



USQ Annual Report

2021

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The USQ Annual Report is also available online at **www.usq.edu.au/about-usq/about-us/plans-reports**.

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DLC T444749



Letter to the Minister

25 February 2022

The Honourable Grace MP
Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing
Department of Education
PO Box 15033
CITY EAST QLD 4002

Dear Minister Grace

I am pleased to present the Annual Report 2021 and financial statements for the University of Southern Queensland.

I certify that this Annual Report complies with:

- prescribed requirements of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* (Qld) and the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019* (Qld); and
- detailed requirements set out in the *Annual Report Requirements for Queensland Government Agencies*.

A checklist outlining the annual reporting requirements can be found on page 117 of this Annual Report or accessed at www.usq.edu.au/about-usq/governance-leadership/plans-reports

Yours sincerely

Mr John Dornbusch
Chancellor, USQ

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Introduction

The University of Southern Queensland (USQ) Annual Report provides a review of the University's activities and performance in 2021 and identifies future priorities. The *Report* aims to ensure the University meets its statutory requirements for transparency in public reporting and remains openly accountable to its many stakeholders.

In describing the achievements, performance, outlook and financial position of the University in terms of the objectives of the *USQ Strategic Plan 2021-2025*, the *Report* also serves to inform continuous improvement in organisational performance.

The *Report* reflects USQ's status as a values-driven organisation committed to:

- providing opportunities for access with success to higher education by a diverse student constituency
- supporting the Queensland and Australian economies through graduates who are highly regarded as job-ready, career-empowered, innovative and connected professionals

- maintaining a program of responsible internationalisation for the mutual benefit of students, our local regions and the source countries of our international student body
- conducting world-class research in select areas that impacts on communities
- serving as a partner of choice to business and community through best-practice management.

In 2021, the University consolidated its position in supporting regional development and sustainability through focussed research and accessible higher education, while continuing its program of necessary reforms to position the University for success in a highly dynamic and challenging operating environment, which continued to be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Intended readers and users of the *Report* include current staff and students, members of State Parliament, research and other partners of the University, employers and graduates, media professionals, and interested members of the public.

Glossary of Terms

For a complete list of USQ terms, please refer to the Definitions Dictionary in the USQ Policy and Procedure Library at <https://policy.usq.edu.au/>

ACADEMIC PROGRAM: An approved Higher Education Award of the University, consisting of a combination of courses, the successful completion of an offering of which, together with any credit transfers and exemptions in accordance with the relevant requirements, will fulfil the prescribed requirements for that particular Award.

BLENDED DELIVERY: Combines different technologies, in particular a combination of traditional (e.g. face-to-face instruction) and online teaching approaches and media.

COURSE: The basic unit of study and assessment for which a student may be awarded a grade, and may accumulate credit units towards completion of a Program.

ENABLING PROGRAM: A program for disadvantaged students which meets Commonwealth guidelines for such programs and from which successful completion leads to automatic admission into an Academic Program of the University.

ON-CAMPUS: Represents courses, the offer of which involves attendance at the University on a regular basis.

ONLINE: Represents courses in which the instruction, communication among academic staff and students, submission of assignments and feedback is offered mainly through the internet.

VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT: An encompassing term for the Learning Management System incorporating USQStudyDesk, USQStaffDesk, and USQOpenDesk and their associated systems.

Chancellor's Report

Despite the ongoing challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic both within Australia and internationally, 2021 was another strong year for the University of Southern Queensland (USQ).

We were again presented with many challenges and much uncertainty, but collectively, as an institution focussed on creating and sharing knowledge, transforming lives and solving the problems that matter to our world, we took on these challenges as an opportunity to seek out and refine new and better ways of doing things. A key milestone for the University this year was the release of our new Strategic Plan 2021-2025, which articulates the University's aspirations for the period. Building upon our strength as Australia's leading regional University, the Plan expresses our key commitments across impact, connections, people and places that will enable realisation of USQ's vision for innovation and excellence.

In late 2020, University Council approved the University's Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech Policy, which affirms the importance of the University's institutional autonomy under law in the regulation of its affairs, including in the protection of freedom of speech and academic freedom. The Policy also serves to ensure that freedom of lawful speech of all University employees, students and visitors is treated as a paramount and defining value of the University, and that freedom of speech and academic freedom are not restricted nor, in their exercise, burdened otherwise than by restrictions or burdens imposed by law and as set out in the Policy. Related to this Policy, the Council in 2021 approved a new Student Grievance Resolution Policy, to facilitate the timely investigation and resolution of student grievances in a manner which is fair and just.

Our graduation ceremonies are our most significant events, and after considerable disruption in 2020, we were fortunate in 2021 to be able to hold 33 in-person graduation ceremonies. These ceremonies saw 1057 graduands process across the stage to receive their awards, as well as enabling 1684 of our graduates who had their awards conferred in absentia in 2020 to finally celebrate in person. Council also awarded honorary awards and titles to the following individuals in 2021:

- Doctor of Letters (honoris causa) – Dr David Hinchliffe
- Doctor of Letters (honoris causa) - Emeritus Professor Brian Roberts AM
- Doctor of Business (honoris causa) - Air Commodore (Ret'd) Martin Smith
- Doctor of Science (honoris causa) - Dr David Waters
- Fellow of the University – Ms Jenny Woodward, Mr John Gouldson OAM, Mr Peter Hauser, Ms Maryanne Walsh OAM
- Professor Emeritus – Professor Tony Machin

This year also saw the cessation of the Tenth USQ Council and the appointment of members to the Eleventh Council of the University. I particularly thank outgoing members Dr Carol Cox AM, Mr Scott Sorley and Mr Grant Vickery for their support, guidance and direction. In welcoming the Eleventh Council, I congratulate Ms Rachel Barlow, Mr Chris Bazley, Mr Brett Delaney, Aunty Lorraine Hatton OAM and Assistant Commissioner Charysse Pond APM, as Governor in Council appointments, Professor Pauline Collins and Miss Rachel Hennessy as staff-elected members, and Ms Heidi Dugan and Mr George Fox AM as additional members appointed to the governing body. Other members are Vice-Chancellor Professor Geraldine Mackenzie, Chair of Academic Board Professor Grant Daggard, and student-elected member Mr John Dowling.

In closing, I wish to express my gratitude to all members of Council for their contribution to USQ over the past year, and in turn, Council offers its acknowledgement of the remarkable engagement and effort of the University executive and staff for maintaining the highest quality in learning, teaching and research. As Chancellor, I am incredibly proud of what the University of Southern Queensland achieved this year, and look forward to continued growth and development of this fine University in 2022 and beyond.



Mr John Dornbusch
Chancellor, USQ

Vice-Chancellor's Report

Although the University's campuses, all located in Queensland, were only moderately impacted by COVID-19 and associated lockdowns in 2021, the impact of the pandemic continued to be felt, with international border closures meaning our international students remained unable to enter Australia, and state border closures impacting on the ability of our staff and students to travel for the purposes of placements, residential schools and graduations. However, our long-established online offerings, continued to ensure that the University remained resilient and able to maintain and grow our quality offerings in learning and teaching, and continue to undertake world-leading research to produce innovative solutions to real world problems.

In 2021, we released our Strategic Plan 2021-2025, which articulates our vision to be renowned for our innovation and excellence in education, student experience, research and engagement. Our mission, as Australia's leading regional University, is to create and share knowledge, transform lives and solve the problems that matter to our world, and throughout this year and beyond, we will measure our success in achieving this mission by evaluating our performance across the following areas:

- Growing our student population and broadening participation in higher education
- Being the University of choice across our regions (for staff and students)
- Delivering an outstanding student experience and outcomes
- Growing the quality and quantity of research outcomes
- Contributing to the sustainable development of our communities
- Maintaining our capacity for investment into our future

Our focus on delivering an outstanding student experience and outcomes was recognised via various external metrics during the year. The 2021 Graduate Outcomes Survey Report showed that University of Southern Queensland graduates have the equal highest starting salary in Australia, our graduates' overall satisfaction rates for both undergraduate and postgraduate experience place USQ in the top 10 of universities in Australia. The University ranked in the Top 500 of the Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2022 (released in September 2021) for the first time. The University also maintained its position within the 101-150 band in the Times Higher Education Young Universities ranking for 2021, and significantly, received an overall 5-Star rating in the QS Stars University Ratings in 2021. QS Stars rates higher education institutions worldwide, on the basis of criteria such as program strength, facilities, graduate employability, social responsibility and inclusiveness, and to achieve an overall 5 Star rating is a considerable achievement, of which I am very proud.

In April 2021, the University was chosen to lead one of eight national Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hubs, a flagship of the Australian Government's multi-billion-dollar Future Drought Fund. The Southern Queensland and Northern New South Wales Hub will receive more than \$22 million in combined Government and partner funding over four years. During the year, we continued our long-standing partnership with the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries to deliver the Broad Acre Cropping Initiative 2.0, involving a \$5 million grant from the Department. In 2021, we were very pleased to be awarded an NHMRC Partnership Grant of \$1.13 million to conduct a world-first trial of a new survivorship care model for prostate cancer.

Despite the challenges faced by the higher education sector in 2021, the University of Southern Queensland has many significant achievements, in which our students, staff and community take great pride. The following Annual Report provides a detailed review of the year, and provides a positive picture of our many achievements, which are testament to our continued growth and development.



Professor Geraldine Mackenzie
Vice-Chancellor, USQ

Overview: The University of Southern Queensland

Functions

USQ is a body corporate established pursuant to the provisions of the *University of Southern Queensland Act 1998* (the USQ Act). The latest version of the *USQ Act* came into effect from 1 August 2018.

USQ's functions under Section 5 of the *USQ Act* are:

- to provide education at university standard;
- to provide facilities for, and encourage, study and research;
- to encourage the advancement and development of knowledge, and its application to government, industry, commerce and the community;
- to provide courses of study or instruction (at the levels of achievement the Council considers appropriate) to meet the needs of the community;
- to confer higher education awards;
- to disseminate knowledge and promote scholarship;
- to provide facilities and resources for the wellbeing of the University's staff, students and other persons undertaking courses at the University;
- to exploit commercially, for the University's benefit, a facility or resource of the University, including, for example, study, research or knowledge, or the practical application of study, research or knowledge, belonging to the University, whether alone or with someone else; and
- to perform other functions given to the University under *USQ Act* or another Act.

In line with the functions as stated in the *USQ Act*, The University defines its purpose as *leading in economic and social development through higher education and research excellence*.

Organisational values

USQ fosters a values-driven culture – one that is built around relationships and community; mutual respect; diversity and inclusion; and a strong commitment to ethical behaviours and integrity, collaboration, creativity and innovation. The organisational values are Respect, Integrity and Excellence.

The philosophy underlying USQ's business and operational model also naturally reflects the five Queensland Public Service Values (<https://www.forgov.qld.gov.au/our-values>)

Customers first:

- Student success and attainment are central to our learning and teaching.
- Mutually beneficial partnerships are core to our research and engagement.
- Internal customer focus informs our service culture.

Ideas into action:

- 'Challenging the norm and suggesting solutions', 'encouraging and embracing new ideas' and 'working across boundaries' are all central to the operations of a university.

Unleash potential and empower people:

- USQ prides itself as a university that supports the broadening of university attainment, has a positive impact on society, and builds a high-performing and productive workforce.

Be courageous:

- USQ is an organisation that takes responsibility for its actions, learns from both its successes and mistakes, takes calculated risks within approved frameworks, and acts with transparency.

Empower people:

- The USQ People Capability Framework provides a common tool that empowers all individuals and teams to learn and develop the key capabilities required for success.
- Together we are all leaders in striving for economic and social development through higher education and research excellence.

Operating environment

The operating environment for Australian universities continued to be challenging during 2021, with the COVID-19 pandemic continuing to impact significantly on the way in which universities operate. Remote and hybrid working and learning is now normalised, creating new challenges and opportunities in the way in which university campuses, facilities and infrastructure are utilised, however the University's long history in providing digital delivery ensured our staff and students remained well-supported during the year. The impact of international border closures on student commencements across the year continued, and whilst the University did not suffer the same significant financial impacts experienced at other universities, the significantly reduced number of international student enrolments did have a material impact on revenue.

The implementation of the Federal Government's Job-ready Graduates (JRG) package commenced during the year. Whilst the medium-term financial impacts of the JRG package are mitigated due to the transition funding offered, in the longer term it has created a significant growth imperative. As the University began to put steps in place to respond to this financial imperative, other aspects of the JRG package became more prominent. Notably, the new eligibility requirements for Commonwealth Supported Places assigns new accountabilities to universities to ensure students are genuine, academically suited to their course and maintain a reasonable completion rate. To support these requirements, new policies and processes are being implemented to improve the support provided to students and to provide adequate, holistic reporting to monitor student success.

Despite the uncertainties of the environment, the University has maintained its program of strategic investment into its academic and research endeavours which is fundamental to long-term positioning and strategic success. This has been made possible by USQ's underlying financial strength. In an increasingly complex and competitive environment, the University has continued to take actions to deliver sustained load growth and address aspects of the University's cost base in a more structured way to ensure future financial sustainability.

Strategic direction

The University's 2021 priorities focussed on strategies centred around:

- implementing the new University of Southern Queensland Strategic Plan 2021-2025;
- delivering quality and excellence programs, learning and teaching and the Student experience;
- refining development and support opportunities for educators;
- achieving research excellence through developing research culture, reputation and impact and deepening research capability;
- enhancing engagement and advancement;
- improving engagement outcomes and impact;
- strengthening the USQ brand;
- strengthening the performance of our people;
- uplifting our leadership capacity and capability;
- supporting development of a diverse and inclusive work environment;
- diversifying and growing USQ's revenue;
- optimising our data and systems for strategic success;
- strategically aligning USQ's resources.

USQ made sustained progress against these priorities in 2021, despite the challenges created by COVID-19. These achievements are detailed in this Report.

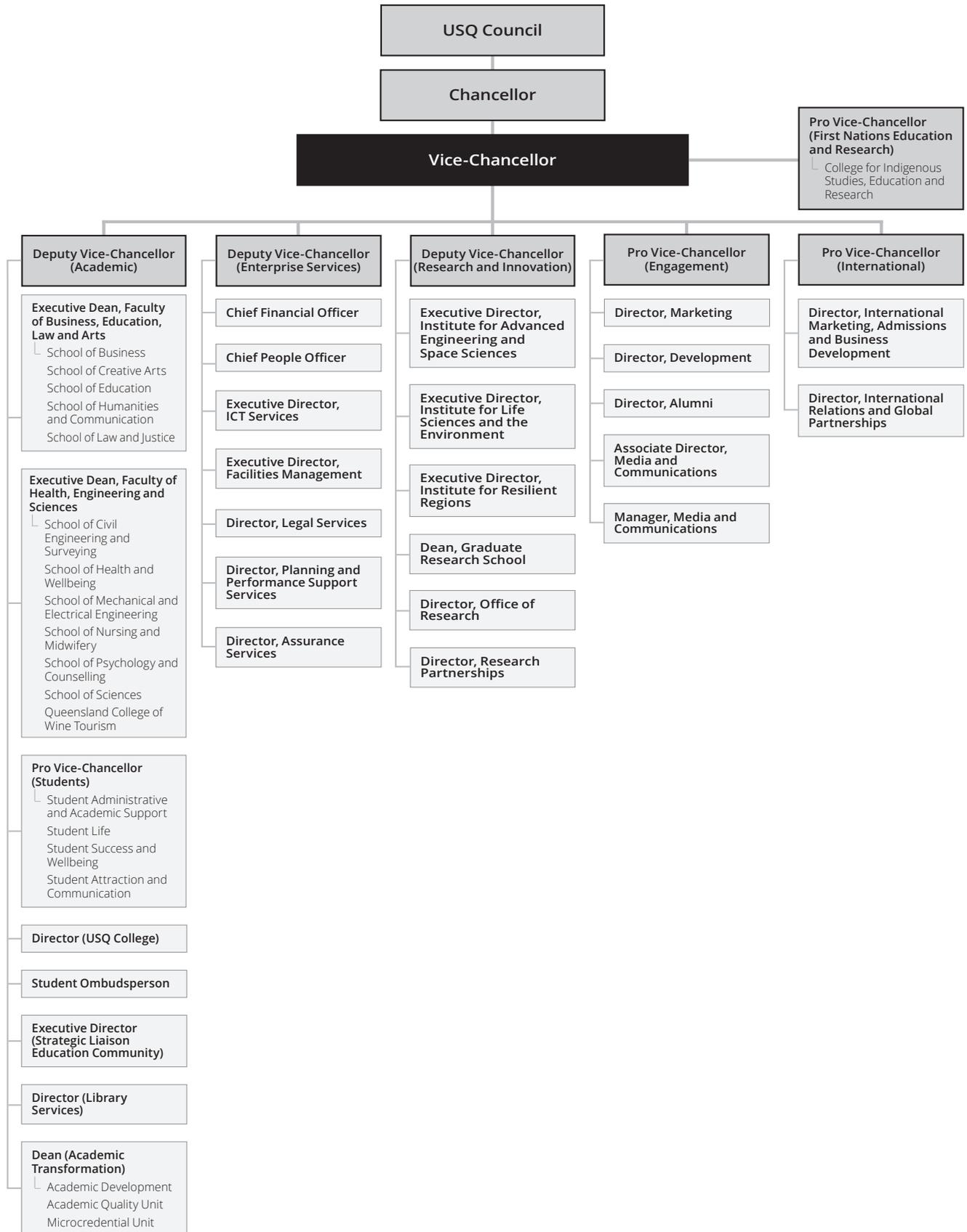
National Security Framework

The University Foreign Interference Taskforce released the Guidelines to Counter Foreign Interference in the Australian University Sector (guidelines) in November 2019. In September 2020, the Office of the Vice-Chancellor commenced a project to identify best practice procedures in response to the guidelines. Throughout 2021, USQ has undertaken a desktop audit of existing instruments (for example: policy, procedures, governance frameworks, systems) to strengthen our position with respect to identifying and managing national security risks. The University has also undertaken a benchmark of 'best practice' examples within the sector and is actively involved in several working groups across the sector engaged around topics related to the University's application to the Defence Industry Security Program, countering foreign interference, Defence Export Controls, and sanctions compliance. The Vice-Chancellor's Executive received a presentation from the Assistant Director from the Counter Foreign Interference Coordination Centre (CFICC) within the Department of Home Affairs, and representatives from ASIO, to discuss how USQ manages risk, the issues faced by USQ in building resilience against foreign interference, and the University's perspective on areas of focus for managing the risk going forward. Building on the University's existing risk frameworks and strong connections to key networks, Universities Australia and the CFICC, USQ is currently implementing a National Security Framework which includes identified key actions across governance and risks frameworks, due diligence mechanisms, communication and education activities, knowledge sharing opportunities and cyber security considerations.

Parallel to this, there has been extensive collaboration in the university sector with regard to countering foreign interference and more specifically reporting in accordance with the Foreign Arrangements Scheme. The Foreign Arrangements Scheme took effect on 10 December 2020, following Royal Assent of *Australia's Foreign Relations (State and Territory Arrangements) Act (2020)*. Under the Scheme Australian public universities had until 10 June 2021 to notify the Foreign Minister of pre-existing non-core foreign arrangements and there are also ongoing reporting requirements. The University met its legislative requirement relating to existing arrangements with 52 pre-existing arrangements submitted to the Government. Reporting on prospective arrangements is ongoing.

