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Australian Government

Department of Education,
Skills and Employment

2021-2023 MISSION BASED COMPACT BETWEEN THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA AND QUEENSLAND UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

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

1. Grow and focus our research capacity in QUT research centres

QUT will continue the targeted investment of effort and resources in clearly defined areas of research performance and potential, through our recently implemented three-tiered research centre structure, to further advance QUT's established standing as a leading global research institution. This investment will see the continued growth of our annual HERD-C research income through 2023 and beyond.

Further information: [Research strengths](#); [Our facilities and partnering](#)

2. Reform curriculum to integrate real world connections and boost cross-domain capabilities

QUT is continuing to reform its undergraduate curriculum structure and content:

- To embed more integrally industry-exposed engagement opportunities, such as placements, work-integrated learning, instruction by visiting industry practitioners, etc.; and
- To facilitate learning pathways that encourage students to acquire essential skills and insights from disciplines beyond their majors, giving them an edge in the workforce as better-rounded, more agile and adaptable graduates with a diverse suite of transferable capabilities.

Measured by the proportion of units incorporating industry engagement; proportion of students engaged in cross-domain learning.

3. Reinforce organisational sustainability

QUT will strengthen and diversify our revenue base while delivering an average underlying margin of greater than 3% over the triennium to support the achievement of its strategic objectives and ensure the financial sustainability of the University. These objectives will be realised through a considered investment in our current strengths and priorities and further strengthened with operational consolidation of education and research and streamlining professional services. QUT will continue to enhance its capacity to respond with speed and agility to enable the pursuit of emerging opportunities.

FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND ACADEMIC FREEDOM

At its meeting of 10 December 2020, QUT Council considered the recommendations of the Walker Review on the Adoption of the Model Code on Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom, noting its assessment that QUT was not fully aligned with the intent of the Model Code, and Professor Walker's primary suggestion, "that universities should adopt a single, overarching code or policy dealing with freedom of speech and academic freedom." Council commissioned the development of a single, unified, overarching policy setting out the University's position on academic freedom and freedom of speech.

Staff and students were consulted, making numerous beneficial suggestions, and reference was made to the University of Queensland's *Model Code for the Protection of Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom*, in light of Professor Walker's assessment that UQ is fully aligned with the Model Code.

That policy, [*A/1.7 Protection of academic freedom and freedom of speech*](#), was adopted by Council at its meeting of 25 February 2021. QUT holds that the policy now aligns closely to the University Chancellors' Committee (UCC) Model Code, in both structure and the wording of principles and definitions. QUT is advised that the Commonwealth Department of Education assesses the policy as 'mostly aligned' with the Model Code.

The policy allocates roles and responsibilities and specifies the related documents that together constitute a comprehensive policy framework that defines the rights and responsibilities of staff, students, visitors, and the University itself in relation to protection of academic freedom and freedom of speech.

IMPROVING TEACHING AND LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR AUSTRALIAN STUDENTS

1. Embed Industry Engagement

QUT aims to maintain sector-leading industry engagement for our undergraduate domestic students with the aim of ensuring at least 90% of undergraduate students have a work integrated learning (WIL) experience upon graduation. This will be measured by monitoring the percentage of students who graduate having undertaken WIL at some point throughout their bachelor degree studies.

Further information: [*Work integrated learning*](#); [*WIL & international internships*](#); [*Indigenous Cadetship*](#)

2. Improve undergraduate commencing domestic retention by 1%

QUT aims to improve its domestic undergraduate commencing retention by 1% by employing overarching student support strategies complemented by specific approaches to create parity among various equity groups. Overall retention will be monitored as well as specific sub-group outcomes to determine the effectiveness of different strategies and approaches. QUT is making more units and support services available flexibly to provide students with choice and provide more opportunities to arrange their studies around their work and life commitments. This extends to regional and remote students who are studying with QUT at higher rates.

Further information: [*Enabling student success*](#); [*Peer mentoring and support*](#); [*Maths, science and IT support*](#); [*language and learning skills*](#); [*Progress monitoring and outreach*](#); [*Orientation and transition to university*](#); [*student life and development*](#);

3. Ensuring on campus experiences to match student demands

QUT will continue to operate under the COVID-19 Pandemic Response Plan which details our approach to learning and teaching that is consistent with the relevant level of restrictions in place by the Government and health departments. Subject to these restrictions, QUT aims to ensure that at least 90% of relevant undergraduate units have on-campus learning activities to provide certainty and continuity to students who choose to come to campus. This will be measured through an internal annual review of unit delivery modes.

