



2024 Mission-Based Compact Between the Commonwealth of Australia and UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

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

The University of South Australia's (UniSA) focus for 2024 is outlined in its strategic plan, [Enterprise25](#).

HOW WILL THIS BE ACHIEVED?

UniSA's [Academic Enterprise Plan 2021 -2025](#) is an integrated teaching and research plan of the strategic priorities, actions and projects that will deliver on the strategic objectives of *Enterprise25*. Oversight for implementation of the Plan rests with UniSA's Enterprise Leadership Team and a governance committee drawn from UniSA's academic and research management committees. This includes annual review processes to assess performance.

HOW WILL THIS BE MEASURED?

UniSA's corporate performance is monitored by University Council on a quarterly basis

NATIONAL AND SECTOR PRIORITIES

Workforce and skill needs

UniSA works closely with industry and both State and Federal Government, to offer programs of study and research projects that are informed by the needs of the community, commerce, and nation.

Ensuring Student and staff safety

UniSA provides extensive [student support services](#) including access and inclusion services, counselling, sexual assault and harassment reporting and assistance, career services, legal advice, student wellbeing and tailored support for cohorts such as international students, regional students, veterans and Aboriginal students. Staff [support services](#) are detailed on the [Wellbeing@UniSA](#) website. Further, a dedicated Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment (SASH) consultant has been employed; a Wellbeing Gateway app is in development; and Psychosocial Safety Framework has been implemented.

Countering foreign interference

- UniSA coordinates its legislative obligations with its accreditation as a Defence Industry Support Program University and has undertaken an externally commissioned threat assessment.
- Contract due diligence processes were reviewed in 2023 to take account of legislation covering modern slavery, foreign interference and influence, foreign arrangements and Defence trade controls and sanctions and conduct regular audits of these processes.

Cyber and data security

- UniSA undertook an internal audit of cyber-awareness in 2023 and has an annual cybersecurity training requirement for all staff, and security training for all clearance holders.
- UniSA's [Information Security Policy](#) ensures that UniSA's information systems are managed to ensure their integrity, security and availability.
- staff information pages cover [UN and Australian Autonomous Sanctions](#) and [Defence Export Controls](#) self-assessment process

Upholding freedom of speech and academic freedom

Following the Walker Review (2020), a range of measures were implemented by UniSA during the previous Compact period to ensure alignment with the Principles of the review and key Operations and Object of the Model Code.

A MISSION FOR THE FUTURE

During the period of the Compact, UniSA is working closely with the University of Adelaide (UoA) to create Australia's newest institution, [Adelaide University](#). Delivery is outlined in [the Feasibility Assessment](#) and a [vision statement](#) has been released. [Legislation](#) was passed in 2023 defining the mission of the new University and on 15 January 2024, an initial application was made to the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) to progress registration of the new University. A Transition Council has been established and commences as the governing body of Adelaide University on 8 March 2024, to oversee the strategic objectives of the new Adelaide University.

Strategies for Improving Equality of Opportunity in Higher Education

Through its Act of establishment, UniSA has responsibility for the provision of education to people who have experienced some form of educational disadvantage.

HOW WILL THIS BE ACHIEVED?

UniSA will continue to provide a range of services to enhance access and success for students from equity groups and has received a funding allocation for approximately 600 EFTSL under the Government's 20,000 additional university places commitment. UniSA's overarching equity strategy includes the following initiatives:

1. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander support and engagement

UniSA aims to be the University of Choice for Aboriginal People and has implemented a [range of strategies](#) to achieve this.

2. Regional and remote students

UniSA's Whyalla and Mount Gambier campuses are adjacent to TAFE SA campuses, providing articulation pathway opportunities. [Student counselling](#) is available at both campuses, [placement grants](#) are available for rural and remote students, together with support services as part of the [Regional Engagement Framework](#).

3. Students with disabilities

UniSA's [Disability Hub](#) provides and promotes disability-related information, procedures and services to the UniSA community. [Student access plans](#) help students to negotiate reasonable adjustments with University staff so they can study successfully at UniSA.

4. UniSA College

UniSA College provides access to higher education for those with low prior educational attainment, especially low-socio-economic status and regional students. These programs prepare students for university by building their study skills, discipline knowledge and confidence. [Introductory videos](#) give prospective students a taste of the programs offered through UniSA College.

