



## 2024 Mission-Based Compact Between the Commonwealth of Australia and Curtin 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 and Strategic Planning

With the launch of the [Curtin 2030 Strategic Plan](#) in 2022, Curtin’s 2030 vision is “through partnership, we will make a difference for people and our planet”. This Plan is focused on the strategic pillars of People, Planet and Partnership, with priorities across the University appropriately aligned. Performance and progress related to Curtin 2030 is referenced in the [Annual Report](#), including selected key performance indicators.

In developing and evaluating learning offerings Curtin examines a range of skills and workforce sources, such as the [Jobs and Skills Australia Skills Priority List](#), as well as engaging with employers, to ensure there will be suitable employment opportunities for graduates. This approach has been successful, with Curtin achieving the highest rates of graduate employment outcomes among Western Australia’s public universities.

Staff and student safety is protected on campus by the [Safer Community Team](#), who are trained to manage general safety and security issues, in addition to complex welfare and wellbeing issues. The [SafeZone security app](#) is made available to staff, students and visitors and provides options for reporting of emergency and non-emergency situations to qualified security personnel.

Curtin University is committed to enhancing the University’s resilience to Foreign Interference (FI) and [protecting its staff and students from these risks](#). Curtin’s commitment is detailed within its inaugural Foreign Risk Policy. Curtin is acutely aware of the importance of Countering Foreign Interference (CFI), having dedicated significant resources towards identifying, assessing, and mitigating these risks, including having established its Foreign Risk Management Team (FRMT).

Curtin’s FRMT has been resourced to conduct specialised inhouse open-source due diligence, risk assessment and mitigation for all Curtin’s activities and arrangements deemed at increased risk of foreign interference. Protecting staff and students from these risks is demonstrated through Curtin’s dedicated efforts to enhance CFI education for all staff and students, with tiered levels of awareness training available and assigned for staff and students dependent on identified threat vector and risk level.

Curtin takes cyber and data security responsibilities seriously, recognising that bad actors seek to access confidential or sensitive information for a range of different purposes. Online security approaches and processes are continually assessed and upgraded as required. The University also engages with wider policy aspects linked to cybersecurity, such as working to and in alignment with the legislative deliverables of the [2024 WA Privacy and Responsible Sharing \(PRIS\) Readiness Plan](#).

Curtin’s [Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech Policy \(Policy\)](#) is based on the Hon Robert French AC’s Model Code for the Protection of Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom in Australian Higher Education Providers (**Model Code**).

Professor Sally Walker's Review of the Adoption of the Model Code confirmed that Curtin's Policy was mostly aligned with the Model Code.

A significant development through the Curtin University Enterprise Bargaining Agreement 2022-2025 (**EBA**) was updating the previous EBA provisions relating to intellectual freedom to align with the Model Code. The new EBA now directly incorporates relevant aspects of the Model Code relating to Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech.

## Strategies for Improving Equality of Opportunity in Higher Education

The University's strategic plan confirms Curtin's commitment to fostering inclusivity and creating an equitable community, underpinned by improved access, inclusion, and participation outcomes.

Key priorities are to improve outcomes for equity students, supported by our [Student Equity and Inclusion Framework](#). The Framework supports an intersectional approach to student equity in learning, teaching, and research. The primary measure of success for 2024 is domestic equity student participation inclusive of: students with disability and those with first in family; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander; rural, regional and remote; and low socioeconomic backgrounds.

Curtin is committed to embedding voices and perspectives of First Nations peoples at the forefront of our decision-making to create an environment in which everyone thrives. Key priorities are to further develop Curtin's Indigenous governance framework and progress opportunities to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander success. This includes increasing Indigenous leadership positions in all faculties; strengthening Indigenous cultural capabilities amongst all staff; and improving enrolments, retention, and completion for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The primary measure of success for 2024 is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student success. Performance against these indicators is reported in the [Annual Report](#).

Curtin's AHEAD program has been expanded to include an innovative range of face to face and digital initiatives for high school students aimed at improving aspiration, awareness and academic skills needed for higher education success. This will continue across rural, regional and remote, and low socioeconomic communities, growing where our resources allow.

Building on Curtin's strong relationships in rural, regional and remote Western Australian communities, Regional University Study Hubs, and Suburban Study Hubs will play a key role in supporting success of Curtin students who can access these Hubs. Focussed engagement and support services at our Kalgoorlie Campus and the community and industry within the Goldfields-Esperance Region are key to improving enrolment, participation and attainment for [regional students](#).

A significant number of Curtin's equity enrolments study through our online programs. Improvements to this experience to positively impact student outcomes will be a focus in 2024.

