



**2017 Mission Based Compact
Between the Commonwealth of Australia and La Trobe 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 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 which includes that year.

MISSION

The purpose of La Trobe University outlined in the **La Trobe University Act, 2009**:

'To serve the community of Victoria for the purposes of higher education, for the education, economic, social and cultural benefit of Victorians and for wider Australian and international communities... providing access to quality higher education to those from disadvantaged communities.'

Since its foundation La Trobe University has sought to be different. Created to broaden higher education participation across Victoria, La Trobe combines accessibility with world class research that makes a difference to some of the world's most pressing problems. We are one of Australia's most successful universities in pursuing these multiple missions.

La Trobe is a place where social inclusion and globally recognised excellence come together for the benefit of our students and our communities. While pursuing this distinctive path, we remain committed to benchmarking ourselves against national and international standards. Accordingly, La Trobe is one of the top three universities in Victoria, one of the top 12 nationally and one of the top 500 internationally.

Future Ready: La Trobe University Strategic Plan 2013-2017 was formally approved by Council in late 2012, and refreshed in mid-2015. This Plan sets out clear priorities for the achievement of the University's vision and areas of focus for 2017.

Strategic Focus Areas for 2017

Future Ready sets out four pillars which provide the focus for our activity across Learning and Teaching, Research, Communities and Campuses and Supporting Strategies:

- **Outstanding student experience:** La Trobe students will have an outstanding experience, from first enquiry through to employment and beyond. Prospective students choose us because we are at the centre of important social, economic, environmental, political and scientific developments; because we partner in their learning; because we are flexible and innovative in our modes of delivery; because of our technology and facilities; and because our staff and systems offer seamless support.
- **Student employability:** La Trobe students develop the high level professional skills and attributes they require to thrive in the world of work. The structure of our curriculum, our research based teaching, and our external partnerships with local employers and industry enable our students to develop the high level professional skills and attributes they require. This assists them to find satisfying employment on graduation, or pursue business and social enterprise opportunities.
- **Research excellence:** La Trobe is globally recognised for its excellence, creativity and innovation in relation to the big issues of our time. We are among the best in the world in our chosen areas of research focus, and we attract outstanding research partners to work with us.
- **Brilliant basics:** We provide innovative, streamlined and effective academic and professional services that support high quality learning, teaching and research and continually enhance our campus life.

The Four Pillars directly contribute to lively and engaged campuses and communities and outstanding student experience and student employability; and are fundamental to our commitment to excellence in learning and teaching, and research. Achieving brilliant basics is the standard we set for our academic and professional services.

La Trobe remains committed to improving education attainment for communities across its campus network. To support the economic transition of these communities there is a pressing need to improve the skills base. The end of automotive manufacturing in Melbourne's north, and shift towards automation and advanced technologies in the agricultural sector are just some of the contextual factors driving increasing demand for higher education.

In providing opportunities to participate in higher education, La Trobe aligns its curriculum and support services with student learning needs and has success rates that are consistently above state and national averages. La Trobe is committed to improving graduate employment outcomes through alignment of curriculum with industry need; innovation in program design and delivery; and better support for students in transition to the labour market.

La Trobe has existing strengths in end-user driven research and collaborates with partners and stakeholders to drive economic growth and development in communities across its campus network. La Trobe is committed to excellence in traditional research output, but also to ensuring that our research delivers benefits to the broader community.

INNOVATION

Strategies and objectives for innovation

- La Trobe aims to equip researchers, graduates and students with the capacity to innovate and skills needed to succeed in the new economy.
- La Trobe aims to support researchers and graduates in translating discoveries and ideas into new products and services through business incubator and accelerator programs.
- La Trobe aims to collaborate with industry to promote innovation and economic development.

Strategies to encourage research translation and commercialisation, including collaboration and engagement with industry and other end users

- La Trobe's Research Focus Areas prioritise investment in areas of research strength and provide clarity to industry and other end users about its research capabilities.
- La Trobe has adopted Easy Access IP to promote the sharing intellectual property and to make it easier for universities and industry to work together.
- La Trobe Consulting, within the Industry Engagement Portfolio, provides researchers with the tools, templates and support they need to provide consulting services, allowing to local, national and international organisations and businesses to access and leverage La Trobe's research knowledge and expertise.
- La Trobe recently launched the 'La Trobe Accelerator Program' to help grow an entrepreneurial culture and ecosystem within La Trobe's regional and urban catchment areas. The Program will help convert good ideas into viable businesses by providing structured workshops and training, along with access to co-working spaces, offices, mentoring, and research expertise. The Program is supported by the Victorian Government, and will have a strong presence at La Trobe's regional campuses in Albury-Wodonga, Bendigo, Mildura and Shepparton.
- La Trobe Research and Development Parks are the largest wholly University owned and managed network of technology parks in Australia. They provide accommodation and facilities for the promotion and support of commercial science and technology research and development. We will use the La Trobe Research and Development Park to house key industry partners and help drive the innovation ecosystem in Melbourne's north and build lasting collaborations.
- La Trobe is developing an innovation talent pipeline by including content on innovation and entrepreneurship in every degree and embedding industry linkages in the doctoral training program.
- La Trobe has established two strategic innovation funds, including one in partnership with our major partner, Optus. These funds will help create spinout companies, support proof of concept studies and invest in the businesses that are

