



2024 Mission-Based Compact Between the Commonwealth of Australia and University of Wollongong

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

UOW's goals for the Compact period, as outlined in our [2020-2025 Strategic Plan](#), are to:

- Empower students for their future;
- Create knowledge for a better world; and
- Make a difference for our communities.

We measure progress towards these goals using a comprehensive planning and reporting framework comprising 12 key performance indicators and supporting metrics, periodic deep-dive reports, and an integrated annual planning and evaluation process. Key outcomes have included improved student equity and success, increased opportunities and partnerships in the national interest, and stronger community connections.

UOW applies a three-horizons strategy framework, comprising our [2030 & Beyond Vision](#); the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan and the [Roadmap 2023-2025](#).

These efforts are supported through our Education, Research & Innovation, Engagement and Civic University strategic objectives: (<https://www.uow.edu.au/about/our-vision-strategy/#d.en.231246>). They are accompanied by our thematic strategies (<https://www.uow.edu.au/about/our-vision-strategy/#d.en.231251>). Our Strategy informs our specific Portfolio, Facility and Divisional strategic business plans.

In 2024, UOW will commence a new strategic planning cycle which will be informed by the Universities Accord and consultation with stakeholders.

Our key strategic priorities are aimed at enhancing UOW's role as an anchor institution in all communities where we have a presence, promoting greater Indigenous and equity participation optimising partnerships and commercialisation and addressing national priorities. Our [Multicampus Vision Statement](#) aims for a global network of vibrant, inclusive, sustainable and digitally-enabled campuses.

UOW is producing graduates in occupations that have been identified in the Skills Priority List. Our undergraduate degrees are delivering more nurses, clean energy leaders, teachers, and cyber security specialists. Our medical degree delivers graduates who are more likely to work in regional and rural Australia than any other university nationally. UOW delivers STEM courses to help grow the skilled workforce required to deliver the AUKUS nuclear-powered submarine pathway.

UOW's Cyber Security Strategy and Plan is aimed at ensuring a robust and secure infrastructure environment and architecture. With regards to foreign interference, UOW continues to educate staff and students, and notify prospective and existing international arrangements under Foreign Arrangements Risk Management Measures.

The management of personal and health information by the University is detailed in our [Privacy Policy](#) and [Privacy Management Plan](#).

Our governing legislation (the [University of Wollongong Act 1989 \(NSW\)](#)), [2020-2025 Strategic Plan](#), [University Code of Conduct](#), [Respect for Diversity Policy](#), [Student Conduct Rules](#), and [Campus Access and Order Rules](#) all safeguard and ensure that we adhere to [academic freedom](#) and the freedom of speech as defining values.

Our [University Code of Conduct](#) provides the right for all members of our university community to experience a safe and respectful environment. We have multiple prevention and response strategies and resources, including our Bullying Prevention Policy, Sexual Harm Policy, Anti-Semitism Policy and the Anti-Racism and Cultural Safety Policy. Our [Safe and Respectful Communities \(SARC\)](#) initiative is UOW's commitment to providing a safe and supportive environment for all members of its community. Through SARC, we provide crucial support including a 24-hour Student Wellbeing Support Line in partnership with Lifeline Direct, and a 24/7 academic support service for students in partnership with Studiosity.

Strategies for Improving Equality of Opportunity in Higher Education

UOW is strongly committed to equity and social justice and has a proud history of working closely with our communities to drive increased participation and attainment among underrepresented groups. The [UOW Enabling Framework for Student Equity 2021-2024](#) adopts a whole of institution approach to supporting students from underrepresented backgrounds.

UOW has invested in a new [Country to Coast scholarship scheme](#) to support students from regional and rural Australia. Our initiatives to attract more students from under-represented groups include pre-access and access programs with over 150 partner schools, [UOW Equity Scholarships](#) to address financial disadvantages, individualised learning success plans and career-readiness programs.

Our commitment to a student-centred, holistic, and inclusive approach is demonstrated through our new [Students as Trusted Partners Framework](#). The [Support for Students Policy](#) is a proactive and multi-faceted approach (encompassing both academic and non-academic elements) that responds to the diverse needs of students across UOW. This policy seeks to foster an inclusive and nurturing learning environment, promoting student success and wellbeing.

The principles of our Support for Students Policy are underpinned by the University's Student Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Framework, providing tailored support to priority equity groups including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students from regional, rural and remote areas, students from low socioeconomic backgrounds and students with a disability.

The framework outlines the University's ambition to reach population parity for these student cohorts and the key actions that will be undertaken by the University to achieve this.

Moreover, a data-informed approach is utilised to identify students potentially at risk of not progressing with their studies and to ensure effective monitoring is in place to support progression and completion of their studies.

