

# OFFICIAL



**Australian Government**

**Department of Education,  
Skills and Employment**

## **2021-2023 MISSION BASED COMPACT BETWEEN THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA AND UNIVERSITY OF DIVINITY**

### **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. Growing in Partnership**

Divinity aims to deliver its [Vision and Mission](#) in engagement, bringing skills and wisdom to address the issues of the contemporary world especially building resilience, social cohesion and the ethical frameworks for a just and inclusive society. Divinity is resourced by over 30 partnerships with churches, religious orders and faith-based agencies and aims to expand this network to grow delivery of its Vision and Mission and to improve the sustainability of education and research in theology, philosophy and ministry across Australia. Key outcomes include: a) add 3 new Colleges by 2023; b) establish 5 new partnerships by 2023; c) delivery of the [Strategic Plan](#), especially pillar 1 Education and pillar 2 Research (see below).

#### **2. COVID-19 Recovery**

Divinity aims to support social, spiritual and economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic especially in Australia. Key outcomes include: a) delivery of new educational programs in Spiritual Care, Counselling, and Professional Supervision (2022); b) new revenue streams to improve sustainability and reduce dependence on the University's partners; c) deepening relationships with governments to address skills and workforce needs.

#### **3. Campus Development**

Divinity established a new long-term home campus in 2021 and aims to maximise use of this facility by 2023. Key outcomes include: a) bringing tenants and partners on site to create critical mass in theological education and research; b) redevelopment of the University's business model to support increased property costs; c) engaging with local community and Indigenous elders.

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### FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND ACADEMIC FREEDOM

The University Council resolved to implement the Model Code through creation of a standalone policy on academic freedom, aligned to its Code of Conduct. The Walker Review found that as at 9 December 2020, the University of Divinity “will be aligned if the draft policy is implemented”. The [Academic Freedom Policy](#) was approved by the University Council on 7 October 2020. In January 2021 Minister Tehan’s office confirmed that Divinity is fully aligned with the Model Code.

In 2021 Divinity will conduct a series of internal conversations about academic freedom and religious freedom, to be followed in 2022 by a series of public seminars and conversations about the interrelationship of these topics with contemporary liberal democratic ideals in a pluralist society, which balances individual freedom of speech with pursuit of the common good. This project aims to build capacity within the University and to make a contribution to wider society.

IMPROVING TEACHING AND LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR AUSTRALIAN STUDENTS

The University's [Strategic Plan](#) section 1 "Education" delivers outcomes for students, employers and endusers building on the University's outstanding record in learner engagement and student satisfaction. The three key performance targets are:

**Goal 1.1: New Awards for New Markets** By 2025 four new awards are established attracting new student cohorts and serving employer and stakeholder needs.

Milestones: 2 new awards established (2021), 1 new award established (2022), 1 new award established (2023)

Measures of success: Divinity enrolments grow by 20% (2023), average student age decreases by 5 years (2023)

**Goal 1.3: Student and Industry Accountability** By 2025 Divinity wide engagement system with internal and external accountability ensures offerings are student- and industry- focussed and tested

Milestones: Student feedback forums established (2021), 2 new accreditation relationships established (2022), 2 new industry relationships established (2022)

Measures of success: Every award of the University is accountable to students, employers and endusers through annual reporting cycles which drive continuous improvement.

**Goal 1.4: Contemporary Pedagogy** By 2025 Divinity's educational delivery is agile and flexible, adapted to contemporary needs and opportunities

Milestones: Maximise student opportunities for onsite learning (subject to public health directives) and ensure all students are able to study online if onsite learning is prohibited (2021); Complete analysis of shift to online learning (2021); finalise approach to online and blended delivery (2022)

Measures of success: Divinity has a distinctive framework for teaching and learning which is visible across all educational delivery.

**Other measures**

[Admission numbers](#)

[Labour market outcomes strategy](#)

[Mental health strategy](#)

[Student retention strategy](#)

**RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST**

The University's [Strategic Plan](#) section 2 "Research" aims to renew Divinity's research performance. The three key performance targets are:

**Goal 2.1 Research Performance** By 2025 quality and quantity of research output increases, aligned to Divinity's unique Vision and Mission.