created from within in our Accelerator Program. Our Strategic Innovation Funds will further our ability to translate research into economic and social impact.

Strategies to promote open access to research publications and data

- La Trobe's Research Online serves as an Institutional Repository that preserves, promotes and provides worldwide access to publications, theses and research data of university researchers.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Objectives/priorities for teaching and learning

- La Trobe aims to provide a distinctive education that makes a difference to students, and the communities and world in which they live.
- The simultaneous pursuit of excellence and inclusiveness is what sets La Trobe apart from other universities.
- La Trobe's curriculum, teaching, external partnerships and support services ensure students have an outstanding experience and are able to find satisfying employment on graduation.

Strategies to ensure quality in teaching and learning

- La Trobe offers a distinctive educational experience through the integrated elements of the La Trobe Framework. The La Trobe Framework embeds content on innovation and entrepreneurship, sustainability thinking and global citizenship in every degree. The La Trobe Framework provides enhanced opportunities for students to be involved in research and optimises employability through more opportunities for experiential and workplace learning.
- La Trobe utilises innovative approaches to educational delivery that are based on sound pedagogy and enhance effective student learning. The roll out of a Digital Learning Strategy now sees the majority of La Trobe subjects offered in blended delivery mode, improving flexibility for students whilst maintaining the face to face interactions that are critical to student's success and engagement.
- La Trobe is committed to providing students with the skills necessary to succeed in the labour market. The Digital Literacies Framework provides an example of innovative practice that inculcates the attitudes and capabilities that staff and students need in a digitally-connected world.
- La Trobe is committed to increasing educational attainment across its campus network, ensuring that entry standards are maintained and students are effectively supported to succeed. The La Trobe Aspire Program has proven successful in identifying high potential students across a range of disadvantaged communities. The Success and Retention Strategy ensures an institution-wide focus on student success that encompasses curriculum design, learning analytics, employability and student/staff partnerships.
- La Trobe continues to invest in the development of a University culture which values, recognises and rewards high-quality teaching. La Trobe celebrates and recognises good teachers and good teaching. La Trobe invests significantly in the capabilities of its staff, through professional development and leadership programs. La Trobe is providing additional opportunities for effective teachers to take on teaching focused roles.
- La Trobe's pursuit of globally recognised excellence involves internationalisation of University teaching and learning. All students are exposed to internationalisation through embedding global citizenship within every degree program. La Trobe aims to have 20% of students participating in international mobility programs. La Trobe enrolls a high proportion of international students. La Trobe provides a learning environment that leverages the diversity present across student cohorts to build cultural literacy and competencies.

Additional information on La Trobe's strategies to ensure quality in teaching and learning can be found at:

- [Learning and Teaching Plan - 2013-2017](#)
- [Internationalisation Plan - 2014-2017](#)
- [Digital Learning Strategy - 2015-2017](#)
- [Success and Retention Strategy - 2016](#)

RESEARCH AND RESEARCH TRAINING

Strategies to ensure excellence in research and the strengthening of research capability

- La Trobe is improving research quality and impact through focusing investment in areas of strength through Research Focus Areas (RFAs) and Disciplinary Research Programs (DRPs).
- La Trobe's Research Focus Areas (RFAs) build on existing and potential strengths and world class infrastructure:
 - Securing Food, Water and the Environment
 - Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation
 - Understanding Disease
 - Building Healthy Communities
 - Transforming Human Societies
- La Trobe progresses the quality and impact of its research through strategically relevant research partnerships and effective engagement with industry. Exemplars of La Trobe's approach include AgriBio and Optus:
 - AgriBio is one of Australia's premier biosciences facilities and serves as an exemplar of a high-impact University-industry partnership that protects and supports Victoria's A\$11.8 billion agricultural sector.
 - La Trobe's partnership with Optus applies research capability around big data and cyber security to the research and skills needs of a large telecommunications company.
- La Trobe Research and Development Parks provide accommodation and facilities for the promotion and support of commercial science and technology research and development.
- La Trobe cultivates a pipeline of research talent through a high quality research training program. Through the Graduate Research School, La Trobe supports a vibrant community of research for our graduate research students, their supervisors and early career researchers.

