



2024 Mission-Based Compact Between the Commonwealth of Australia and Deakin 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

Deakin University's Strategic Plan, [Deakin 2030: Ideas to Impact](#) communicates Deakin's approach to serving communities and addressing national challenges. Across the priorities of Education and Employability, Research and Innovation, our approach is:

1. Flexible and accessible education, relevant across career and life

Strategies: lifelong learning integrated into course design; co-designed courses with industry; integrated workplace experiences; and flexible entry requirements to acknowledge prior knowledge, experience and ability.

Measures: the proportion of course offerings, enrolments and demographics; existing internal and external feedback mechanisms, such as the [Graduate Outcomes Survey](#) (GOS), [Student Experience Survey \(SES\)](#) and [Employer Satisfaction Survey](#) (ESS). All our programs will be judged against context adjusted measures of student success and retention (see sections 2 and 3).

2. Continued improvement of research performance through commercialisation outcomes

Strategies: tailor research development across discovery, innovation and industry pathways; research activity focussed to national and local challenges and opportunities; leverage and expand industry partnerships; provide clearer career pathways for HDR students both academic and commercial.

Measures: number of formal industry partnerships created and maintained; HDR student to supervisor ratio; continued industry precinct expansion; and number of HDR completions, alongside results in the Postgraduate Outcomes Survey.

3. Continue to lead in digital delivery and integrated teaching and learning

Strategies: continued investment in digital capabilities, emphasising a human-centric and ethical approach when creating and managing our digital platforms, and in cyber security.

Measures: continued balance of on-campus online, and blended course opportunities for students; industry recognition for the innovation application of educational technology and a blended learning experience.

4. Approach to National and Sector Priorities

Deakin is committed to sectoral leadership across national priorities, reflecting an externally focussed, national institution.

Workforce and skills development

Reflecting our industry-alignment, and focus on community and national needs, Deakin places workforce and skills development at the forefront. From our rural clinical school to address medical and health workforce shortages, to workplace learning integration in degrees, Deakin is committed skills development to prepare our graduates for the future workforce. See [Deakin Career Planning](#)

Student and Staff Safety

Deakin welcomes the ongoing work by the federal government, expert panel, and sector to improve student and staff safety on campus. This is a priority issue for us, from our Council and Executive to the entire university. We have undertaken numerous innovative programs, as well as engaged with external experts to review our approach and help us continually improve. Greater detail of Deakin's approach is included in Appendix A.

Cyber Security, Data and Foreign Interference

Deakin is fully compliant with government foreign interference regulations, taking a proactive management approach. Working in sensitive industries, we prioritise security systems. These include university-wide dual-factor authentication, dedicated cyber security resources, as well as dedicated security clearance and monitoring resources internally. For those areas of the university engaged in particularly sensitive projects, for example artificial intelligence, further systems are in place.

Free Speech and Academic Freedom

Deakin has a single, high-level policy in operation since 2001.

Please see [Code for Upholding Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom](#)

Strategies for Improving Equality of Opportunity in Higher Education

Deakin is deeply committed to supporting students from under-represented backgrounds and the rising proportion of non-ATAR and pathway programs admissions. We systematically apply, and measure effectiveness of, strategies for pre-access, access, retention and success using a suite of sophisticated support mechanisms traversing academic, financial, cultural, wellbeing and ancillary needs.

Please note that Deakin University will not be eligible for the Higher Education Continuity Guarantee (HECG) in 2024 and therefore will not require a HECG Equity Plan.

Continue to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation and success

[Deakin's Indigenous Strategy 2023-2028](#) sets out our comprehensive plan placing Indigenous matters as a whole-of-University responsibility and benefit.

Advancing the aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples by providing access to education through inclusive pathways is at the heart of our strategy. This is consistent with our broader approach for all students, balancing excellence and equity. In addition to standard support systems, strategic deployment of programs such as the Indigenous, Regional and Low-SES Attainment Fund (IRLSAF) and the Indigenous Student Success Program (ISSP) enables Deakin to tailor responses to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students as well as other under-represented groups.

Support students from under-represented backgrounds

Deakin welcomes learners from diverse backgrounds who broaden our horizons and enrich our learning. We seek to build aspiration, impact and influence by serving under-represented populations and leveraging relevant partnerships, alumni and research.

[Deakin 2030: Ideas to Impact](#) is designed to enable greater access to higher education for aspiring, talented students from all backgrounds. We prioritise a student experience that optimises entry and participation for diverse learners and provide tailored support to promote student success.

Our new [admissions framework](#) enables holistic consideration of applicants from non-traditional backgrounds and under-represented cohorts. Likewise, our equity initiatives, funded by the Australian Government's Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP), aim to build on Deakin's inclusive and welcoming culture, promote equality of opportunity to widen aspiration and promote higher education to prospective students from low SES background, regional and remote areas, and prospective Indigenous students.

Deakin's Strategic Plan guides our tailored approach to disability, aiming to better the student and staff experience through the themes of education and employability, digital delivery and innovation and partnerships.

