

# OFFICIAL



**Australian Government**

**Department of Education,  
Skills and Employment**

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

### **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**

Rapid financial recovery from the prolonged impacts of COVID-19, including effective organisational sustainability, will be critical for the University to achieve its academic aspirations and position for success. Through [Advancing Melbourne 2030](#), the University has reaffirmed its commitment towards benefiting society through the transformative impact of education and research. Performance measures are still in development. Core academic directions the University seeks to address over the compact period include:

**1. A connected community of scholarship with students at the heart of the University with a focus on curriculum, student experience, and equity and diversity**

- Enhancing student life and wellbeing.
- Innovation in curriculum.
- Domestic student equity and diversity program.
- *Measured through student experience and satisfaction, uptake of curriculum redesign, and increased enrolments of under-represented student cohorts.*

**2. A catalyst for invention and innovation and driving economic growth**

- Powerful contributions to Australia's physical, environmental and social wellbeing with a focus on global health, climate change, and arts and culture.
- *Measured through research impact in health and climate change, and implementation of the [cultural commons](#) strategy.*

**3. Creating and harnessing high-value industry and university community partnerships, grounded in the University's place and precincts**

- Further developing the University's value and strength of convening power through leveraging [Melbourne Connect](#), the Global Experiences Hub, [The Reconciliation Action Plan](#), [Melbourne Biomedical Precinct](#) and activation of the [Science Gallery](#).
- *Evidenced through research income, student and partner satisfaction measures.*

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### FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND ACADEMIC FREEDOM

On 16 June 2021, the University was notified by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment that its policies are now 'fully aligned' to the Model Code. This reflects the University's response to the Walker Review around the need for (i) the inclusion of students in the University's Academic Freedom of Expression Policy, (ii) an explicit reference to the freedom of association for students and staff, (iii) less 'evaluative judgements' in related University policies and (iv) a single policy covering Freedom of Speech. Specific actions included:

1. Amending the definition of 'scholars' in the [Freedom of Speech Policy \(MPF 1342\)](#) to include students. Walker noted that the definition in the Freedom of Speech Policy applies, by inference, to the Academic Freedom of Expression Policy.
2. Adding a new Section 4.4 to the Freedom of Speech Policy to explicitly recognise freedom of association for students and staff.
3. Noting that the [Academic Freedom of Expression Policy \(MPF1224\)](#) is unable to be amended at this time due to restrictions in the University's Enterprise Bargaining Agreement. In addition, noting that appropriate policy settings and processes are in place such that any policy provisions allowing administrative discretion or judgment must be exercised in accordance with the University's Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom of Expression Policy.
4. Not ruling out, once amendments to the Academic Freedom of Expression Policy are permitted, establishing a single policy covering the two distinct concepts of freedom of speech and academic freedom.

## IMPROVING TEACHING AND LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR AUSTRALIAN STUDENTS

The University continues to implement the signature initiatives of the [Student Life Strategy](#), to ensure that our [campuses remain the vibrant heart](#) of our learning and teaching delivery. Key priorities for 2021 – 2023 include:

### 1. Finalising the implementation of the Student Life Strategy

- Delivery of first year discovery subjects, third year capstone subjects, the Melbourne Plus program to recognise co-curricular capabilities (aligned with 21<sup>st</sup> century skills), and an integrated program of peer mentoring, academic advising and alumni/industry mentoring for undergraduate students.
- *Measured through improved student experience and satisfaction, and annual increases in the uptake of peer mentoring, academic advising and mentoring.*

### 2. Formulation of a new Student Wellbeing and Mental Health Framework

- Ensuring the University continues to strive to be a wellbeing-supporting community, building resilience and delivering appropriate services to students as required.
- *Measured through the completion and implementation of the new Student Wellbeing and Mental Health Framework.*