Strategies for the provision of high quality research training, including measures to encourage PhD industry placements

- La Trobe is home to about 1,000 higher degree research students who are an important part of our research effort and valued members of our community.
- The Graduate Research School supports higher degree research students and supervisors by providing training, streamlined administrative processes and coursework programs to enrich students' learning and improve their career prospects.
- The University continues to develop and expand its international research engagement, including a particular emphasis on the recruitment of the very best international research students.
- The Graduate Research School supports and assists La Trobe graduate researchers and academic staff to adopt quality research practices, effective engagement strategies and strong linkages to industry.
- La Trobe offers three streams of industry engagement activity for graduate researchers that include:
 - Industry internships where graduate researchers work within industry on well-defined problems. This is undertaken in partnership with the Australian Mathematical Sciences Institute.
 - Industry mentoring where graduate researchers are linked in with senior industry professionals. This is undertaken in partnership with Industry Mentoring Network in STEM.
 - The La Trobe Industry PhD: This program is tailored to provide candidates with extensive industry experience through collaboration with an industry organisations. The PhD candidate conducts research on a topic relevant for the industry partner and completes a 2-year industry placement with that organisation. The candidate is under academic supervision by La Trobe, and under industry supervision by the industry partner throughout the program.

Additional information on La Trobe's strategies to ensure excellence in research and provide high quality research training can be found at:

- [Research Plan - 2013 – 2017](#)

EQUITY

Strategies for improving Indigenous outcomes and related targets for the term of this compact

- 'Gamagoen Yarrbat: Indigenous Education Strategy 2015 – 2017' creates a whole of university approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education both for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students at La Trobe.
- Gamagoen Yarrbat revolves around five distinct domains of Students, University Alignment, Indigenous Employment, Knowledge/Research and Community Engagement. Actions, success indicators and accountabilities, are identified for each domain.
- The Office of Indigenous Strategy and Education, provides leadership on Indigenous issues and to improve access, participation, success and employment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at La Trobe.
- La Trobe is closely linked with the Koori (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or Indigenous) populations in Melbourne and regional Victoria, with campuses located in the midst of large Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
- La Trobe is a Victorian and national leader in the support of Koori education pathways and the Koori Academy of Excellence in Melbourne's north.
- The Wominjeka La Trobe module (meaning Welcome to La Trobe) is a compulsory online subject which introduces all commencing La Trobe students to Indigenous Australian history, culture and customs. The subject links Indigenous knowledge and values and the broader graduate capabilities around cultural literacy.
- La Trobe is also committed to teaching, learning and research within the area of Indigenous Australian studies.

Strategies for achieving equity for low socio-economic students and students from other equity groups.

La Trobe has a range of strategies in place for improving student equity:

- Increasing participation and achievement of under-represented students through equity scholarships targeted to low SES, regional, Indigenous, disability, and students from refugee backgrounds;
- Expanding the University's outreach programs, including delivering the School Partnerships Program to more schools and to lower year levels, where appropriate;
- School outreach and partnerships programs that include raising interest and capability in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics among year 10 -12 students in selected low SES and regional secondary schools;
- Developing a university-wide approach to peer mentoring and academic advising;
- Continuing the University's commitment to core first year curricula including enquiry-based learning, group work and student engagement, an approach that has seen an increase in success rates;
- Ensuring that equity is embedded within the La Trobe Essentials, including 'innovation and enterprise';
- Expanding the University's Academic Early Warning System (Succeed@La Trobe);
- Increasing participation through expansion of alternative entry pathways, including the 'Aspire' program;
- Continuing the University's support for LEAP (Learn, Experience, Access Professions) to raise awareness, aspiration and participation;
- Working with partner TAFEs to deliver new joint degree programs (such as within the Vic Gov funded Bendigo Tertiary Education Plan) and develop pathways and articulation models (such as diploma to degree programs in partnership with Wodonga Institute) to raise participation of under-represented students, particularly those in the regions.

Additional information on La Trobe's strategies to promote Indigenous outcomes and achieve equity for low socio-economic students and other equity groups can be found at:

- [Gamagoen Yarrbat Indigenous Education Strategy 2015-2017](#)
- [Access and Achievement Research Unit](#)

SIGNED for and on behalf of

In the presence of:

THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

by

Dom English
Full name (please print)

Group Manager
Position

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

Dom English
Signature

19/12/17
Date

Cate Hutchinson
Witness (please print)

Policy Officer
Position or profession of witness (please print)

CG Hutchins
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SIGNED for and on behalf of

In the presence of:

UNIVERSITY

PROFESSOR JOHN DEWAR
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