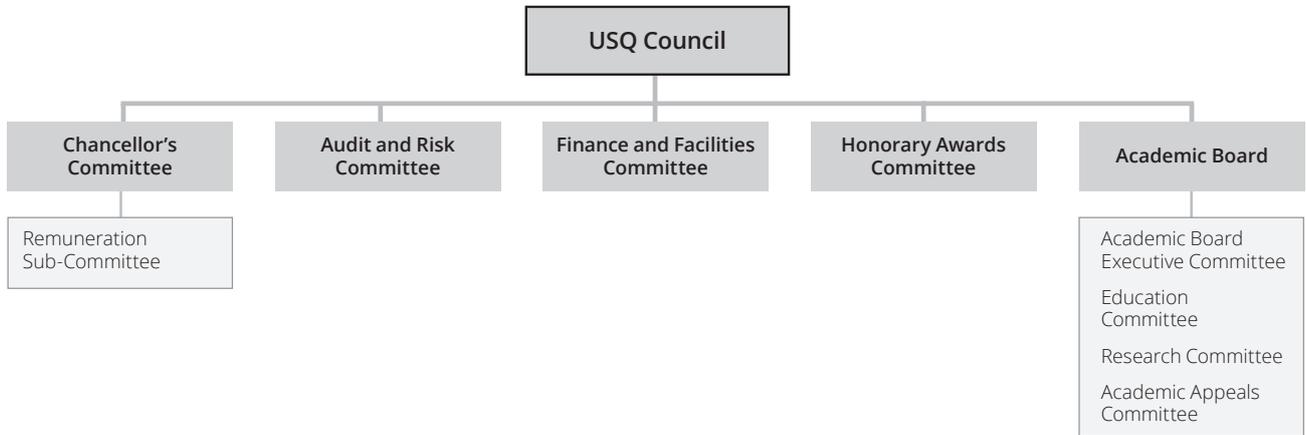
USQ Organisational Structure

as at 31 December 2021

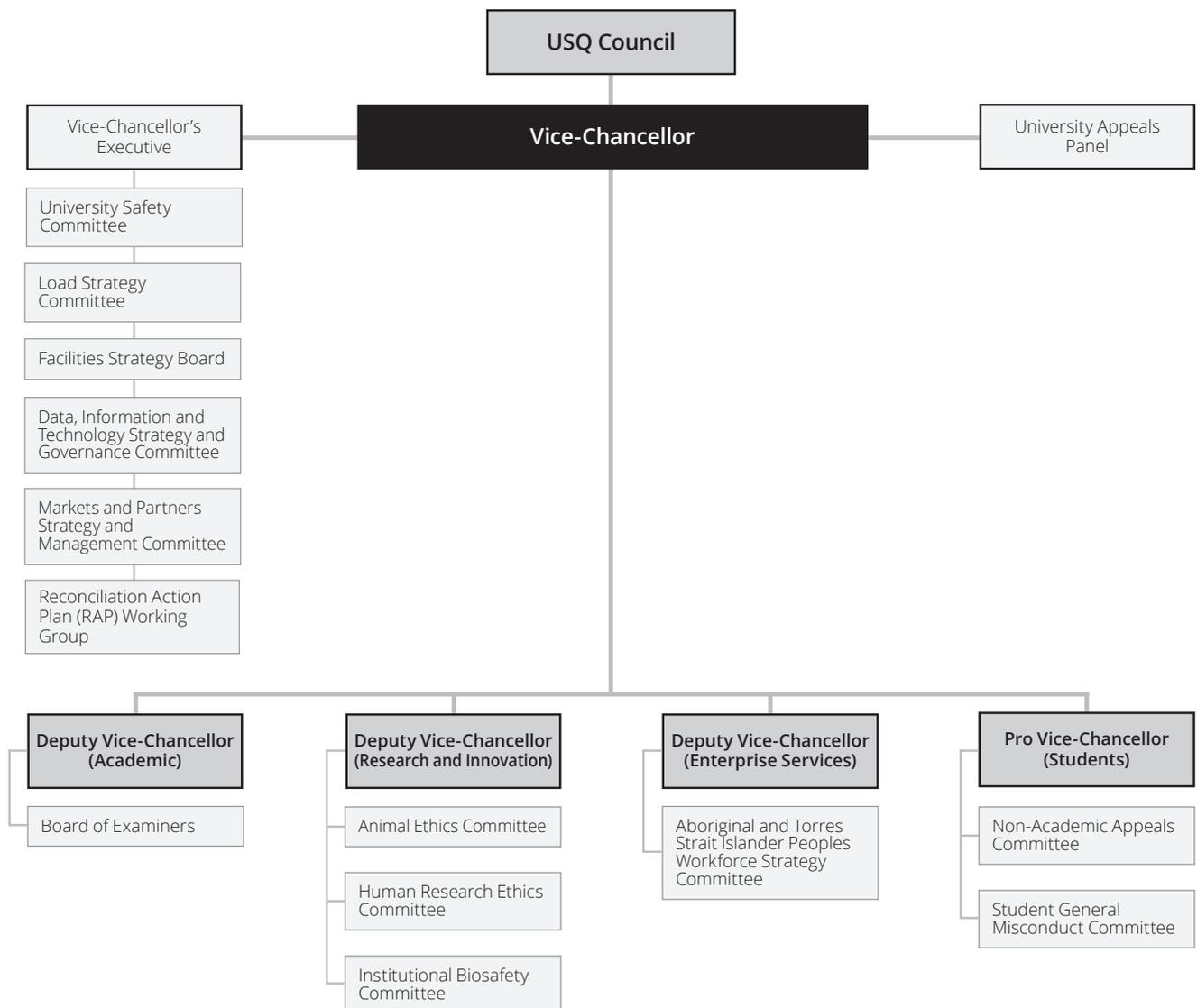


USQ Committee Structure

as at 19 November 2021



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USQ Management

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT

Vice-Chancellor

Professor Geraldine Mackenzie

LLB *QUT*, LLM *QUT*, PhD *UNSW*, FAAL, FQA, FIML, GAICD

The Vice-Chancellor is the chief executive officer of USQ. As Vice-Chancellor, Professor Mackenzie is responsible for the academic, administrative, financial and other affairs of the University, and promotes the interests and furthers the development of USQ. The Vice-Chancellor has line-management responsibility for the Deputy Vice-Chancellors and the Pro Vice-Chancellors who, with the Vice-Chancellor and other leadership staff, comprise the University's leadership team. The position is accountable to the University Council for the academic and financial health of the University.

The Vice-Chancellor exercises general supervision over the activities and welfare of staff and students. The Vice-Chancellor has all such powers and duties as may be necessary or convenient to enable her to carry out her responsibilities.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

Professor Karen Nelson

BIT, BIT(Hons), PhD *QUT*, PFHEA

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) has overall responsibility for the planning, quality and delivery of the University's undergraduate and postgraduate teaching programs, and for achieving high-quality student outcomes. As head of the Academic Division, the position provides strategic direction, leadership and management of the functions of the Academic Division which comprises the Faculty of Health, Engineering and Sciences; Faculty of Business, Education, Law and Arts; Students Portfolio; Academic Transformation Portfolio; USQ College; and Library Services.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services)

Michael Thomas

BBus *QUT*, PGCertMgt *USQ*

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services) has overall management responsibility for the University's business functions, including People Portfolio, Facilities Management, Planning and Performance Support Services, Legal Services, Financial Services, Assurance Services and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Services. This role is responsible for the University's organisational performance; development and improvement through strategic leadership of the corporate services that underpin the successful operation of the University, including the strategic positioning of the University's physical, information, financial and human resources.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)

Professor John Bell

BSc(Hons) *Sydney*, PhD *UNSW*

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) is responsible for providing strategic direction, leadership and management of the University's research activities. This role focusses on enhancing the University's research profile, its research performance, and its culture of research excellence and quality research training. The position oversees the fostering of collaborations and partnerships with government, industry and the community to deliver applied research outcomes that have regional relevance, align with national and international priorities, and deliver global impact. The Research and Innovation Division comprises the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation), Graduate Research School, Office of Research, and the University's three Research Institutes and nine Research Centres.

Pro Vice-Chancellor (Engagement)

Professor John Cole (to 1 October 2021)

BA (Hons) PhD *Qld*

Shawn Walker (from 4 October 2021)

BA, B Ed *ACU*, MBA *RMIT*

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Engagement) is responsible for the leadership and management of key engagement activities at USQ. The position focusses on connecting the University's teaching and research with its diverse communities locally, nationally and globally, in order to create economic, social and cultural value. The role is responsible for the University's brand and reputation, marketing, media and communications, advancement, alumni relations and development, business and community engagement and partnerships.

Pro Vice-Chancellor (First Nations Education and Research)

(from 27 September 2021)

Professor Tony Dreise

B.Teach *Griffith*, M.Public Admin *ANZSOG*, PhD *ANU*

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (First Nations Education and Research) gives voice to First Nations matters and works collaboratively with colleagues across the University to develop and implement a culturally appropriate and inclusive University-wide approach to communication and collaboration on Indigenous issues with staff, students, Traditional Custodians, Elders and the community. The position also provides strategic leadership and vision for the University's College for Indigenous Studies, Education and Research.

Pro Vice-Chancellor (International)

Professor Ren Yi

BA *BUAA*, MBA *Swinburne*, PhD *Melb*

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (International) provides a University-wide leadership role in international strategy and engagement. The position leads the development of the University's international strategies and plans; manages the development of international relationships and partnerships; creates strategic mobility initiatives; identifies and leverages opportunities to grow research capacity in international markets; and provides high-level strategic and operational advice on international regulatory matters, projects, and proposals across all domains of University activity.

Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students)

Professor Josh Pienaar

BSc(CM) *Pretoria*, GCertTertEd *CQU*, MBA *Bond*, PhD *CQU*, FAIB, FRSN, GAICD

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students) is responsible for delivering on the University's priorities related to the student experience. The role provides the strategic leadership to drive innovation in student success, retention, and graduate and career outcomes by strengthening student engagement at the University. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students) plays a central role in the non-academic component of the student journey and experience. The Portfolio includes Outreach and Engagement, Student and Academic Support, Student Life and Residential Colleges, and Student Success and Wellbeing.

Executive Dean (Faculty of Business, Education, Law and Arts)

Professor Barbara de la Harpe

BSc(Hons) *Rand Afrikaans*, GradDipEd *Curtin*, PhD *Curtin*

The Executive Dean, Faculty of Business, Education, Law and Arts, is responsible for providing strategic direction, as well as overarching leadership and management for the learning and teaching, research, service, operational, and outreach functions of the Faculty. The Faculty comprises five Schools including, the School of Business, School of Creative Arts, School of Education, School of Humanities and Communication, and School of Law and Justice, as well as the College for Indigenous Studies, Education and Research (CISER).

Executive Dean (Faculty of Health, Engineering and Sciences)

Professor Glen Coleman

BVSc(Hons) *Qld*, GDipBiotech *QUT*, PhD *Qld*

The Executive Dean, Faculty of Health, Engineering and Sciences is responsible for providing strategic direction, leadership and management of the functions and schools in the Faculty of Health, Engineering and Sciences. The Faculty comprises the Schools of Sciences, Civil Engineering and Surveying, Health and Wellbeing, Mechanical and Electrical Engineering, Nursing and Midwifery, and Psychology and Counselling. The Executive Dean also has executive responsibility for the Queensland College of Wine Tourism (QCWT), a joint venture winery and training centre, in conjunction with the Queensland Government.

Chief Financial Officer

Athol Kerridge

DipCoDirCrs A/CD, BBus USQ, MBA USQ, FCPA

The Chief Financial Officer has the responsibility for supporting the Executive in the development and execution of financial strategy for the University to deliver the outcomes of the Strategic Plan. The role also has management responsibility for the operations of the Financial and Business Solutions Department. This department provides expertise and support in relation to financial operations, procurement, contract management and associated systems, University catering operations, financial systems, financial management related policies and procedures, and financial business advisory services in a business partnership model.

Vice-Chancellor's Executive

The Vice-Chancellor's Executive (VCE), comprising all members of the senior executive, is a key advisory committee to the Vice-Chancellor on all matters relating to the management of the University and on the setting of strategic directions and the development of policy. In 2021, VCE met 22 times.

Specifically, VCE provides advice to the Vice-Chancellor on the following matters:

- The management of the University.
- The relevance, implementation and modification of existing policies and strategies, and on the development of new ones considered desirable.
- The development and review of strategic and operational planning through the review of plans, and negotiation of planning outcomes.
- Institutional performance in all areas of its operation.
- The development of the University's budget methodology and budget allocation.
- The academic and infrastructure planning and development of the University, including Facilities Strategy and Information Communication Technology Strategy.
- The assurance of regulatory compliance and ethical accountability for the institution.
- The implementation of risk management across the University.
- Reports containing recommendations and advice from management committees as required.
- The continued development of University-wide communication and cooperation.
- Other strategic matters referred to the committee by members.

Executive Service to the Professions and the Community

Vice-Chancellor Professor Geraldine Mackenzie

Professor Mackenzie is a board member of Universities Australia, the peak body for the higher education sector in Australia. Professor Mackenzie is also a board member of the Regional Australia Institute, and Chair of the Board of the Ipswich Hospital Foundation. Professor Mackenzie is a member of the Australian Government Space Industry Leaders Forum, and represents the University on the Regional Universities Network Vice-Chancellors Group. She is also a member of the Queensland Vice-Chancellors Committee. She is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Law, the Queensland Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the Australian Institute of Managers and Leaders.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) Professor Karen Nelson

Professor Karen Nelson is a member of the Regional Universities Network and Universities Australia DVC Academic Groups and the UA DVC Academic Executive. She is the chief editor of Student Success: an open access journal exploring the experiences of students in tertiary education; and has been a member of the organising committee, Chair and Co-Chair of the annual STARS Conference for more than twelve years. Professor Nelson also serves the sector as an external expert for the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA).

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services) Michael Thomas

Mr Thomas is a continuing member of the Universities Australia Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Corporate) Group, and represents this Group in the Australian Network of University Planners.

Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation) Professor John Bell

Professor Bell is a Fellow of Engineers Australia, a 2021 graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, a member of the Australian Institute of Physics, the American Physical Society, the American Chemistry Society and the Smart Energy Council. Professor Bell is also a Board Member for the Queensland Cyber Infrastructure Foundation.

Pro Vice-Chancellor (Engagement) Professor John Cole (to 1 October 2021)

Professor Cole continued as a member of the Policy Advisory Board for the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland and also on the community reference panel for Urban Utilities. In addition, he serves on the Queensland Government's steering committee overseeing the delivery of the ecoBiz program to business and industry. In February, he completed three years as Chair of Queensland's Rural Economies Centre of Excellence, a collaboration between USQ, The University of Queensland, Central Queensland University, James Cook University and the Queensland Government. He continues to chair the Clean Growth Choices consortium, an ad hoc multi-party research and extension collaboration assisting community development. He is also a member of a committee assisting Agforce with its social and community policy development.

Pro Vice-Chancellor (Engagement) Shawn Walker (from 4 October 2021)

Mr Walker is a Fellow of the Australian Marketing Institute and a member of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education.

Pro Vice-Chancellor (First Nations Education and Research) Professor Tony Dreise (from 4 October 2021)

Professor Dreise is the Chair of the Indigenous Literacy Foundation, and a member of the Australia and New Zealand School of Government Research Committee.

Pro Vice-Chancellor (International) Professor Ren Yi

Professor Yi is a Board Member of the International Education Association of Australia. He is the recipient of the Award for Excellence in Research Management Leadership 2021, presented at the virtual INORMS World Congress in Hiroshima, Japan. Professor Yi is a past President of the Australasian Research Management Society, the International Network of Research Management Societies, and Universities Australia Deputy Vice-Chancellor (International) Executive Group. He serves as a reviewer of the Australia Research Council and the European Commission, including Horizon Europe and Erasmus+ programs.

Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students) Professor Josh Pienaar

Professor Pienaar currently as an external expert for the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, is an external reviewer for the Oman Academic Accreditation Authority, and a specialist for the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications. In 2021, he chaired the Australian Institute of Building (AIB) Accreditation Panel for Victoria University, and is an active member of the AIB Course Accreditation Committee. Professor Pienaar is the co-founder of the Australasian Building Information Modelling Academic Forum. He is a Fellow of both the Australian Institute of Building and the Royal Society of New South Wales and immediate past President of the Australasian Universities Building Education Association (AUBEA). Professor Pienaar is an Honorary Professor in the School of Science, Engineering and Environment at the University of Salford in the United Kingdom.

Executive Dean (Business, Education, Law and Arts) Professor Barbara de la Harpe

Professor de la Harpe is a Board Member of the Council for Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, the peak advisory body for the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences in Australia. She is also a member of the Australasian Council of Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities.

Executive Dean (Faculty of Health, Engineering and Sciences) Professor Glen Coleman

Professor Coleman is current Chair of the Australian Veterinary Association Queensland Division education sub-committee and remains active in national and international veterinary accreditation matters. In 2021, he participated in reviews of the veterinary programs offered by Massey University and the University of Glasgow. Professor Coleman also serves as a Board Member for the Ipswich Region Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Queensland College of Wine Tourism, and Southern Queensland Rural Health.

Chief Financial Officer Athol Kerridge

Mr Kerridge is a Fellow of CPA Australia, a Board Member of the Queensland College of Wine Tourism, and a member of The Glennie School Council.

Governance

Governing body – USQ Council

Under Sections 7 to 11 of the *USQ Act 1998*, the University Council is established as the governing body of the University. The Council consists of official, appointed, elected and additional (co-opted) members. As Council members contribute to the development of policy and strategic planning, they are expected to have a knowledge and understanding of the legislative framework within which strategy and policy may be developed and applied in order to minimise risks.

The legislative framework within which the Council operates is the *USQ Act*. The *USQ Act* defines the functions and powers of the Council (at Sections 8 and 9) and sets limits on what the University and its authorities may do.

Under the *USQ Act 1998*, the Council has the power to:

- do anything necessary or convenient to be done for, or in connection with, its functions
- appoint the University's staff
- manage and control the University's affairs and property
- manage and control the University's finances.

The Council may delegate its powers to:

- an appropriately qualified member of the Council
- an appropriately qualified committee that includes one or more members of the Council
- an appropriately qualified member of the University's staff.

However, the Council is not able to delegate its power to make an election policy, nor to adopt the University's annual budget.

A delegation of a power to the Vice-Chancellor may permit the sub-delegation of the power to an appropriately qualified member of the University's staff.

Section 10 of the *USQ Act 1998* states that, in discharging these responsibilities, the Council must act in the way that appears to it most likely to promote the University's interests. In doing so, the Council endeavours to monitor and assess its performance, both collectively and in terms of the individual contributions of members.

The University also complies with the Voluntary Code of Best Practice for the Governance of Australian Public Universities.

Insurance premiums have been paid to insure each of the Councillors and officers of the University against any costs and expenses incurred by them in defending any legal proceeding arising out of their conduct while acting in their capacity as officers of the University.

USQ Council members are able to receive remuneration for attendance at Council meetings and Council activities. Council members who are also University employees receive their normal remuneration while attending to Council business. The University accepts financial responsibility for travel costs related to Council meetings and Council activities. Remuneration details can be accessed at: usq.edu.au/about-usq/governance-leadership/plans-reports

USQ Council key achievements in 2021

Council governs all the University's affairs, finances and property. Some selected specific achievements in 2021 include the following:

- Approved the 2020 USQ Annual Report and Financial Statements.
- Approved the USQ Annual Plan and Budget for 2022.
- Approved a new USQ Strategic Plan 2021-2025.
- Approved monthly Financial Statements throughout the year.
- Approved University domestic, international and administrative fee schedules for 2022/2023.
- Approved updated terms of reference for all Council committees (including the Academic Board).
- Approved reappointment of Professor Grant Daggard as Chair, Academic Board for a further three-year term from 27 July 2021, up to but not including the Academic Board meeting in July 2024.
- Approved an updated Charter of University Governance.
- Approved an updated Assurance (Internal Audit) Charter.
- Approved the USQ Modern Slavery Statement for 2020.
- Approved a new Student Grievance Resolution Policy and associated repeal of the existing Student Complaint and Appeal Policy.
- Approved a new Prevention of Discrimination, Bullying and Sexual Misconduct Policy.
- Held a half-day Reflective Forum to consider specific strategic matters.
- Conducted a self-evaluation of the Tenth USQ Council.
- Authorised the Vice-Chancellor to approve a Standing Offer Arrangement with Dell Australia for procurement of University end-user computing, noting that the agreement exceeded the Vice-Chancellor's financial delegation.
- Approved the renaming of B Block, Toowoomba Campus to the Bobbie Brazil Building, in recognition of former Chancellor and longstanding Council member Dr Bobbie Brazil AO.
- Approved the naming of a new garden on Toowoomba Campus to the Don Stevens Garden, in recognition of former Chancellor and longstanding Council Member, Dr Don Stevens AM.
- Approved the renaming of the Toowoomba Campus entrance drive to the John Dornbusch Drive, in recognition of current Chancellor and longstanding Council Member Mr John Dornbusch.
- Welcomed the Eleventh USQ Council in October 2021.
- Reconstituted Council standing committees for the term of the Eleventh USQ Council.
- Approved a proposed Early Retirement Scheme, subject to Australian Taxation Office approval.
- Approved the investment of a portion of the University Student Endowment Fund with the Queensland Investment Fund Corporation (Long Term Diversified Fund).

10th USQ Council

(07/10/2017 to 06/10/2021)

Meetings and membership¹

The 10th Council of the University met on seven occasions during 2021. Membership was as follows:

Chancellor (ex-officio)

Mr John Dornbusch

BEd UNE, BEd MBA USQ, OPM Harvard, FAICD

Retired Chair, Dornbusch Partners Pty Ltd, Toowoomba

5/5

[4/5] Chair, Chancellor's Committee

[1/1] Chair, Remuneration Sub-Committee

[0/1] Chair, Honorary Awards Committee

[4/5] Member, Audit and Risk Committee

[4/5] Member, Finance and Facilities Committee

Vice-Chancellor (ex-officio)

Professor Geraldine Mackenzie

LLB Q/T, LLM Q/T, PhD UNSW, FAAL, FQA, FIML, GAICD

5/5

[5/5] Member, Chancellor's Committee

[1/1] Member, Honorary Awards Committee

[5/5] Member, Finance and Facilities Committee

Chair, Academic Board (ex-officio)

Professor Grant Daggard (31 July 2018 up to but not including Academic Board meeting in July 2021; 27 July 2021 up to but not including Academic Board meeting in July 2024)
DipEd BA(Hons) PhD Macquarie

5/5

[4/5] Member, Chancellor's Committee

[1/1] Member, Honorary Awards Committee

One member of the full-time academic staff of the University, elected by members of that staff

Professor Pauline Collins

LLB Adelaide, BVisArt GDipProfComm USQ, LLM PhD Qld

Professor (Law), School of Law and Justice, Faculty of Business, Education, Law and Arts, USQ

5/5

[1/1] Member, Honorary Awards Committee

One member of the full-time staff of the University, other than the academic staff, elected by members of that staff

Mr Scott Sorley – from 04/01/2021 to 06/10/2021

BBus MBIT USQ

Executive Director (ICT Services), USQ

5/5

[1/1] Member, Honorary Awards Committee

One student member, elected by the enrolled students of the University

Mr Grant Vickery – from 29/05/2020 to 18/04/2021

Enrolled student, Faculty of Health, Engineering and Sciences, USQ

2/2

Mr John Dowling – from 19/04/2021

BPsychSc UNE, BSc(Hons) Psychology USQ

Enrolled student, Faculty of Health, Engineering and Sciences, USQ

3/3

Five members appointed by the Governor-in-Council

Ms Rachel Barlow

BBus USQ, GDipAppFinInv Finsia, FFin, CFP®

Senior Private Client Advisor, MGD Wealth Ltd

4/5

[5/5] Member, Finance and Facilities Committee

[1/1] Member, Remuneration Sub-Committee

Mr Chris Bazley

BBus Qld, FAICD

Agricultural Business Advisor/Farmer

5/5

[5/5] Chair, Finance and Facilities Committee

[5/5] Member, Audit and Risk Committee

[5/5] Member, Chancellor's Committee

[1/1] Member, Remuneration Sub-Committee

Dr Carol Cox AM

MBChB Edin, FRACGP FRCP

Fellow of USQ, Retired Family Practitioner, Toowoomba

5/5

[5/5] Member, Chancellor's Committee

[1/1] Member, Honorary Awards Committee

¹ [2/2] refers to Meetings attended / Meetings eligible to attend

Mr Brett Delaney

BCom *Qld*, FCA

Retired President, National Heart Foundation of Australia (Qld Division). Retired Member, National Board, National Heart Foundation of Australia. Retired Assurance Partner, PricewaterhouseCoopers. Retired Chair of Audit Committee, Honeycombes Property Group.

