



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

UWA 2020 Vision

STRATEGIC PLAN: 2014-2020





Foreword

UWA's Centenary year in 2013 has provided an opportunity both to reflect on the University's achievements and to plan for the future. The University's founders recognised that Western Australia needed an institution of higher education in order to produce the enquiring minds and bright ideas that would unlock the economic, social and cultural potential of the fledgling state. One hundred years later, the contribution of the university to almost every aspect of Western Australia's development has been profound, not least through the activities and achievements of more than 120,000 UWA graduates. Our opportunity now is to determine how the University can best pursue its objective 'to advance the welfare and prosperity of the people' through educational and research activities that are relevant to the circumstances of the early 21st century.

The need to produce enquiring minds and bright ideas remains paramount, and perhaps is even more important today than when the first students enrolled at UWA in 1913.



Knowledge is now the universal currency that underpins the relative performance and success of individuals, organisations and nations. Over the past century, universities, as centres of education and research, have played a fundamental role in promoting technological and economic dynamism and social and cultural creativity. Our challenge, and our responsibility, is to ensure that we continue to advance the effective exchange, development and application of useful knowledge – among and between students and staff, and between the university and a broad range of external stakeholders.

This Strategic Plan builds on a century of success and on the reputation of UWA as one of Australia’s – and the world’s – leading research universities. The plan establishes the values and characteristics of the University that infuse and guide all aspects of our operation and behaviour. It then identifies a number of strategic objectives for us to meet across our key areas of education, research, engagement and operations. We will aim to excel in

all that we do, and we will consistently compare our performance with the highest international benchmarks and standards. We will provide the best possible educational, research and employment environment for our students and staff, and we will ensure that we continue to support our local, national and international communities through the production and dissemination of new and relevant knowledge.

This Strategic Plan highlights the broad and longer-term objectives and ambitions of the University. We can be confident that meeting the targets and attaining the goals set out here will ensure the continued development and success of UWA as it moves into its second century.

Professor Paul Johnson
Vice-Chancellor





Introduction

UWA was established by the University of Western Australia Act in 1911 and we opened our doors to students one hundred years ago in 1913. The Act has a strong and distinctive focus on the University’s social and economic role in Western Australia “to advance the prosperity and welfare of the people” and to provide for those hindered “by lack of opportunity or means”.

In the century since our establishment UWA’s role has extended beyond WA in the belief that we can best serve our home state by operating successfully at world standards, and acting as an international gateway for WA. Throughout our history, UWA has maintained a strong commitment to contributing to economic prosperity and to social equity.

Today, UWA is a world-class university, ranked by the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) among the world’s

Top 100 universities. Our aspiration is to be regarded as a Top 50 university by 2050, recognised internationally for excellence in education and research and as a leading intellectual and creative resource for the communities we serve.

As a world-class university, we will undertake world-class research; we will provide our students with a world-class educational experience; we will be deeply engaged with our communities locally, nationally and globally; and we will manage our resources and operations to international best practice standards.

In the pages that follow, we present UWA’s mission, core values and defining characteristics; we set out how we will achieve our goal of being recognised as a Top 50 University, and how we will gauge our progress towards that goal during the rest of this decade.

Mission and Vision

The mission of UWA is:

To provide world-class education, research and community engagement for the advancement of the prosperity and welfare of our communities.

The vision of UWA is:

We aspire to be recognised as one of the world's top 50 global universities by 2050.

Values

The core values underpinning our activities are commitments to:

- a culture of high performance and continuous improvement, designed to achieve international excellence;
- academic freedom to encourage staff and students to engage in the open exchange of ideas and thought;
- equity and merit as the fundamental principles for the achievement of the full potential of all staff and students;
- fostering the values of openness, honesty, tolerance, trust and responsibility in social, moral and academic matters;
- the achievement of Aboriginal peoples' rights, aspirations and potential, and the recognition of Indigenous knowledge, culture and values;
- sustainability in environmental, economic and social dimensions.





