



**2017 Mission Based Compact
Between the Commonwealth of Australia and The University of Sydney**

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

We aim to create and sustain a university in which, for the benefit of both Australia and the wider world, the brightest researchers and the most promising students, whatever their social or cultural background, can thrive and realise their potential.

Our work will be guided by the pursuit of **excellence, engagement and simplification**. It will be underpinned by values of **courage and creativity, respect and integrity, inclusion and diversity and openness and engagement**.

In 2017, we will continue in the direction set by the 2016 – 2020 Strategic Plan, with real and measurable change in its core activities of teaching and research, while also challenging us to think more deeply not just about what we do, but about how and why we will do it.

By implementing the initiatives in our plan, we will build upon the work that began with the 2011-15 strategy to create a university true to the vision of our founders, true to our strategic purpose, and embody our shared conception of the best a university can be.

Our strategic goals for 2016 – 2020 focus on:

- **A culture of research excellence.** Be the leading, research intensive university in Australia with outstanding researchers, networks and partnerships that improve the lives of our local and global communities by investing in research excellence and attracting and developing outstanding researchers and partnering for impact.
- **A distinctive Sydney education.** Deliver an undergraduate education that is unique in Australia so that our graduates have the skills, knowledge and values to lead in a rapidly changing world by transforming our undergraduate curriculum and transforming the learning experience for our academics and students.
- **A culture built on values.** Foster an aspirational culture that enables each member of the University to thrive by developing our leaders, embedding our values and breaking down institutional barriers.

The initiatives in this plan have begun implementation, building on the work that started with our 2011 – 2015 strategy (and outlined in the previous compact.) This compact outlines those strategies with a key focus in 2017.

INNOVATION

We are committed to helping realize a new national vision for innovation.

We will significantly boost our capacity in 2017 and improve our performance both in competitive funding schemes (Linkage, CRC, ITRP etc.) to secure direct industry funding. New initiatives are in place to improve our industry and community engagement including our 'Industry and Community Engagement Seed fund' to assist researchers to form new relationships with industry and community partners, as well as improve our performance in the ARC Linkage scheme. We will leverage of over \$1m in funding (including \$800k from industry) and hire six new Business Development Managers who will be embedded in faculties to facilitate and support industry and community engagement. We will be working closely with our commercial funding partners (including Uniseed) to seek out and develop support for the commercialisation of our research outcomes.

In order to promote the importance of industry research the University will:

- provide incentive and reward mechanisms for staff to pursue industry and community engagement and commercialisation activities. Investment in our Commercial Development and Industry Partnership team will aim to embed new business development expertise in our faculties.
- increase its proof-of-concept fund to provide researchers with the resources they need to progress their ideas to the next phase of development and,
- partner with Uniseed, an external venture fund dedicated to commercializing university research.

Other initiatives for innovation outlined in the 2016 – 2020 Strategic Plan and planned for 2017 include:

- a) Creating the University of Sydney Knowledge Hub as a dedicated space with industry and community partners. A Working Group has been formed and the initiative will be developed over 2017 with a framework in place by end 2016. In 2017, we will consider a possible 'pop-up' version of the Knowledge Hub and begin to map possible locations and tenants for the permanent facility.
 - b) Investing and expanding our footprint at our Westmead campus to maintain it as a leading international centre for research and innovation. In 2017 the first cohort of Masters of Nursing students trained at Westmead will complete the program and a new Honours program in Medical Science will commence.
 - c) Partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders communities for research in real-world intercultural settings
- a) Develop a focused approach to global engagement through
 - i) Partnership with University of California, (Davis (UCD) signed off in early February 2017.
 - ii) Partnership with Fudan University in conjunction with the opening of Sydney Suzhou Centre, opened in October 2016. The Research Portfolio is actively engaged in planning research and industry engagement activities there for 2017 and beyond.
 - iii) Further discussions to progress partnerships with the University of California, San Diego (UCSD), as well as with University College London (UCL), the University of Edinburgh, Utrecht University, the University of Leuven (KU Leuven), the University of Glasgow and the University of Geneva.