4/5

[5/5] *Chair, Audit and Risk Committee*

[5/5] *Member, Chancellor's Committee*

[5/5] *Member, Finance and Facilities Committee*

Assistant Commissioner Charysse Pond APM

BA(Soc) *CQU*, GradDipCrim *QUT*, MLship&Mgt(Policing) *CSU*, GradCertAppliedMgt *AIPM*

Operational Commander, People Capability Command, Queensland Police Service

5/5

[1/1] *Member, Remuneration Sub-Committee*

Three additional members² appointed by the USQ Council, one of whom must be a graduate of the University

Ms Heidi Dugan

BCA *USQ*, AssocDip(IntlTrade) *RMIT*

Television and Live Broadcast Host. Member of Board of Directors, AustCham Shanghai. Director and Co-Owner, Chef Mama.

4/5

Mr George Fox AM (Deputy Chancellor)

BCom LLB (Hons) *Qld*

Solicitor, Adjunct Professor of Law

5/5

[5/5] *Member, Audit and Risk Committee*

[5/5] *Member, Chancellor's Committee*

[5/5] *Member, Finance and Facilities Committee*

[1/1] *Member, Honorary Awards Committee*

[1/1] *Member, Remuneration Sub-Committee*

Aunty Lorraine Hatton OAM – from 29/03/2021 to 06/10/2021

Ngughi/Nunukul Female Elder. Retired Servicewoman, Australian Regular Army. President, Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Dedicated Memorial Committee. Director, Quandamooka Yoolooburrabee Aboriginal Corporation.

3/3

USQ Council is supported by the Governance Office, headed by the University Secretary

Professor Mark Toleman

BAppSc GDipInfProc *DDIAE*, MSc *JCU*, PhD *Qld*, MACS, MAIS, MAICD

11th USQ Council

(07/10/2021 to 06/10/2025)

Meetings and membership¹

The 11th Council of the University met on two occasions during 2021. Membership was as follows:

Chancellor (ex-officio)

Mr John Dornbusch

BEd *UNE*, BEd MBA *USQ*, OPM *Harvard*, FAICD

Retired Chair, Dornbusch Partners Pty Ltd, Toowoomba

2/2

[1/1] *Chair, Chancellor's Committee*

[1/1] *Chair, Honorary Awards Committee*

[1/1] *Member, Audit and Risk Committee*

[1/1] *Member, Finance and Facilities Committee*

Vice-Chancellor (ex-officio)

Professor Geraldine Mackenzie

LLB *QIT*, LLM *QUT*, PhD *UNSW*, FAAL, FQA, FIML, GAICD

2/2

[1/1] *Member, Chancellor's Committee*

[1/1] *Member, Honorary Awards Committee*

[1/1] *Member, Finance and Facilities Committee*

Chair, Academic Board (ex-officio)

Professor Grant Daggard (27 July 2021 up to but not including Academic Board meeting in July 2024)

DipEd BA(Hons) PhD *Macquarie*

2/2

[1/1] *Member, Chancellor's Committee*

[1/1] *Member, Honorary Awards Committee*

One member of the full-time academic staff of the University, elected by members of that staff

Professor Pauline Collins

LLB *Adelaide*, BVisArt GDipProfComm *USQ*, LLM PhD *Qld*

Professor (Law), School of Law and Justice, Faculty of Business, Education, Law and Arts, *USQ*

2/2

[1/1] *Member, Honorary Awards Committee*

One member of the full-time staff of the University, other than the academic staff, elected by members of that staff

Miss Rachel Hennessy

BBusCommerce *USQ*

Student Enrichment Officer (Student Leadership), *USQ*

2/2

[1/1] *Member, Honorary Awards Committee*

One student member, elected by the enrolled students of the University

Mr John Dowling

BPsychSc *UNE*, BSc(Hons) Psychology *USQ*

Enrolled student, Faculty of Health, Engineering and Sciences, *USQ*

2/2

Five members appointed by the Governor-in-Council

Ms Rachel Barlow

BBus *USQ*, GDipAppFinInv *Finsia*, FFin, CFP®

Senior Private Client Advisor, MGD Wealth Ltd

2/2

[1/1] *Member, Finance and Facilities Committee*

Mr Chris Bazley

BBus *Qld*, FAICD

Agricultural Business Advisor/Farmer

1/2

[1/1] *Chair, Finance and Facilities Committee*

[1/1] *Member, Audit and Risk Committee*

[1/1] *Member, Chancellor's Committee*

Aunty Lorraine Hatton OAM

Ngughi/Nunukul Female Elder. Retired Servicewoman, Australian Regular Army. President, Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Dedicated Memorial Committee. Director, Quandamooka Yoolooburrabee Aboriginal Corporation.

2/2

[1/1] *Member, Chancellor's Committee*

[1/1] *Member, Honorary Awards Committee*

Mr Brett Delaney

BCom *Qld*, FCA

Retired President, National Heart Foundation of Australia (Qld Division). Retired Member, National Board, National Heart Foundation of Australia. Retired Assurance Partner, PricewaterhouseCoopers. Retired Chair of Audit Committee, Honeycombes Property Group.

2/2

[1/1] *Chair, Audit and Risk Committee*

[1/1] *Member, Chancellor's Committee*

[1/1] *Member, Finance and Facilities Committee*

Assistant Commissioner Charysse Pond APM

BA(Soc) *CQU*, GradDipCrim *QUT*, MLship&Mgt(Policing) *CSU*, GradCertAppliedMgt *AIPM*

Operational Commander, People Capability Command, Queensland Police Service

2/2

¹ [2/2] refers to Meetings attended / Meetings eligible to attend

Three additional members² appointed by the USQ Council, one of whom must be a graduate of the University

Ms Heidi Dugan

BCA USQ, AssocDip(IntlTrade) RMIT

Television and Live Broadcast Host. Member of Board of Directors, AustCham Shanghai. Director and Co-Owner, Chef Mama.

2/2

Mr George Fox AM (Deputy Chancellor)

BCom LLB (Hons) Qld

Solicitor, Adjunct Professor of Law

2/2

[1/1] Member, Audit and Risk Committee

[1/1] Member, Chancellor's Committee

[1/1] Member, Finance and Facilities Committee

[1/1] Member, Honorary Awards Committee

One position VACANT

USQ Council is supported by the Governance Office, headed by the University Secretary

Professor Mark Toleman

BAppSc GDiplInfProc DDIAE, MSc JCU, PhD Qld, MACS, MAIS, MAICD

Legislative Compliance

TEQSA registration

The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) is the regulator of Australia's higher education sector. The University is required to comply with the TEQSA *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021* as part of its registration as a higher education provider in Australia.

The University's re-registration in May 2018 included one condition relating to 'Governance and Accountability Reporting Obligations'. The University completed submission to TEQSA in September 2021 of all required items of statutory and non-statutory evidence, including the minutes of Academic Board and Council. The University has continued to implement processes and initiatives to meet the requirements of the re-registration condition, and progress to date has been deemed satisfactory by TEQSA.

Academic Board

USQ maintains an Academic Board with defined roles under Part 4, Division 3 of the *USQ Act*. The Academic Board serves as the key advisory committee to USQ Council on academic matters. The Board monitors the academic activities of the University's faculties, while promoting teaching, scholarship and research, and developing and reviewing academic policy.

The term of office of the current Academic Board is three years from 31 July 2021. The term of the current Board will continue up to, but not including the regular meeting of the Academic Board in July 2024.

The Board comprises of 35 members, including members of the Senior Executive, representatives from key areas of USQ, academic staff, and student representatives. Five standing committees report to and advise the Academic Board – Academic Board Executive Committee, Academic Program Committee, Education Quality Committee, Research Committee, and Academic Appeals Committee.

The Board met on six occasions throughout 2021. Recommendations were considered for the reaccreditation of three existing programs and the accreditation of eight new programs. Recommendations were considered for the discontinuation of 17 existing programs.

The Academic Board's focus for 2021 has been to monitor implementation of the Academic Quality Framework in response to the TEQSA re-registration condition, as mentioned above. Other actions have included:

- Consideration and approval of a range of academic quality policies.
- Consideration of the prototype Consolidated Academic Quality Reports and the action plans developed in response to identified issues.
- Restructure of Academic Board Standing Committees.

Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019 (Qld)

The University of Southern Queensland is a statutory body under Queensland's *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019*. The Standard provides a framework for the development and implementation of systems, practices and controls for the efficient, effective and economic financial and performance management of the University. USQ has a range of policies, procedures and systems in place to ensure compliance with its responsibilities under the Standard in the areas of strategic and operational planning, performance management and review, general resource management, internal audit, and reporting.

The USQ Planning, Reporting and Review Framework

Under Queensland's *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019*, USQ is required to have in place a strategic plan covering a period of at least four financial years, and processes for annual operational planning and performance reviews that meet specific legislative guidelines. The *USQ Strategic Plan 2021–2025* was approved by USQ Council in May 2021 and the University develops an Annual Plan and Budget which meets legislative requirements.

USQ also enacted further improvements to its *Planning, Reporting and Review Framework in 2021*. This included the continued development and implementation of the Integrated Planning Framework and calendar that began in 2020. The Integrated Planning Framework provides increased alignment and transparency between USQ's Strategic Objectives, the underpinning operational planning, and resource allocation. Critical operational components of the Framework developed and implemented in 2021, included key result indicators and their associated reporting as well the progression of a series of underpinning strategies and plans. New digitised operational plan templates were also released as part of the annual budget setting process in 2021 creating the alignment guided by the Framework.

Financial management practices

USQ has a number of policies and procedures published as part of the *Financial Management Practice Manual (FMPM)*. The FMPM provides an authoritative internal source of information and guidance to assist the University to manage its financial resources and meet its financial responsibilities and obligations. The FMPM includes policies in relation to financial management and accountability, revenue, expenditure, assets and liabilities to support the financial management and financial operation of the University, and these are reviewed regularly in accordance with the policy review cycle.

Financial reporting arrangements

Internally, monthly financial statements are reported to Council's Finance and Facilities Committee. These are recommended for approval to Council. The unaudited Annual Financial Statements are considered by the Finance and Facilities Committee at its February meeting, and recommended for approval to Council at its following meeting for inclusion in the USQ Annual Report after audit by the Queensland Audit Office. In line with USQ's status as a not-for-profit Higher Education Provider established under the *USQ Act 1998*, and a statutory body as defined in the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*, the Annual Financial Statements represent the audited general-purpose financial statements of the University. They are prepared on an accrual basis and comply with Australian Accounting Standards. Additionally, the statements have been prepared in accordance with the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (Financial Statement Guidelines) and the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019* issued pursuant to the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*.

Assurance Services

The Council and the Vice-Chancellor recognise Assurance Services as key components of USQ's governance framework. Operating independently, Assurance Services provides objective assurance and advisory service to:

- the Vice-Chancellor on the adequacy and effectiveness of risk management, internal control, compliance and governance processes;
- the Vice-Chancellor and Council that USQ's financial and operational controls are designed and operating in an efficient, effective, economical and ethical manner within acceptable risk; and
- assist management in improving the University's performance.

Internal audit

The Assurance Charter, which is reviewed annually, establishes the authority and responsibility conferred on Assurance Services so that it may operate as an effective function of the University in accordance with the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* and the *Financial and Performance and Management Standard 2019*. The Charter is consistent with the Audit and Risk Committee Terms of Reference. The Charter was reviewed and endorsed by the Vice Chancellor and the Audit and Risk Committee, before being approved by Council.

Assurance Services plays a key role in:

- developing and maintaining a culture of accountability and integrity;
- facilitating the integration of risk management into day-to-day business activities and processes; and
- promoting a culture of cost consciousness, self-assessment, and adherence to high ethical standards.

In 2021, an Internal Audit Plan was implemented by Assurance Services and augmented through an established co-sourced partner arrangement. The Internal Audit Plan provides an appropriate level of assurance to the Audit and Risk Committee, University Council, and management by focusing on key risks, business processes and information systems across the University.

Six individual audits were delivered during the year, across a range of audit types, including financial, compliance and performance audits. These audits included Cybersecurity (Malware), Transnational Education Providers, External Research Grant Management, USQ Hub, Payroll and Student-Led Clinics. The program has been supplemented through the implementation of a Continuous Controls Monitoring solution covering the financial management system.

Assurance Services was assessed through an external quality review conducted by the Institute of Internal Auditors – Australia and was found to conform to the requirements of the International Professional Practices Framework.

Compliance

USQ routinely monitors the external environment to ensure that compliance with regulatory instruments remains embedded in policies and procedures. The University has implemented a Compliance Register and has compliance plans in place covering its obligations.

Risk management

The *USQ Risk Management Policy* and *USQ Risk Management Plan* have been adopted to establish a Risk Management Framework informed by international standards (ISO 31000:2018 and aligned to the *Institute of Internal Auditors Framework*) to comply with the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019*.

The University continues to identify and document its most significant risks, with active monitoring and consideration of risk-reduction strategies undertaken through University committees and reviewed by executive management. Reporting on risk management activities is provided to the Vice-Chancellor's Executive, the Audit and Risk Committee, and Council. During 2021 all material risks were reviewed as part of the formation of the University Strategic Plan 2021-2025 and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Overall, there has been a continual maturing of the audit and risk activities at USQ which is reflected in the review of the Risk Management policy suite, Strategic Risk Register, and Risk Appetite Statements which confidently provides governance and management with high-quality reporting on the University's risk profile and the status of associated risk management activities.

Audit and Risk Committee

The University Council has in place the Audit and Risk Committee, operated in accordance with *Audit Committee Guidelines – Improving Accountability and Performance*, published by the Queensland Government Treasury Department.

The primary purpose of the Audit and Risk Committee is to provide independent assistance to the University Council by overseeing and monitoring the governance, risk, control and compliance frameworks, as well as internal accountability requirements of the University and its controlled entities.

The Vice-Chancellor's Executive provides advice and assurance to the Audit and Risk Committee on the effectiveness of the risk management framework and the management of risk.

The Audit and Risk Committee is independent of management. During 2021, the Committee comprised three members of the Council (one of whom, the Deputy Chancellor, is ex-officio) who are not employees or students of the University and are able to contribute to the broad skills base relevant to the business of the Committee; and two persons external to the Council and staff of the University who represent the accounting profession with experience in auditing. Members of the Audit and Risk Committee are as follows:

Council Members:

Mr Brett Delaney (Chair)

BCom *Qld*, FCA

Retired President, National Heart Foundation of Australia (Queensland Division); Retired Member, National Board, National Heart Foundation of Australia; Retired Assurance Partner, PricewaterhouseCoopers; Retired Chair of Audit Committee, Honeycombes Property Group

Mr John Dornbusch (Chancellor)

BEd *UNE*, BEd MBA *USQ*, OPM *Harvard*, FAICD

Retired Chair, Dornbusch Partners Pty Ltd, Toowoomba

Mr Chris Bazley

BBus *Qld*, FAICD

Agricultural Business Advisor/Farmer

Mr George Fox AM (Deputy Chancellor)

BCom LLB (Hons) *Qld*

Solicitor, Adjunct Professor of Law

External non-Council Members:

Mr Tim Davis

BBus *USQ*, FCA, CTA

Consultant, Horizon Accounting Group, Toowoomba

Mrs Kylee Valentine

BCom *USQ*, FCA

Senior Partner – Brisbane, Findex Australia.

The University Secretary, **Professor Mark Toleman**, served as secretary to the Committee.

The Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services) and Chief Financial Officer attended Audit and Risk Committee meetings by invitation, had rights of audience and debate, but were not members of the Committee.

The USQ Council reviewed the financial statements and accounting policies for appropriateness and compliance with prescribed accounting and other requirements, with reference to recommendations by the Queensland Audit Office.

The Audit and Risk Committee met on six occasions during 2021. Remuneration details can be accessed via: usq.edu.au/about-usq/governance-leadership/plans-reports

Some selected specific achievements of the Committee in 2021 include the following:

- Review and approval of five final internal audit reports.
- Approval of the 2022 Internal Audit Plan.
- Approval of a 2021-2023 Assurance Strategy.
- Endorsement of new co-sourced Internal Audit partner.
- Endorsement of a revised USQ Assurance (Internal Audit) Charter.
- Endorsement of a Continuous Controls Monitoring system for roll-out across various financial processes.
- Review of the Audit and Risk Committee Terms of Reference for recommending to USQ Council for approval.
- Endorsement of the insurance strategy for the University's 2022 insurance renewal program.
- Receipt of regular reports on Risk Management.
- Monitoring of fraud control activities.
- Receipt and monitoring of regular management reports, including on Integrity and Professional Conduct, Litigation, Information Privacy, Safety, Workplace Relations, Right to Information, Legal Discovery and Administrative Access.
- Noted the USQ Modern Slavery Statement for 2020 and the annual obligations relating to this.

External Scrutiny

Independent scrutiny of the University's performance is provided by a range of State bodies which may publish reports on significant operational or performance issues.

Other Legislative Requirements

Records and information management

The University continues to mature its records and information management practices and compliance with the *Public Records Act 2002 (Qld)*, the *Queensland State Archives Records Governance Policy* and the *Records Governance Policy Implementation Guideline*. Internally, the *Records and Information Management Policy*, and *Procedure* direct and guide the University's management of its records and information to meet its obligations and business requirements.

The implementation of the Enterprise Information Management Framework in 2021 provides a coordinated and consistent approach to the management of information across the whole organisation. It highlights the importance of optimising the use of information to create insights, to effectively use, and to realise the full value of information assets. The newly formed Data, Information, Technology Strategy and Governance Committee provides executive sponsorship and oversight of information governance.

A roadmap has been prepared to ensure ongoing maturity with the requirements of the Records Governance Policy.

During 2021, this included the following activities:

- Continued deployment, training and functional support of the electronic document and records management system (Content Manager), including a major upgrade in May 2021.
- Configuration of Content Manager with the Queensland State Archives Retention and Disposal Schedules, to ensure retention and disposal compliance.
- Mapping and applying records retention and sensitivity labels.
- Communication and education of the Enterprise Information Management Framework.
- Integration with USQHub to ensure records management compliance for over 175 workflows and approvals.
- USQHub workflow for the approval of records destruction in accordance with the authority of the Queensland State Archives Retention and Disposal Schedules.
- Appointment of the Information and Compliance Coordinator.
- Development of an information and data management survey for information creators and users.
- Consultancy and advisory service for internal and external records and information management enquiries.
- Professional advice and management of records throughout the information lifecycle.
- Preservation of the history and memory of the University through the USQ Historical Archives.

In 2021 there were no reportable breaches of the public authority's record-keeping system and no records were transferred to Queensland State Archives.

Right to Information Act 2009 (Qld)

USQ continued to meet its statutory obligations under the *Right to Information Act 2009 (Qld)* through:

- the proactive release of documents under the University's Administrative Access Scheme (where possible);
- the processing of formal access requests for documents held by the University;
- maintaining its Publication Scheme, which describes and categorises information routinely available;
- maintaining its Disclosure Log, which makes information available that has been released in response to an access application under the Act;
- ensuring the Right to Information policy and procedures are in place; and
- ensuring mandatory Right to Information training as a component of the e-Induction program.

No formal requests under the *Right to Information Act 2009 (Qld)* were processed in the reporting period. In the reporting period 80 document production notice requests were handled.

Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld)

The University confirms its commitment to manage personal information in accordance with information privacy principles under the *Information Privacy Act 2009* (Qld) and to abide by the rules about transferring personal information outside of Australia and about bound contracted service providers.

Individuals can apply to access their personal information through an administrative access scheme and retain their right to make a formal access application. Four formal applications received during 2021 were finalised within the applicable processing period.

Queensland Public Sector Ethics Act 1994 (Qld)

As defined in the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994* (Qld), the University's Code of Conduct embodies the four fundamental ethical principles of integrity and impartiality, promoting the public good, accountability and transparency, and commitment to the system of government.

The requirement to conform to the Code are prescribed in the University Enterprise Agreement, policy, procedures, and position descriptions. Employees are required to undertake training on induction and continue to undertake refresher training at least annually.

Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)

Since the *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld) commenced on 1 January 2020, the University has progressed a review of all complaint management policies and procedures to embed all obligations. This work was completed in late-2020, and provides guidance to staff, students and the public about human rights complaint processes. Awareness and training material provided by the Queensland Human Rights Commission has been incorporated into the University's Human Resources Learning Hub to promote broad understanding of the application of the Act. There were no human rights complaints received by the University during 2021.

A three-year action plan, established for employee-related matters, has resulted in the following outcomes to date, to reflect obligations under the *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld):

- Executive management briefed on human rights principles and implications.
- The revision of 14 human resource-related policies.
- The establishment of processes to embed human rights principles into future human resource policy development.

Modern Slavery Act 2018 (Cth)

In line with the *Modern Slavery Act 2018* (Cth), the University submitted its first Modern Slavery Statement to the Australian Government for inclusion in its Online Register for Modern Slavery Statements.

