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Australian Government
Department of Education,
Skills and Employment

2021-2023 MISSION BASED COMPACT BETWEEN THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA AND FEDERATION 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

Federation University's *Strategic Plan 2021-2025* outlines our ambition to be Australia's leading regional university. Our University and TAFE provide integrated lifelong learning, skills, and impactful research enabling people and communities to prosper locally, regionally, and globally.

Our key priorities for 2021-2023 are outlined below.

Strengthening university-industry collaboration

Federation is number one in Victoria for graduate employment and starting salary¹, achieved due to our leadership in industry collaboration and award-winning programs offering paid internships.

To further enhance our learner experience, we will implement a 'co-operative' model where every learner has an extended work experience, together with the industry certifications and skills needed by employers. By 2023, our aim is for 80% of programs to include opportunities for extended workplace learning.

Research commercialisation

Our *Research and Innovation Plan 2019–2023* reinforces our commitment to quality research and impactful partnerships, delivering economic and social transformation for regional Australia and beyond. Our objectives include embedding a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship to support research commercialisation (see Research Opportunities, below).

A community-embedded university

Our future-focused campuses integrate our [Technology Parks](#), enabling Federation to work with employers to co-design and deliver education in areas of skills demand, leading to high value employment. We will prioritise the revitalisation of our campuses through our University Town campus master plans to create vibrant regions and opportunities for community integration in

¹ [Good Universities Guide Rankings, 2021](#)

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university spaces. A key focus will be Ballarat University Town, including the [Business Centre for Excellence](#) and Watson Internet of Things (IoT) centre.

FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Federation University strongly values principles of academic freedom and freedom of speech as set out in the Model Code and fully supports the Commonwealth Government's commitment to ensuring that those principles are embedded in Australian higher education institutions.

On 16 March 2021, the University adopted the University Chancellors Council (June 2019) version of the Model Code in full as our [Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech Policy 2021](#). The policy came into operation immediately upon Council's approval. In May 2021 the University was assessed by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment as being 'fully aligned' with the Model Code.

The University's Academic Procedure (the Procedure) is currently under review, to ensure that it is fully aligned with the Policy. This review is part of a larger review, which commenced in April 2021, of the University's governance structure, statutes, delegations, policies, procedures, standing orders and delegations. Other policies and procedures have been updated to link to the Policy.

All University staff were invited to attend a workshop in April 2021 to discuss and debate a range of hypothetical scenarios involving issues of academic freedom and freedom of speech. More than 60 members of academic and general staff participated. The outcomes of that workshop are informing the current revision of the Procedure.

IMPROVING TEACHING AND LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR AUSTRALIAN STUDENTS

Learning and teaching plan

The Federation *2022-2024 Learning and Teaching Plan* (in development) aims to improve learning and teaching outcomes through:

1. Enhancing digital and blended capability
2. Measurable curriculum quality assurance
3. Indigenous, global, and inclusive curriculum enhancements
4. Co-operative learning
5. Digital education partnerships.

Each pillar will be underpinned by clear deliverables and targets.

Program renewal

The Program Renewal project will reimagine Federation's offerings and delivery. Features include strong industry collaboration through extended work experience opportunities, where students are employed whilst learning (co-operative model). New technology will enable programs to be offered via cross-campus technology enabled teaching (the Connected Classroom). The project aims to have new offerings and delivery modes ready by 2023.

The project will support learners to enhance employability, work skills and social capital. Key measurables for labour market outcomes will include improved employability and increased number

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of graduate start-ups (measured through the Graduate Outcomes Survey, QILT, Good Universities Guide).

Student retention and success

Our Student Retention Strategy focuses on fostering a growth mindset among learners, scaffolded academic skills development, personalised student interventions and targeted support. The [Federation Advantage](#) program will continue to support retention and completion by fostering students' graduate employability skills, demonstrated through digital credentials.

