



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

RMIT's mission is to empower people and communities to adapt and thrive across generations with education, research and civic engagement that are applied, inclusive and impactful.

Our strategy to 2031, *Knowledge with Action*, focuses on using our knowledge, skills and capabilities to make a difference in the world via three key Directions: Learning through life and work; Research and innovation for impact; and Serving our communities.

The initiatives outlined here are guided by RMIT's 2024 Strategic Execution Plan and the four goals of our strategy:

1. Build a coherent, connected lifelong learning system
2. Extend RMIT's dynamic research and innovation system
3. Grow civic partnership at scale
4. Be a leading University of impact across the Asia Pacific.

Knowledge with Action is enabled by six adaptive priorities to achieve our goals. Additional policies, strategies and frameworks guide our approach to national and sector priorities including:

Ensuring Student and Staff Safety

At RMIT, we want our community to be a place where students and staff are free from violence, relationships are respectful, services meet the needs of those experiencing sexual harm, justice responses are effective, and perpetrators stop their violence and are held to account.

RMIT's Sexual Harm Prevention and Response Policy is in place, along with initiatives to reduce and prevent sexual harm and to support those affected by it. Our Addressing Gender-Based Violence Strategic Action Plan 2023-2027 works to address gender-based violence across three key action areas – awareness raising, learning and capability development, and innovation projects and activities. In 2024, we will:

- Double the number of face-to-face interactions with students and staff that challenge outdated and harmful beliefs and behaviours of individuals as well as the social norms, structures and practices of our communities, colleges and institutions.
- Launch a public-facing report 'Planning for change – a learning and development approach for the prevention of gender-based violence, sexual harm and harassment at RMIT'.
- Participate in the 2024 National Student Safety Survey.

Upholding freedom of speech and academic freedom

Freedom of intellectual inquiry, freedom of speech and institutional autonomy are founding values of universities around the world. RMIT's [Policy Governance Framework](#) states that policy documents will not impinge or impair freedoms related to academic freedom, freedom of expression and freedom of speech that are protected by the University in the [Intellectual Freedom Policy](#). In 2024, RMIT will undertake a review of this policy internally and as part of broader external review of academic governance.

Cyber and Data Security

RMIT is strengthening its cyber posture through a multi-year Cyber Program to uplift cyber capability and controls, reinforce a strong cyber culture, and provide layers of fortification and protection. In 2024, we will:

- Uplift our Security Framework to align to NIST 800-53.
- Strengthen network protection by completing a Network Segmentation project.
- Uplift our Identify and Access Management processes and solutions.
- Complete uplift of controls to meet Essential 8 requirements.
- Improve Cyber Awareness capability thorough role-based cyber awareness training.

Strategies for Improving Equality of Opportunity in Higher Education

Building a culture of inclusion and diversity for staff and students is one of [RMIT's core values](#). Our [Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access \(IDEA\) Framework](#) aspiration is that RMIT is *Inclusive by Design: Everyone, Everywhere, All the time* with student 'Access, participation and success' forming one of the five identified domains of Inclusive Excellence.

IDEA implementation priorities for 2024 include reviewing and responding to Accord Final Report priorities in addition to:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student access and success

RMIT has a strategic commitment to growing and empowering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners and professionals as part of a distinctive learning ecosystem. The adoption and implementation of the Indigenous Student Success strategy in Q1, 2024 will identify and address key factors that impact on retention, graduate employability outcomes, and academic achievement of Indigenous students.

RMIT is committed to providing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People with greater access to vocational and higher education programs. The [Indigenous Access Program](#) allows RMIT and the Ngarara Willim Centre to support Indigenous students through the application process, through an informal interview and non-ATAR and non-competitive selection process.

Access, participation and success

RMIT will continue to build the diversity of our student profile, ensuring all can participate and thrive in learning through life and work and in fulfilling careers. To further this aim in 2024 we will:

- Develop and implement pilots for secondary school outreach to respond to some of the key challenges currently facing schools with limited resources, including mentoring, more coordinated planning across various teams doing outreach and more in-school engagements.
- Continue implementation of our regional outreach initiatives including partnering with regional communities to co-design and deliver new programs to build awareness of tertiary education pathways and opportunities.
- Continue implementation of women in STEM outreach with secondary schools and proactively uplift female enrolments in new RMIT STEM programs with fee scholarships and employer support for women who need to retrain because of redundancy or other industry or local employment-related reasons.
- Undertake design to inform the implementation of our [Education Plan](#) initiatives to widen participation in tertiary education.

