



**2019 Mission Based Compact  
Between the Commonwealth of Australia and [THE UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME  
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**

The University of Notre Dame Australia (University or Notre Dame), as a Catholic University is committed to the provision of university education within the context of Catholic Faith and Values and the Catholic intellectual tradition. This includes a commitment to the constitution of Catholic Universities, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, and other Magisterial teachings of the Catholic Church.<sup>1</sup> As a Catholic University, Notre Dame is committed to being an academic community of scholars, which includes all staff and students, dedicated to truth and the common good, to human dignity and cultural heritage, to be of Christian inspiration, and to provide pastoral care to staff and students. The University has endeavoured to fulfil its mission over many years and this is evidenced by the excellent QILT results and five star ratings over many years. These rank the University among the top two in the country. At an institutional level these include:

1) 1st Nationally:

- a) Learner Engagement (2018 Student Experience Survey; postgraduate coursework)
- b) Skills Development (2018 Student Experience Survey; postgraduate coursework)
- c) Overall Employment (2018 Graduate Outcomes Survey; postgraduate coursework graduates)
- d) Adaptive Skills (2018 Employer Satisfaction Survey)

2) 2nd Nationally

- a) Overall Quality of Educational Experience (2018 Student Experience Survey; undergraduate)
- b) Learner Engagement (2018 Student Experience Survey; undergraduate)
- c) Skills Development (2018 Student Experience Survey; undergraduate)
- d) Teaching Quality (2018 Student Experience Survey; postgraduate coursework)
- e) Student Support (2018 Student Experience Survey; postgraduate coursework)
- f) Overall Satisfaction (2018 Graduate Outcomes Survey; undergraduate graduates)
- g) Skills Scale (2018 Graduate Outcomes Survey; undergraduate graduates)
- h) Medium Term Full-Time Employment (2019 Graduate Outcomes Survey- Longitudinal; undergraduate)
- i) Medium Term Overall Employment (2019 Graduate Outcomes Survey- Longitudinal; undergraduate)

<sup>1</sup> See: *Canonical Statutes of the University*,

[https://www.notredame.edu.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/2071/canonicals.pdf](https://www.notredame.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0010/2071/canonicals.pdf)

Notre Dame's aspirations for the period of this compact, as set out in its *Strategic Plan 2018 – 2021* are to:

- Ensure that it continues to be an authentically Catholic community in all that it does;
- Pursue excellence in all that it does, with particular reference to and emphasis on teaching, scholarship and research;
- Play an active role in the local, national and international community; and
- Ensure that in all of its undertakings it seeks, promotes and exercises progressive, sustainable and responsible stewardship.

The University of Notre Dame Australia - Strategic Plan 2018 - 2021 (Strategic Plan)

Key features of the Strategic Plan include:

- fostering in staff and students an appreciation of the richness of the Catholic Intellectual Tradition, its historical impact on society and its relevance as a living tradition for the world today and in the future;
- ensuring that the educational experience provided to students, equips them with a liberal arts foundation, theoretical knowledge and disciplinary expertise as well as professional skills and attributes which will empower them to realise their potential and serve the community through active participation, engagement and reflection;
- undertaking excellent, high-impact scholarship and research that is aligned to the University's Objects and mission and which will make a positive contribution to local, national and international communities;
- ensuring, both independently and in partnership with others, that the University makes an active and positive contribution to the wellbeing of Australia and the Australian community; and
- growing sustainably and providing facilities, infrastructure and resources which will enable the University to achieve its mission and vision.

The University has spent considerable time and effort considering and responding to the French Review Report of the Independent Review of Freedom of Speech in Australian Higher Education Providers considered by the Hon Mr Robert French AC. One of the key recommendations was that universities adopt a Model Code on Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom (Model Code). Notre Dame has formed a working party to consider the Model Code and to review its current academic freedom statement frameworks. The Model Code has been submitted to the University's Academic Council, as requested by the Minister for Education, and is being considered in detail. Notre Dame will be adopting the principles of the Model Code, while taking into account its own regulatory and governance framework. This new statement on freedom of speech would be an adaption of the proposed Model Code that arose out of the French review.

**TEACHING AND LEARNING**

In keeping with the Objects of the University, Notre Dame strives for excellence in all things 'learning and teaching'. The University's Learning and Teaching Strategic Plan (2019–2021) affirms and develops the four strategic goals of the University's Strategic Plan 2018–2021, with a specific focus on 'Strategic Goal 2: Pursuing excellence in academic endeavours' and supports the University's commitment to meeting the requirements of the Higher Education Standards Framework (2015).