Continue to improve access and outcomes for aspiring and talented students regardless of background

Deakin's aspirations to improve access opportunities for aspiring students who face additional barriers are articulated in our [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy 2020-2025](#), and [Indigenous Strategy 2023-2028](#). Deakin has targeted access programs to increase the representation of under-represented groups including the [Deakin Regional Access Scheme](#), [Indigenous Access Scheme](#), [Regional and Remote Entry Scheme](#) and the Guaranteed ATAR Scheme (2025 onwards). Deakin drives action to improve student outcomes through its Education and Employability Guiding Plan which places the student and their journey through study at its heart. Activities to improve success, retention and graduate outcomes are described below (Strategies for Improving Teaching and Learning).

Measuring the efficacy of our programs

We have implemented the Student Equity in Higher Education Evaluation Framework (SEHEEF) to evaluate our impact across equity-focused programs and initiatives. Deakin measures access, participation, success and retention rates as a percentage of overall student outcomes for the following cohorts:

- identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or both
- with a declared disability
- from a low-SES background
- from a regional or rural home location.

Strategies for Improving Teaching and Learning

Deakin education is designed to meet the needs of contemporary learners and a future-oriented workforce. We welcome diverse learners starting in higher education and those returning to study. Deakin builds lifelong education partnerships with graduates, industry and communities.

Teaching and learning

DeakinDesign is our sector-leading curriculum framework, integrating on-site and online delivery. Evidence-based practice uses student feedback and unit performance (attrition, success, satisfaction) from every teaching period, and national survey results in a cycle of continuous improvement. We are an innovative educator, encouraging staff and students to develop awareness, knowledge and skills as contemporary, ethical and digitally fluent citizens. Further, we

disseminated guidance on using [generative artificial intelligence](#) to students and teaching teams early in 2023 with a university-level steering committee guiding Deakin's approach.

Admissions

Since implementing the Admissions Transparency Phase Two Common Terminology and Information Sets in 2018, Deakin has overhauled its [admission policy](#) and implemented a new [admissions framework](#) for the 2024 academic year. The framework enables holistic consideration of applicants from non-traditional backgrounds and evaluation of evidence of their achievements.

Success and retention

Deakin's Education and Employability Guiding Plan (internal document) focuses closely on student success as a key indicator of retention and progression. Our unit (subject) leads access data dashboards providing selected student demographics, trends on use of learning resources, participation and assessment outcomes to enable timely intervention. We use student-centred approaches for continuous improvement including a robust [Equity Students-as-Partners](#) program.

Early intervention and support

Deakin's comprehensive approach is articulated in our [Support for Students policy](#). Deakin monitors students' engagement from pre-commencement to census; contacting students who appear disengaged to offer academic or personal support, management of study load or facilitating intermission or withdrawal. Students who neither engage in their units nor respond to contact are unenrolled so no debt is incurred.

Support is tailored to cohorts: First Nations students have access to the [Indigenous Tutorial Network](#); international students commence orientation early, supported by a detailed [guide](#) to enrolling, travelling to Australia and studying.

[Orientation](#) for all students runs for several weeks before and after the teaching period starts using the free [study tools and support services](#). These include peer assisted study sessions, maths support, writing assistance (24/7), study skills support, peer mentoring and wellbeing support. All commencing online students have a [success coach](#), a current Deakin student, to build students' sense of belonging and self-efficacy.

Students failing or at risk of failure

Deakin's revised [Academic Progress policy](#) guides actions supporting all students at risk of making unsatisfactory progress, including students who have failed more than 50 per cent of their units in the study period under review.

Work integrated learning and career education commitments

All Deakin's highest enrolling, generalist undergraduate courses include career education and work-integrated learning in the core curriculum (please see Deakin's 2023 NPILF report for detailed information about career education at Deakin). Labour market outcomes and strategy are considered as part of the standard course approval and review procedures, linking closely to the strategic plan and the guiding and enabling plans that support it.

Measuring the efficacy of our programs

Student feedback, engagement and success and graduate outcomes are monitored using student analytics and institutional and national surveys and reported to the Academic Board and University Council. The Education and Employability Plan sets annual targets for:

- Value: student demand (above sector growth) and employer satisfaction (top 10% sector)
- Graduate outcomes: employment (top three Victorian universities)
- Student experience: overall satisfaction (top 5% public universities)
- Education leadership: success and retention (top 10% in sector).

Strategies for Improving Research, Research Training, and Innovation

Deakin undertakes innovative and discovery-driven research that addresses national priorities and aligns with our capabilities. Our research and creative endeavours are strongly linked to applied research, translation and commercialisation through a focus on industry engagement – a portfolio which has grown in scale and quality faster than most other providers.

Our research efforts are guided by our five interconnected ‘Impact Themes’ that focus our strengths in research and innovation towards areas of most significant impact for society. These are:

- Advancing society, culture and the economy.
- Building safe and secure communities.
- Creating smarter technologies.
- Enabling a sustainable world.
- Improving health and well-being.

Each Impact Theme provides opportunity to harness our disciplines to focus on areas for the common good, building local and international partnerships that enhance impact.