Milestones: Research assessment tool established (2021), Resource allocation model established (2022), Research active benchmark for staff increased (2023)

Measures of success: Divinity's research active requirements comparable to sector (2022); All Colleges have research active staff (2022), maintain "world standard" or higher on ERA in FOR 22 (2023)

**Goal 2.2 Research Themes** By 2025 there are clearly articulated research strengths which generate quality outcomes, advance knowledge, transform practice, and deliver the Vision and Mission

Milestones: Internal Large Grants established (2021), Research Themes finalised (2022), Outcomes of Large Grants analysed and further programs developed (2022)

Measures of success: 3 Research Themes established as whole-of-University collaborative projects (2022); 5 external competitive grant applications submitted to funding bodies (2023); Increase in competitive and engagement income above 2020 levels (2023)

**Goal 2.3 School of Graduate Research** By 2025 the SGR provides internationally recognised research training opportunities to HDRs and ECRs.

Milestones: SGR established (2021), Scholarship strategy implemented (2022), Internship scheme for PhD candidates implemented (2022), Improvement of student and supervisor training programs completed (2023)

Measures of success: Number of PhD candidates grows by 20% (2023); funded scholarships grow by 20% in \$ terms (2023); 20% of PhD students are undertaking industry internships (2023).

**Other: Research Commercialisation Activity**

Divinity conducts niche research of indirect commercial benefit that improves outcomes for Australian society. Commercial benefit is achieved through value-adding to the commercial services provided by industry partners.

Measures of success: By 2025 20% of applied research results in value-added outcomes for products produced by industry partners, to be tracked through EI measures.

**Other: Foreign Interference**

Divinity's research activities are confined to philosophy and theology and as such present negligible risk of foreign interference. In 2022 the University will conduct a self-review of compliance obligations to mitigate against foreign interference. The University's cybersecurity framework is subject to annual review to ensure currency.

IMPROVING STUDENT EQUALITY AND OUTCOMES

**1. School of Indigenous Studies:** In 2021 Divinity [will establish a School of Indigenous Studies](#) with two Indigenous staff under goal 5.1 of the [Strategic Plan](#). The School's objectives include providing culturally appropriate support and curriculum for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, developing Indigenous theological research, and ensuring Divinity is a place of flourishing for Indigenous students. This includes delivering cultural awareness training for all staff and students, integrating Indigenous scholarship into all courses, and strengthening relationships with Indigenous communities. Deliverables: Constitution of SIS approved by University Council (2021); measurable objectives and an implementation plan have been developed by the School's Committee in 2022 for delivery by 2025.

**2. Disability Support:** In 2021 and 2022 Divinity will implement wide-ranging recommendations from an external review of the University's accessibility by and support for students with a disability. Deliverables: Working group reports to the Academic Board against the recommendations (2022); implementation completed (2023).

**3. Gender Equity:** Theology and ministry have historically been dominated by men often to the exclusion of women. Goal 5.2 of the [Strategic Plan](#) is that "By 2025 the University is a centre of excellence for feminist theological scholarship and a leader in gender justice in the theological sector". This goal includes research and research training opportunities for women, to improve the gender balance in the theological sector, and to provide role models and mentoring programs to encourage female students. Deliverables: Mentoring program established for HDRs and ECRs (2022); Gender diversity targets established with implementation plans (2022).

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SIGNED for and on behalf of  
THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

In the presence of:

by

Dom English

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Ryan Kinder

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Full name (please print)

Witness (please print)

First Assistant Secretary

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A/g Director

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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

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Date

SIGNED for and on behalf of  
University of Divinity

In the presence of:

by

**Peter David Sherlock**

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**Anjali Esther Antoniotti**

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Full name (please print)

Witness (please print)

**Vice-Chancellor**

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**University Secretary**

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Position

Position or profession of witness (please print)



Signature

Signature