We support open access to scholarly literature produced by our researchers. We recognise that the widest communication of research outputs will maximise the usage and outcomes of this work. We have developed and implemented the 'Open Access to Research Policy 2015' which outlines our commitment to open access to university research and to provide and maintain open publishing platforms and institutional repositories, our role and responsibilities and our researchers, ownership of intellectual property and the guidelines for open access to scholarly works, research data collections and higher degree by research theses. This policy will continue in 2017.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

We have a key strategic goal to focus on a distinctive Sydney Education. We aim to deliver an undergraduate education that is unique in Australia so that our graduates have the skills, knowledge and values to lead in a rapidly changing world. Our strategies are to i) transform our undergraduate curriculum and ii) transform the learning experience for all of our academics and students. We will concentrate on enabling our academics to foster excellence and innovation in teaching, develop a full suite of experiential learning opportunities and create innovative and aligned physical and digital environments.

We will adopt and embed new graduate qualities in our new curriculum framework that reframe in contemporary terms the enduring purpose of an undergraduate education at the University of Sydney and reaffirm our aim to serve our communities. The qualities of a Sydney graduate are foundations for leadership – depth of disciplinary expertise; broader skills in critical thinking and problem solving, communication, information and digital literacy and inventiveness; cultural competence; interdisciplinary effectiveness; an integrated professional, ethical and personal identity; and influence.

Attaining these graduate qualities will enable students to make productive, innovative and ethical contributions to society as they take on positions of intellectual and professional leadership after graduation.

Key components of delivering our distinctive education are underway for 2017, with changes approved to the undergraduate curriculum and degree profile by the Academic Board. A number of courses will be discontinued and eleven new courses will start in 2018, including the Bachelor of Advanced Studies and its combinations. These new courses and our new curriculum framework will be launched and promoted to prospective students throughout 2017.

Key objectives and priorities to be delivered in 2017 as part of this strategy also include:

- Approve remaining undergraduate courses and majors and first tranche of vertically integrated Masters degrees for commencement in 2019.
- Establish approach and policy for project and interdisciplinary placements.
- Develop new project-based units for the new curriculum.

As part of our key strategy to transform the learning experience, there are three ongoing initiatives that will help ensure quality in teaching and learning. In 2017 our focus for these strategies will include:

1. *Develop interactive and collaborative learning designs that foster excellence and innovation*, with the roll out of new first year coordinator professional programs.
2. *Create contemporary environments that enable flexible and interactive learning* with the development of a process to refresh an enterprise suite of learning technologies. In 2017, we will prepare for the deliver a new learning environment, including a new Learning Management System in 2018.
3. *Build a new professional learning and support environment* by aligning professional learning and support with external frameworks and reviewing the educational component of recruitment, promotion, retention and performance.

In addition, we have a commitment to fostering and recognising excellence, with a focus on the quality of our staff and the culture they work in. Central to that vision are five key qualities of academic staff and their work in both education and research, including academic expertise and scholarship, leadership, engagement, integrity and professional conduct and cultural competence.

RESEARCH AND RESEARCH TRAINING

In our 2016 – 20 strategy, we will pursue three interrelated strategies that will help us achieve our goal of becoming the leading comprehensive, research-intensive university in Australia and among the very best in the world. We will invest in and drive research excellence across the University. We will attract and develop outstanding researchers in ways that enable them to fulfil their full potential, as well as establish new programs and mechanisms for the recruitment, retention and development of researchers at all stages of their careers, to create and sustain a culture of research excellence across the institution. And we will expand and develop new partnerships, both locally and globally, that enable our research to make a difference, improving the lives of Australian and others around the world.

Key elements of our Sydney Research Excellence Initiative (SREI) are in place, including a new Compact process for supporting faculty and multidisciplinary research over the next three years. A new fund starts in 2017 ('SREI 2020') to seed and support disciplinary and cross-disciplinary initiatives from the 'bottom up', building on existing or potential research excellence and pre-eminence. The consultation process for establishing 'aspirational benchmarks' for research performance for all academic staff has begun, as part of our ambition to build a high performing culture across the institution. Existing processes will be aligned and new benchmarks (recruitment, retention, promotion and performance) will be developed in 2017. In 2017, we will undertake major procurement and recruitment activities for seven of our core research facilities, a very significant component of the decadal plan for research infrastructure. This is the most significant investment in our research infrastructure in the last 25 years.

We are on track to launch the Sydney Policy Lab in 2017 and are currently conducting internal and external consultation and developing themes. This initiative will help harness our deep expertise and breadth across the institution to address fundamental questions in research and key challenges faced by our society and the world.