Three key priorities:

1. Excellence in research, research training and innovation

Strategies: support focussed, world-class research, creative endeavours and research training that are linked to industry and generate globally recognised new knowledge that changes thinking and policy across disciplines and sectors.

Measures:

- Continued growth in research quality and income.
- HDR student numbers and success, HDR student to supervisor ratio.

2. Strengthen and expand industry partnerships to deliver genuine impact

Strategies: increased joint industrial pilot projects, enabled by our growing industry precincts and platforms; accelerate translation of discoveries and ideas into new policy, products and services via streamlined pathways, including commercialisation and industry engagement; scale-up of our industry precincts with cutting edge production and world-class research and development facilities.

Measures:

- Growth in number and value of industry partnerships.
- Growth in number of industry-supported PhD students.

3. Supporting and realising research talent and commercialisation outcomes

Strategies: substantial investment in transforming research support systems and connectivity for a new way of working that enables researchers to focus on research and innovation that delivers demonstrable impact. A strategically focused ‘Research-Innovation-Commercialisation Ecosystem’, ensuring connection to our discovery-based research and our industry partners.

Measures:

- Growth in commercialisation income.
- Number of active patents.

Strategies for Engaging with Industry

Deakin recognises the increasing importance of industry engagement. This is reflected by the significant uplift in industry income over the last decade, at a rate equal to or greater than our peers. Industry engagement is led by Deakin Research Innovation, a division within the Research Office. More recently, we recognised the need to foster deeper, strategic relationships with

industry and thus formed a new Partnerships Portfolio. The two internal areas work collaboratively on industry engagement.

Deakin's focus is on national and international partnership development. Strategies for systemic industry engagement include, but are not limited to:*

<p>Focal areas for engaging with industry</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Research and innovation ● Skills development (skilling, re-skilling and up-skilling) ● Student/graduate placement
<p>Partnering with local employers, regional/national businesses, international organisations, relevant industry bodies, NGOs and statutory authorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fee for service and/or memorandum of understanding agreements for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ research and innovation ○ validation and evaluation ○ student / graduate placements ○ work integrated learning (WIL) ○ exchange of training and assessment materials ○ provision of industry-focussed microcredentials. ● In-kind relationships and arrangements. ● Co-design projects focussed on community challenges. ● Industry relationships that result in a 'preferred provider' status. ● Procurement arrangements.
<p>Involving industry leaders/employers in industry advisory committees</p>	<p>Convening course advisory groups or industry advisory committees to discuss and advise on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● priority industry research focal areas ● industry demands ● market sector developments ● emerging trends and technologies ● alignment and compliance with workplace accreditation standards ● workforce / workplace needs ● skills requirements, gaps and development needs ● training and assessment strategies ● microcredentials ● graduate placements.
<p>Embedding staff and students within enterprises</p>	<p>Placing educators / students within industry to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● complete work integrated learning ● provide on-site training and assessment services ● undertake site visits as part of ongoing training and assessment of students.
<p>Networking with industry and trade organisations, peak bodies, and employer groups</p>	<p>Involving industry representatives in formal and informal discussions about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● industry demands ● emerging trends and technologies ● education service/microcredentials ● development ● training and assessment strategies ● real-world training/simulation environments

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • skills requirements, gaps and development needs.
<p>Exchanging knowledge and resources with employers, networks and industry bodies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending trade shows, conferences or expos. • Visits to industry employers and suppliers. • Engaging subject matter experts to participate in research, education and assessment processes (e.g., guest speakers, co-assessment arrangements). • Establishing formal mentoring relationships between educators/students and representatives from industry. • Speaking with current students employed within industry to collect information about current work practices and job roles. • Shadowing a current industry practitioner in the performance of their normal duties. • Active interaction with networks through social media platforms such as LinkedIn.
<p>*Systematic industry engagement means activity that is strategic, planned, reproducible, consistent and controlled.</p>	

Appendix A - Student and Staff Safety

Deakin University is committed to prioritising health, safety and wellbeing, ensuring that students, staff, and our communities are safe, and feel safe – both physically and psychologically.

The University has no appetite for actions or activities that jeopardise a safe working and learning environment, and we apply best practice safety systems and contemporary approaches to control risks.

Our campus environments are thoughtfully designed, operated and maintained to positively impact health, safety and wellbeing outcomes, and Deakin has a robust [health and safety management system](#) managed in line with the requirements of the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004, Safe Work Australia and WorkSafe Victoria.

Our systems are regularly reviewed and enhanced in alignment with the ISO45001 standard, and we have a range of proactive initiatives to advance our health, safety and wellbeing goals, meet our compliance obligations and continue to provide a safe University environment for the Deakin community.

SIGNED for and on behalf of
THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

by

Madonna Morton
Full name (please print)

First Assistant Secretary

Position
of the Department of Education



Signature

29/05/2024

Date

SIGNED for and on behalf of

Deakin University

by

Professor Iain Martin
Full name (please print)

Vice-Chancellor
Position



Signature

In the presence of:

Sarah Bugg
Witness (please print)

Administration Manager Officer of the Vice-Chancellor
Position or profession of witness (please print)



Signature