We continue to offer comprehensive mental [health support](#) and resilience programs, including proactive training and self-development, mental health first aid, and 24/7 crisis [counselling](#).

The University also continues to ensure that we meet the [admissions](#) transparency requirements and regularly publishes admissions information for its programs and cohorts.

RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST

Research Commercialisation

Federation's strong industry partnerships support the research commercialisation ambitions of the Commonwealth.

[Watson IoT Centre](#) will be the Asia Pacific hub for big data in modelling AI transformation of future business. Focusing on critical infrastructure (including cybersecurity), digital health and agile supply chains, the centre will use big data to develop expandable and transferable future enterprise models.

[Ararat Jobs & Technology Precinct](#) will co-locate the city's economic development team with Federation researchers. IoT and advanced manufacturing principles will automate processes, embedding high value and sustainable regional businesses. This transferable model links applied research to regional economic growth.

[Morwell Innovation Centre](#) will provide opportunities for businesses to co-locate around a multi-national tenant and offer a research incubator solving R&D barriers for local businesses in Gippsland, leading to investment in new business or products.

Success measures will include contribution to local, state and national GDP, new employment, HDR training opportunities and category 2 and 3 funding. 34% of our HDR students are currently funded/co-supervised by industry, meaning we are leading Victoria and number four in Australia. We aim to increase this to 50% using the government industry linkage parameter and >50% of HERDC reportable income from government/industry/university partnerships.

Foreign interference and security

We have audited our foreign agreements and submitted these to DFAT. Our team structure for foreign interference is established. Our [Foreign Arrangements Notification Procedure](#) and [Research Export Controls Policy](#) are published online.

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Our Internet Commerce Security Laboratory works with IBM to mitigate against new security threats. Future solutions will be delivered through the Watson IoT Centre.

IMPROVING STUDENT EQUALITY AND OUTCOMES

Federation is number one in Australia for First-Generation Student Enrolments, and number one in Victoria for Social Equity and Student Support.² Our key priorities for supporting students are outlined below.

Tailored, focused and timely support based on data analytics

Support will be digitally enabled across the student lifecycle, utilising learner profiles including background demographics and experiences to drive targeted support and communications. Student feedback and QILT surveys will inform interventions to support under-represented groups.

The [Aboriginal Education Centre](#) (AEC) continues to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Initiatives include identifying culturally safe spaces outside each campus, the Student Recruitment and Retention Taskforce, and development of a Cultural Inclusion, Safety and Immersion Strategy.

Growth mindset and strength-based programs

Programs will support learners throughout their studies in:

- Identifying their academic and professional goals
- Maintaining motivation
- Building wellbeing and resilience capability.

Student as partners will co-design student engagement, support and retention initiatives.

Graduate employability and skills

Extended work experience offerings will enhance employability, work skills and social capital. Under-represented student cohorts will have opportunities to build long-lasting relationships with employers, industry, and communities.

The University Specialist Employment partnership offers a free program to support students with a disability to attain employment relevant to their qualification.

The effectiveness of these measures will be conducted by quantitative and qualitative criteria, including student experience, retention and completions, progress and GPA, graduate outcomes, skills development, as well as long-term socio-economic impact of increasing number of tertiary-educated graduates from disadvantaged groups.

² [Good Universities Guide Rankings, 2021](#)

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**SIGNED for and on behalf of
THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA**

In the presence of:

by

Dom English

Ryan Kinder

Full name (please print)

Witness (please print)

First Assistant Secretary

A/g Director

Position

Position or profession of witness (please print)

**of the Department of Education, Skills and
Employment as delegate of the Minister for
Education and Youth**

Signature

Signature

28/12/2021

Date

**SIGNED for and on behalf of
FEDERATION UNIVERSITY AUSTRALIA**

In the presence of:

by

Professor Duncan Bentley

Megan Tucker

Full name (please print)

Witness (please print)

Vice-Chancellor and President

Senior Advisor to the Vice-Chancellor

Position

Position or profession of witness (please print)



Signature

Signature