The three areas of focus in the Learning and Teaching Plan (2019–2021) are:

- 1) Excellence in Learning
- 2) Excellence in Teaching
- 3) Excellence in Curriculum and Programs

Additional key strategies to ensure quality in teaching and learning over the term of this compact include:

- 1) Formation of an Academic Standards and Policy Committee to provide advice and recommendations on:
  - a) the quality of, and current standards in, teaching, scholarship and research;
  - b) emerging risks and actions relating to academic quality and standards;
  - c) effectiveness and adequacy of the academic policy framework; and
  - d) effectiveness of academic quality governance and management processes.
- 2) Investigating student needs and requirements for learning spaces with the aim of making improvements which support and further enhance the learning experience.
- 3) Fine-tuning program and course approval processes to ensure that the profile and curriculum are cognisant with employment focus areas and professions of the future.
- 4) Continued emphasis on the student experience through enhancement of work integrated learning, internships and networking opportunities across Notre Dame's programs to foster curricula that support authentic learning and positive employability outcomes.
- 5) Utilisation of the University Department of Rural Health collaboration hosted on the Broome Campus (Majorlin Kimberley Centre for Remote Health and Rural Medical programs) to promote rural areas as desired employment locations.
- 6) Improving the use of analytics, outcomes of cyclical review, interim monitoring and professional accreditation to underpin curriculum reform and pedagogy.
- 7) Continuing to build a strong culture of safety and respect within the University community and learning environments through the bolstering of student health and wellbeing policies, procedures and services.

<https://www.notredame.edu.au/about/learning-and-teaching-at-notre-dame>

The University of Notre Dame Australia - Learning and Teaching Office Strategic Plan 2018 - 2020

#### **UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS TRANSPARENCY**

The University is committed to an admissions process that is underpinned by respect for the dignity of the individual and pastoral care and support for all. Whilst ATAR is the predominant method of determining offers in public universities, Notre Dame takes a more holistic view, focussing on:

- 1) Each applicant as an individual;
- 2) A broad-based assessment of suitability, including academic and non-academic achievements, and the applicant's strengths, attributes and experience; and
- 3) An applicant's capacity to complete their preferred program and to become a contributing member of the Notre Dame community.

The University has eligibility requirements to be considered for admission to all Programs. These specify the minimum thresholds required and are published on the University's website and other relevant publications. Minimum requirements include:

- 1) English language proficiency;
- 2) Minimum academic requirements for the program;
- 3) Other Program-specific requirements; and
- 4) Non-academic requirements.

An interview with an academic staff member is an important part of the process. Not all eligible applicants are offered an interview nor will all those interviewed be offered a place in a Program.

Academic achievement for entry to undergraduate programs is assessed using any of the following measures depending on the requirements of the specific Program:

- 1) Higher Education qualifications or study;
- 2) Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank (ATAR) or equivalent;
- 3) Final Year 11 or mid-Year 12 school results or equivalent;
- 4) An Indicative ATAR calculated from school mid-year Year 12 results;

- 5) International Baccalaureate;
- 6) International qualifications;
- 7) Special Tertiary Admissions Test (STAT);
- 8) Completion of a VET or a non-award qualification; and
- 9) Relevant professional and work experience.

Applicants to postgraduate degrees are also required to demonstrate prior learning and industry experience relevant to the program, and applicants to a postgraduate degree by research are also required to:

- 1) Undertake initial research into the proposed research area;
- 2) Submit an initial research proposal; and
- 3) Identify potential academic supervisors.

Notre Dame has ensured transparency of its admissions processes and information for prospective students by:

- 1) Publishing admissions criteria relevant to students annually on the University website and in hard copy guides;
- 2) Ensuring all new required definitions and terminology have been incorporated into the website and guides;
- 3) Publishing basis of admission data for the previous intake of students (Semester 1) annually on the University website and in the specified templates;
- 4) Publishing ATAR data (min, median and max) annually where it was used as the basis of admission decision for more than 5 students in the program on the University website; and
- 5) Publishing data annually on the National Platform (*Course Seeker* website).

***What evaluation strategies are in place for ensuring that students admitted without an ATAR are likely to succeed in their studies?***

The majority of students enter the University without reference to their ATAR (0% enter on the basis of ATAR alone and 8.7% enter on the basis of ATAR + other criteria).