Defining Characteristics

UWA will be recognised by the following defining characteristics:

- **aspiring to excellence**, in all our activities;
 - **comprehensive**, with a broad teaching and research profile in the arts, sciences and professions; but selective within a comprehensive base, to develop particular areas of strength and emphasis;
 - **research-intensive**, with a strong teaching and research nexus across all our disciplines;
- **globally-connected**, with international perspectives embedded in our teaching and research, strong engagement with leading institutions internationally, and high and positive international recognition and reputation;
 - **technologically-innovative**, to maintain our currency and maximise our flexibility;
 - **engaged**, to respond to the needs of the community, our students and our graduates.



Achieving Success – Strategic Goals

Leadership in Education

UWA will be recognised as a global leader in university education.

The education mission of UWA is intrinsic to the purpose of the University. A fundamental way in which the University advances “the prosperity and welfare of the people”, both individually and collectively, is by educating students and producing graduates, who will contribute economically, culturally and socially, and provide leadership to their communities.

To achieve this purpose, it is important that the University attracts students of the highest potential, locally and internationally, and delivers our students an excellent educational experience: by offering highly-sought-after educational courses, delivered

with leading contemporary educational methods, and an outstanding holistic student experience; and achieving high levels of student satisfaction.

UWA aspires to be recognised as a global leader in university education. The introduction of *New Courses* in 2012 demonstrated our preparedness and capability to implement major changes in curriculum and course structure, motivated by a clear vision regarding the academic preparation required of future leaders, professionals and academics. Having successfully implemented the first cycle of *New Courses*, a major focus of the next period is the successful introduction of our new postgraduate coursework (or cycle 2) degrees.

Complementary to the curricular focus of *New Courses*, the University has articulated a vision for teaching and pedagogy in 2020: *UWA's Education Futures Vision*. This vision comprises seven statements that are consistent with UWA's overall educational principles, with a focus on the practices of teaching and learning across undergraduate and postgraduate courses. These statements encompass the education strategy of UWA for the period 2014-2020.

- Teaching practices at UWA will be designed to engage, challenge and transform students throughout their courses.
- UWA will provide evidence-based, quality teaching practices.
- We will provide students with a rich variety of learning experiences, including service learning, that connect them to the University, professional, local and global communities.
- Learning and teaching experiences at UWA will be integrated with, and informed by, research.
- UWA teaching and learning activities will be supported with an extended range of quality resources, facilities and technologies.
- We will value and provide a supportive, collaborative learning environment within our attractive campus encompassing a broad and vibrant student experience.
- We will prepare our students to be contributing members and leaders of local, national and global communities.



Measures of Success

- Increase in student satisfaction ratings, including the University Experience Survey (UES) and Good Universities Guide.
- Achievement of plans for development and take-up of cycle 2 courses.
- Implementation of innovations arising from *UWA Education Futures* project.
- Increase in the utilisation of educational technology.
- Increase in the percentage of students with study abroad/student exchange (on our current sector leadership position of 20%).

Internationally-renowned Research

The University of Western Australia strives for an international research agenda of relevance to the communities we serve.

Our ambitions and activities are influenced by more than a century of learning, scholarship, research and public engagement “to advance the prosperity and welfare of the people”.

UWA's Strategic Plan 2014-2020 expresses a commitment to disciplinary excellence across the spectrum of the sciences, medicine, the social sciences and the humanities, including supporting research in strategically important and vulnerable subjects. We value high performance and continuous improvement, academic freedom, respect, honesty and openness, and sustainability of environmental, economic and social dimensions.

We aim to maximise the benefits of research by advancing fundamental knowledge and contributing to better public policy, improved health outcomes, economic prosperity, social cohesion, international development, community identity, and the creative arts. We commit to progressing the welfare of indigenous peoples through recognising and engaging with the traditional custodians of our land, promoting a greater level of understanding of indigenous culture and knowledge, and educating future indigenous researchers.