5. Community outreach

UniSA's extensive secondary schools outreach program across metropolitan and regional South Australia combines on-campus visits for school students with outreach into schools through its [Services for Schools](#) programs. UniSA also provides prospective students with a range of [early career planning resources](#) both directly and in collaboration with secondary schools.

UniSA's community engagement activities include the provision of community clinics (health, law, psychology), through to [public lecture series](#), and several [galleries, museums and centres](#).

6. UniSA Online

UniSA Online (UO) provides a high-quality, flexible learning environment for 100% online students in any location with multiple term and entry pathways options. [Student support](#) is available seven days a week with extended hours and 24/7 technical support. This is attractive to a variety of learners including the high % of equity students who enrol in UO programs, including significant numbers of Aboriginal Students compared with on-campus programs.

HOW WILL THIS BE MEASURED?

As part of its Corporate KPIs, UniSA tracks the number of domestic students belonging to one or more of the following equity groups: Aboriginal, regional, remote, non-English speaking, low SES and disability.

HIGHER EDUCATION CONTINUITY GUARANTEE (HECG) FUNDING EQUITY PLAN

Based on 2024 budgeting, and dependent on enrolment actuals, UniSA estimates Maximum Basic Grant Amount (MBGA) surplus funding of around \$18m (depending on CGS enrolment actuals). Detailed information on the specific equity-related initiatives to be delivered with the HECG funding in 2024 and 2025 will be outlined in a HECG Equity Plan as required by the Department.

Strategies for Improving Teaching and Learning

UniSA's teaching and learning objectives and performance targets are set out in its [Academic Enterprise Plan 2021-2025 \(AEP\)](#). Key elements of the AEP, including how they will be achieved and measured, are summarised below.

HOW WILL THIS BE ACHIEVED?

University retention strategies

- UniSA provides ongoing [student support](#) including learning advice and study skills, individual access plans, career guidance, and counselling services. These support services are widely promoted through orientation days, online and on-campus notifications and via academic staff.
- UniSA's most recent Performance-based Funding submission provided an update on three key student success projects in 2020/2021: online delivery retention and success; supporting Aboriginal learners; and supporting other at-risk student cohorts.
- Revised academic review policy and processes (including revised success thresholds) have been introduced, accompanied by holistic advice and support communications which enable earlier identification of students at academic risk and proactive support services.

University admissions transparency

- UniSA's [Selection and Entry to Programs Policy](#) ensures transparent, fair and equitable processes for admission into UniSA. Separate policies cover the same for [Bachelor Honours Degree Programs](#) and [Research Degrees Admission and Enrolment](#).
- UniSA operates entry pathways for applicants from all educational backgrounds. UniSA's [Entry Pathways and Admissions Criteria](#) site highlights the expanding range of non-ATAR options available.
- UniSA meets its obligations under Admissions Transparency having fulfilled both Stage 1 and Stage 2 implementation requirements. UniSA's approach has been included in the TEQSA [Good Practice Note: Making higher education admissions transparent for prospective students](#).

Teaching Innovation

UniSA's [Teaching Innovation Unit](#) develops best practice in higher education and partners with academics and external stakeholders to design and deliver outstanding online and on-campus curricula using relevant, effective teaching practices, technologies and tools, underpinned by universal design for learning principles. The Unit offers a range of staff professional development and support in the

areas of teaching and learning practices, effective use of technology in curriculum delivery, assessment design, and academic integrity. The Unit leads a number of strategic University projects including the Authentic Assessment project (to prepare students for the workforce), and the Accessible and Engaging Curriculum project (to meet the needs of all learners). The Unit provides oversight of Academic Integrity via the Academic Integrity Strategy.

HOW WILL THIS BE MEASURED?

- UniSA's Enterprise Leadership Team will oversee the implementation of the AEP.
- Executive Deans are responsible for Academic Unit Plans which align with and contribute to the AEP.
- Student success and retention, including the impact of basis of admission, is systematically monitored through UniSA's corporate KPI process; and as part of the annual Curriculum Innovation Process (CIP). The CIP comprises annual, data-informed discussions with Academic Units aimed at enhancing student engagement and satisfaction, graduate outcomes, and teaching-research alignment.
- UniSA's corporate performance reporting process also measures graduate outcomes and employer satisfaction and benchmarks these against universities nationally.