As part of the University's commitment to operating responsibly and mitigating risks of modern slavery in its operations and supply chains, a Modern Slavery Working Group was established. Through this group, the University has:

- developed a risk assessment tool to identify potential modern slavery risks within the University's operations and supply chains and suitable actions to mitigate those risks;
- established and/or maintained ongoing membership with several independent organisations who provide specialist advice, assistance and representation within other key industry entities nationally, including the Australian Universities Procurement Network (AUPN) which has enabled the University to adopt a coordinated approach to analysing procurement data and development of various resources;
- incorporated key performance indicators in some contractual arrangements;
- commenced supplier engagement activities to identify high-risk products and services;
- disseminated various communications to University staff to increase awareness of the Act and possible risks within the University's operations and supply chains;
- facilitated staff training through materials obtained through the Australian Border Force and Anti-Slavery Australia; and
- undertook an initial review of the University Policy Library to identify key policies and procedures for inclusion of human rights risks.

These activities, and future actions identified within the University's Modern Slavery Statement, will continue and will be the subject of ongoing monitoring and measurement to ensure the University takes a leading role in improving transparency and addressing the risks of modern slavery in its operations and supply chains.

Integrity and professional conduct

The University continued to demonstrate its commitment to integrity and professional conduct during 2021 through the distribution of guidance material from the Queensland Ombudsman and the Crime and Corruption Commission covering public interest disclosures, corrupt conduct, fraud prevention, recognising and managing conflicts of interest, and reporting gifts and benefits. Major revision of the University's Policy Framework included revitalisation of the Public Interest Disclosure and Corrupt Conduct Reporting and Resolution policies and procedures.

Supporting Queensland Government's Objectives for the Community

USQ actively supports the Queensland government's objectives for the community – as stated in *Our Future State: Advancing Queensland's Priorities* – through its teaching, research and engagement programs.

Unite and recover

- Underpinned by a COVID Safe Framework, learning experience in 2021 continued to be designed to include opportunities for student-teacher, student-student and student-industry interaction and collaboration, regardless of whether students were studying online or on-campus.
- To address the challenges faced by students brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, scheduled on-campus learning activities were transitioned to online for the duration of any lockdowns during the year and student placements were managed in conjunction with placement providers. The University extended its support to students by providing alternatives to location-based paper invigilated examinations by offering alternate final assessments including take-home examinations, time-limited online examinations and online viva voce.
- During 2021, the University offered a suite of 18 short programs designed to provide the opportunity for students to upskill in a number of national priority areas, setting students on a path to employment, career change or advancement, or further study.

Create jobs in a strong economy

- Researchers from USQ's Institute for Advanced Engineering and Space Sciences work with more than 70 aerospace, defence, agricultural machinery and civil engineering companies to deliver knowledge, cutting-edge technologies and industry solutions at the forefront of discovery.
- USQ researcher Professor Allan Manalo from the Centre for Future Materials is working with industry partners to develop a non-corrosive alternative to extend the life of marine infrastructure, with funding received through an Advance Queensland Industry Research Fellowship.
- Dr Leila Javazmi from the Centre for Future Materials is using graphene nanofibers to create low-cost and high-efficient sensors for the multi-billion-dollar composites manufacturing industry.
- USQ has obtained a grant from the Scenic Rim Council to deliver the Scenic Rim Entrepreneurial Hub Online Program. The 12-week Entrepreneurial Hub program will be delivered to business people and entrepreneurial thinkers in the Scenic Rim Region to overcome barriers in starting and growing their ventures and businesses.

- USQ's Australian Collaboratory for Career Employment and Learning for Living (ACCELL) is a multi-disciplinary research and research-training team which addresses the role of dispositional traits and characteristic adaptations in individuals' engagement and learning in their work across a variety of settings. ACCELL's 'Vital Infrastructure Workers in Rural Contexts' program is focussed on the psychological and social qualities of occupations and workers considered vital to the socio-economic success of rural and regional communities. The program aims to develop resources for employers to enhance their strategies to attract and retain workers in regional areas for essential occupations, such as teaching, nursing, veterinary services, farming and mechanical trades.

Keep Queenslanders healthy:

- USQ graduates a significant cohort of health professionals each year and is in the process of expanding its allied health offerings, including place-based education offered at Charleville in conjunction with Southern Queensland Rural Health.
- USQ researcher Dr Rajib Rana is working with the State Government through Advance Queensland and their response to COVID-19 to use artificial intelligence to help emergency call operators screen call for signs of distress and prioritise the provision of services. The Artificial Intelligence Algorithms Identifying Hoax Emergency Calls project as announced as the Queensland Government and Public Sector Solution of the Year at the 2021 iAwards.
- USQ researchers are collaborating with nurses and Aboriginal health services to deliver a project funded through an Indigenous Australians Health Program Grant from the Department of Health for a project to improve wound care in regional and remote Indigenous communities.
- USQ researchers are working with partners, including Cancer Council Queensland and Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia and West Moreton Health, to improve cancer survivorship and quality of life for regional Queenslanders.
- USQ is spearheading a project to develop an online platform giving young people direct access to tailored mental health information and support. The online platform integrates detection, assessment and tailored interventions addressing common mental health problems, such as anxiety, depression, substance use and sleep problems.

- USQ Ipswich operates a Sport and Exercise Clinic which offers major benefits to the local community, providing an exercise rehabilitation service for people with chronic and complex health conditions, who may be unable to pay for private exercise physiology services, or who have exhausted available publicly funded services within the hospital system.
- USQ researchers are focusing on behavioural approaches for the promotion of active lifestyles, looking at sedentary behaviour, muscle strengthening exercise, holistic movement and mental health. Their work has analysed large data sets to determine whether people do enough muscle strengthening activity, as well as currently researching the benefits of moving more and sitting less to offset negative mental health impacts.
- USQ researchers are looking to improve health outcomes, specifically chronic diseases, including obesity, diabetes, HIV/sexual health, and hepatitis, among vulnerable communities. A collective of researchers from varied disciplines (including psychology, economics, nursing, health and wellbeing, and exercise science) are working in partnership with affected communities, health practitioners and industry stakeholders to improve health behaviours and outcomes.

Reduce Queensland's contribution to climate change

- USQ is leading the New Options for Waste and Saving The Environment (NO WASTE) Precinct project to reduce the large amount of waste that ends up in landfill. The NO WASTE Precinct project is implementing a circular economy model to identify the best ways to make commercial and residential recycling and upcycling viable and profitable.
- Researchers from USQ's Centre for Agricultural Engineering are focusing on capturing energy from solid and liquid waste streams from the intensive livestock sector to increase biogas production and decrease the need for methods of waste disposal that negatively impact the surrounding environment. Similar work for the Queensland sugar cane industry is enabling sugar cane producers to use a portion of cane trash for biogas production which can be used to offset energy costs, with the non-degradable portion converted to a valuable source of minerals and organic matter for recycling on the fields.
- Increasing energy costs are one of the major challenges facing Australian agriculture, and a key driver of energy efficiency. A reduction in direct on-farm energy use enables farmers to proactively respond to rising energy costs and contribute to a reduction in greenhouse gases. Information on optimising irrigation system performance, energy

efficiency, selecting alternative farming systems or methods, best management practices and the benefits of emerging technologies is being developed at USQ and delivered to industry via training workshops, field days, fact sheets and web resources. USQ projects will also increase awareness of on-farm energy use and highlight the importance of energy assessments, particularly when considering infrastructure change.

- USQ's Centre for Future Materials is conducting research into the design of cost-effective and high-efficiency thermoelectric materials and devices that directly convert thermal energy into electrical energy, offering a green and sustainable solution for the global energy dilemma. This research is investigating innovative methods for harvesting electricity from waste heat or sunlight, which will place Australia at the forefront of environmentally sustainable energy technologies. USQ researcher Professor Zhigang Chen is developing wearable thermoelectric materials and devices with high cooling performance for personal heat management, through funding received from the Australian Research Council Linkage Projects scheme.

Improve water quality

- USQ has played a key role in the development of on-farm irrigation technologies nationally for the past 20 years by developing precise and automated control systems for a range of irrigation systems across the sugar, cotton and dairy industries. USQ research is focusing on soil structural constraints to productivity, irrigation and wastewater quality, with researchers seeing an immense value in the strategic use of marginal quality water sources for irrigation.
- Traditional land use and farming practices have significant detrimental effects on the quality of waterways and coastal environments. Camera-based 'sense and spray' technologies developed by USQ researchers are helping to reduce the amount of herbicides lost in runoff that can ultimately reach important waterways, including the ocean. Sense and Spray technologies have negated the traditional act of spraying herbicides over an entire field, and instead only target specific areas. This not only significantly reduces the cost for Australian farmers, but also keeps farming chemicals out of waterways.
- USQ researchers and students are actively involved in supporting the Granite Belt Irrigation Project, through a partnership with Granite Belt Water Limited, which will deliver a dam at Emu Swamp, south-west of Stanthorpe, and pipeline throughout the Granite Belt region.

University Strategy

The University of Southern Queensland Strategic Plan 2021–2025 was approved by USQ Council in May 2021. The Strategic Plan states the University's purpose, vision and values; and outlines the University's strategic ambitions supporting its vision to be renowned for innovation and excellence in education, student experience, research and engagement. The Plan is underpinned by four pillars:

1. Our Impact

Build a better future with our communities.

2. Our Connections

Translate ideas and knowledge into opportunities.

3. Our People

Be innovative, engaged and forward thinking.

4. Our Places

Create vibrant hubs of education and research.

Our success will be evaluated by measuring our performance in the following areas:

- Growing our student population and broadening participation in higher education.
- Being the University of choice across our regions (for staff and students).
- Delivering an outstanding student experience and outcomes.
- Growing the quality and quantity of research outcomes.
- Contributing to the sustainable development of our communities.
- Maintaining our capacity for investment into our future.

In the following sections of this Report, strategies and actions enacted during 2021 to progress the achievements of these goals are discussed.

Goal: Growing our student population and broadening participation in higher education

USQ aims to grow the overall student population and the proportion of school leavers that choose to study at USQ. To achieve this goal, USQ provides opportunities for potential school leaver and mature-age students to fully understand the educational offerings we offer and how they link to potential future pathways. The Future Students Strategy, developed in 2021, sets out USQ's commitment to ongoing purposeful career-focussed development with school students and the community in our peri-urban, regional and rural areas to build awareness of and create aspiration for university study and improve the attraction of students in recruitment into the University.

To grow its student population, USQ offers a quality assured, innovative and well-managed, portfolio of traditional and contemporary curriculum offerings that meet student, industry and community needs that communicate and reinforce USQ's reputation as a high-quality higher education provider. Initiatives in 2021 include a focus on an enhanced first year experiences through curricular and co-curricular initiatives that assist transition to learning at university, increasing work-integrated learning and employability in subjects and increasing proactive advising to students.

Domestic recruitment in 2021

Recruitment campaigns throughout 2021 built on the strength of market conditions at the end of 2020 with an emphasis on the consumer and the increasing need for flexibility, support and a robust online mode of study. USQ's recruitment campaigns strongly reinforced the University's leading position of graduate starting salary and full-time employment rankings, coupled with a call to action to apply for each upcoming intake. Across the year, recruitment campaigns targeted the University's primary non-school leaver and school leaver audiences and were timed to align with key milestones along the customer journey for each market.

The USQ brand campaign came to fruition at the end of 2021 with the 'All You Need' campaign hitting the market in November. The awareness campaign reinforced USQ's excellence in education and student experience through a distinctive style. The brand campaign aimed to increase awareness and elevate perception of the brand in all markets, bringing with it a renewed focus on USQ as an excellent choice for higher education.

Improving participation for students from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds

Schools and community outreach

USQ is committed to addressing the significant under-representation of regional students in higher education as a regional university. The University has a high level of brand recognition and is active in communities with low higher education attainment levels. A range of immersive school and community outreach programs are offered to students in regional areas to raise educational aspirations and awareness of post-secondary study options and careers.

In 2021, USQ continued implementing the USQ Discovery Experience. The Discovery Experience offers university exposure to regional school students by delivering aspiration building and career development activities. In particular, schools in disadvantaged areas or with high proportions of students from under-represented groups are targeted. The Program includes study-area-specific activities for Years 7–10, including Paramedicine, Nursing, Law, Surveying and Aviation, to inspire a range of post-school study options. The Discovery Experience activities are designed to immerse students in several different study areas of their choice, with an opportunity to engage and ask USQ Student Ambassadors, academics, and staff questions. In 2021 impact evaluation from Terms one and two found that 75% of participants are more confident about post-high school career options after one of these sessions. In addition, 82% of participants either strongly agree or agree that they are more likely to consider going to University or TAFE after the event.

In 2021, Primary Careers Workshops were introduced to allow Years 5 and 6 students to engage with future careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) through interactive sessions. These workshops focussed on two key areas within STEM, which align with the current University priorities in agriculture, space and engineering. The *Agricultural Science* and *The Science of Space* workshops were aimed at promoting STEM and the careers associated within the community and primary school demographic in the Toowoomba and Ipswich/Springfield region. USQ PhD students and USQ Student Ambassadors from the STEM program areas delivered the workshops.

Deadly Ways and Indigenous Connections

Deadly Ways works with Indigenous students across Years 7 to 12 to engage them in a positive university experience that contributes to raising their career aspirations and encourages them to consider higher education as part of their career path. Deadly Ways moved into its fifth year of operation at USQ in 2021. It provides a continuous pathway for Indigenous students as they journey through Years 7 to 12 to engage with various aspects of university life, pathway opportunities and study options, and experience cultural activities under the guidance of mentors and other role models.

Entry pathways – USQ Early Offer

The University's Early Offer initiative enables Year 12 students, who place USQ as their first preference on their Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) application, to receive an early offer to study at USQ. Students can receive an early offer through a recommendation from their principal or principal's delegate or complete a USQ Head Start course. Offers are conditional on applicants meeting the pre-requisites for the Program of their choice and on successful completion of Year 12. In 2021 USQ made 318 offers to students commencing their studies in 2021 via this initiative.

Scholarships

In 2021 the Scholarships Team assessed applications across 45 USQ, government funded and donor scholarships, to assist 1061 commencing and continuing students on their student journey.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE SCHOLARSHIPS

In 2019, the University introduced the *Become Rewarded Scholarships* to attract high-achieving school-leavers to study full-time, on-campus whilst engaging as citizens of the University through the USQ Student Ambassador Program. In 2021, these scholarships underwent a name change to *Academic Excellence Scholarships*. Year 12 students, who put USQ as their first preference on their QTAC application and achieve the required ATAR, are automatically offered an Academic Excellence Scholarship. Students who receive an ATAR rank between 84 and 97 or above receive one of the three scholarships: Chancellor's Excellence Scholarship, Vice-Chancellor's Scholarship, and the Executive Dean's Scholarship, valued from \$6 000–\$29 000.

In 2021 the Chancellor's Excellence Scholarship was awarded to seven students, the Vice-Chancellor's Scholarship was awarded to 72 students, and 30 students were awarded the Executive Dean's Scholarship.

RESIDENTIAL COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

The USQ Residential College Scholarships contribute towards accommodation costs at the University's Residential Colleges for regional and rural full-time undergraduate students experiencing financial hardship. 2021 saw the return of many students to on-campus study and the enjoyment of Residential College life after many students moved to online study in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions. Benefits include enhanced accessibility to attend academic activities, College support through the academic assistance program, pastoral care and wellbeing support and access to learning communities and engagement activities. In 2021 these scholarships supported 90 students with \$378,400 of scholarship payments made across three semesters.

Destination Australia Program

The Destination Australia Program continues to be an important initiative to support regional university campuses and to encourage students to experience the rewards of living and studying in regional Australia. Funding to the University for the 2021 Round 2 program totalled \$874,500 over four years, to support 17 domestic students and four international students in completing two-year, three-year and four-year programs across a range of disciplines at USQ Toowoomba. This year challenges included Round 1 international recipient still being unable to relocate to Toowoomba due to the pandemic. However, these students continued to be supported by the scholarship whilst studying in their own countries, with the view to relocating to Queensland upon international travel restrictions lifting.

Tertiary Access Payment

The Federal Government's Tertiary Access Payment initiative to encourage outer regional and remote school-leavers to undertake tertiary studies was implemented by USQ in 2021. A one-off means-tested Tertiary Access Payment of \$5,000 was paid to students to assist with costs associated with relocation and daily living expenses to undertake on-campus study at our Toowoomba campus. USQ awarded 27 eligible school leavers a Tertiary Access Payment to assist them in commencing their full-time studies on-campus in Semester 1, 2021.

Provision of Higher Education to students who are incarcerated

The University leads the sector in the delivery of innovative, scalable, sustainable, and replicable courses to students in prisons with digital and offline technology. In partnership with state correctional jurisdictions, in 2021 we delivered high-quality teaching and learning to 1100 incarcerated students enrolled in over 2000 offline courses.

2021 Higher Education Participation and Partnership Program Funding

In 2021 the University received \$5,002,396 in Higher Education Participation and Partnership Program funding as part of the Indigenous, Regional and Low-SES Attainment Fund. This significant allocation is committed to programs that raise awareness, widen participation, ensure access, and improve retention and success for undergraduate students from regional and remote Australia, low SES backgrounds and First Nations people. USQ's strategy encourages students ambitions and higher education awareness, enables equitable access, ensures support systems and programs contribute to engagement and academic success, and enhances their employability, job readiness and career development.

International education

The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically affected Australian international higher education. USQ has continued to respond rapidly to pandemic and associated barriers for international students, and in 2021 the USQ International Strategy for the next four years was reviewed to include post-COVID-19 recovery. USQ will continue to monitor changes resulting from COVID-19 border disruptions and is well prepared to rapidly scale up its activities as Australia repositions towards opening borders in line with greater vaccine coverage. USQ and other Queensland universities worked throughout 2021 with bodies such as Study Queensland and the International Education Association of Australia (IEAA) to influence the opening of Australian borders to international students through the secure corridor initiative.

National Policy and Governance

The Australian Federal Government is developing the Australian Strategy for International Education 2021 – 2030. The strategy aims to guide the COVID-19 recovery of the international education sector, equip the Sector's innovation and responsiveness, respond to emerging opportunities, changes in student demands, maintain Australia's position as an effective and trusted partner in international education, and outline the goals and approach to international education over the next ten years. USQ has worked closely with peak education entities such as Universities Australia, the Regional Universities Network, and IEAA to provide feedback to the Federal Government on the draft Strategy.

International Performance

In 2021, USQ International built on the priorities headlined in the USQ International Strategy 2020-2024 to maintain USQ's existing international education market presence and strengthen, its platform for international education growth when international students are able to return to Australia.

Across the higher education sector, international education providers have responded to the challenge of COVID-19 border disruptions and the consequent international student load reductions. Remarkably, USQ international student enrolments substantially outperformed regional peer universities enrolment when COVID-19 disruptions took effect, based on the 2020 annual report data of the universities in the Regional Universities Network Group (RUN).

In 2021, USQ received an overall 5-Star rating in the QS Stars University Ratings. QS Stars is a rating system that provides a detailed review of higher education institutions worldwide, on the basis of criteria such as program strength, facilities, graduate employability, social responsibility and inclusiveness. After the assessment, universities are awarded an overall Star result which ranges from 0 to 5+ Stars, depending on the number of points achieved through the evaluation. USQ's ratings in each category of assessment were as follows:

- Overall – 5 Stars
- Teaching – 5 Stars
- Employability – 5 Stars
- Research – 5 Stars
- Internationalisation – 5 Stars
- Inclusiveness – 4 Stars
- Social Responsibility – 3 Stars
- Specialist Criteria – Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) – 4 Stars

International Markets

The border closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic impacted significantly on international student recruitment, with prospective students instead choosing to study in the United States, United Kingdom, and Canada. All Australian universities saw declining rates of applications. Among the Australian university groups, the RUN group was the worst affected, however, USQ was the best performing university in the RUN Group.

USQ maintained constant communication with international students during the border disruptions, ensuring they had current information from State and Australian Government authorities. Those students who could not attend classes on-campus were provided with ongoing support to undertake their studies and plan the future progress of their degree programs, where possible, to online delivery. USQ provided support to international students seeking Australian Government travel exemptions to enter Australia. In recognition of the financial hardship experienced by current and future students worldwide, the University offered a 25% fee scholarship to international students in 2021 and will extend this scholarship to 2022. It is also planned that international student fees for 2022 will be maintained at the 2021 rate.

South Asia remains USQ's highest volume international student market, with India and Nepal continuing to perform strongly relative to other markets. The South Asia market orientation buffers USQ's exposure to market fluctuations and competition in the Greater China market. However, market diversification and program differentiation remain priorities of the University to further reduce region-specific risk. Border disruptions during 2021 have created a useful opportunity to focus on market diversification and program differentiation to better position USQ within its target markets when borders re-open. The agent networks in emerging markets have strengthened, presenting opportunities for market growth when disruptions end.

International Partnerships

Diversification was a priority in the international partnership area in 2021, with new opportunities in third-party provider arrangements. Dual award partnership models identified in Latin America, Europe, and the Asia Pacific region better align with current and expected program offerings and Return on Investment expectations.

Prior to January 2021, USQ delivered on-shore and on-campus mobility and study tour programs for international students. With the impact of COVID-19, the closure of Australian borders, and the anticipated post-COVID-19 changes affecting the delivery of these programs in the future, USQ implemented changes to its traditional program delivery options to remain engaged with existing partnerships and to respond to market demand. These include virtual short-term program development and delivery for USQ's study tour partners and the initiation of the Virtual International Experience for study abroad and exchange partners. From 1 January to 30 August 2021, more than 150 students participated in virtually delivered programs for partners in China, Indonesia, Korea, and Japan.