Woolyungah Indigenous Centre provides support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students including the Indigenous Tailored Academic Program, student academic consultations, scholarships, tailored career advice and designated study and social areas. This has led to increased student retention rates overall as well as enrolments at UOW's Bega Valley and Eurobodalla campuses. Our [Reconciliation Action Plan \(RAP\) 2022-2024](#) supports students, staff and communities in gaining a deeper understanding around how to advance reconciliation.

Our regional campuses are critical to UOW's focus on driving student equity and access outcomes. By delivering world class education close to home, we are helping increase participation and attainment amongst underrepresented groups.

The University systematically collects and reports on student performance data in accordance with the [Procedure for Monitoring Comparative Student Outcomes](#). In addition, UOW monitors and reports on student progression, attrition and completion rates across cohorts and delivery locations and against external reference points.

UOW is dedicated to fostering an environment that enriches the university experience for students with disabilities, ensuring an atmosphere free from harassment and discrimination. UOW encourages timely disclosure and registration of disabilities with the Student Accessibility and Inclusion Team to optimise support as part of the [Disability Inclusion Network](#).

Our [Student Career Development & Employability Strategy and Plan](#) aims to lead in transformative employability initiatives, fostering a career-ready culture across UOW for lifelong learning and graduate success.

Strategies for Improving Teaching and Learning

A key aim of UOW's 2020-2025 Strategic Plan seeks to transform learning, teaching and student support to empower students for the future, meet workforce needs, and support our communities through lifelong learning. Our top strategic objective is to continue the digital transformation of our education provision.

Our Academic Integrity Advisory Group is exploring the implications of generative AI for our existing policy and practice. We are currently working with partners to support curriculum and assessment design and innovation in alignment with sector-wide development in technology-enhanced learning and artificial intelligence.

The retention rate for all commencing bachelor students is averaging around 83%, while the key strategic objectives under Goal 1 of our Strategic Plan to support student retention and graduate outcomes include:

- Increasing use of learning analytics to support student retention, measured through the percentage of student utilisation.
- Widening and deepening work-integrated learning (WIL), advanced through WIL rollout plan and measured via the percentage of subjects with WIL component.

- Enhancing student career preparedness, operationalised through the UOW Compass Personal Awareness Framework and measured by student self-awareness of employment preparedness.

Under our National Priorities and Industry Linkage Fund Pilot Plan 2022-2024, we aim to have all new courses and course reviews co-designed with industry. This plan commits to making improvements across priority areas of WIL, STEM and industry partnerships. The success of this will be demonstrated by the following measures:

- Number of students engaging in WIL and Career Development Learning (CDL);
- Number of subjects with enhanced WIL and CDL;
- Number of industry/community partners contributing to WIL activities; and
- Industry/community partners' experiences of these programs.

Key data sources for measurement include UOW subject and placement management systems, UOW student databases, UOW industry engagement register and targeted surveys.

UOW tailors and targets curricula content to align with future workforce needs. WIL and CDL are integrated in successful programs that are co-developed with our industry partners and career development specialists. Consideration is also given to other relevant strategic initiatives, e.g., the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and broader higher education strategies, including the Australian Universities Accord.

UOW's retention and re-engagement strategies include Peer Assisted Learning in identified subjects and Peer Success Coaching for students at risk of withdrawing, as well as mentoring and career development learning. Key metrics involve analysis of student participation rates, attrition rates, graduate employment rates, and percentage of subjects with learning analytics focused on the online learning environment.

The [Wollongong Academy for Tertiary Teaching and Learning Excellence \(WATTLE\)](#) is dedicated to providing teaching and learning recognition, development and dialogue. It currently has more than 200 Fellows at all levels and aims to create a community of practice where a diversity of expertise can be recognised and utilised to further teaching and learning at UOW.

The WIL Curriculum Classification Framework supports a University-wide approach for developing, mapping and reporting WIL. It offers a common language for WIL across disciplines and provides a tool to scaffold WIL experiences throughout degree programs. All WIL subjects are accurately classified for Federal Government reporting requirements.

Strategies for Improving Research, Research Training, and Innovation

The UOW 2020-2025 Strategic Plan incorporates a Research Strategy and an Engagement Strategy. Our university is committed to equipping higher degree research (HDR) supervisors with the resources and support necessary to foster the growth and success of HDR scholars. Our induction workshops for new supervisors and best practice workshops for experienced supervisors provide ongoing professional development opportunities for all supervisors, which help ensure that supervisors cultivate an environment of excellence and mentorship in graduate research.

UOW focuses on creating impactful research through industry collaborations, driving innovation and growth. Our research-driven approach cultivates highly skilled graduates who lead progress by adopting new technologies and fostering creativity.

