

Strategic Plan for Higher Education in Western Australia 2015

Western Australian Higher Education Council



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Murdoch
UNIVERSITY
PERTH WESTERN AUSTRALIA



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NOTRE DAME
AUSTRALIA

Background to the Strategic Plan

Western Australia's potential as a diversified knowledge based economy meeting the social and cultural needs of its people will be enhanced by mutually beneficial partnerships between the State Government and the State's universities.

In 2011, the Western Australian Government appointed a panel chaired by Emeritus Professor Margaret Seares AO to recommend the most effective partnerships for the future.

The panel's report, *Future Directions for the Role of the State in Higher Education*, was completed in 2013.

The Government responded to the recommendations of the report in August 2013. Included in the Government's response was support for the development of a Strategic Plan for higher education in the State.

This Strategic Plan has been developed by the Western Australian Government and the State's five universities through the Western Australian Higher Education Council, comprising the Minister for Education and the universities' Vice Chancellors.

The Western Australian Higher Education Council will be responsible for implementation of the Strategic Plan.

Signatories to the Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan was endorsed at the May 2015 meeting of the Western Australian Higher Education Council (WAHEC) and signed at Parliament House on 21 September 2015.

The following are signatories to the Strategic Plan.



Honourable Peter Collier MLC
Minister for Education;
Aboriginal Affairs;
Electoral Affairs



Professor Deborah Terry
Vice Chancellor,
Curtin University



Professor Steve Chapman
Vice Chancellor,
Edith Cowan University



Professor Andrew Taggart
Acting Vice Chancellor,
Murdoch University



Professor Paul Johnson
Vice Chancellor,
The University of
Western Australia



Professor Celia Hammond
Vice Chancellor,
The University of
Notre Dame Australia

Western Australian Higher Education Council

Strategic Plan for Higher Education

Vision

The Western Australian Government will work cooperatively with the State's higher education providers to maximise the quality and availability of higher education to optimise the benefits to the people of Western Australia

Strategic Goals

1. Increase the percentage of Year 12 Western Australian students proceeding to higher education
2. Encourage greater equity in higher education participation
3. Assist in the development of a more integrated system of education and training at all levels
4. Develop partnerships to advance activities of mutual benefit to the State and the higher education sector
5. Assist higher education institutions to further develop international relationships, including international research collaboration
6. Advocate at the national level to maximise support for the Western Australian higher education sector
7. Maintain a legislative and regulatory framework to provide for a high quality higher education sector in Western Australia

Strategic Priorities

Strategic Goal 1 - Increase the percentage of Year 12 Western Australian students proceeding to higher education

Priorities

- Develop strategies, in consultation with the school and higher education sectors, to increase the proportion of school students proceeding to higher education
- Encourage joint initiatives by the universities to raise the aspirations of school leavers to go on to higher education
- Increase participation of school students in science, technology, engineering and mathematics by developing engaging learning activities jointly by schools and universities
- Encourage greater exchange of higher education students between universities in Western Australia and other States
- Consult with the universities, school representatives, and the School Curriculum and Standards Authority to provide a simplified structure of Years 11 and 12 courses, while ensuring a high standard of preparation for students proceeding to higher education
- Evaluate, through WAHEC, the current processes of ranking students for university selection

Strategic Goal 2 - Encourage greater equity in higher education participation

- Develop proposals through WAHEC for the State Government, the school sectors and the universities to work together to improve aspirations for, and access to, higher education by disadvantaged students
- Develop proposals, through a widely consultative process, to lift the aspirations and opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in higher education
- Consult with the education and training sectors and the Department of Regional Development on options for increasing regional participation in higher education

Strategic Priorities (Cont.)

Strategic Goal 3 - Assist in the development of a more integrated system of education and training at all levels

Priorities

- Consult with the universities, through WAHEC, on possibilities for improved articulation between schools, vocational education and training, and higher education sectors
- Convene a forum comprising university representatives, the Departments of Education Services and Training and Workforce Development, and the State training providers to further develop educational pathways between the university and vocational education and training sectors
- Examine the implications for Western Australian institutions of national policies which are leading to greater convergence across the higher education and vocational education and training sectors

Strategic Goal 4 - Develop partnerships to advance activities of mutual benefit to the state and the higher education sector

Priorities

- Develop, in consultation with the universities and the Office of Science, a coordinated approach to the allocation of State Government research funds to universities to support the State Government's economic priorities
- Encourage greater collaboration between universities, the State Government, the business sector and professional bodies to achieve commonly shared benefits
- Work with the Department of Training and Workforce Development to examine, in consultation with the higher education sector, the implications for higher education of the State's changing workforce needs

Strategic Priorities (Cont.)

Strategic Goal 5 - Assist higher education institutions to further develop international relationships, including international research collaboration

Priorities

- Work in partnership across government and with higher education institutions to take full advantage of the potential benefits of education exports to the State's economy
- Take advantage of areas of education and research dominance in Western Australian universities to attract greater international involvement in Western Australian higher education
- Exercise the influence of Government to develop increased collaboration in education and research between universities in Western Australia and their overseas counterparts
- Continue to provide funding to assist higher education institutions with international marketing

Strategic Goal 6 - Advocate at the national level to maximise support for the Western Australian higher education sector

Priorities

- Increase the proportion of Commonwealth research funding to Western Australia through collaborative proposals from the universities and the State Government for appropriate Commonwealth research funding rounds
- Work with the universities to obtain higher representation of Western Australian universities on national funding bodies
- Establish annual meetings between relevant State Government agencies and the Commonwealth Government to pursue the State's higher education priorities

Strategic Priorities (Cont.)

Strategic Goal 7 - Maintain a legislative and regulatory framework to provide for a high quality higher education sector in Western Australia

Priorities

- Modernise the Acts of Parliament which legislate for the State's universities
- Legislate for appropriate commercial activities of universities with minimum regulatory impact
- Facilitate, through State planning and other approval processes, co-location of university and complementary industry activities, including opportunities to translate research into commercial outcomes
- Reduce any unnecessary regulatory burden on universities by State Government agencies

The Western Australian Higher Education Council

The Western Australian Higher Education Council is a standing group aimed at facilitating consultation between the Western Australian Government and the State's universities.

It is chaired by the Minister for Education and also comprises the Vice Chancellors of each of Western Australia's five universities.

The Council meets at least twice per year to discuss higher education issues of mutual interest and how the State Government and the State's universities can work cooperatively to achieve mutual goals.

Decisions of the Council do not bind individual universities; collective actions by Council members result from a recognition of mutual benefits which can be achieved, and from a commitment to serving the Western Australian community.

Further information

For more information about the Strategic Plan or the Western Australian Higher Education Council, please email wahec@des.wa.gov.au