USQ was successful in its application for funding under the 2021 round of the New Colombo Plan. A record number of projects were funded, and these included nursing placements to Vietnam; ceramics and painting study in Japan; sport and exercise science placements in the Solomon Islands; paramedicine placements in Thailand; surveying placements in Nepal; an indigenous study tour opportunity in Fiji and, for the first time, eligible students can spend a semester at USQ's partner institution in Thailand, Mahidol University. Due to the Australian border closure, USQ successfully varied some of these projects to facilitate a virtual delivery mode, rather than in-country. This provided current students with an opportunity to engage in an 'internationalisation at home' mobility program and enabled USQ to meet obligations in line with the funding requirements.

International student enrolments into Higher Degrees by Research (HDR) have consistently increased each year, totalling a 20% increase over five years until 2020. While impacted by COVID-19 disruptions in 2021, international HDR student enrolment has outperformed expectations, with Engineering, Business, Sciences, and Education study areas receiving the strongest enrolment. USQ's international research profile has been further supported by the Cotutelle PhD Program launched in July 2020. A Cotutelle PhD sees candidates jointly enrolled at two universities, jointly supervised by staff at both institutions and upon successful completion of the program, the candidate graduates from both universities with a Doctor of Philosophy. Since its launch, the program has connected USQ to various high-ranked potential new partners in Europe, Latin America, Southeast Asia, and Greater China through a series of coordinated research collaboration workshops, leading to more than 10 Cotutelle candidacies commencing in 2021 and 2022.

Ongoing investment in Omega, USQ's international student admissions system, has maintained its currency and efficiency during dynamic market changes. A dedicated upgrade initiative in the latter half of 2021 was aimed to improve the system's ability to process applications for new complex education products such as cross-institutional Cotutelle programs and study abroad packages. Furthermore, the implementation of the cloud-based MoveOn System to supplement the current Admission and Student Management System in processing and recording both inbound and outbound student mobility programs has commenced. MoveOn allows high customisation across various reporting platforms and will maximise USQ's international mobility and international partnership management and reporting capabilities, enabling the collation and consolidation of international relationships and activities in a centralised system and repository.

Responsible internationalisation

USQ recognises the need to responsibly undertake international education, maintaining the quality of the learning experience offered to all students. In 2021, this has meant responsibly managing the constraints of the current environment to protect the interests of international students and minimise their exposure to disruptions in their study programs, including the students studying through third-party provider arrangements. USQ's strong online platform for the delivery of degree programs has presented a stable foundation for students to study online while they are unable to enter Australia. USQ continues to monitor and modify its processes to ensure that USQ's international education operations for on-campus and offshore programs remain compliant with Australian regulations and able to deliver a high-quality learning experience responsibly. Commencing international student load target setting for 2021 and 2022 reflects the University's intent to maintain its market position during border disruptions and to achieve moderate, sustainable growth during the recovery years.

Students with disabilities

Enrolments of students with disabilities, and the number of students registered and accessing support through the Student Equity unit, continues to increase. In Semester 2 2021 post-census date, 1,276 students had either indicated that they are impacted by a disability at enrolment or have gone on to register for support. From this group, there are 835 students currently receiving support through Student Equity. This is a 25% increase in participation from the same period in 2020. In 2021, there has been a 300% increase of students with a hearing impairment which has ensured a strong focus on the provision of learning materials that are accessible and available to these students. Further, the Student Equity team is engaged in providing diversity expertise contributing to creating a Graduate Certificate in Tertiary Education. USQ continues to contribute to breaking down barriers and working together towards creating a fully inclusive and accessible environment at the University.

Goal: Delivering an outstanding student experience and outcomes

The University is committed to delivering an outstanding student experience throughout the three major phases of a student's relationship with the institution including: transition in, transition through and transition out. These phases, and the transition points between them, offer opportunities for the University to step up and support student success through proactive data-driven student success advising activities. The University adopts a holistic view of its students, recognising they lead complex lives and bring with them a wealth of knowledge and experience and acknowledges that each student will experience all transition stages and that they will do so in highly individualised ways. Other activities include development of a students as partners framework and the rollout of a visible centralised in person and online front-line student enquiry management system 'iconnect'.

Residential Colleges' services during COVID-19

USQ Residential Colleges continued to support students on campus throughout 2021, with all services and activities operating under COVID-safe plans. Residential Colleges also offered all residents a Welcome Pack, with students having the choice of either a laptop, iPad or a Become Ready pack consisting of items designed to reduce the cost of moving on-campus. The Residential Colleges Student Support Scholarship, valued at \$2,000, was also available to residents to provide additional support with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Student assessment of the quality of educational experience

Whilst many universities across the country saw a steep decline in educational experience due to the impacts of the pandemic, USQ's results in the Student Experience Survey remained mostly stable from 2019 to 2020. In comparing outcomes from 2019 to 2020, the average for all students and for all universities was 67.8% (a decline of 9.7%) for the Overall Educational Experience indicator, whereas USQ remained stable at 75.3% (a decline of just 1.2%). The USQ decline of 1.2% was the lowest level of decline for undergraduates of all universities between 2019 and 2020, which is a remarkable achievement in the face of the challenges brought about by the pandemic. The 2020 SES results show USQ is above the national average for all universities in five of the six focus areas including Skills Development, Teaching Quality, Student Support, Learning Resources and Quality of Entire Educational Experience (the outcomes for the remaining focus area of Learning Engagement were stable). Of particular note, USQ's 2020 Teaching Quality result of 80.9% increased significantly by 3.4% on 2019. This result is both higher and also converse to the all-universities average of 77.4% which declined significantly by -3.3%. The 2020 USQ Student Support result of 80.2% also significantly increased by 3.3% on 2019 remaining higher than the all-universities average of 72.9% which declined by -0.9%.

Student survey system

In March 2021, a new USQ Student Survey System was launched to provide the University with the opportunity to survey students by course, major, program or by cohort

demographics. The new system replaces the former MyOpinion survey system that had operated at the University for more than five years and was no longer meeting the current needs of the University. A USQ Student Feedback Executive Advisory Committee has been established to provide oversight of all University internal and external surveys that seek feedback from USQ students. This committee provides valuable insights and data to the Academic Division and Research and Innovation Division, which informs the wider strategic direction and decision making of the University. The Committee will meet quarterly each year to manage and monitor survey activity and application of findings with relation to the student population.

USQ Academic Plan

The *USQ Academic Plan (2019-2022)* spans all academic and related endeavours across the University, providing a whole of University blueprint for the achievement of USQ's overarching strategic goals in alignment with USQ's Strategic Plan. Throughout 2021, a raft of initiatives has been implemented to achieve quality and excellence within:

- USQ's program portfolio including traditional undergraduate and postgraduate programs, innovative education offerings, and structured pathways to USQ for domestic and international students at all levels.
- Innovative learning and teaching policy and practice which is designed to maximise learning, emphasise employability outcomes, and to develop students to be global citizens in a challenging and rapidly changing world.
- Student experiences of USQ that are positive, productive and rewarding and intentionally designed to provide all students with curricular and co-curricular opportunities to enhance and strengthen their learning.

The University's investment into enhancing key technologies that support the *Academic Plan 2019-2022*, structured into six major programs of work, is in progress, with the program of works including:

- Academic Product Information Management Program - A major initiative that will support curriculum design and review that will be managed through a centralised accreditation

portal to transform and digitise USQ's catalogue of program and course information, and enable students to have a guided enrolment experience in developing and progressing their study plan.

- Academic Calendar Project - With the approval of a multi-layered, flexible, and innovative Academic Calendar in December 2021, a twelve-month implementation phase has now commenced. Transitioning of programs into the new calendar will begin in January 2023 and by January 2025 all USQ programs will be aligned to the new Academic Calendar. The intended goal is to increase flexibility by way of expanded study options for USQ students to complete their program of study in the most efficient and affordable means possible, including the option to accelerate program completion via the facility to complete more courses in a shorter timeframe.
- Assessment and Academic Integrity Program - Involves the trial, evaluation, and implementation of online assessment tools to support flexible and contemporary approaches to assessment, ensuring ongoing academic integrity.
- Admissions, Enrolments, Graduations and Credit Program - Academic Credit Management transformation will improve our student experience by simplifying the credit application process, reducing credit assessment timelines, and streamlining the credit management process, assisting students in navigating prior learning and credit management from pre-enrolment through to graduation.
- Student Support and Advising Program - Delivering contemporary, proactive, data-driven, timely outbound contact with students to offer information, advice, support, and mentoring with the aim of increasing persistence with learning, assessment submission, course completion, grade achievement, and progression into subsequent courses.
- Learning and Teaching Program - Focuses on the implementation of a range of system and technology enhancements, upgrades, and innovations to deliver online teaching and learning.

Student success advising

Building on early successes in 2020, Student Success Advising has developed through 2021 under the *Academic Plan*, implementing an integrated program of support for students that brings together specialist academic, personal, and administrative dimensions. Focusing on the first year experience, a purposeful sequence of outreach, and offers of support, is now embedded into the first semester of study for all commencing students. This ensures school leavers and mature-age students alike can establish an early connection to their peers and support staff and are allowed to form appropriate expectations of study habits that promote success at the very beginning of their learning journey.

Student Success Advising initiatives in 2021 included:

- a coordinated effort between Course Examiners and Student Advisors within key discipline-specific pilot projects to embed Student Success Advising in first-year courses to influence increases in the rate of successful assessment submissions;
- an integrated referral service to support examiners to connect students to academic skills and personal support services easily and efficiently; and
- customised coaching courses delivered to professional and academic staff in student-facing roles to promote coaching in the advising context and consistency in how students experience support services at the University.

Student academic progress

The new Student Academic Progress Procedure describes a supportive approach to student progression. It integrates early identification, intervention, and scaffolded support for all students to promote their program of study progression. The implementation of the procedure contributes to the student experience pillar of the Academic Plan by applying a systematic approach to proactive, data-driven, timely outbound contact with students. Interventions include offers of information, advice, mentoring, and goal setting to increase persistence, course completion, grade achievement, and progression. Enabled by the Academic Plan Technologies program of work, the Student Centre has been configured to allow for quick and accurate identification of students who may benefit from an offer of assistance and automated triggers to prompt intervention at each stage of progression management.

Students as partners

Work is underway with USQ students and staff to implement the University's Students as Partners Strategy. The Strategy builds a philosophy and culture based on engaging students as partners, creating safer communities, enhancing USQ frontline services, and proactive, data-driven, personalised student advising.

The Students as Partners Strategy applies the principles recommended by the National Framework for Student Partnership in University Decision-making and Governance. These principles articulate the pathway for the University to embrace the student voice in decision-making and develop a culture of student-staff partnership.

Strengthening the First Year Experience

Within each of the schools and USQ College, academic First Year Experience Leads have been appointed to provide leadership for coordinating and operationalising strategies to strengthen the first year experience through first year curricular and co-curricular reform. To strengthen the first year experience, there was a general focus on: reviewing and redesigning assessment; mapping and making explicit to students recommended enrolment patterns; developing frameworks and action plans to support the implementation of first year experience and transition pedagogies; improving orientation and welcome processes to help students build better social networks and to encourage their participation; and designing school- or program-level USQStudyDesk sites that help make students feel more welcome and included, while also helping make essential information (such as enrolment patterns) more explicit.

Online examinations

In 2021 USQ extended its support to students by providing online examinations to degree programs offered by the University following the rapid transition in 2020 brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Recognising the ongoing challenges faced by students, a 48-hour exam window was introduced, providing students enhanced accessibility and flexibility to complete their exams. Additionally, to further assist students in making the transition away from traditional paper-based examinations, exam specific training resources were created, communication campaigns deployed, and a 24-hour examination support service activated supporting all three examination periods.

In Semester 1 2021, USQ trialled a University-wide early deferred and supplementary examination period for eligible students to better manage their study progression following the encouraging results from similar small-scale trials held in 2020. The overwhelming success of the Semester 1 pilot offered the evidence of success to implement early deferred and supplementary examination periods as a permanent feature of the Academic Calendar.

Student leadership development

USQ's Learn to Lead Series grew in 2021, with additional, relevant content added to the program. These additions included various workshops and recordings of sessions such as the 2021 Leadership Conference: Positive Leadership in Challenging Times. Additionally, 2021 saw the pilot version of USQ's Leadership Excellence Academy brought to fruition, where students could apply for a place within the USQ Leadership Excellence Workshops Program. This Program saw 25 student applicants undergo a four-week learning and

development course covering topics such as self-awareness, thriving amidst disruption, and creating personal success systems. Students were paired together to coach and support each other throughout the program. The success rate of applicants and student attendance during this program was extremely high, providing a solid foundation for a very successful program to be fully implemented in 2022.

The USQ Phoenix Award, which recognises extra and co-curricular activities and the development of graduate skills, continued to advance throughout 2021, with more than 620 students enrolled in the program and 20 students graduating with the award for the year.

Graduation in a COVID-19 environment

In 2021, the University delivered 33 COVID-safe graduation ceremonies at the Toowoomba campus (Clive Berghofer Recreation Centre), Ipswich Civic Centre, and Toowoomba Empire Theatre for 2471 graduates. COVID-safe ceremonies necessitated a shorter, more concentrated graduation experience delivered in a different but safe format. New requirements included QR-coded ticketing, allocated seating, and intensive cleaning between each ceremony. The University delivered a special and unique graduation to each of its graduates, including highly valued features such as a presentation to the Chancellor, stage and studio photography in academic dress, and an opportunity to share their success with family, friends, and academic staff. Unfortunately, two Sydney ceremonies were cancelled due to the New South Wales lockdowns. While South-East Queensland Local Government Authority lockdowns impacted the attendance at our August ceremony, registrations for 2021 events show that a graduation ceremony experience is in more demand than in recent years.

Student Grievance Resolution Framework and resources

Several initiatives and resources were dedicated to strengthening the University-wide student grievance resolution framework and practices throughout 2021. A new policy suite was developed and implemented, supported by enhanced case management and reporting capabilities. The new policy framework supports transparent and effective resolution as early and as close as possible to the cause of the issue, managed through a redesigned online student portal with oversight by the Grievance Resolution Advisor. This new full-time ongoing role was established in January 2021, with the position working closely with all areas of the University and with students to promote and achieve fair, consistent and timely resolution of student grievances, along with the provision of high-level advice to students and staff about grievance resolution processes. The Grievance Resolution Advisor, supported by a part-time Grievance Resolution

Officer, conducted a number of capacity building workshops with frontline staff throughout the second half of the year, and provided training to decision makers to promote sector good practice grievance resolution processes.

A new part-time position of Student Ombudsperson was established, with Dr Deborah Peach commencing in the position on 5 April 2021. The Student Ombudsperson operates with a high degree of autonomy and acts as a neutral arbiter, ensuring that students receive fair and equitable treatment in the formal and informal resolution of student grievances and regarding complaints related to administrative and academic decisions. The position is also responsible for providing advice and support in the implementation of the University-wide student grievance resolution framework and acting as a catalyst for innovation and improvement in grievance resolution standards, practices and procedures relating to all students.

Health and wellness

The USQ Health Service was open throughout 2021 to students in Toowoomba and Ipswich, as well as the wider community, to support health needs. This year the Health Service provided free Influenza vaccinations for staff and students across all three campuses. 700 staff and 748 students who received their Influenza vaccination through the USQ Health Service in 2021. The Health and Wellness team provided online student wellness webinars, workshops, and events to support students' mental health and wellness as the challenges with online studies continue. Mental Health First Aid programs have been offered throughout the year to ensure ongoing training of students in recognising, responding to, and supporting peers who are experiencing mental illness. 150 students completed Mental Health First Aid training in 2021.

Multi-faith services

In 2021, the USQ Chaplain Coordinator continued to offer sessions for students one-on-one or in groups as a way of providing a spiritual connection. Multi-Faith Services invested significant effort in supporting students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds whose home countries were disproportionately affected by COVID-19 and, in some cases, adverse political changes. The Chaplaincy expanded spiritual support networks for its clients through increased involvement in community initiatives. The Chaplain Coordinator was invited as a speaker to multiple community events, including ANZAC Day commemorations, Harmony Day gatherings, religious services and school functions.

Safer Communities Framework

In 2021, USQ implemented a Safer Communities Framework to support the prevention of threats and risks associated with student behaviour. The Safer Communities Framework replaces previous efforts within the Respect. Now. Always. initiative, and expands the focus on respectful, healthy and safe relationships. Initiatives this year have included:

- provision of by-stander awareness training to students to develop capabilities to assist people who experience sexual assault and sexual harassment;
- introduction of a system to collect, store and manage incidents of unwanted or inappropriate behaviour, including sexual assault and sexual harassment;
- "If it matters to you, it matters to USQ" campaign to increase reporting of student behavioural threats and risks;
- establishment of monthly Assessment and Monitoring Behavioural Risk (AMBR) team case meetings and additional case coordination AMBR meetings called to respond to emerging or serious matters;
- development of assessment and monitoring tools to be used during interdepartmental case coordination; and
- establishment of Safer Communities Reference Committee.

Engagement with potential and current student communities

Open Day

As the University's largest recruitment event, Open Day aims to showcase all that USQ offers and demonstrate to prospective students and their influencers that USQ is the number-one choice in the region. In 2021, USQ planned for two physical open day events and a Virtual Open Day. This included a combined Springfield and Ipswich Campus physical Open Day to showcase this regions connectivity on 8 August 2021, Toowoomba Campus physical Open Day on 15 August 2021 and a Virtual Open Day on 22 August 2021. Due to COVID-19 government restrictions, the Springfield and Ipswich physical event was cancelled.

Orientation

Orientation took place across all USQ campuses and online in Semesters 1 and 2 2021. In Semester 1, on-campus attendance was consistent with 2020, however, there was a 253% increase in online attendance. On-campus attendance was lower in Semester 2, and the trend of increased online attendance continued to show that students have a strong preference for an engaged online orientation model. Student feedback was positive and demonstrated that the orientation program achieves the objectives identified in the USQ Orientation Strategy.

Ensuring high-quality academic programs

Program revitalisation

The revitalisation of program offerings included the following new or substantially revitalised programs which commenced in 2021:

- A suite of seven new Creative Arts-named degrees were introduced from Semester 1, replacing the previous multi-discipline single degree of the Bachelor of Creative Arts. Designed to inspire creativity, this innovative suite of programs allows students to develop technical expertise and gain practical experience under the guidance of our experienced industry professionals. With seven new Creative Arts degrees to choose from, students can follow their passion in a flexible and supportive environment. The degrees are:
 - Bachelor of Theatre;
 - Bachelor of Design and Interactive Technologies;
 - Bachelor of Film and Screen Production;
 - Bachelor of Creative Arts and Community Wellbeing;
 - Bachelor of Music;
 - Bachelor of Visual Art; and
 - Bachelor of Television and Radio.
- The introduction of a Master of Learning and the separation from Semester 1 of the previous Master of Learning and Teaching program which comprised specialisations in Primary and Secondary into two separate programs, and the introduction of a new Master of Learning and Teaching program:
 - Master of Learning and Teaching (Early Years);
 - Master of Learning and Teaching (Primary); and
 - Master of Learning and Teaching (Secondary).

Innovative and flexible program design offerings have been implemented, for example:

- From 2021, the new accelerated online Master of Business Administration is offered in consecutive eight-week teaching periods, with six commencing intake periods across the year. Students can study at their own pace and convenience or fast-track their studies to gain the qualification in 12 months full-time.
- The Bachelor of Laws now has a 'carousel curriculum model' to allow intakes into the program in Semester 1, 2 and 3 and flexible enrolment which allows students the option to fast-track their study and complete the degree in two years full-time over six consecutive semesters. In 2021 USQ extended its support to students by providing online examinations to degree programs offered by the University following the rapid transition in 2020 brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

A suite of generic exit qualifications that cover all undergraduate disciplines was introduced from Semester 3 2021, providing points for students to exit from all undergraduate coursework programs with an Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) strength Award, broadening higher education attainment and social impact that makes a difference to communities.

Further new or substantially revitalised program offerings for 2022 include the following:

- Designed to provide international students with an alternate pathway into the Bachelor of Nursing, the Diploma of Health has been developed for delivery from Semester 1. The Diploma seeks to reconceptualise language and learning to provide international students with a more connected learning experience through an embedded approach with discipline educators and communication educators collaborating to ensure they support students' academic skills and language development consistent with the discipline.
- Diploma of Child, Youth and Family Practice (from Semester 2)
- New programs within the University's flagship program areas, including a:
 - Bachelor of Environmental Science (from Semester 1)
 - Bachelor of Agricultural Technology and Management (from Semester 1)
- A unique suite of programs in Strength and Conditioning as a postgraduate option for students in existing USQ Sport and Exercise Science undergraduate programs, as well as for graduates from other universities, via offering, from Semester 2, of a Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma, and Master of Strength and Conditioning.
- Building on the University's undergraduate program offerings in construction management, from Semester 2, a suite of postgraduate programs will be offered, including a Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma and Master of Construction Project Management.
- Responding to an area of growth and employment demand, a Graduate Certificate and a Graduate Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care will be offered from Semester 1.

The University is also in the process of developing a suite of Allied Health programs for introduction across 2023 and 2024.

It is also transforming the Bachelor of Business and Master of Business programs to offer innovative and flexible program designs, including embedding of micro-credentials and badging in 2023.

Microcredential Strategy

USQ's Microcredential Strategy provides the framework for the University's success in the delivery of short courses offered in block, intensive and stackable modes and professional development short courses that result in a recognised USQ badge and/or certificate of completion. USQ currently has 29 mini-courses on offer in the fields of marketing and communication, management, business, education, leadership, transport, cybersecurity and entrepreneurship as well as the option to complete the Graduate Certificate of Business through UpSkill mini-courses, with plans to further expand these offerings.