### 3. Growing industry-aligned delivery of learning and teaching

- Enhanced experiential learning opportunities, consistent with the University's NPILF response, within the undergraduate and graduate curriculum.
- Development of small, flexible, industry-partnered Melbourne [MicroCerts](#) for lifelong learners, highly relevant to the needs of Australia's workforce.
- *Measured through proportionate increases in domestic enrolments undertaking work-integrated learning experience subjects, and growth in the number of industry-partnered Melbourne MicroCerts.*

## RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST

The effects of COVID-19 have fallen disproportionately on early career researchers and staff with caring responsibilities. The University's immediate focus is on supporting these researchers and securing the pipeline of research talent for Australia. Key priorities for 2021-23 include:

### 1. Driving research excellence

- Through performance expectations at faculty and discipline levels, calibrated against career stage, disciplinary norms and relative to opportunity considerations.
- Implementation of a framework to develop skills and capabilities for Graduate Researchers, supported by the recently established Researcher Development Unit.
- *Measured through annual academic performance and triennial review processes, Graduate Research cohort satisfaction and outcomes.*

### 2. Advancing a renewed emphasis on all areas of research translation and commercialisation

- Realising the benefits through targeted investment, enhanced cross-disciplinary partnerships through our [interdisciplinary institutes](#) and initiatives such as [Melbourne Climate Futures](#), major new and developing precincts such as [Melbourne Connect](#), [Fishermans Bend](#), the [Melbourne Biomedical Precinct](#) (including the [Australian Institute of Infectious Disease](#)), and increased focus on industry partnerships such as Illumina and CSL and research commercialisation.
- *Measured by research income, with a particular focus on HERDC Category 2-4, IP disclosures and enabling internal investment.*

### 3. Enhancing the identification and management of research-related risks and practices

- Advancing compliance processes and system enhancements under the Foreign Interference and Transparency Scheme, and for the Foreign Arrangements Scheme, and engagement with Government on the refresh of UFIT guidelines.
- Systems enhancements to monitor potential risks to cyber security will continue to be refined.

## IMPROVING STUDENT EQUALITY AND OUTCOMES

In addition to the University's existing suite of access and equity initiatives, key priorities for 2021-23 include:

### 1. Expanding the admissions criteria for the successful [Access Melbourne program](#)

- Focussing on highly under-represented schools, lowering the guaranteed minimum ATARs for students in equity groups, and introducing 'Access Melbourne Plus' to consider new criteria beyond ATAR in admissions selection.
- *Measured through increased enrolments of Indigenous, low SES, and regional and remote students through Access Melbourne.*

### 2. Establishment of new outreach programs

- Delivery of the innovative new [Science Gallery](#) programs (and the [STEM Centre of Excellence](#) partnership with the Victorian Department of Education and Training), which encourages young people to connect to world-class scientific research, interdisciplinary artistic practice and innovative teaching, targeting 15-25 year olds including from backgrounds under-represented in STEM.
- *Measured through increases in the number of students from equity backgrounds who participate in Science Gallery programs, annual increases in University students who complete subjects with embedded Science Gallery curriculum activity, and qualitative evaluation by student participants.*

### 3. Growing our program and support offerings for students from Indigenous, low SES, regional and remote backgrounds

- Growing the [Diploma in General Studies](#), the [Bachelor of Arts \(Extended\)](#), [Bachelor of Science \(Extended\)](#) and the [Professional Certificate in Indigenous Research for Indigenous postgraduate research students](#). Alongside the implementation of [The Reconciliation Action Plan](#) which continues a suite of offerings aimed at supporting all current and prospective Indigenous students.
- *Measured through increased enrolments through the targeted program (mentioned above) and increased uptake of the range of support offerings offered through implementation of The Reconciliation Action Plan.*

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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

Date 28/12/21

SIGNED for and on behalf of  
THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

In the presence of:

By

Duncan Maskell

Carol Boles

Full name (please print)

Witness (please print)

**Vice-Chancellor**

**Executive Assistant**

Position

Position or profession of witness (please print)



Signature

Signature