



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

**2021-2023 MISSION BASED COMPACT BETWEEN THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA  
AND FLINDERS UNIVERSITY**

***Drafting instructions: please limit your submission to 5 pages.***

**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 to specify (Max 250 words):*

- *its three key outcomes it will achieve over the length of the compact period, including how they will be achieved and measured*

The **Making a Difference: The 2025 Agenda** states that Flinders will ‘proactively engage with business, industry, government and non-government organisations to deliver outcomes that promote economic development and change lives for the better.’ This flows through to both the education and research pillars highlighting a strong focus on our partnership with industry to achieve our overall mission. The following key outcomes reflect this focus:

1. Improve the percentage of students in non-professionally accredited courses undertaking Work Integrated Learning.
2. Increase the number of courses that are co-designed with industry.
3. Lift our industry research engagement, evidenced by research student industry experiences and a new framework that enhances industry research engagement and impact.

The sections below describe how these outcomes will be achieved and measured.

(125 words)

**FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND ACADEMIC FREEDOM**

*In this section the University to specify (Max 250 words):*

- *its response to the recommendations of the Walker Review on the adoption of the Model Code on Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom.*
- *links to relevant policies and implementation strategies that demonstrate the formalised adoption of the Model Code on Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom*

Flinders University enacted an [Academic Freedom & Freedom of Speech Policy](#) in March 2020 which was found by the Walker Review to be 'Mostly Aligned' to the Model Code. A key finding of the Walker Review in relation to Flinders University's policy was that the definition of 'academic freedom' was more restrictive than the Model Code's definition. In response, the University will adopt in its policy the definition of 'academic freedom' which has now been inserted into the Higher Education Support Act. Other initiatives to uphold and promote academic freedom and freedom of speech include:

- enacting a Code of Conduct in October 2020 which confirmed Flinders University's commitment to academic freedom and freedom of speech
- including in the list of considerations against which policies are reviewed periodically a requirement to consider whether there is anything in the policy which may erode the exercise of academic freedom and freedom of speech
- reviewing the University's policies in the following areas to ensure that they do not erode the exercise of academic freedom and freedom of speech
  - Student Misconduct Policies
  - Codes of Conduct applying to Staff
  - Codes of Conduct applying to Students
  - Bullying, Discrimination and Harassment Policies or Procedures
  - Policies regarding the Hire or Use of University Facilities.

(210 words)

**IMPROVING TEACHING AND LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR AUSTRALIAN STUDENTS**

*In this section the University to specify (Max 250 words):*

- *its three key teaching and learning performance targets, including how they will be achieved and measured. Strategies for engaging with industry must be included and admissions transparency, retention strategies, student and staff mental health policies, labour market outcomes, student return to campus strategy and other relevant areas should be considered. Provide relevant links.*

Key teaching and learning performance targets – how they can be achieved and measured:

**1. Learner Engagement**

Flinders has a strong emphasis on learner engagement as we see this as a key element of student success, retention and wellbeing. Our Student Success and Retention Plan has objectives and a series of measures to assess impact:

- Be a Student Centred Community
- Develop Students Skills for Success
- Inspire and Engage Students
- Develop and Support Wellbeing
- Provide a Responsive and Navigable Learning Environment Online and In-person

The measure of success is continued improvement in learner engagement (as measured via the Student Experience Survey) relative to the sector.

**2. Increasing Work Integrated Learning (WIL)**

Flinders has strong positioning in relation to professional courses and WIL, however, this is less so in non-professionally accredited courses. A key goal is to improve the number of students in non-professionally accredited courses undertaking WIL. Various models will be explored such as cross-disciplinary WIL projects and virtual placements to increase opportunities. In line with the University's NPILF Pilot Plan there will be a target to increase the number of undergraduate students in the Colleges of Business, Government and Law; Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences and Science and Engineering engaged in WIL.

**3. Co-design of courses**

Flinders places a strong emphasis on courses being industry focused and where possible, co-designed with industry. Our award-winning Diploma of Digital Technologies, co-designed with BAE Systems Australia provides a model for an industry engaged approach. Flinders aims to increase the number of co-designed courses.

(249 words)

**RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST**

*In this section the University to specify (Max 250 words):*

- *its three key priorities for research and research training and innovation, including how they will be achieved and measured. Include industry engagement strategies and consider research commercialisation, countering foreign interference, including cybersecurity measures and compliance mitigation strategies, and other relevant areas. Provide relevant links.*

**1. Increasing industry engagement opportunities for HDR students**

High quality [research training](#) is backed by comprehensive [candidature management](#), [supervisor training](#) and [HDR professional development](#). We will increase the number of HDR industry engagements by introducing HDR Enterprise Scholarships, co-funded with industry, to provide students with industry engagement experiences. The measure of success will be an increase in the number of industry engaged HDR students supported by industry-supported scholarships.

**2. A new approach to industry research partnerships**

Flinders University has a comprehensive approach to [innovation](#) through partner engagement, entrepreneurship training through the [New Venture Institute](#) and [commercialisation](#) through [Flinders Commercial](#). We will trial a new approach to engagement with manufacturing industry partners, involving innovation sprint projects, an innovation accelerator and Industry 4.0 capability assessment. The measure of success will be the establishment of this approach and assessment of its impact over the first two years of operation.

**3. Establish robust cybersecurity and countering foreign interference training and capability**

We have established a comprehensive framework to mitigate against the risk of foreign interference per the [Policy](#) and [Foreign Interactions Intranet Website](#) which includes educational information and our Due Diligence process. We will focus on continuing education and training so that the risk of foreign interference is a key consideration in any research project. In defence and defence industry-related research, we recently gained Defence Industry Security Program Membership at the Entry Level cybersecurity certification and will now seek the next level of DISP membership, evidenced by application for that level.

(247 words)

**IMPROVING STUDENT EQUALITY AND OUTCOMES**

*In this section the University to specify (Max 250 words):*

- *its three key priorities to support students from under-represented backgrounds, including how they will be achieved and measured. Consider student equity, support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, low SES students, students with disability, student and community outreach, and any other relevant areas. Provide relevant links.*

Key priorities to support students from under-represented backgrounds – how they can be achieved and measured:

**1. Increase the percentage of equity students undertaking STEM, specifically in the College of Science and Engineering.**

NPILF targets for percentage of equity students undertaking STEM, specifically in the College of Science. To be achieved through a variety of initiatives, including *Women in STEM* and those detailed in the University's *NPILF Pilot Plan 2022-2024*.

**2. Creating a culturally appropriate, welcoming and safe space for Indigenous students**  
Flinders [Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan](#) is fundamentally about creating a cultural shift by working across all areas of our core business to 'increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community participation, retention and success in higher education to reduce social and economic barriers and increase the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' (page 20). The measure of success will be our achievement of the deliverables (pages 16-21) as per the embedded timelines.

**3. Implement new models for remote, rural and regional students for health education**  
Development of a sustainable health workforce to support remote, rural and regional communities is a high State and Federal government priority. Flinders is working with rural and regional communities to develop new models for medical, nursing and allied health education and delivery. Integral to this model for rural students will be increased linkage with Regional University Centres. The key outcome will be consolidation of current programs and extending to new models.

(240 words)

OFFICIAL

SIGNED for and on behalf of

In the presence of:

THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

by

Dom English

Ryan Kinder

Full name (please print)

Witness (please print)

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A/g Director

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Position or profession of witness (please print)

of the Department of Education, Skills and  
Employment as delegate of the Minister for  
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Signature

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28/12/2021

Date

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In the presence of:

FLINDERS UNIVERSITY

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