- UWA will undertake research across all our disciplines, focussed on issues of relevance to our communities and industries, while generating understanding and solutions of global value.
- We will focus on areas relevant to our strengths, assets, geography and partners.
- We will build problem-oriented multidisciplinary teams.
- We will communicate our research globally through high quality publications, presentations at international conferences, and through social media.
- We will improve our national standing in gaining competitive research funds by diversifying our funding base and building a high-performing culture.
- We will build our scholarship resources to support world-class research training.
- We will translate the results of our research to the community and industry to ensure that we provide value to our partners.
- We will provide the academic and administrative services and infrastructure needed to facilitate research excellence and knowledge transfer.

Measures of Success

- Improving our position on a basket of international ranking indicators.
- Improving our ERA results.
- Increase in *Web of Science* publications and citations data, with an increase in publications in top 20% of journals.
- Increase in our research income, including ACG income.

- Increase in our HDR completions, the proportion of timely completions and the impact of our HDR programs.

Community and Global Engagement

A world-class university serves its communities not only by the excellence of its education and research activities and outcomes, but through its broader contribution to the intellectual, cultural and social life of those communities, locally, nationally and internationally.

Engagement impacts on the quality, relevance and impact of the work of the University. Our engagement with partners expands the capabilities and resources available to us. The feedback from business, government and the community, focuses and aligns our activity with community need, and provides the greatest opportunity for our research and education to find application and use.

UWA will be recognised for the strong and mutually-beneficial relationships we have forged with our stakeholders. These will be developed in co-ordination across UWA:

- with business, industry and the professions;
- with government at local, state and national levels;
- with our alumni around the world;
- with the arts and scientific communities;
- with a variety of constituencies such as parents, schools, local residents, and collaborators around the world.

- We will build our brand and reputation as a leading global university.
- We will engage proactively and strategically to garner support for our mission and to provide value to our stakeholders.
- We will communicate our successes and demonstrate our impact and value to the societies we serve.
- We will collaborate with high quality international partners in research and education.
- We will engage with communities in regional WA in the context of a strategy to enhance educational opportunities for WA communities outside of Perth, as evidenced by our campus in Albany.
- We will recognise and engage with indigenous people as the traditional custodians of our land.

Measures of Success

- Increase in position in rankings that use reputational indices.
- Implementation of the brand review project, and annual reputational surveys.
- Development and implementation of political and corporate engagement plans.
- Increase in media presence (number of media mentions).
- Increase in the number of visitors to community outreach activities, such as the cultural precinct and community lectures.
- Increase our collaborations (institutional, networks, joint publications, industry contacts, study leave, visits).
- Achieve the goals of the New Century Campaign.



Achieving Success – Key Capabilities

While the strategic goals of the University focus on the core functions of education, research and community engagement, the success of the University in achieving these goals will depend on the quality of our staff, our students and our operational excellence.

World-class staff

The staff of UWA, both academic and professional, are the key resource on which the reputation of the University is based. To sustain and improve our standing requires continuous improvement in the quality and performance of our staff. This, in turn, requires ever-higher standards for staff recruitment, the fostering of a high performance work environment, and the ongoing development and performance management of our human resources.

Maximising the quality of the staff requires drawing on the largest pool of talent. This requires an active approach to encouraging and fostering diversity in all its aspects, so that positions at UWA have the widest possible appeal, and the University can attract and retain staff of the highest quality.

- UWA will attract and retain high-quality staff, who will be recognised for the quality of their academic and professional work.
- Our researchers will be recognised as international leaders in their disciplines.
- Our teachers will be recognised for their contribution to a world-class student experience.