In addition to improving access and representation, RMIT has a strategic focus on retention and completion to improve the success ratio of students from equity groups. In 2024 we will:

- Implement new compulsory learning modules on sexual harassment prevention, response and support for staff and students.
- Implement evidence-based targeted interventions to support ongoing improvement in low-SES and non-English speaking background learners/graduates to target parity in employability outcomes.
- Improve the identification and implementation of reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities, parents and carers, and other priority cohorts.
- Open new inclusive spaces on campus including study spaces to support neurodiverse students.
- Build capability to support students through resources and professional development for educators and other staff.
- Respond to internal Student Support Report recommendations with an action plan regarding the increasing prevalence of students with complex circumstances, neurodivergence, and/ or mental health issues.
- Develop a complex case management model with supporting processes and procedures.

Strategies for Improving Teaching and Learning

RMIT differentiates itself by providing learners with capabilities to solve real-world problems by embedding our [Signature Pedagogy](#) in courses and programs. We are also scaling the number of programs that provide interdisciplinary opportunities and have the capacity for modular, stackable curriculum and pathways to improve student experiences and graduate outcomes. In 2024 we will:

- Increase the total number of courses and programs reflecting signature pedagogy principles and design standards.
- Embed pedagogical principles in appropriate policies and undertake formal review of the assessment policy suite.
- Continue to embed industry-partnered learning (IPL) in all programs – with scaffolded work integrated learning, career development learning and industry connectedness throughout the curriculum of every program.
- Grow the number of interdisciplinary courses and/or programs.
- Integrate shorter learning opportunities into a single framework aligned to award level qualifications.

- Progress implementation of a Curriculum Management Mapping Tool by finalising configuration, integration and system testing and launching a change management program.

RMIT is also expanding and amplifying extra and co-curricular activities to improve student accessibility to them, and to support staff to align informal learning with courses for curriculum credit. In 2024 we will establish and launch a co-curricular offerings pilot.

Implementation of RMIT's Signature Pedagogy embeds authentic assessment and industry partnered learning with an anticipated impact on retention and success for all cohorts. To facilitate student success, in 2024 we will:

- Continue to streamline data collection, storage, analysis and access systems to better identify underperforming cohorts and provide timely interventions to improve usability and enable greater insight generation and uplift and promote the Early Warning Signs dashboard to program managers.
- Undertake a pilot to incorporate an analytics module and dashboard in order to provide meaningful data on student engagement and participation in all activities to better inform teaching and future learning design.

Supporting educators to share and evolve their educational and scholarly practice is a core enabler of Direction 1: Learning through life and work. In 2024 we will commence development of our Educator of the Future strategy in collaboration with the academic community and the People team. In addition, we are working towards:

- An Innovation and Learning and Teaching Grants Scheme.
- Community building scholarly activities including L&T Festival and Educator Conversations covering topical issues like artificial intelligence, scholarly practice, sustainability in education and student engagement.
- An integrated and more formalised Reward and Recognition program.
- Aligning educator capability and expectations to RMIT's strategy and fostering industry relevant curriculum and pedagogy.
- Scoping roll-out of the Graduate Certificate in Tertiary Teaching and Learning, in collaboration with RMIT Vietnam to support educator capability development.
- Uplifting and extending training offerings to better equip staff to support neurodivergent students.
- Reviewing promotion processes that more fully recognise learning and teaching in the academic career trajectory.

Strategies for Improving Research, Research Training, and Innovation

RMIT's *Knowledge with Action* Direction 2 articulates a goal to extend RMIT's dynamic research and innovation ecosystem. We are evolving an increasingly integrated, connected and accessible research and innovation ecosystem to enable positive impact with our partners and community. Our focus in 2024 is centred around five key actions:

- Deepening our research impact culture and capabilities
- Fostering partnerships for sustained impact at scale
- Scaling up applied, transdisciplinary research
- Growing impact-focused research training
- Accelerating research translation and commercialisation

RMIT's eight Enabling Impact Platforms (EIPs) in particular support the development of high impact-potential initiatives that strategically connect researchers from multiple disciplines with industry partners to solve critical global problems.