Academic Quality Framework

Since 2019, Academic Board has monitored the development and implementation of the USQ Academic Quality Framework. Implementation of the Academic Quality Framework embeds responsibility for the quality of course and program performance in the schools and faculties. Reporting of data, performance indicators and interventions ensures that actions initiated in response to performance indicators are regularly reviewed and monitored by relevant Faculty and University Committees, the Academic Board and University Council. The overall goal is a systematic approach to monitor and improve performance against internal and external benchmarks for academic quality and student outcomes. This work moved into the third phase of implementation, Year 3: Sustainable practices in 2021.

A significant part of implementing the Academic Quality Framework has been the establishment of a suite of standardised reports to assist the University in evidence-based decision making about curriculum, associated aspects of learning and teaching and the overall experience of students by cohort and by program of study. The suite of standardised academic quality reports includes student feedback, course, program and program major levels consolidated to faculty and university level reports. Sentinel indicators for attrition, progression and completions were approved by the Academic Board and the faculties to monitor and evaluate program quality against these indicators.

Academic policies and procedures

Academic Board and its standing committees have taken an active role in 2021 in developing, monitoring and reviewing academic policies and their effectiveness, in line with the academic governance requirements of the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021. A key focus of policy development has been to assist Academic Board to effectively monitor the quality of teaching, learning, research and research training and provide assurance and

competent advice to Council on academic outcomes, policies and practices. The new Coursework Curriculum Design Policy suite was developed and implemented in Semester 2, 2021 to provide a context for the University's curriculum at the levels of program, major, extended major and minor and course. The suite consolidates current practices regarding the design and structure of the University's curriculum and ensures compliance with the regularity framework of the Australian Qualifications Framework and the Higher Education Standards Framework.

Academic Board endorsed the new Assessment Procedure, Grades Procedure, Assessment Types Schedule, Assessment Pattern Schedule, and Assessment and Grades Roles and Responsibilities Schedule, subordinate to the new Assessment Policy approved in late 2020, to ensure the University embraces best practice in assessment design and delivery, including a focus on first year assessment. Due to the scale of change required, an Implementation Working Group was formed to coordinate the necessary changes to business processes, systems and practices and communication to stakeholders to effectively and efficiently implement the new suite of Assessment policy instruments by the end of the year. Further amendments to the Grades Procedure are in progress to facilitate compliance with changes to the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* and *Higher Education Provider Guidelines 2012* as a result of the *Higher Education Support Amendment (Job-ready Graduates and Supporting Regional and Remote Students) Bill 2020*.

Following the joint Regional Universities Network initiative to investigate, implement and evaluate the impact of a pilot program of Academic Student Success advising, in 2021 the University implemented a new Student Academic Progress Procedure and Higher Degree by Research Student Progress Procedure to embed a student-centred and supportive approach to academic progression management. The process seeks to improve student progression and retention through early identification and intervention, and personalised, timely support and advice to students where and when it is needed. Implementation is supported by the appropriate provision of academic and other support services, targeted support interventions and monitoring of retention, progression and completion rates of cohorts of students throughout their program of study.

Academic Integrity Framework

Considerable progress has been made in 2021 in relation to ensuring a comprehensive approach to Academic Integrity at USQ including through the implementation of a whole of University Academic Integrity Framework. The Framework emphasises adopting an educative focus on the creation and maintenance of a culture of academic integrity and considers respect for, and commitment to academic integrity and honesty to be the responsibility of all staff and students of USQ. A range of initiatives has also been implemented to further enhance the University's coordinated and systemic approach to promoting academic integrity and to preventing, detecting, and managing academic misconduct. In the lead up to the International Day of Action Against Contract Cheating on 20 October 2021, October was celebrated as Academic Integrity month with activities including a file sharing amnesty, drop-in sessions for staff and students, competitions, professional development activities, release of the Academic Integrity site for students and contributions to the inaugural Australian Academic Integrity Network Forum.

Load forecasting

In early 2021, the Load Forecasting and Review Committee became the Load Strategy Committee, with a focus on the University's approach to student load growth, as well as oversight of the cycle of management processes involved in load reporting and review and the University student load submissions to the Federal Government. A new load planning system, which is part of a new Enterprise Planning and Budgeting System encompassing integrated modules covering load planning and forecasting, financial planning/reporting, workforce planning, capital planning, project planning and activity-based costing (cost attribution), was implemented in June 2021, providing further enhancements to the load planning process.

Optimising academic staff performance

Scholarly supports for good practice in online teaching and learning

During 2021, 79 casual educators successfully completed the USQ Foundations of Learning and Teaching for Casual Educators program. This program comprises nine hours of paid professional development focussed on good practice in online learning and teaching, and an ongoing community of practice. The program was also completed by a cohort of 11 casual staff from USQ Sydney Education Centre. Eight educators have completed Collegial Observation of Learning and Teaching, in which educators work in cross-disciplinary pairs to provide scholarly insights into each other's teaching practice.

In 2021, a total of 151 educators attended the Back to Teaching series of professional development workshops addressed areas of educator demand and institutional priority in a 'bite-sized', just-in-time manner. The series included 30 one-hour sessions in total addressing six themed areas including the basics of Zoom and USQStudyDesk, strategic use of Turnitin and chunking, and capacity-building opportunities focussed on reflection and the scholarship of learning and teaching. Several short videos were disseminated via Twitter to spark collegial conversations in the build-up to the workshop series.

Academic Employee Expectations Framework

As part of the six-month pilot, the Academic Employee Expectations Framework, which was released for pilot implementation in July 2020, was reviewed in 2021 to ensure ongoing alignment with the cycle of USQ strategic planning and other strategic-level guiding documents. During the review, key stakeholders at the University were consulted, and all academic employees were invited to provide feedback and suggestions for improvement through a staff survey. Following the review, the Framework has been updated with minor clarification changes and the Framework has been formally adopted for USQ from pilot phase to core business phase.

Australian Awards for University Teaching

The outstanding work of four USQ educators in improving the student experience and enhancing learning outcomes in higher education has been recognised nationally via the awarding of Citations for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning as part of the 2020 Australian Awards for University Teaching outcomes announced in February 2021. Recipients of the Citations included:

- Ms Melissa Fanshawe, Senior Lecturer (Mathematics Curriculum and Pedagogy), School of Education) - *For supporting success of teacher education students, through a school partnership service, a large online education community and maths curricula aligning university and school approaches.*
- Dr Ashley Jones, Senior Lecturer (Television and Radio Broadcast), School of Creative Arts - *For supporting television and radio broadcasting students' learning through student-centeredness, industry engagement and sophisticated technologies, resulting in graduate career success.*
- Academic Integrity Team - Dr Kerstin Braun (Lead), Senior Lecturer (Law and Justice) and Associate Professor Noeleen McNamara (Law) from the School of Law and Justice - *For eliminating academic integrity breaches through developing compulsory, assessed first year Law student curricula and resources, which are preventative, include case scenarios and develop empathy.*

Excellence Awards for Teaching

The Excellence Awards for Teaching recognise and reward employees who have created exceptional learning opportunities for students, and provided learning and teaching leadership for University colleagues.

Recipients of the Excellence Awards were:

- Excellence Award for University Teaching: Krystal Schaffer, School of Health and Wellbeing - *for making significant changes to three low experience courses in my first year of teaching and beyond, improving overall student experience and success.*
- Excellence Award for Faculty Teaching – Business, Education, Law and Arts: Dr Susan Carter, School of Education - *for the development and utilisation of two Open Education Resources that have allowed students' access to and engagement in, quality authentic learning.*
- Excellence Award for Faculty Teaching – Health, Engineering and Sciences: Justine Baillie, School of Civil Engineering and Surveying - *for enhancing student learning and satisfaction in a fully online residential school through high quality course design and delivery in response to COVID operating conditions.*

Goal: Being the University of choice across our regions for students

USQ aspires to be the University of choice across our regions for students, offering innovative educational offerings that are a catalyst for transforming the lives of students, their families and communities. Our aspirations will be achieved by engaging locally and globally to translate ideas and knowledge for the benefit of our communities, and by adopting a comprehensive approach that links students to the labour market. By consistently making explicit the connections between course and program content, assessment and career outcomes, the University will develop employable and employed graduates and will seek to engender in our students a life-long love of learning.

USQ is also working closely with the communities that have established regional university centres in Geraldton, Goondiwindi, Roma, and St George to ensure students in more geographically dispersed locations are supported to study while remaining in their local area.

Survey outcomes

A number of survey instruments are used within the higher education sector to gauge various aspects of student, employer and graduate experiences and outcomes. These, in turn, serve to inform continuous improvement activities across the University.

Good Universities Guide 2022

The *Good Universities Guide 2022* rankings were released on 2 August, with the University of Southern Queensland graduates again having the highest median starting salary in Australia. The University also received five-star rankings for undergraduate full-time employment, undergraduate starting salary, postgraduate learning resources, postgraduate student support, social equity and first generation to attend university. These positive results reflect our ongoing commitment to a quality education which produces job-ready graduates and demonstrate that despite the disruptions caused by the pandemic, we have provided our students with a consistently positive educational experience.

Graduate Outcomes Survey

The Graduate Outcomes Survey measures the short-term labour force outcomes achieved by graduates of Australian higher education institutions (approximately) four to six months post completion. As per trends in previous years, USQ's undergraduate full-time employment and overall employment rates have remained above the national rates with undergraduate median full-time starting salary now at \$72,000, which is \$7,000 above the all universities' median and is the equal highest in the nation. This outcome reflects our continued focus on offering programs which align with industry needs, producing graduates with job-ready knowledge and skills to meet the needs of our community regionally, nationally and internationally. In 2021, USQ's graduates reported the highest levels of Graduate Overall Satisfaction with their University experience since 2017. USQ's Overall Satisfaction rates for both Undergraduate (80.5%) and Postgraduate (86.3%) place USQ in the top 10 of the nation's universities for these items.

Employer Satisfaction Survey

The Employer Satisfaction Survey asks supervisors of graduates who participated in the Graduate Outcomes Survey to provide feedback about the generic skills, technical skills and work readiness of the graduate employed in their workplace. USQ's results for the Employer Satisfaction Survey (ESS) released in March 2021 relate to students who completed their studies in 2020. The results, which link the experiences of graduates to the views of their workplace supervisors, were very positive, reflecting the University's commitment to educating job-ready graduates. Although the sample is small, the University received very good results across the board in terms of all those areas measured and exceeded the national average in overall satisfaction. All of USQ's results were above the 85th percentile showing very strong levels of support for our graduates by employers.

Careers and employability

Employability and work-integrated learning

Within each of the schools and USQ College, Academic Employability Leads have been appointed to provide leadership for coordinating and operationalising strategies to enhance graduate employability through later year curricular and co-curricular reform.

Much of the work related to the employability initiative within the schools is currently focussed on mapping existing employability knowledge and skills in the priority programs and developing a planned program-approach to employability that scaffolds employability skills across the program curriculum in a way that ensures students are supported in their development of a professional identity, starting from their initial year and in core courses and then throughout their degree across multiple courses.

An Employability Working Party was established with responsibility for joining-up scholarly practice and supports for learning to support education quality in the employability components of the *Academic Plan*, and particularly the

refinement and enactment of the USQ Employability and Work-Integrated Learning Strategy. The strategy sets out how USQ supports students to acquire the professional identity, skills and knowledge assets they need to decide, plan, and compete in the graduate labour market and for their future careers.

Career development

In 2021, the Career Development Practitioners conducted 957 appointments with 764 current students and USQ graduates from a wide range of disciplines. Common themes included career decision-making, program selection, job search strategies and improving employability. During the same time period, 217 appointments were conducted with 195 prospective students to discuss career aspirations, navigate the higher education application process, and understand post-study options.

Careers in the curriculum

As articulated in the *Academic Plan*, the University is committed to maximising employability outcomes for all USQ students. In 2021, the *USQ Employability and Work-Integrated Learning Strategy* was developed with a critical pillar of this plan to embed employability into the curriculum. To support this strategy, the Careers and Employability team facilitated the USQ Employability Community of Practice. This initiative enables Academic Employability Leads to showcase employability initiatives within the curriculum. The Careers and Employability team supported academic staff to map current career and employability education in the curriculum and support the development of careers and employability learning and resources within the curriculum. Resources include the Career Insights Podcasts recorded in 2020 - 2021 in collaboration with academic staff and aligned to the USQ Careers and Employability Learning Framework.

Ignition Project

This project provides all students with the opportunity to engage in programs that support the development of entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial attitudes, behaviours and skills. The focus for 2021 was on embedding resources and knowledge into the curriculum, starting with students who will enter industries with high self-employment rates. The goal is to create resources that develop employability skills and business experience. Some of the opportunities in 2021 included:

- a month-long webinar series on freelancing and consulting ('How to Freelance');
- Regionally Speaking, a podcast about regional entrepreneurship;
- a monthly interview series featuring entrepreneurial alumni;
- supporting academics to embed entrepreneurship into the curriculum; and
- supporting course reviews to enhance entrepreneurship and employability learning.

Employer engagement

In 2021, the Careers and Employability team proactively responded to the employability and industry needs of USQ students as part of the *Academic Plan*. The Employer Engagement team increased their efforts to establish and enhance industry and employer relationships to provide holistic employability support to students and Faculties. This was achieved by delivering employability programs, support for implementing Work-Integrated Learning opportunities, internships and industry projects. The Employer Engagement team continued to connect USQ students with employment opportunities through Virtual Industry Coffee Chats throughout the year, facilitating the connection between employers and USQ students on available graduate employment, work experience or employability enhancement.

USQ Industry Mentoring Program

This project allows students to connect with industry professionals to help prepare them for the transition from university to employment, with the aim of enhancing students' knowledge, understanding and professional networks. In 2021, the program was open throughout the year with ongoing enrolment, suiting the availability of students and mentors. A total of 40 connections were established across the year, with 30 mentors and 38 students.

Career Insights Conference

USQ hosted the 'Forward Thinking, Forward Planning' Career Insights Conference from 16 – 18 November 2021, providing students with the opportunity to engage directly with industry representatives to access information about career development, employability learning and employment to support and inform future career decision making. The Conference was attended by 135 students, and included three professional key note speakers, 11 panel sessions with industry guests and a range of webinar presentations.

High school mentoring project

A new career development initiative, the Career Mentoring Program, was piloted in 2021. The program is funded by the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program. The Career Mentoring Program is designed to give students in Years 10, 11 and 12 ongoing career support with a qualified Career Development Practitioner, with the aim being to enhance career management skills and raise aspirations for further study. Seven high school students participated in the Pilot, which involved engaging in mentoring sessions in terms 2 and 3 of the school year.

Turn to Teaching Initiative

In 2021, USQ was successful in a bid to deliver the Queensland Department of Education's Turn to Teaching initiative. From 2022 USQ Master of Learning and Teaching students will have the opportunity to apply for a scholarship that will provide financial support in their first year, a 0.5 full-time equivalent paid teaching position in a Queensland state school in their second year, and the offer of a permanent, full-time teaching position in a Queensland school upon graduation. USQ is one of only two universities chosen to partner with the State Government in this scheme, which will see 50 scholarships available.

Women in STEM Cadetships and Advanced Apprenticeships Program

The University's application to deliver courses of study for the Women in STEM Cadetships and Advanced Apprenticeships Program was successful in 2021, with all 25 places requested being secured. The program involves the University partnering with participating employers to support women who are working in paid employment to study an industry relevant, higher education Diploma or Associate Degree in a STEM field. Employers will also be recipients of grant funds to recognise some of the costs associated with flexible work arrangements. The program generated significant interest amongst Regional Councils and private industry partners. A total of 18 higher education providers were approved for participation in the program.

Alumni community

A new strategic plan (2021 – 2023) for alumni has been developed that aligns with USQ's refreshed strategic plan. In late March 2021, a new social media platform, USQ Alumni Community, was launched, designed to bring together into one location alumni, staff, students, former student exchange and study abroad students, and members of the community, with the aim of increasing networks and engagement with USQ. Since the launch, more than 1,300 people have opted in to the site, and 30 USQ alumni have volunteered to be digital ambassadors on the platform. An Alumni Engagement Metrics program was launched in October, which will enable USQ to track and report on alumni engagement with the University.

The Alumnus of the Year Awards were held in October 2021. This keystone event honoured ten outstanding alumni, including:

- Highly Commended Alumnus in Business & Enterprise – Dhamitha Pathirana
- Outstanding Alumnus in Business & Enterprise – Sally Foley-Lewis
- Outstanding Alumnus in Creative Industries & Humanities – Lauren Stuart

- Outstanding Alumnus in Education – Rachel Downie
- Highly Commended Alumnus in Law & Justice – Kathleen Wincen
- Outstanding Alumnus in Law & Justice – Angus Murray
- Highly Commended Alumnus in Health & Wellbeing – Amanda Ullman
- Outstanding Alumnus in health & Wellbeing – Sherry Holzapfel
- Outstanding Alumnus in Science & Engineering – Nathan Thomas
- Highly Commended Young Alumnus of the Year – Adrian Dudok
- Young Alumnus of the Year – Angus Murray
- Alumnus of the Year – Rachel Downie

Alumnus of the Year, Rachel Downie, was also the 2020 Queenslander of the Year. Rachel is the Chief Executive Officer of Stymie. Stymie is an anonymous harm reporting tool that schools are proactively using to support their students to say something without fear. Stymie work with school communities both nationally and internationally to enhance or change the culture of care in their school. Stymie has been built to support existing pastoral care frameworks in schools, and since 2014, Stymie has been presented to more than 600,000 students in Australia, New Zealand and the United Arab Emirates. Young Alumnus of the Year, Angus Murray is currently a Partner and Trademarks Attorney at Brisbane-based law firm, Irish Bentley Lawyers. Angus is also the Vice President of the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties, a Co-Founder and Director of The Legal Forecast and the Chair of Electronic Frontiers Australia's Policy and Research Committee. Angus was listed as a finalist for the Lawyer's Weekly 30 Under 30 Award for Intellectual Property in 2019 and received the 30 Under 30 Award for Taxation in 2019.

The Alumni team continued to build on gains from 2020 in identifying alumni leaders with strong potential for future engagement activities. Identification of an additional 300 alumni leaders brings to some 1,100 the total number of alumni leaders identified since 1 January 2020. Also during 2021, the Alumni team assisted the School of Business and the School of Education with a project to identify alumni to participate in videos targeting current students with the aim of boosting retention in particular programs. More than 20 alumni volunteered their time to be featured in the videos. The Alumni team also partnered with Residential Colleges in delivering the McGregor College 50th Anniversary Celebration, and has been assisting in the development of a suite of ideas for the celebration in 2022 of the combined 30th anniversary of USQ and 55th anniversary of our predecessor institution, Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education.

Goal: Growing the quality and quantity of research outcomes

In 2021, USQ released a new five-year Research Plan with a vision to be recognised as a world-class, research-intensive university, renowned for industry engagement and community impact in a dynamic research ecosystem.

The Research Plan is underpinned by the key imperatives of the USQ Strategic Plan 2021-2025 including strategic growth, differentiation, innovation and sustainability, and builds on the strong foundations laid over the previous five years which created a culture for delivering quality research across all disciplines. Consistent with the USQ Strategic Plan 2021-2025, the Research Plan acknowledges that the internal and external drivers impacting the next five-year period are vastly different to the previous period, including changes to the funding environment for universities and other draft legislation, such as the Foreign Relations Bill, and the Provider Category Standards Legislation, and a renewed focus on Foreign Interference and commercialisation of research. The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic are also still being managed. The Research Plan aims to respond to these types of challenges in a research context and is focussed on growing the quality and quantity of research outcomes for the entire University.

The Research Plan's vision for the next five years, and looking out to 2030, is ambitious. It recognises the success and impact of the investments and actions taken over the previous five years to strengthen the University's research performance and strives to deliver a step change that will place the University in a strong position to meet the challenges ahead. The Research Plan sets key goals and strategies to meet those goals and establishes benchmarks and metrics that can be monitored throughout the lifecycle of the Plan to improve performance and ensure academic quality.

Recognition of research excellence

USQ ranked in the Top 500 (401-500 band) of the Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2022 (released in September 2021) for the first time this year, improving its ranking position for the second year in a row. The University also maintained its position within the 101-150 band in the Times Higher Education Young Universities ranking for 2021.

These outcomes have been driven by the strong performance of USQ researchers, who are producing quality work that is being published in reputable journals and cited by their peers. Citation impact in our research disciplines (referred to as Field-Weighted Citation Impact) demonstrates this increasing impact, with an increase from 1.52 (2021 World Ranking) to 1.64 (2022 World Ranking, released in September 2021). This means the University's research papers are being cited 64% more times than the world average for similar publications. This performance is also supported by an improvement in our performance in research income, doctoral completions, and our international outlook.

In 2021, USQ researchers have published two articles in Nature journal publications, which are some of the most prestigious publications possible in scientific fields. Professor Zhigang Chen from the Centre for Future Materials co-authored an article in Nature Energy titled, *'Identification of embedded nanotwins at c-Si/a-Si:H interface limiting the performance of high-efficiency silicon heterojunction solar cells'* and Adjunct Research Fellow, Dr Graziella Caprarelli from the School of Sciences and Centre for Astrophysics co-authored an article in Nature Astronomy titled, *'Multiple subglacial water bodies below the south pole of Mars unveiled by new MARSIS data'*.

USQ's long standing collaboration with John Deere has led to the development of See & Spray™ Select: a vision-based precision spray technology for use on fallow ground that will reduce input costs and minimise environmental impact in farming businesses across the globe. USQ owns four patents in this technology area which have been licensed to John Deere. See & Spray™ Select was globally launched in the first half of 2021.

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between USQ and Granite Belt Water Limited in March 2021. Granite Belt Water Limited has oversight of the Granite Belt Irrigation Project that will deliver a dam at Emu Swamp, south-west of Stanthorpe, and pipeline throughout the Granite Belt. Researchers and students will be actively involved in progressing and completing a major infrastructure project.