Strategies for Improving Research, Research Training, and Innovation

UniSA's priorities for research and research training and innovation are set out in its [Academic Enterprise Plan 2021-2025 \(AEP\)](#). The strategies described below will create opportunities for UniSA staff and students to work with industry and with research leaders globally to solve real-world problems, develop work-ready graduates and help to drive research commercialisation and economic activity.

HOW WILL THIS BE ACHIEVED?

1. Project-based research degrees

A new approach to research degrees introduced by UniSA in 2021 sees students working on projects in collaboration with UniSA supervisors and industry or community partners across South Australia, Australia and abroad. (*AEP Strategic priority 3.2*). This approach also tracks project application rates and has undertaken big data analysis of expertise sought by employers in research-related jobs (university and non-university) to ensure that development supports social and economic growth and diversification.

2. Visiting research fellows

Since commencing in 2021, UniSA's Visiting Research Fellowship Scheme (VRFS) has hosted 64 funded fellows per annum, with 40 booked for 2024 so far, assisting in promoting and building on UniSA's research excellence. The scheme includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and both international and domestic researchers (*AEP Strategic priority 4.1*).

HOW WILL THIS BE MEASURED?

- Performance review framework for research institutes, centres and concentrations aligned with UniSA strategic priorities.
- UniSA's Corporate Performance Report (CPR) benchmarks UniSA's position relative to the sector on key research performance indicators including citation impact, research degree enrolments and completions, research commercialisation income, and research publications.
- External measures including ERA, E&I, university ranking methodologies (e.g. THE, ARWU), Research Block Grant funding and HERDC income.

Strategies for Engaging with Industry

1. Enterprise Hub / industry engagement

The [UniSA Enterprise Hub](#) launched in 2021 established a 'one stop' virtual and physical shopfront for industry, businesses and the community to engage with UniSA. It provides access to the full suite of University services including research, internships, graduates, and professional development by bringing partners together with UniSA researchers, educators and students on activities that solve real problems, drive progress and shape business and community prosperity. Additionally, the Enterprise Hub supports start-ups and entrepreneurs to develop and grow ideas, and help to unlock the commercial potential of research by bridging the gap between researchers, industry and investors.

A fully integrated Industry Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system which houses activities across 6500 partners supports both a single view of partners and importantly quickly refers partners to appropriate area in the university to achieve partner outcomes.

2. Industry engagement and enhancing labour market outcomes

- The Authentic Assessment Project ensures that student assessment is relevant to industry and validated against employer and professional requirements.
- The Work Integrated Learning (WIL) Project will accelerate UniSA's national leadership in career-ready education and extend WIL opportunities to coursework and research degree students.
- All Academic Units have external advisory groups to advise on curriculum and authentic assessment strategies, helping to ensure the professional relevance of our programs.
- The University's [Career Service](#) offers a unique Career Development Learning program to all students which has contributed to UniSA being ranked #1 in Australia for Employability, as ranked by industry (QLT Employer Satisfaction Survey 2020-22).

3. Work Integrated Learning (WIL) strategies

UniSA's new [WIL policy](#) recognises the value of WIL activities and commits to advancing the University's position as a national leader in career-ready education by building relationships with community organisations, industry, business and government to provide WIL opportunities to coursework and research degree students. UniSA provided over 15,000 WIL placements across 34 disciplines with 2,800 industry partners in 2023. Our target is to provide WIL experiences to all students (currently around 60%) to increase employability, produce career ready graduates, improve theory and practice integration and build valued enterprise skills to forge ahead on graduation.

Additionally industry-partnered and immersive learning strategies including HE Apprenticeship programs, Associate Degree in Engineering, SA Health Nursing and Midwifery clinical upskilling program, Community Clinics, Accenture Innovation Academy, Integrated Simulation activities to build skills and professional capabilities before entering the workplace, and new RSP Visual Effects immersive program, provide students the opportunity to apply skills learned in the classroom in real - world settings.

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
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

by

Professor David G. Lloyd

Full name (please print)

Vice Chancellor and President

Position



Signature

In the presence of:

Serelle Salangsang

Witness (please print)

Executive Assistant to the Vice Chancellor

Position or profession of witness (please print)



Signature