- Our professional staff will manage an efficient and effective organisation, to international benchmark standards of service and operations.
- We will actively develop and manage staff, to assist them in achieving their career objectives, and improving the performance of UWA.
- Our staff will be recruited from around the world in line with the highest international standards.
- We will foster and maintain a diverse workforce, in a work environment which values and supports diversity in all dimensions. In particular, we will increase the representation of female academics at levels D and E.
- Our staff will engage actively with their peers and the wider community, locally, nationally and internationally.

Measures of Success

- Increase in staff distinctions (Fellows, Laureates, awards and prizes).
- Increase in teaching awards (OLT and other).
- Increase in the percentage of female academics at levels D and E.
- Increase in the percentage of internationally qualified staff.

Students with outstanding potential

As with staff, the quality of the student body at UWA is both evidence of the reputation that the University has achieved, but also a key input into the University's future reputation, as these students contribute

to the academic life of UWA, and achieve success in their subsequent careers.

Additionally, UWA was founded with an explicit objective to provide “special encouragement and assistance” to “those who may be hindered in the acquisition of sound knowledge and useful learning by lack of opportunity or means”. This requires the University to look beyond prior achievement to identify unrealised potential.

To attract the students of the highest potential requires UWA to broaden its recruitment of students to tap into markets beyond WA, and, in admitting greater diversity to the University, provide an outstanding student experience that is broad, inclusive, supportive and values diversity.

Ultimately, our graduates are our most valued output, and our mutually-beneficial engagement with them is of ongoing importance.



- UWA will be the destination of choice for students of the highest potential.
- The great majority of the highest achieving WA school leavers will come to UWA, and we will increasingly attract greater numbers of high quality interstate and international students.
- We will identify, encourage and provide pathways for students of high potential but limited means and opportunity, including programs for indigenous and low SES students.
- Our higher degree research students will be high-quality students attracted from around the world.
- UWA graduates will be highly valued by employers for their graduate attributes and quality of their education.

- Our graduates will be globally mobile and will distinguish themselves in employment and further study anywhere in the world.
- Our alumni will be lifelong ambassadors and supporters of their University.

Measures of Success

- Increase in our median ATAR scores (median) for undergraduate entry.
- Increase in our share of top quality school leavers.
- Increase in the number of international and interstate enrolments.
- Increase in the percentage of students from low SES, rural and isolated, and Indigenous backgrounds.
- Increase in our graduate outcome measures (maintain our five star rating in the Good Universities Guide).





Operational Excellence

A world-class university will only sustain excellence in its core functions of research, education and community engagement if it also achieves excellence in the management of its human, financial and physical resources, its governance and its culture.

The fostering of a culture of high performance and continuous improvement sustains this objective of operational excellence, and we will invest in the development of systems and processes to further this objective.

The challenges of university funding arrangements require a commitment to strong financial management, both to identify and pursue opportunities to

grow University revenue, and to manage expenditure within agreed budgets. This will enable us to generate the financial returns for investment in our future infrastructure and capabilities.

- UWA will be acknowledged for strong governance, leadership, management and a commitment to continuous improvement referenced to international standards.
- We will be recognised for our ability to innovate.
- We will demonstrate a performance culture that embodies the values of transparency, collegiality, merit, equity and accountability. We will increase and diversify our resource base and manage our resources commensurate with a world-class university.
- We will operate in a responsible, sustainable manner by international best practice standards.
- We will provide high quality services to our students and other stakeholders with a strong service culture.

Measures of Success

- Improvement against a variety of high-level financial and physical indicators (e.g. dollars per EFTSL, operating surpluses).
- Improvement against a set of HR indicators (e.g. completion rates of PDR/PAR).
- Improvement against staff and student satisfaction survey indicators (e.g. Working Life Survey).





THE UNIVERSITY OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Vice-Chancellery

The University of Western Australia

M464, 35 Stirling Highway

Crawley WA 6009

Tel: +61 8 6488 3500

Fax: +61 8 6488 1013

Email: vice-chancellery@uwa.edu.au

uwa.edu.au