USQ is working with NASA to grow healthy food crops for astronauts on deep space missions with funding received through the Queensland Government's Moon to Mars Demonstrator Feasibility Grant, announced in June 2021. The project will develop machine vision-based technology to automatically interpret plant stress signals so fresh vegetables and other leafy greens grown at NASA's two veggie units and the larger Advanced Plant Habitat currently onboard the International Space Station can be better monitored for increased food safety, and food options.

In June 2021, Dr Brett Addison from the Centre for Astrophysics, led a global team of astronomers to discover one of the hottest planets ever, called TOI-1431b. TOI-1431b, also known as MASCARA-5b, is located about 490 light-years

away from Earth, and is about one and a half times larger and just over three times the size of the Solar system's largest planet, Jupiter. It orbits closely around a relatively bright and very hot star roughly every two and a half days. In October, a team of international researchers, led by Pennsylvania State University, discovered the gaseous exoplanet TOI-3362 b about 200 light years from Earth. USQ astronomer Dr George Zhou from the Centre for Astrophysics was part of the team that confirmed the discovery.

In October 2021, USQ received the news that three research projects will receive funding through the Queensland Government's Advance Queensland Industry Research Fellowship program. The project 'Novel and Sustainable Protective Concrete Seawall Infrastructure' led by Dr Omar Alajarmeh will receive funding to the value of \$240,000. Dr Wahid Ferdous will lead the project 'Integrating waste plastics into sleepers for sustainable railway infrastructure' to the value of \$160,000. The project 'Early detection of chronic health conditions using AI prediction model' led by Dr Xujuan Zhou, will receive funding to the value of \$360,000.

Professor Brad Carter, Director (Centre for Astrophysics), was the successful recipient of a 2021 Fulbright Future Scholarship. Professor Carter will work with researchers at the NASA Exoplanet Science Institute and the University of Louisville using stellar activity surveys to advance understanding of the activity extremes of our local star, the Sun. In addition, Brad will collaborate with researchers at the University of Colorado on designing novel compact lightweight instrumentation for future space telescopes, and work with scientists at the University of California Berkeley on the translation of astronomical research techniques into improved space-based remote sensing for early panoramic detection of wildfires and bushfires.

Four USQ researchers were included in the prestigious Clarivate Highly Cited Researchers List for 2021, which identifies scientists and social scientists who have demonstrated significant influence through the publication of multiple highly cited papers. These researchers are Professor Stuart Biddle from the Centre for Health Research, Professor Ravinesh Deo from the School of Sciences, Professor Zhi-Gang Chen from the Centre for Future Materials, and Dr Paul Gardiner from the School of Health and Wellbeing.

Professor Scott Power, Director of the Centre for Applied Climate Sciences was awarded a 2021 Zillman Medal by the Australian Meteorological and Oceanographic Society. Professor Power received the award in recognition of his nationally and international leadership in areas including global warming, the El Niño-Southern Oscillation, Australian

Climate and climate variability and projections. Professor Power has pioneered a number of major discoveries in climate science in relation to ENSO and its impact on Australia and the Pacific.

In June 2021, USQ was announced as the winner of the Qld Government and Public Sector Solution of the Year at the 2021 iAwards, for the Artificial Intelligence Algorithms Identifying Hoax Emergency Calls project, led by Associate Professor Rajib Rana from the School of Sciences. The iAwards are Australia's longest running innovation recognition program, promoting excellence in the Australian digital technology ecosystem.

Dr Graziella Caprarelli was named Scientist of the Year at the Australian Space Awards, hosted by Space Connect. The awards have been created to showcase the nation's best and brightest space businesses and professionals. USQ was also named as a finalist for Research Organisation of the Year, along with Professor David Buttsworth and Dr Duncan Wright for Academic of the Year and Researcher of the Year, respectively.

Dr Kirsty Owen from the Centre for Crop Health, and Associate Professor Eliza Whiteside from the School of Health and Wellbeing, were finalists in the Rural, Regional and Remote category of the 2021 Women in Technology Awards. The Awards highlight the outstanding talent of women working in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) disciplines, and the contribution they make to research, policy, economic and social development.

Dr Alison McCarthy received the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage Young Professionals WatSave Award for 2021. The Young Professionals Award is presented to young professionals (40 years or younger) contributing to original research and innovative water-saving techniques leading towards sustainability. This award acknowledges Dr McCarthy's work on the VARlwise technology, which helps growers make improved management decisions. Dr McCarthy's research is being conducted as a part of the Smarter Irrigation for Profit Phase 2 project, led by the Cotton Research and Development Corporation and supported by funding from the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment as part of its Rural R&D for Profit program. Dr Adam Frew from the School of Sciences was announced as a recipient of a 2021 Queensland Young Tall Poppy Science Award. These awards recognise and celebrate researchers who demonstrate scientific excellence combined with a unique passion for science communication, which can inspire young people to enter STEM study and careers. Adam's research examines how fungi can enhance plant defences and investigates how managing soil fungal diversity can reduce

crop damage while simultaneously conserving soil ecosystems. In addition, Adam has received \$453,583 in funding via an Australian Research Council (ARC) Discovery Early Career Award (DECRA) for his research project - 'Delivering defences: using fungi to enhance plant resistance to herbivory'. Adam's project will identify how the diversity of beneficial fungi in the soil is affected by agricultural management and will reveal how these fungi govern the ability of plants to defend themselves from insect herbivores.

Professor Bernadette McCabe from the Centre for Agricultural Engineering will collaborate on the successful ARC Research Hub for Nutrients in a Circular Economy. The Research Hub is set to transform the wastewater industry by commercialising urine processing technologies and demonstrating uses of the liquid fertiliser produced. The Australian Government will provide more than \$2 million over four years for the collaboration as an Industrial Transformation Research Hub. The University of Technology Sydney-led initiative includes five Australian universities, international research collaborators and 13 commercial and government partners who are together contributing an additional \$1.8 million to the Hub. USQ will receive \$200,000 for its involvement in the Hub project.

Professor Zhigang Chen from the Centre for Future Materials received \$428,541 through the ARC Linkage Projects scheme to continue his innovative research into the development of wearable thermoelectric materials and devices for personal heat management. Professor Chen is utilising his expertise in functional materials to help place Australia at the forefront of the wearable electronics and garment industry.

Professor Georgina Barton from the School of Education will be the Australian lead on an international research project attempting to improve young people's literacy through engaging with art at local galleries. Announced in October 2021, Professor Barton will collaborate with academics from Canada on the project that has won an Insight Development Grant from the Canadian Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council – the equivalent of a prestigious ARC grant.

USQ received two 2021 Science and Innovation Awards for Young People in Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Awards. Successful recipients were Fraser Border who received the Minister's Award and the Australian Meat Processor Corporation Award for his research into 'novel visualisation technologies to improve workforce flexibility and yield losses in high value meat processing tasks'; with Dr Zahra Faraji Rad receiving the CSIRO Biosecurity Digital Innovation Award for her research into 'rapid detection of plant diseases by microneedle patch array'.

PhD student, Jake Clark was selected as one of three recipients of a Science and Technology Australia regional scholarship to participate in the Science Meets Parliament Program.

Research training and development

USQ has continued to build a research culture of excellence, embedding commitment and accountability for high-quality performance outcomes. USQ's Researcher Development and Training Program, ReDTrain, is a comprehensive, all-of-University program that provides resources, enrichment and rewards for USQ HDR students, and promotes professional development opportunities for USQ researchers. In 2021, the Program continued to play a major role in driving the University's research performance through its suite of coordinated initiatives, and in strengthening a vibrant research culture to help researchers and research students, in particular, grow their capacity and skills. The Research Giants program and Eminent Visiting Scholars Scheme (EVISS) did not go ahead due to interruptions to travel as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite these challenges, the ReDTrain program continued to be delivered in flexible formats, promoting over 200 events in 2021.

The 2021 Research Professional Development Plan was developed to support the University's Academic Employee Performance Expectations Framework, and to assist the research community in meeting its goals outlined in the Research Plan 2021-2025. The 2021 schedule, compiled by the Office of Research in collaboration with the Faculty Associate Deans (Research), included a combination of internally facilitated workshops and initiatives as well as externally-led opportunities. The plan focussed on fundamental principles for developing grant applications, including building a track record, preparing your project description and developing your budget. Sessions were also provided focussing on more specific topics of relevance to researchers applying for ARC and NHMRC funding.

External professional development opportunities included engagement with Epigeum and the Salis Institute. USQ is working with Epigeum (Oxford University Press) to co-develop (with other Australian and UK-based universities) a new 'Advancing Your Research Career' online module series (10 modules in total). The content is currently being developed and is due to go-live in May 2022. USQ's involvement as a founding member enables the University to have an in-perpetuity licence once live. The Salis Institute provided a 'write your paper in 3 weeks' online course in November 2021, presented by Professor Amanda Salis, an NHMRC Senior Research Fellow. This research training opportunity provided

USQ staff, students and affiliates with a step-by-step process designed to help write a research paper in three weeks, with the envisaged outcome to have completed a compelling and professionally structured draft of their paper ready for feedback from their co-authors.

Graduate Research School

In 2021, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic were still felt by USQ's Graduate Research School with international travel restrictions continuing to affect the University's ability to recruit students from overseas. Consistent with the previous year, the Graduate Research School has continued to provide a significant amount of support to HDR students who, at various times throughout 2021, have been required to transition to off-campus arrangements.

Following the review of the Graduate Research School in late 2020, a Final Report, provided by the external review panel, was tabled at VCE in January 2021. The Final Report provided eight recommendations to enhance the HDR student experience and strengthen the University's attraction and retention of HDR students. In April 2021, an implementation plan was endorsed by VCE and Research Committee to progress the University's response to the recommendations of the Final Report. Consistent with the implementation plan, two significant activities have progressed throughout 2021, including the review of all HDR program offerings and the review of research and research training policies and procedures.

Subsequent to the HDR program review, the University has approved the accreditation of a new Master of Research, for commencement in Semester 1, 2022, which consolidates all five of the existing research master's programs into a single common program. The development of the Master of Research program provides a consistent course structure and a pathway for Master of Research students from all disciplines to the Doctor of Philosophy. The review of research and research training policies and procedures resulted in the approval and publication of a new Research Policy, HDR Student Policy and HDR Student Progress Procedure in 2021. As of 31 December 2021, there are five policy instruments in consultation and six policy instruments being reviewed or drafted.

With a renewed focus on training and development for HDR Students and their Supervisors, the Graduate Research School led the development of the HDR Essentials Webinar Series, designed to support, equip and empower our HDR students through their learning journey. The Webinar Series showcases the full spectrum of support services available to assist HDR students, from human ethics and research integrity, eResearch services and data management plans through to resume writing and building professional networks and provides information on where and how to access these resources.

In August 2021, the University purchased Epigeum's Supervising Doctoral Studies training to further develop USQ's capacity for excellent research supervision. The online training program includes ten modules designed to support HDR supervisors in developing their supervisory practice, to ensure the best possible environment and outcomes for doctoral candidates. Since its inception, more than 400 HDR supervisors have completed the online training.

Goal: Contributing to the sustainable development of our communities

Supporting USQ's research mission to be a catalyst for industry growth, innovation and community prosperity and well-being, through focussed, high-quality research and high-quality research training are three multi-disciplinary research institutes and nine focussed research centres, delivering on the University's flagship areas of research:

Space and Defence, including astrophysics, hypersonics and rocketry, and materials engineering.

In October 2020, USQ submitted its application for Defence Industry Security Program (DISP) membership at entry level, and is awaiting the outcome. DISP is a membership-based program that sets minimum security requirements and will support the University to continue to undertake current projects with Defence at the Toowoomba campus. Throughout 2021, USQ has worked with the assigned assurance partner in the Federal Department of Defence to demonstrate the required governance, personnel, physical security, and cybersecurity measures are in place to conduct business with the Department of Defence. During 2021, the University is also exploring options to improve on-campus facilities, with an aim for an increased level of membership to undertake future work with the Department of Defence at a higher security classification. Recruitment for a Research Facility Manager with responsibility for undertaking the role of Security Officer has also been completed to support the University's space and defence research activities.

In 2021, USQ's Institute for Advanced Engineering and Space Sciences continued to work with Defence Science and Technology (DST) and has completed the first stage of a three-year rocket manufacturing project, named Taipan. The primary objective of the project is to develop a two-stage rocket motor which will be able to replicate the flow conditions currently achieved in USQ's controlled hypersonic wind tunnel facility, TUSQ. Once the project is completed, USQ will be the only university in Australia to manufacture its own rocket test beds, which will allow us to ground and flight test the exact same hypersonic experiments. Successful conclusion of this project will position USQ as the prime aerospace university in Australia, while also enabling significant collaborative activity with research and industry primes.

It was announced in June 2021 that USQ's *New Options for Waste and Saving The Environment (NO WASTE)* Precinct project will receive \$2 million in funding from the Australian Government's Strategic University Reform Fund (SURF) to reduce the large amount of waste that ends up in landfill. The NO WASTE Precinct project is implementing a circular economy model to identify the best ways to make commercial

and residential recycling and upcycling viable and profitable. The precinct is based in Toowoomba and will work with local retail entities, manufacturing industries, technical specialists and education providers, both in Toowoomba and Ipswich, to revitalise existing recycling programs. The SURF is designed to help universities find innovative solutions for local communities. Project collaborators include Queensland Investment Corporation, through Grand Central Shopping Centre, Wagners, Envirosand, Talon Technologies, Queensland Department of Transport and Main Road, Ipswich City Council and Plastic and Rubber Technical Education Centre (PARTEC). The project will operate as a regional test case to develop general waste reduction initiatives and build a more efficient industry that is scalable and transferable into other local communities; further strengthening USQ's link to our local communities.

Agriculture, including climate science, drought mitigation and adaptation, crop health, agricultural technology and environmental science.

USQ is a partner in the successful Resilient Landscapes Hub, commenced in 2021. The Resilient Landscapes Hub is one of four new research hubs under the National Environmental Science Program 2 (NESP 2). NESP 2 is the continuation of a long-term commitment by the Australian Government, with funds granted to address emerging priorities in environment and climate research. The Resilient Landscapes Hub is led by the University of Western Australia and is worth \$47 million over seven years. The Hub will inform the management of Australia's terrestrial and freshwater habitats to promote resilience, sustainability and productivity, with researchers from USQ leading threatened and invasive species research on farm.

In 2021, USQ continued its long-standing partnership with the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) to deliver the Broad Acre Cropping Initiative 2.0 (BACI 2.0). BACI 2.0 is a five-year, \$5 million investment by DAF which focusses on improving yield in broad acre farming. The initiative is carried out by the University's Centres for Crop Health, Agricultural Engineering and Sustainable Agricultural Systems and is a cornerstone of the agriculture flagship at USQ.

In April 2021, it was announced by the then Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency that USQ had been chosen to lead one of eight national Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hubs, a flagship of the Australian Government's multi-billion-dollar Future Drought Fund (FDF). The Southern Queensland and Northern New South Wales (SQNNSW) Hub will receive more than \$10 million in Federal Government over four years. The Hub has resources spread throughout the region to address local drought resilience research and innovation priorities, with the core aim of ensuring primary producers and regional communities are better prepared for, and resilient to, future droughts. The Hub will apply proven drought-resilience research on the ground to improve innovation and adoption across agriculture, industry and the community to harness research, development, extension, adoption, commercialisation and knowledge. By connecting research expertise with existing on-the-ground knowledge, USQ will empower primary producers to be more profitable and adaptable, reducing community vulnerability and ensuring the future growth and success of our regions. In October 2021, USQ received notification of an additional \$2.5 million from the Federal Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, to expand the Hub further into the agricultural innovation space.

The Agtech and Logistics Hub was officially launched in May 2021. The Agtech and Logistics Hub is funded by the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries in association with the FKG Group, Toowoomba and Surat Basin Enterprise, USQ, and the University of Queensland. The Hub's vision is to grow and diversify the agricultural value chain through the development and adoption of innovation and technology and aims to bridge the gap between industry challenges and problem solvers by fast-tracking the deployment of innovative solutions that will make our economy more resilient, companies more competitive, and create high value jobs.

Health, including sport and exercise science, mental health and allied health.

In March 2021, USQ and West Moreton Health renewed their research partnership with the signing of a memorandum of understanding and the official launch of the 'West Moreton Health Prostrate Cancer Survivorship' program. The program, an online platform to deliver care, real-time condition monitoring, and virtual at-home appointments with a clinical nurse, will investigate how existing technology can be used to deliver a prostate survivorship program through.

In September 2021, USQ was awarded an NHMRC Partnership grant of \$1.13 million, which will be matched by local, national and international health partners as part of a total injection of \$2.25 million into the research project. Led by Professor Jeff Dunn AO, USQ behavioural scientist and chief executive of Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia (PCFA), the four-year project will conduct a world-first trial of a new survivorship care model, set to test the clinical and cost effectiveness of nurse-led survivorship care for improving the health and well-being of men on hormone therapy for prostate cancer. More than 200 men will participate in the trial, which will use an evidence-based survivorship framework, developed by USQ, in collaboration with the PCFA and NHMRC's Centre of Research Excellence in Prostate Cancer Survivorship. It will be delivered by specially-trained PCFA nurses through four telehealth sessions over a four-week period, with a booster session a month later. The sessions will cover distress management strategies, decision support, treatment education with self-management and skills training for symptom effects and communicating with health professionals.

The outcomes from Round One of the Regional Research Collaboration Program, funded by the Job-ready Graduates program, were released by the Minister for Education and Youth in September 2021. There were six university-led projects funded under the scheme, including the University of New England-led \$3.7 million project to develop the Regional Australia Mental Health Research and Training Institute. The Institute is a collaboration with the Regional Universities Network and aims to build place-based research capacity to improve mental health in regional, rural and remote Australia. USQ's contribution will be led by Professor Sonja March, Professor in Psychology, and links strongly to the recommendations identified by the USQ Health Research Strategy Working Group and will support USQ's growth in health research capacity.

Dr Zhaohui Tang and Professor Yan Li were also awarded a \$500,000 competitive research grant from the Australian Government in September 2021, as part of its First National Blood Borne Viruses and Sexually Transmissible Infections Research Strategy 2021 – 2025. The grant will support the development of a mobile app, supported by artificial intelligence, centred around sexual health risk behaviours, and screening and testing for sexually transmissible infections.

Regional Development, including agribusiness, economic development, and cultural heritage.

The regional development flagship encompasses many of the activities which are the focus of USQ's other flagships, such as climate resilience, health service delivery in the regions, and the growth of manufacturing industry in the regions. The regional development flagship is led through the Institute for Resilient Regions together with coordinated faculty and research activities in critical service sectors such as health and education, traditional industry sectors such as agriculture and resources, and those emerging such as manufacturing.

In 2021, the Rural Economies Centre for Excellence was extended for a 12-month period with a further \$1.6 million injection of funding from the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. The USQ-led Centre of Excellence was established in 2018 for an initial three-year period as a \$3.6 million research collaboration with the University of Queensland, James Cook University and Central Queensland University. The Rural Economies Centre of Excellence is focussed on strengthening the economic resilience of Queensland's rural communities.

The Australian Government announced more than \$11 million for the FDF's Drought Resilience Leaders program in June 2021. USQ's Rural Economies Centre of Excellence is a partner in the Future Drought Resilience Leaders Program facilitated by the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation and is helping to deliver a suite of personal and professional development opportunities designed to equip people working in or with rural, regional and remote communities with skills to lead their communities into the future. Regional resilience is also a key part of USQ's SQNNSW Hub, demonstrating the interlinked nature of our flagships, and the strong collaborations across our research institutes.

Continued investment in research

Building on the University's current teaching and research activities in agriculture, the purchase of an Agri-Bio Forge commenced in 2021. The Agri-Bio Forge is a suite of specialised equipment that complements USQ's existing facilities and enables the large-scale selection of microbes and bio-componentry. These unique microbes, microbial populations and DNA components can be used in a range of applications including increased plant growth, plant health and bioresource recovery. The purchase of the Agri-Bio Forge develops the University's infrastructure capabilities in biosynthetic agriculture which will be applied to ongoing cutting edge research applications as well as teaching the new generation of agriculturists.

Continued investment in USQ's advanced manufacturing research facilities and equipment has been made through the purchase of a MF Tech Filament Winder. This purchase provides USQ with the most advanced filament winding cell in Australia with a unique capability set to deliver research focussed on industrial applications.

The outcomes of USQ Capacity Building Grants were announced in June 2021. In its second year, the USQ Capacity Building Grants are an internal funding program which aims to build the capability of early and mid-career researchers to apply for external funding. Seeding grants of up to \$15,000 are provided to successful applicants to help them develop their research project concepts. The scheme specifically helps applicants to develop skills in building research project teams and writing grant proposals and is open to all USQ academic staff. A total of 36 applications were received for the USQ Capacity Building Grants, with 17 successful applications receiving a total of \$204,629 in funding.

USQ celebrated the \$5.8 million expansion of the engineering and research facilities at Springfield campus with an official opening ceremony held in October 2021. The new facilities enable the University to expand its capacity to conduct research and work with industry to contribute to the development of new knowledge and solutions that address real-world problems. The expanded building features multiple teaching and research laboratories, including a robotics and automation room, lab spaces for future materials development, power and energy testing and civil and structural engineering testing systems.

Research Information Solutions Enhancement Project

In 2021, USQ established Project Research Information Solutions Enhancement (RISE) to oversee the design of new solutions for the University's research information and HDR Student management systems. A critical purpose of this project is to ensure researchers and managers have access to a holistic view of their research portfolios that is self-serviced and user friendly.