Reporting is undertaken annually in all Schools, managed by the University's Quality Management Office (QMO), and reported to the Executive and Academic Council. It includes student completion, retention and success rates, and includes data at a School and program level. This provides a formal and systematic approach to:

- 1) Enhancing responsiveness to issues of academic quality and student experience; and
- 2) Ongoing course relevance and viability.

Notre Dame monitors its progress in HEIMS and QILT data, which allows benchmarking against the sector. The University has also evaluated the entire admissions process in parallel to the work being undertaken by the Higher Education Admissions Transparency Implementation Working Group, to ensure that it is responsive to the needs of Schools and students, is appropriate to drive the ambitions and principles espoused within the *Policy – Admissions* and for ensuring that requirements for admission are likely to enable student success.

<https://www.notredame.edu.au/about/notre-dame/student-profile-data-tables>

[https://www.notredame.edu.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0027/59634/Policy-Admissions.pdf](https://www.notredame.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0027/59634/Policy-Admissions.pdf)

[https://www.notredame.edu.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0026/59633/Procedure-Admission-to-Higher-Ed-VET-and-Enabling-Programs.pdf](https://www.notredame.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0026/59633/Procedure-Admission-to-Higher-Ed-VET-and-Enabling-Programs.pdf)

**UNIVERSITY RETENTION STRATEGIES**

The University is distinct in its provision of pastoral care to all students and its commitment to providing an environment that is conducive to the development of the whole human person.

The Notre Dame Student Success and Retention Strategy provides a framework to positively influence retention, completion and success for all students across our three campuses by:

- 1) Ensuring we attract and enrol students who will thrive at the University;
- 2) Welcoming students into the University community, celebrating diversity and promoting inclusion;
- 3) Creating a community of care and support through the provision of high quality, coordinated and accessible support services;
- 4) Engaging students with vibrant learning environments that inspire academic excellence, innovation and creativity;
- 5) Ensuring retention strategies are informed by data; and
- 6) Supporting students in their transition to work or further study.

During the period of this Compact, the University will be focusing on:

- 1) Implementation of the comprehensive and well-coordinated institutional approach to supporting first year students, known as the 'First Year Experience (FYE) framework.
- 2) Reviewing and benchmarking the Entry Interview for all students.
- 3) Providing opportunities for students who have withdrawn or ceased participation in their studies to re-engage.
- 4) Ensuring that all areas of the University have access to data analysis for the development and adoption of evidence based strategies to meet agreed retention benchmarks.

#### **RESEARCH AND RESEARCH TRAINING AND INNOVATION**

Throughout the period of this Compact, the University will be focused on undertaking excellent, high-impact scholarship and research that is aligned to the University's Objects and mission and will make a positive contribution to local, national and international communities. Specific means of achieving this are detailed in the University's Research Strategic Plan (2018 – 2021). The key strategic focus areas are:

- a) Building research capacity and capability;
- b) Continued improvement in research quality, and
- c) Strengthening Research Engagement and Impact.

Specific measures and progress indicators are detailed in the Research Strategic Plan at this link: <https://www.notredame.edu.au/research/research-at-notre-dame/about-us>

Key amongst the institutional strategies includes:

- a) Appointment of world class researchers in target broad research areas to enhance the achievement of "At World Standard" or better in at least these areas by the next Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) Assessment (2023); and
- b) Appointment of specific expertise in research data analysis and acquisition of cutting-edge research data analytics software tools.

Particular research training strategies include:

- a) Strengthening of Higher Degree by Research (HDR) scholarship schemes, particularly the Commonwealth Research Training Program (RTP) scholarships;
- b) Introduction of an "Industry-linked PhD scholarship Program" in 2019. This is a scheme that is co-funded by the University and an industry partner;
- c) Inclusion of industry partners in supervisory teams and recruitment of HDR candidates from industry; and
- d) Strengthening of supervisor training and HDR research and professional skills training.

Particular strategies to encourage research translation and commercialisation include:

- a) Design of high-quality research projects together with local, national and international industry and community partners;
- b) Awarding of "Industry-linked Early Career Researcher (ECR) Fellowships" in 2018 and 2019. This is a three year, university/industry co-funded scheme, which has resulted in the appointment of three ECR Fellows to date;

- c) Provision of an enabling environment for conducting research that will have an impact including acquisition of tools and skills that will ensure the capture of impact. This includes access to a variety of workshops and training delivered through the University or in collaboration with other Universities and partners. For example, in 2019 Industry Engagement and Research Impact workshops were conducted at the University, and two teams participated in the CSIRO OnPrime program. In addition the University's internal Research Incentive Scheme, now includes rewards for the demonstration of research engagement and research impact with industry partners and research end-users; and
- d) Establishment of a 'Strategic Research Advisory Board' in 2019. The function of the Board is to provide high level strategic recommendations to the University on matters related to research and industry engagement. The Board includes Industry partner members which make up 40% of the total membership.