A new framework for the recruitment and retention of high-performing researchers will be in place in 2017, with a new set of initiatives to attract, retain and develop our most outstanding researchers. The first cohort of 20 early- and mid-career researchers in our new researcher accelerator program SOAR, start in 2017 and we expect to expand the program in future years to meet the demand of high quality applicants.

We plan to remodel the pathways to PhD and in 2017, this will include developing and agreeing on the graduate qualities and approving a research-track Masters course. We will attract and invest in the best PhD students by developing a PhD engagement strategy, a Watt review implementation strategy and plan for increasing access to start up, incubator and entrepreneurial opportunities.

For many of our PhD students, it is vital that we provide exposure to a range of settings outside of the University in order to broaden their world view and consider the potential applications for their research at an early stage. We will streamline and create new opportunities for joint PhD programs and HDR student mobility with our leading global partners in business, industry and community organisations.

Finally, working closely with the DVC-Education and DVC-Registrar, we will progress our strategy for aligning PhD scholarships more closely with our research ambitions. A new model for the allocation of PhD scholarships and for the distribution of Postgraduate Research Student Support Scheme (PRSS), aligning up to 20% of new PhD scholarships with areas of strategic research priority, will be in place for 2017.

EQUITY

We acknowledge that we are on the land of the Gadigal people of the Eora nation.

We have developed a comprehensive inclusion strategy around Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as a part of our commitment to develop a distinctly Australian institution. Wingara Mura-Bunga Barrabugu is our strategic commitment to building opportunity, capability and rights for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and for valuing Indigenous culture.

In 2017, we will continue the access strategies to grow our dedicated program of engagements with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pre-tertiary students from around Australia, including the Cadigal Entry Pathway scheme, Wingara Mura - Bunga Barrabugu Summer and Winter programs, TAFE link and the Breadwinner's project. In order to enable our research to make a difference locally and globally, we will partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities for research in real-world cultural settings.

We will continue to build a culturally competent workforce of academic and professional staff. The National Centre for Cultural Competence (NCCC) will provide leadership, training and research support on cultural competence. The Centre establishes us as one of the first universities in the world to address cultural competence at a whole-of-university level.

As part of our 2016 – 2020 Strategic Plan, the mapping of our new curriculum framework to graduate qualities, cultural competence has been embedded as a learning outcome in every degree with supporting development within every major, stream or degree as appropriate. We will provide meaningful learning activities that take advantage of the cultural diversity within our community and ensure professional programs develop cultural understanding and intercultural capabilities relevant to likely practice.

We are committed to diversity and have a range of activities to ensure everyone is accepted and has equal opportunities when it comes to education and employment in our university. Embedding equal opportunity means implementing real initiatives that empower our students and staff to reach their goals, irrespective of gender, race, orientation or economic background, such as partnering with the Australian Human Rights Commission's campaign *Racism. It Stops with Me* and setting up the ALLY network to support equal rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQ) students and staff.

In 2017 we will continue to expand the access and participation opportunities for young people from identified communities and build upon our high quality widening participation program to schools in Western and South West Sydney and regional areas of NSW. Through our Compass program, our schools outreach program, we work with school students who are generally under-represented in higher education: Low Socio-Economic Status (Low SES), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and regional and remote students. Our Early Offer Year 12 (E12) scheme will continue for students who are from a financially disadvantaged background and/or are attending a government-identified 'low socioeconomic' high school. Our Broadway Scheme targets domestic students who have experienced long-term disadvantage that has affected educational performance in Year 11 and/or Year 12 including from disrupted schooling, financial hardship, home or school environment, English language difficulty, personal illness or disability, or refugee status and our Rural Entry Scheme will continue for identified courses in veterinary study.

The University of Sydney Disability Action Plan 2013 – 2018 outlines a number objectives for achievement over a six year period. Key focus in 2017 is to:

- Provide an innovative, creative, flexible and open learning environment that maximises access, participation and success for all students, with 95% of all teaching staff provided with disability awareness training to ensure they have disability confidence in the teaching and learning environment.
- Adopt and progressively implement the Accessible Environment Plan including the provision of accessible paths of travel and equitable services and facilities, provide accessible paths of travel, parking, teaching and support areas and tactile, Braille signage and numbers to be installed in up to 75% of all rooms.

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.

English

Signature

19/12/2017

Date

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CG Hutch

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In the presence of:

UNIVERSITY

Dr Michael Spence

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