Implementation of Curtin's [Support for Student's Policy](#) will focus on students at risk of non-completion, a proportion of whom are from equity backgrounds.

Curtin's [Disability Access and Inclusion Plan](#) furthers our focus on inclusive practice, focussing on the embedding of universal design thinking into all of our activities. This will improve the experience and outcomes for students with disability across all interactions with Curtin, and more broadly will benefit all students.

Curtin encourages staff as champions for student equity and provides opportunity to enhance staff capability and inclusive practice knowledge to support equity students to achieve and succeed, through the Student Equity Network and professional learning and training opportunities.

Equity student data and insights are monitored and reported on to the University Council, Senior Executive Team, Academic Board and Learning and Student Experience Committee. This includes monitoring equity student performance in retention, pass rates and completions, satisfaction, and employability.

## Strategies for Improving Teaching and Learning

Curtin prides itself on being a student centric university. Our students' experience, learning journey and success is at the heart of everything we do. Throughout this journey Curtin provides high quality and innovative experiences across all its campuses and online.

Students are welcomed with a comprehensive orientation programme designed to ease the transition to university. A range of innovative services are available to support students in their academic and employability success, mental health and wellbeing, leadership development and social impact. All information is freely available on our [Current Students](#) website, including our [Students as Partners](#) approach.

Overall performance of Learning and Teaching against our strategic aims is monitored by the Learning and Student Experience Committee of Academic Board.

Curtin provides a sector-leading experience, demonstrated by improving student satisfaction scores. A programme of initiatives across Curtin was set up in 2022 to specifically improve overall student satisfaction. Student Experience Survey (SES) data is used to monitor our performance.

Proactive measures are in place to identify students who are at risk of non-completion based on well-established indicators. Students are referred to a range of support programs depending on their needs including wellbeing, psychological and counselling services, specialist mentoring, [AccessAbility services](#), academic skills development such as UniPASS and financial or other support. In addition, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students can access a range of support through the [Centre for Aboriginal Studies](#).

At-risk students are proactively managed to address challenges and improve future student performance. Strategies for increasing student engagement include providing timely assessment feedback, monitoring attendance, regular and timely communication to students relevant to critical points in the learning journey.

Curtin is committed to upholding the highest standards of transparency in student admission information and processes, accessible through the [Study Curtin site](#). Prospective students can access all information necessary to make informed decisions about their academic journey. Curtin's [Admissions and Enrolment Policy and Procedures](#) serves as a comprehensive resource, providing the governance for fair and accountable admission processes and practices.

Curtin is unique in its alignment with industry and the work it does with its industrial partners in both research and industry teaching into our programmes. Industry interfaces at many levels and involves teams in Learning Partnerships, Student Success and Community Engagement. Many of our students will have an industry placement or internship as part of their studies. [Volunteering opportunities](#) and [Curtin Extra](#) allow students to develop additional skills outside of their course or degree programme.

Curtin already has a high employment rate at graduation and leads in educational innovation in preparing graduates for the world of work. The [Course Quality Assurance Manual](#) defines Curtin's approach to developing "industry-connected and career capable" graduates. Graduate outcomes are documented in the [Annual Report](#).

Curtin is a global university with campuses in Western Australia, Singapore, Malaysia, Mauritius, and Dubai. This provides a set of unique opportunities for our students to develop a global vision, gain multicultural experiences, and broaden networks for future career development. Through the development of shared curriculums, exchanges, short courses, and New Columbus Plan (NCP) programs, Curtin is committed to creating channels and possibilities for cultivating global talents.

## Strategies for Improving Research, Research Training, and Innovation

Curtin research is being improved through strategies outlined in the [Enabling Plan for Research at Curtin University 2023-2024](#), with the aim that:

*Curtin leads research that Australia and our global partners need now and for the future.*

This aim will be achieved through the following priorities, including detail of how they will be achieved and measured provided for each.

1. Increase engagement with, and awareness of, the impact of Curtin research, internally and externally by:
  - a. Supporting researchers to showcase the quality and impact of their research
  - b. Showcasing our research activities that intentionally support the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
  - c. Developing and implementing a [Research Impact Communication Strategy](#) to enhance the awareness of how Curtin is making a difference through research
2. Integrate research into learning and teaching by:
  - a. Increasing undergraduate and postgraduate student exposure to research
  - b. Increasing research-led undergraduate teaching
3. Build research quality, capacity, and impact by:
  - a. Strengthening external relationships with better recognition of industry and Government needs, and bi-directional movement of staff and students
  - b. Increasing researcher-initiated and demand-driven research funding and scale
  - c. Supporting all researchers to recognise and aim for high quality outputs and impact of their research
  - d. Securing external funding for the full cost of research wherever possible
  - e. Optimising the higher degree by research student experience and contributions
4. Support the processes of research at Curtin by consultatively developing systematic improvements in research grant and industry-supported funding and management processes with all schools, institutes, faculties, and central support areas.