Further information: [COVID-19 Information for staff](#); [COVID-19 Information for students](#); [COVID-19 advice for the QUT community](#)

Other links: [Mental Health](#); [Wellness Matters Program](#)

4. Admissions Transparency

QUT regularly reviews admission policies, procedures, and protocols to ensure compliance with the Commonwealth's Admission Transparency Guidelines. QUT has implemented the standardised presentation of admissions information and the common admissions terminology. Institution and course specific information is available in the national admissions information system CourseSeeker, and QUT regularly updates admissions website information to ensure undergraduate applicants can find good quality information that allows them to make informed study choices.

RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST

1. Grow QUT's research performance and standing by delivering high-quality research

outcomes that can be translated into real world impact. To achieve this QUT will continue to invest strategically in:

- Research centres based on [research strengths](#) – QUT provides centres with financial support and has refined reporting processes to review centres' research performance
- Support packages for ARC/NHMRC fellows and Industry co-funded appointments to attract and retain outstanding researchers
- Research infrastructure and facilities aligned with our research strengths
- End-user driven research through University Research Centres, Centres of Excellence, Cooperative Research Centres, Industry Transformation Training Centres and Research Hubs
- Research collaborations, knowledge transfer and commercialisation, supported by the Office of Industry Engagement.

2. Promote equity and diversity in research through:

- QUT has introduced the Ignite Scheme to support high quality Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research
- Development of a program, including scholarships, to support QUT Indigenous PhD students to completion and increase the number of Indigenous academics
- Grant schemes to assist women Early and Mid-Career Researchers to enhance their research expertise and track records
- The Gender Equity and Diversity in STEMM Committee which will progress University actions to support gender equity and diversity in STEMM.

3. Provide high quality research training and produce job ready graduates by:

- offering HDR scholarships aligned with research strengths
- increasing HDR end-user engagement experiences through industry internships, placements, industry-funded projects and external supervision

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- establishing new joint PhD programs with quality international partner institutions.

Other:

- Established processes and tools to address foreign interference obligations and report on foreign arrangements including collaborative research projects.

IMPROVING STUDENT EQUALITY AND OUTCOMES

QUT's *Blueprint 6* 'aspiration and inclusion' priority includes support for students from under-represented backgrounds:

Indigenous Australian and Torres Strait Islander students

- QUT's [Oodgeroo Unit](#) supports Indigenous Australians by providing admission pathways, orientation programs, academic support, pastoral care, and facilities that are culturally supportive and responsive to their needs.
 - Measured via improvements in Indigenous Australian students' participation, retention, success, and completion rates.

Equity and regional and remote students

- A large [Equity Scholarships Scheme](#) with approximately 2,500 scholarships awarded annually to students with financial hardship and complex life circumstances. Disadvantage based on relocating from a regional/remote location is taken into consideration. Other forms of [financial support](#) include emergency bursaries, work integrated learning bursaries, and a loans scheme.
 - These retention strategies are measured via recipient numbers, retention levels, and through an annual student survey.

Widening Participation

- [Widening participation](#) outreach to school students and potential adult learners from low SES, Indigenous Australian, and/or regional/remote backgrounds. A comprehensive program of activities aims to build awareness of available tertiary education and career opportunities; build aspiration for tertiary study; increase motivation, engagement and achievement; and build awareness of available financial assistance. QUT partners with schools in the Moreton Bay region and is collaborating with regional universities to develop partnerships with regional school communities. Strategies to increase the retention and success of equity group students include resources and reasonable adjustments for [students with a disability](#), [academic support](#), [language and learning support](#), [maths, science and IT support](#), and [career development](#). This program engages with over 20,000 students each year.
 - This program is measured via student and staff surveys; case studies; and QTAC admissions data with the aim of increasing the number of school students who attend QUT (physically or remotely) and study our high-quality course offerings from these target demographics and geographical locations.

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SIGNED for and on behalf of

In the presence of:

THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

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

In the presence of:

Queensland University of Technology

by

Professor Margaret Sheil

Kym Woods

Full name (please print)

Witness (please print)

Vice-Chancellor and President

Executive Assistant

Position

Position or profession of witness (please print)

Signature

Signature