Research objectives under Goal 2 of UOW's 2020-2025 Strategic Plan are:

- Maximising the potential of every researcher, including higher degree research (HDR) scholars;
- Promoting transdisciplinary and translational endeavours that foster excellence and deliver impactful outcomes;
- Focusing on thematic research strengths for greater investment, including recruitment, aligned with United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and addressing issues of sustainability;
- Increasing momentum and enhancing excellence and impact by aligning with the Academic Performance Framework and Research Performance Policy; and
- Optimising major research assets, data and infrastructure.

UOW is supporting our next generation of research leaders with best practice HDR training and support, and our Researcher Development Framework has core principles of:

- Encompassing all UOW researchers from graduate students to distinguished professors;
- Acknowledging that researching with integrity is integral; and
- Fostering good research citizenship/mentoring, along with influence/impact as vital components for excellent research scholarship.

UOW's Research Services Office assists UOW academics to achieve research excellence. Our team advise and support researchers across all aspects of research funding and administration, ethics and integrity, data and computing, demonstrating impact, research promotion, policy, guidelines and committees.

The [Innovation and Commercial Research Unit](#) (ICRU) enables UOW researchers to work on real-world challenges, build their career options and access additional funding sources. [iAccelerate](#) is a unique business accelerator and incubator program that is a pathway to accelerate innovation. iAccelerate has a significant regional footprint, delivering education and support programs beyond the Illawarra to regions including the South Coast and Southern Highlands and partners with four Aboriginal Land Councils. Since its inception, iAccelerate has delivered 1013 new jobs and supported close to 350 companies in total. This is underpinned by the \$10 million iAccelerate seed fund delivered through independent external investment manager Artesian.

Taking effect from January 2024, the Research Entity Framework Policy will help guide local connections, funding processes, accountability, strategic planning, role clarity and lifecycle of all research entities at UOW.

Strategies for Engaging with Industry

UOW has strong engagement with industry and government through the delivery of many commercial research and consulting projects. Industry engagement strategies and research commercialisation include co-investing with government and research partners in emerging and new industries. UOW's Pro Vice-Chancellor (Industry and Engagement) leads our industry engagement strategies and research commercialisation.

More than 150 companies and government institutions are engaged in commercial research with UOW. Commercial research focus areas are: power, energy and infrastructure; healthy living; biomedical science; future manufacturing; and social change and public policy.

Our priorities for even more effective industry engagement, collaboration and impact include:

- Developing strategies and mechanisms to grow capability and capacity for University impact, including positioning for the Australian Economic Accelerator;
- Reviewing our technology transfer capabilities and future needs;
- Aligning business development resources more closely with research priority areas; and
- Implementing programs that directly foster the growth of students and under-represented groups through the programs of iAccelerate.

UOW's Innovation and Commercial Research team (ICR) actively engages with industry and community, facilitating quality [industry research engagement](#) and research collaborations focused on real-world problem solving. This team assists with:

- industry/business and UOW research facilitation;
- commercial research contracts, tenders, grants and Centres for Research Collaboration (CRC);
- contract research agreements; and
- identification, protection and commercialisation of intellectual property and innovation.

UOW's [Advantage SME](#) program supports the formation of new industry partnerships with businesses, fostering industry connections to UOW's world-class research and helping to identify opportunities for collaboration. Generator Labs are facilitated workshops where we bring together University researchers, industry experts, and commercialisation advisers to tackle new innovation challenges together.

Helping to facilitate connections between external stakeholders and the University, UOW Local was launched in 2022 to build a deeper awareness of the scope of the University's activities and foster and maintain links with business and industry, and the community more broadly. The initiative bolsters UOW's role as an anchor institution in its regions and facilitates access to UOW's expertise and opportunities for collaboration on social endeavours.

UOW is an anchor partner of the NSW Cyber Academy alongside TAFE NSW and Deloitte. This apprenticeship-style program will fast track students' careers in the cyber security sector, by combining nationally recognised qualifications with on-the-job training and mentorship, and a three-year paid work placement. The education model and associated student learning outcomes for the academy are being designed with industry for industry.

UOW is uniquely positioned to drive innovation and cultivate the AUKUS workforce by providing cutting-edge research facilities, access to industry partnerships, and specialised education programs.

UOW's [Global Challenges Program](#) was relaunched in 2023 and is co-designed with community partners, aligned with UN SDGs. This brings together researchers from across faculties and schools to partner with community and business, working to solve problems that are of concern to the 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
UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

by

Professor Patricia M. Davidson

Full name (please print)

Vice-Chancellor and President

Position



Signature

In the presence of:

Stacey Thomas

Witness (please print)

Senior Executive Assistant

Position or profession of witness (please print)



Signature