Strategies to promote open access include:

- a) Researcher Development training workshops;
- b) Web based instructional materials and guides for researchers focusing on publishing, including Open Access (e.g. Open Access guide, Alumni guide);
- c) Institutional Repository access to open access versions of University research outputs;
- d) Publication of four Open Access academic journals using the Institutional Repository;
- e) Ability to specifically search for and discover Open Access resources via a Library resources search filter (Summon Open Access filter);
- f) Commitment to underwrite open access research publication (e.g. Knowledge Unlatched, The Conversation); and
- g) Open Access Week promotional activities.

## EQUITY

Notre Dame is strongly committed to improving participation rates and outcomes for students from under-represented groups, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, low socio economic students, students with a disability, and students from remote and regional areas. Key strategies over this time period (over and above the unique admissions process of the University and the 'person-centred' approach of the University) include:

- Continued support for Notre Dame's Broome Campus (which exists as a campus of reconciliation) and is the only major higher educational presence in the North West of Western Australia;
- The continued offering of alternate pathways for entry, including VET courses (Broome Campus) and Enabling Programs (all campuses);
- The provision of additional and on-going academic and general support for all students (particularly those from non-traditional backgrounds, including those on bridging visas for humanitarian reasons and veterans) throughout their studies and access to dedicated mentoring programs and scholarships;
- Access and Inclusion Offices on all campuses, providing individualised assistance and support to all students with disabilities (including the oversight of adjustments where required and the establishment of tailored scholarships);
- Increasing promotion and numbers of dedicated scholarships for low SES students who have experienced financial or other hurdles;
- Increasing focus and attention on attracting, supporting and retaining Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students through:
  - Specific orientation, support and mentoring programs;
  - Dedicated pathways into Medical programs;
  - Specific scholarships;
  - Dedicated tutorial assistance;

o Aboriginal Student Support Officer roles.

Notre Dame's support programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are detailed in its ISSP Institutional Performance Report. Enrolment, progression and outcomes data for this cohort indicates growing Indigenous student enrolments, increased access to academic and financial support, and increasing completions (both in terms of total graduations as well as time to completion of studies).

An increased focus on these student support programs is complemented by Notre Dame's *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy*, which prioritises, amongst other things, cultural awareness training for all staff of the university, with the aim of building a culturally safe environment for students and staff alike.

See the below webpages for further information programs that support Indigenous students and the student community more broadly.

[https://www.notredame.edu.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0019/80083/Indigenous-Student-Success-Program-ISSP-Performance-Report-2018.pdf](https://www.notredame.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0019/80083/Indigenous-Student-Success-Program-ISSP-Performance-Report-2018.pdf)

[https://www.notredame.edu.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0014/50180/Aboriginal-and-Torres-Strait-Islander-Employment-Strategy-2019-21.pdf](https://www.notredame.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0014/50180/Aboriginal-and-Torres-Strait-Islander-Employment-Strategy-2019-21.pdf)

<https://www.notredame.edu.au/current-students/support/indigenous-portal>

<https://www.notredame.edu.au/community/student-wellbeing-and-support>

## LABOUR MARKET OUTCOMES

One of the Objects of the University is 'training for the professions'. To ensure that all educational programs offered at Notre Dame remain contemporary to the needs of the workforce the following strategies are employed:

- all academic Schools have external advisory boards with members from the relevant professions and industries;
- many discreet programs have specific program advisory boards;
- where available, all programs are accredited by the external professional body; and
- many of the academics employed at Notre Dame maintain their professional practice and industry engagement.

This professional / industry engagement informs curriculum and practice (including addressing skills gaps) from the development of a program, through delivery and importantly as an integral part in cyclic program review and update of program offerings.

Example: To address the shortage of Maths teachers in NSW schools, Notre Dame, in consultation with representatives from a number of school regions, developed a suite of postgraduate programs for already qualified teachers. These programs are now being delivered at a number of workplaces around Sydney and at times that suit the cohort and fit between the NSW School Terms. These programs will be delivered across the state in the coming years.