In 2024, we will:

- Progress development of an enterprise-wide Digital Research Infrastructure and Research Translation Infrastructure roadmap to focus planning and development aimed at attracting and supporting RMIT researchers to conduct impact focused research and research translation.
- Design and implement two large-scale impactful initiatives to further position RMIT as a competitive and agile partner for collaborators both within and outside of academia.
- Establish new networks and cross-college research centres across disciplines to effectively build, harness and deploy RMIT's diverse research capabilities to meet the challenges and opportunities to create benefit from excellent and impactful research.
- Operationalise our co-invested Breakthrough Victoria pre-seed fund to increase research translation and improve RMIT's position as a significant player in the national research and innovation system.
- Launch a Research Translation Fellowship scheme to build capability and skills that support translation career pathways.
- Create more opportunities for Higher Degree by Research projects with industry partners to deliver impact with a target 5% increase in HDR internships and industry-funded and industry-supervised HDR projects in 2024.
- Pursue excellence in Indigenous Research as outlined in RMIT's *Indigenous Research Plan 2023-2025* in furtherance of our strategic commitment to excellence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait research, creating positive Indigenous-led impact with integrity, and engaging meaningfully with, and for the benefit of, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This plan is currently an internal document that we are happy to share with Government for its review on request.

Over the longer term, our recently launched Decadal Aspirations outline how RMIT will strategically enable both the conduct of excellent research and the pathways to impact from excellent research.

Strategies to mitigate foreign interference

RMIT applies a risk-based approach to managing foreign interference threats by prioritising efforts on areas of highest exposure and acting in line with government guidelines. Key initiatives that relate to RMIT's activity in countering foreign interference and cyber security measures include:

- Due diligence assessments conducted by our International & Engagement and Research & Innovation portfolios.
- Robust policies (e.g. the Research Policy and Higher Degrees by Research Policy), procedures, systems and processes for all international partnerships and collaborations to ensure compliance with the range of national standards, codes and laws including the Defence Trade Controls Act, Australia's sanctions regimes, the *Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme Act 2018* and the Guidelines to Counter Foreign Interference in the Australian University sector.

Strategies for Engaging with Industry

RMIT maintains a very widespread range of industry partnerships and engagement, reflecting our founding mission and many decades of extensive, direct collaboration with industry in many sectors and jurisdictions.

Through the *Knowledge with Action* strategy, we are working to build on RMIT's reputation as a "go-to" partner for government and industry, especially for workforce solutions to meet skills needs in sectors facing high demand or disruption, activating key RMIT locations as platforms for solutions and scaleable partnerships meeting the needs of future urban communities and industry partnerships. We are also working to extend and activate RMIT's large and diverse alumni community.

RMIT will develop industry partnerships and activity through innovative hubs that align with and leverage RMIT's four strategic focus areas: Social Innovation, Smart Sustainable Cities, Emerging Technologies, and Regional (Asia Pacific) Collaboration.

RMIT will continue to advance the implementation of the City North Social Innovation Precinct and Innovation Spine through activation and engagement in partnership with the City of Melbourne and Victorian Government.

In 2024, RMIT will prioritise the development of effective collaborative approaches to building scaleable, industry-engaged partnerships to deliver for workforce skills and lifelong learning in Australia and Southeast Asia. This includes:

- Piloting higher apprenticeships in Systems Engineering co-designed with industry.
- Delivering innovative entry-level and leadership 'earn and learn' training at scale with social service sector employers.
- Developing additional shortform learning and micro-credentials co-designed with industry in areas including teaching, sustainability and digital skills.
- Expanding offerings to upskill mid-career workers at scale with the digital skills Australian businesses need.

RMIT will prioritise the expansion and mobilisation of our local and international alumni network by:

- Establishing an advisory board to test ideas, gather insights and develop an alumni engagement continuum to map movement throughout their journey.
- Increasing understanding of and ways to support the alumni community and strengthening our relationships with alumni in key markets.
- Introducing products that support alumni giving.
- Designing an alumni awards program.

Our aim for 2024 is to achieve a 3% increase in highly engaged alumni.

Asia Pacific

RMIT will continue to connect Australia with Vietnam and identify and deliver industry engaged projects through RMIT's strategic innovation funding.

RMIT will:

- Establish an RMIT Southeast Asia Community to support the growth and facilitation of new strategic partnerships with three communities established and operational in Southeast Asia, North Asia and South Asia.
- Further position RMIT as a key convenor, thought leader and contributor to Australia's relationship with Southeast Asia by partnering with the Australian Government to deliver the ASEAN Australia Special Summit in Melbourne.
- Launch RMIT's Singapore Country Commitment and renew our partnership with Singapore Institute of Management for a further five years to prioritise the acceleration of sustainable development in the Asia Pacific.

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

RMIT University

By

ALEXANDER (ALEC) JOHN CAMERON

Full name (please print)

VICE-CHANCELLOR AND PRESIDENT

Position



Signature

Date: 30 April 2024

In the presence of:

JASON VERACHARD NGAMSIRIVADHANA

Witness (please print)

SENIOR GOVERNANCE OFFICER

Position or profession of witness (please print)



Signature

Date: 30 April 2024