Curtin has committed to an institution-wide approach to supporting new models of industry collaboration, commercialisation, new business formation and scale-up. This approach has developed over several years, based on the knowledge that it is not one thing that will lead to a paradigm shift, but sustained commitment to a comprehensive and aligned set of support activities.

The University has developed a pipeline of support for commercialisation that starts with shifting culture towards increased commercialisation activity by recognising and rewarding this work. A series of longstanding capability programs provide practical training to develop new technology-based products and services: [Ignition](#), [Accelerate](#), [Kickstart](#), the [Curtin Innovation Awards](#) and [West Tech Fest](#). These programs support the translation of exceptional research outcomes and innovations into new commercial opportunities.

Curtin also directly invests in these opportunities that progress through the pipeline and require funding for prototyping and proof-of-concept.

Performance against all abovementioned strategies is measured through the University Council key performance indicators, HERDC income data, and various school and faculty performance measures. Some of these key performance indicators are available in the latest [Annual Report](#).

## Strategies for Engaging with Industry

Curtin has always had a strong connection to industry through teaching, research, and innovation partnerships to build both a sustainable talent pipeline and accelerate cutting-edge innovation.

Curtin works with its partners to develop and deliver education experiences focussed on building workforce capability and talent pipelines dedicated to the critical needs of our state in both rural and city locations. Researchers and working professionals explore opportunities to support Curtin students across all aspects of their learning journey and career pathway including work integrated learning (WIL), certifications and internships.

Our industry engagement in learning and teaching includes WIL and specialised internship placements, customised professional development programs delivered within organisations, public facing professional learning, microcredentials, masterclasses, industry-university co-designed executive education and graduate courses.

These partnerships all focus on an enhanced student experience, creating graduates who can adapt to and contribute to their industries and organisations whilst creating mutual value for the university, the organisation, and the communities we operate in.

Curtin's research and development engagement with industry is focussed on building long-term relationships for sustained collaboration and innovation, aligning research interests and expertise to maximise the impact of collaborative project outcomes. Our industry engagements encompass short-term joint research projects through to longer term research alliances with our industry partners. Building upon these partnerships, mechanisms for transferring university-developed technologies to industry for commercialisation and providing resources such as Ignition ([Curtin Ignition](#)) and accelerator programs ([Curtin Accelerate](#)) are in place to foster an ongoing culture of innovation and collaboration. Higher degree research internships for our PhD students with our industry partners are a particular focus.

We hold key partnerships with organisations representing a wide range of industries to advance teaching and research, including resource and energy (BHP, Mineral Resources WA, Woodside), telecommunications (Optus, Cisco), employment and human services (APM), technology (Adobe, Amazon), engineering/defence (Babcock Australasia, Huntington Ingalls), health (WA Country Health Services, Telethon Kids Institute), sport (Fremantle Football Club) and finance (Bankwest).

Key areas of training and research engagement are in technology skills, leadership, mining, energy transition/transformation, defence, health, Indigenous culture immersion and education.

Example of our deep industry partnerships are:

- Upskilling our graduates through incorporating Cisco's Net Academy ([Cisco-Curtin Centre for Networks](#)) into our curriculum, jointly funding the [Internet of Things MOOC](#) which has had over 250,000 enrolments to date.
- Designing learning labs to research the future of technology in education, creating Innovation Central Perth (where students and Industry co-create solutions to issues – a project that Cisco has since replicated in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Canberra and Adelaide) ([Innovation Central Perth](#)).
- The [Mineral Resources \(MinRes\) and Curtin University partnership](#) which combines MinRes expertise across lithium, iron ore, energy and mining services with Curtin University's research and learning capabilities.
- The Curtin led Resources Technology and Critical Minerals Trailblazer hub ([Resources Technology and Critical Minerals Trailblazer](#)) which matches \$50 million of government funding support from the university and 33 industry partners involved in value chains requiring lithium, nickel, cobalt, vanadium and hydrogen resources. The hub's aim is to turn research outputs into services, products, and businesses.

SIGNED for and on behalf of  
THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

by

Madonna Morton

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Full name (please print)

First Assistant Secretary

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Position

of the Department of Education



Signature

29/05/2024

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Date **29 April 2024**

SIGNED for and on behalf of

Curtin University

by

**Harlene Hayne**

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Full name (please print)

**Vice-Chancellor**

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Position



Signature

In the presence of:

**Rachael Clark**

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Witness (please print)

**Executive Assistant**

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Position or profession of witness (please print)



Signature