<https://www.notredame.edu.au/programs/sydney/school-of-arts-and-sciences/postgraduate/graduate-certificate-in-mathematics>

Notre Dame is committed to training for the professions and to producing work ready graduates. Student applicants are interviewed by academics delivering the program, which allows the opportunity to explore the suitability of the program and career to each applicant. Prior to enrolling in the program Notre Dame students not only know the demands of the course but the prospects of employment and career progression. This is one of the contributing factors to Notre Dame's high student retention rate.

Strategies to produce work ready graduates that industry need and to increase the number of students undertaking at least one workplace internship/ experience from 96% (current) include,

- every program at Notre Dame has Work Integrated Learning embedded within course structures;
- all students have the opportunity to undertake meaningful workplace experience or internship during their studies;
- designated internship coordinators within each school to find or assist with finding and coordinating placements;
- expand the industry placements available with local industry and partner service providers;
- continue providing and expanding the industry placement opportunities at the national and international level (e.g. Medicine placements in the Kimberley WA; regional and rural Nursing placements; international internships in Sweden and China (Education) and Vietnam (Nursing); and
- provide more than the professional/industry minimum of practical experience (where possible) - e.g., Bachelor of Nursing minimum hours 800 – Notre Dame minimum 1026 hours.

These workplace experiences ensure attainment of necessary graduate skills and enhance graduate employability, which is reflected in graduate employment rates (90.7% of Notre Dame's undergraduate graduates and 96.3% of postgraduate graduates were in overall employment, 91.2% of Notre Dame's Nursing undergraduate graduates were in overall employment (2018 Graduate Outcomes Survey)).

Notre Dame offers support for students to access coordinated advice on study abroad, internships, careers, industry and community engagement and leadership and volunteering opportunities and programs.

Every student at Notre Dame undertakes a three-course Core Curriculum focused on ethics, philosophy and theology. This introducing them to the liberal arts and teaches the students to think, question and reason age-old problems and contemporary issues. Students from any discipline or program are brought together to bring different perspectives and experiences. This distinctive education produces graduates that have honed collaborative and relational skills as well as theoretical and technical skills.

<https://www.notredame.edu.au/current-students/support/student-services/sydney/beyond-the-books>

<https://www.notredame.edu.au/study/core-curriculum>

<https://www2.deloitte.com/au/en/pages/media-releases/articles/work-human-australia-faces-major-skills-crisis-120619.html>

## SECURITY MEASURES

Notre Dame is committed to protecting the information of the University, its staff, students, researchers and partners.

**Key action** undertaken by the University to ensure the safety of data against cyber-attack include, but are not limited to:

- Developing and implementing the University's broader Cyber and Information Security Strategy;
- Ongoing security assessments and testing of our networks and systems;
- Increasing the defences of our infrastructure;
- increasing awareness of Students and Staff in cyber and information security; and
- Addressing known and emerging security vulnerabilities including by upgrading critical support infrastructure and services.

**Key Mitigations** in place to identify and respond to a breach of security include, but are not limited to:

- Continued and ongoing development and uplift in our internal Information Security capabilities;



- Ongoing review and refinement to the existing suite of Information Security Policies and practices that align with the University's operations and with industry good practice (e.g. ISO270001, NIST); and
- Ongoing engagement with the other Universities through the Council of Australasian University Directors of Information Technology (CAUDIT), their Community of Practices (CoP) for Cyber Security, and their strategic partners, including ACSC, AusCERT, AARNet and REANNZ.

The Australian Cyber Security Centre's guides are a key framework for guiding the University approach to Information security.

The University is aware of and complies with its obligations to counter foreign interference. While the size and current scope of our operations cause the University to assess its current risk of foreign interference is low to medium we are in the process of developing principles based guidelines to counter foreign interference with a particular focus on cyber security and the area of international students. The University in collaboration with Universities Australia welcomes the implementation of the University Foreign Interference Taskforce and will collaboratively work with the Government in this space.

SIGNED for and on behalf of  
THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA  
by

Dom Faulstich  
Full name (please print)

CAOUS MANAGER  
Position

of the Department of Education as delegate of  
the Minister for Education.

[Signature]  
Signature

23/12/19  
Date

In the presence of:

Drew Menzies-McVey  
Witness (please print)

Branch Manager  
Position or profession of witness (please print)

[Signature]  
Signature

SIGNED for and on behalf of

UNIVERSITY

Peter Mantel  
Full name (please print)

Acting Vice Chancellor  
Position

[Signature]  
Signature

In the presence of:

Justine Taylor  
Witness (please print)

Executive Officer  
Position or profession of witness (please print)

[Signature]  
Signature