The Project RISE team consulted extensively with stakeholders across the University to analyse the current state, understand future business requirements and focus on the user experience. Key findings from this process indicated a critical need for an overarching, interoperable multi-platform solution aligned with USQ user experience principles that effectively and efficiently manage workflows and processes relating to core research functions, including HDR Student management.

Following an external tender process, in January 2021 USQ engaged with an external provider for three integrated modules that will manage USQ's human and animal ethics requirements,

repository data and research project management (grants and contracts). Additionally, USQ is leveraging the existing PeopleSoft Student system to support the University's HDR Student management needs, with both systems easily interfacing with each other to deliver our business needs.

The Project RISE team has conducted extensive needs analysis, business process design, data migration, and user testing and training and the four modules within this new system will all be live by May 2022. The system implementation will herald a new stage of operational excellence, supported by an innovative solution that will enhance USQ's ability to establish, conduct, report on and improve the visibility of our research performance.

Health Research Strategy

In recent years, USQ has experienced an increase in health research capabilities, placing the University in a strong position to address important health challenges and priorities. In 2021, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) and the Executive Dean (Faculty of Health, Engineering and Sciences) initiated the development of a focussed University Health Research Strategy as the appropriate next step to maximise our success in obtaining external research funding, strengthening our partnerships, and ultimately driving further improvements to our research performance and impact.

A USQ Health Research Strategy Working Group was established with membership comprised of representation from internal stakeholders; including research leaders and discipline experts in the various health areas across the University, and two external health discipline experts. The Working Group undertook an analysis of USQ's existing capacity to undertake health research, conducted scoping of national and international health priorities and participated in a series of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods designed to understand the future potential of health research at USQ.

This work informed the development of a USQ Health Research Framework, titled 'Transformation through Connection', which reflects the collective views of the Working Group and acknowledges the importance of team-based connections in learning and teaching, research and University engagement with communities and stakeholders. To support the implementation of the Framework, the Working Group also provided a suite of 'Pathway Recommendations' consisting of the immediate actions, which include the establishment of a USQ Executive Health Board; strategic recruitment including a professorial academic appointment to build capacity and leadership and a Business Manager (Health Research) to lead external engagement; targeted professional

development activities including Seminar Series' and external workshops and internal seed funding to build capacity of researchers to work with external health providers.

Expanding industry engagement

A critical focus for the University moving forward is to further strengthen and develop research partnerships that provide a foundation to create and deliver high-quality, large-scale research projects. A key role of the Research Partnerships team, within the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation), is to facilitate the development of linkages with industry, government, and other public and private sector organisations to realise partnership and commercialisation opportunities. In 2021, USQ has led the development of and has collaborated in several large-scale bids including the successful Future Drought Fund Southern Queensland Northern New South Wales Drought Resilience Hub and Strategic University Reform Form proposals, which in combination have engaged more than 35 industry partners and community stakeholders to support the translation of research and development to deliver high-quality research outcomes.

In August 2021, USQ collaborated in two Round 23 Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) bids; the Regional Advanced Manufacturing CRC (led by Deakin University); and the Plastics Waste CRC (led by Griffith University). The CRC grants provide funding for medium to long-term, industry-led research collaborations for up to 10 years, providing an opportunity to solve industry identified problems. Participation in both CRCs is closely aligned with USQ's Strategic Plan 2021-2025 and USQ's involvement demonstrates the value that an open and engaged regional university brings to its communities and promotes growth in the university's flagship areas of regional development, agriculture, and defence (materials manufacturing).

In October 2021, USQ's Institute for Life Sciences and the Environment contributed to the development of a proposal for an Australian Research Council Industrial Transformation Training Centre. Led by the Queensland University of Technology, the Human Centred Data Science in Agriculture proposal is focussed on developing a user-friendly approach to data in agriculture to address current barriers to digital adoption.

Contribution to global research communities

Associate Professor Ben Lyons, Director of the Rural Economies Centre of Excellence was made a member of the Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal's Program Advisory Committee - Networks to Build Drought Resilience in 2021.

The Networks to Build Drought Resilience program is one of the FDF's foundation programs and is designed to build community capacity by strengthening social and community networking, support, engagement and wellbeing. The aim of the program is to build an enduring resilience to the impacts of climate change, drought, and enhance the public good in agriculture-dependent communities.

Professor Jeff Dunn AO from USQ's Centre for Health Research is Chief Executive Officer of the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia and President-elect of the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC). With 1188 organisation members across 172 countries, UICC is a network of research institutes, healthcare agencies, ministries of health and other partners committed to shaping cancer control on a global scale. As Chair and Research Program Director of USQ's Centre for Health Research's Social and Behavioural Sciences team, Professor Dunn is actively involved in research focussed on the social and behavioural aspects of cancer, covering the continuum of research, prevention, early detection, supportive care, and quality of life. He is the Director of the West Moreton Hospital and Health Service Board and Chair of the Risk and Audit Committee. Professor Dunn will commence as President of the UICC in 2022.

Goal: Being the University of choice across our regions for staff

USQ aspires to be an employer of choice with a high-performance, values-based culture that enables achievement of its education and research goals. The People Portfolio's priorities for 2021 included: developing a future-focussed people strategy and workforce to optimise the delivery of the University's strategic plan and other key plans; continuing to lift the capability of our leaders, managers and supervisors to enable them to effectively lead their teams and deliver strategic priorities; and a renewed focus on partnerships, people and processes.

Strategic workforce planning and performance

Workforce and leadership capability

PEOPLE STRATEGY

Development of the 2021-2025 USQ People Strategy was commenced as a key enabling plan to support the implementation of the new 2021 – 2025 USQ Strategic Plan. In 2021, the University worked with Deloitte to develop a comprehensive stimulus document to engage the executive in an informed discussion on the key priorities and choices shaping the future of the University's workforce, to inform the development of the USQ People Strategy. This new USQ People Strategy will guide the University's people priorities over the next five years. The University also committed to the establishment of its inaugural People Culture and Change Committee to ensure strong governance arrangements in relation to the future strategic positioning of, and return on investment in, its people.

TALENT STRATEGY AND ATTRACTION

This year, the University continued to build on its employer brand, visibility, and presence through the use of its LinkedIn platform and across other University social channels. The University's talent brand on LinkedIn grew considerably in 2021, with a total of almost 79,000 followers. Employee engagement and advocacy continues with strong growth on the platform.

During 2021, the formalisation and implementation of the USQ Strategic Plan, USQ Academic Plan and USQ Research Plan required recruitment of a range of mission-critical roles, including key leadership appointments including the Pro Vice-Chancellor (First Nations Education and Research), Pro Vice-Chancellor (Engagement), the University's first 'women only' post-doctoral positions as a key initiative of the SAGE Athena Swan Action Plan, and various roles in the University-led Southern Queensland and Northern New South Wales (SQNNSW) Drought Resilience Hub, to support the University to deliver on its key priorities. A targeted campaign was also designed and delivered to specifically recruit University graduates into roles with the Academic Quality Unit, as a pilot for a potential future Graduate Program.

The People Portfolio continued to make improvements to the recruitment process throughout the year to establish clear points of accountability and responsibility, increase process efficiency, digitisation and automation, improve reporting and analytics, and enhance the functionality of the University's online recruitment system. Deliverables have included online requests and workflows, streamlined pre-employment screening processes, online onboarding for new employees, expanded sourcing channels to promote job opportunities to University students, alumni and specialised talent cohorts, and revised employee training modules, guides and tools to ensure a contemporary approach to the attraction and recruitment of talent and support diversity recruitment strategies.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT

The priority leader and manager cohort for development in 2021, was academic supervisors, managers, and leaders. In addition to commencing strategic discussions with the newly appointed Senior People Partners, learning opportunities for this cohort included the High Performing Talent Coaching Program and Management Essentials. The High Performing Talent Coaching Program provided individualised development to employees identified as leading strategic priority initiatives, new leaders to the University and the tertiary sector, or high performing/high potential leaders on a positive career trajectory. Management Essentials was offered as an intensive program to Academic supervisors in Learning and Teaching as well as Research positions. In total, 116 leaders participated in leadership and management development during 2021.

PEOPLE CAPABILITY

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting impact on employee development, the focus in 2021 was providing virtual, just-in-time, and in-situ development opportunities in line with the USQ People Capability Framework. To support individual employees to build their capability in line with emergent needs and in a timely manner, the University trialled the use of LinkedIn Learning. During the year, 48% of all employees engaged and undertook learning within the online platform for an average duration of 1 hour and 58 minutes per employee. In addition, in-situ individual and team development was offered and managed virtually

using the USQHub. A total of 124 employees participated in bespoke capability development (individual and team) throughout 2021. In addition, nine new online learning courses were developed for employees across a range of topics, such as organisational change, academic expectations, recruitment and selection, and performance planning and review.

CAREER PROGRESSION (ACADEMIC PROMOTION)

Continuous improvements continue to be made to the University's academic promotion processes, with 2021 including a data gathering exercise on a proposed new promotion rating scale and minimum performance matrix, designed to align to the USQ Academic Employee Expectations Framework and increase expectations and levels of performance as the classification level increases and, particularly, recognise the distinguished level of performance required in the University's senior academic ranks. In parallel, the Level B Academic Promotion process has also been streamlined as a way of empowering local-level ownership and encouraging early career conversations in work areas. The same number of promotion applications was received this year as in 2020 (a total of 48 applications), although with a difference between levels and gender. Overall, women applied at lower proportional rates than men in 2021 with the exception of applications for Level E, where 75% of applications were from women, in addition to an increase in the number of applications from women for Level D. These are very positive outcomes that reflect a number of pipeline-building development activities which have been invested in over the last three-year period with the long-term aim of ultimately increasing women at senior academic levels. The overall success rate for academic promotion applications in 2021 was 66.7%, which was lower than the 2020 success rate.

CAREER PROGRESSION (STUDY ASSISTANCE AND ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT AND OUTSIDE STUDIES PROGRAM)

The 2021 Academic Development and Outside Studies Program round received 18 applications, 16 of which were approved or conditionally approved. This year also saw a number of deferred applications from 2020, due to COVID-19 impacts limiting the program last year. A strategic review of the Program has been undertaken to re-align the program with strategic priorities and the future of academic work.

Study assistance continues to reflect the changing nature of work and careers, with a declining 48 applications for undergraduate programs and an increasing 58 applications for postgraduate study in 2021. This program has also undergone a review to align with future-focussed University and employee capability requirements.

Workforce engagement and culture

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

To ensure continued focus and embedding of the key strategic actions arising from the last VOICE Employee Engagement Survey in 2020, regular monitoring of progress on recommendations from the Engagement Survey Working Group continued throughout 2021. These actions focussed on improved communication and information access activities, streamlining change management, and improving work processes through continuous improvement. At the local work area level, themes addressed include process improvements, workload, career progression/development/planning, communication and collaboration, respect, and wellbeing.

ORGANISATIONAL VALUES

The University partnered with UniSuper for a fourth consecutive year to present the University's Values Champion Award. This award is bestowed on four deserving employees who continually demonstrate their commitment to the values of the University – respect, integrity and excellence – and bring them to life through their daily interactions, performance and behaviours.

In 2021, the recipients were:

- Julianna Dawidowicz, Office of Research
- Chelsea Koelmeyer, Student Success and Wellbeing
- Dr Shahab Abdulla, USQ College
- Dr Ali Mirzaghobanali, School of Civil Engineering and Surveying

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

The University Excellence Awards, which recognise staff achievements across a number of categories expanded in 2021, with new awards introduced in the Learning and Teaching and Research categories, reflecting University priorities in academic quality, and in recognising the achievements of women in STEMM.

The recipients of 2021 Excellence Awards were:

- Excellence Award for Community Engagement and Service: Dr Suzanne Reich and Kathy Reeves (School of Law and Justice) and India Bryce (School of Education)
- Excellence Award for Teaching (BELA): Dr Susan Carter (School of Education)
- Excellence Award for Teaching (HES): Justine Baillie (School of Civil Engineering and Surveying)
- Excellence Award for University Teaching: Krystal Schaffer (School of Health and Wellbeing)
- Excellence Award for Innovation and Change: Indigenous Student Support and Success Team - Laurie-Anne Parsons, Naomi Bruggmann, Jaylane Connelly, Candice Hamilton, Will Hay, Chelsea Webber (College for Indigenous Studies, Education and Research)

- Excellence Award for Values-Based Leadership: Julianna Dawidowicz (Office of Research)
- Excellence Award for Research: Professor Ravinesh Deo (School of Sciences)
- Excellence Award for Research (Highly Commended): Professor Tek Maraseni (Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Systems)
- Excellence Award for Early Career Research: Dr Toan Dinh (Centre for Future Materials)
- Ronel Erwee Memorial Award for Excellence in Postgraduate Research Supervision: Professor Celmara Pocock (School of Humanities and Communication)
- Inaugural Vice-Chancellor's Excellence Award for Women in STEM: Associate Professor Weena Lokuge (School of Civil Engineering and Surveying)
- Excellence Award for Service to Research: Vanessa Munster (Office of Research)

The University's peer recognition program – Say Thanks and Recognise Success (STARS) – has continued to flourish. In 2021, an average of 66 STARS were received by employees per month with the top two reasons being 'going above and beyond' and 'providing excellent service'. A new category of 'safety advocacy' was added during the year and 26 have been awarded to date. The program has had a strong impact on recognition culture at the University and has been a valued method of recognising colleagues and supporting social connection; particularly during the ongoing impacts of COVID-19.

Health, safety and wellbeing

In 2021, the USQ Safety team progressed the rollout of the USQ Safety Strategy 2020-2022 to the USQ community with a focus on increasing positive safety culture and actively managing key workplace health and safety risks. The University launched leader-led safety observations to connect University leaders with the USQ community at a local level, fostering direct cultural engagement. Additionally, the University released a new safety-focussed website, Safety Central, to promote connectivity of safety initiatives and resources. Safety Central continues to grow with new Risk specific pages published frequently to further cultivate connectivity, transparent safety culture and compliant operations. The University also introduced USQ Safety Advocacy awards, which enable staff at any time to acknowledge their colleagues' safety achievements and positive safety behaviours, in support of a positive safety culture.

During 2021, the University continued to perform better than the lost time injury frequency rate benchmark for higher education. Musculoskeletal injuries (including trips, slips and falls) are the University's most common type of injury and a common theme within higher education. Learning reviews continued during the year to inform built environment outcomes and drive educational initiatives.

USQ Safety continued during the year to prioritise and deliver on the Biosafety Improvement Project aimed to manage biosafety risk across the University. A robust, benchmarked Biosafety Framework was developed with a focus on ensuring consistent operating practices across the University with streamlined, centralised coordination of advisory and compliance services and fit for purpose institutional accountability.

The University also procured a new Safety Information Management System to provide University benchmarked management of core safety data accessible through Safety Central to all staff and students. The system will greatly improve reporting accessibility for the entire USQ community and deliver significant safety performance visibility for the proactive and reactive management of safety. The rollout of the system will continue in 2022.

With the continued impact of COVID-19, the University developed a refreshed suite of supporting resources, health and wellbeing supports, and development options for employees in 2021. This included an online COVID-19 Special Leave form in the USQHub, which has enabled more accurate and timely reporting, 1310.90 hours of COVID Special Leave accessed in 2021. The University also actively supported employees in COVID-19 vaccinations by providing flexibility during work time for employees to attend an appointment.

The University continued to support the mental wellbeing of employees via the continued offering of Mental Health First Aid training. 114 employees participated in Mental Health First Aid training in 2021, bringing the total number of employees trained in Mental Health First Aid to 226.

Recognising the increasingly changing nature of work, the University also refreshed its flexibility resources and online portal to bring together a range of existing resources about flexible work relating to flexible hours, flexible leave, and flexible patterns of work, and providing employees and managers with guidance on having conversations around suitability for the individual, the work team, and the broader University needs.

Workforce structure and flexibility

Workforce design

Foundational workforce planning activities to support the future of work, with a focus on re-positioning of the academic workforce to align with the USQ Research Plan and the USQ Academic Plan, were undertaken throughout the year. This included the development of new academic position descriptions which better balance and integrate teaching and research and are designed to attract the type and calibre of academics the University needs, to position itself for future success. As part of the future of work considerations, the University also clarified expectations and career pathways for different academic employment categories (teaching and research, research only, teaching only) as a way of bringing more flexibility into the structure of the University's academic workforce and aligning with the USQ Academic Employee Performance Expectations Framework.

Industrial frameworks

To implement the requirements of the Fair Work Act 2009 in relation to casual employment, in 2021 the University undertook an extensive Casual Conversion Project addressing both the immediate transitional period requirements, and the longer-term workforce planning principles and considerations for managing the University's casual and temporary workforce. As part of the transition phase of the project, approximately 710 casual employees were assessed in terms of their eligibility for conversion to continuing employment. Of all casuals assessed as part of the transition phase, only one employee was assessed as being eligible for conversion to part-time continuing employment. Ongoing assessments are now being conducted as part of the People Portfolio's business-as-usual workforce planning activities.

Enterprise bargaining

The unions were advised at the Staff Consultative Committee meeting on 24 March of the University's intention to issue a Notice of Employee Representational Rights to staff; this notice was issued to staff on 26 March 2021. The agreement to commence bargaining later in the year provided the opportunity for further consultation to occur internally on bargaining strategy and claims, for a comprehensive redrafting of the current 2018 – 2021 University of Southern Queensland Enterprise Agreement and has provided the University with the benefit of observing the progress of bargaining at other universities before it commences formal bargaining. An extensive review was carried out in relation to identifying clauses and processes within the Enterprise Agreement that will form part of negotiations.

Organisational review and change

The USQ Change Communication Portal was developed for employees in 2021 to provide an easy-to-use, central location for employees to find templates, tools, and information about organisation change at the University. The portal provides a central referral point for employees about organisational change by consolidating and connecting a range of information from existing platforms. The portal responds to one of the key suggestions provided by the Engagement Survey Working Group, which was to consolidate and provide more information on the change processes underway across the University, to support achievement of the USQ Strategic Plan. As part of the University's continuing cycle of planning development and business improvement, organisational unit reviews and organisational changes are conducted as and when appropriate.

Reviews conducted during 2021 included the following:

ACADEMIC TRANSFORMATION PORTFOLIO

The Academic Transformation portfolio, led by Professor Lyn Alderman came into effect on 19 July 2021 following a formal change process, consultation for which took place between April - June 2021. The Portfolio, which draws together and builds on a range of existing activities in a coordinated manner and is designed to provide support and resources to strengthen USQ's approach to building new business streams, reinvigorating academic programs and ensuring compliance with the Higher Education Standards Framework, is comprised of the Academic Development Team; Academic Integrity Unit; Academic Quality Unit; Microcredential Unit and Senior Education Technology Advisor. The Portfolio continues to partner with the Faculties, USQ College, Students Portfolio and Library Services, and collaborates with other areas of the University, to contribute to the University's aspirations for quality and excellence and innovation in the program portfolio, learning and teaching and the student experience as set out in the University's *Academic Plan* and new Strategic Plan.

As part of the process, the Office for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching was disestablished from 19 July 2021, with the functions from the Office for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching transitioned to the Academic Transformation Portfolio and, where appropriate, within the Faculty of Business, Education, Law and Arts and the Faculty of Health, Engineering and Sciences.

An exciting new development arising from this process was the pilot launch of a Graduate Employment Program. The program includes the establishment of four three-month full-time Honours contracts to assist USQ students who have completed all of the requirements of a USQ honours

program with their transition to further research at USQ, and three one-year full-time graduate contracts. The positions are based within the Academic Quality Unit with the incumbents undertaking a range of daily activities such as reporting and conducting research and evaluations that support evidence-based decision making about the curriculum offered at USQ.

FINANCE AND BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

A review of the Financial Services structure, systems and processes commenced in April 2021, with the release of an organisational change proposal and consultation document outlining the intent to review, design and deliver a contemporary, highly skilled and efficient financial services to the University, ensuring that the structure delivers value in the increasingly complex operating environment. The revised structure is anticipated to provide an opportunity to align capabilities with the needs of key clients, to support them in the critical strategic decisions for growth and the efficient and effective use of resources, and to provide standardised, simplified and contemporary solutions to transactional services that ensure efficiency, compliance and the prevention of fraud. The new structure of the Finance and Business Solutions work unit became effective from 25 October 2021.

ASSURANCE SERVICES

The aim of the change activity was to review, design and deliver effective Assurance Services to the University, ensuring the structure and governance of the department delivers value in the increasingly complex operating environment. The review also intended to address recommendations from the external Quality Assurance Review conducted by the Institute of Internal Auditors Australia on USQ's Assurance Framework on 19 May 2021.

The review of the current structure resulted in the:

- reallocation of responsibility for leadership of the development, implementation and review of the University's risk and compliance management frameworks,
- implementation of a new approach to risk and compliance advisory and support services; and
- reallocation of compliance advisory, coordination and support activities.

The revised Assurance Services structure came into effect on 30 August 2021.

OMNIA BOOKS & BEYOND

With consideration of long-term financial sustainability, enhanced service provision and student/employee amenity, the Vice-Chancellor's Executive endorsed the proposed cessation of the non-catering offerings of Omnia Books & Beyond, and the proposed outsourcing of textbook, courseware and student retail sales from 31 December 2021.

FACULTY OF HEALTH, ENGINEERING AND SCIENCES

The release of the USQ Strategic Plan, including four flagship program areas of agriculture, health, regional development, and space and defence, has prompted a review of the organisational structure of the Faculty of Health, Engineering and Sciences to ensure that its structure supports the University to best leverage its research strengths, and best position it and the Faculty to deliver successfully on the new USQ Strategic Plan and flagship areas. As a result of the review, consultation for which was conducted between 5 August and 15 October, from 4 January 2022, the existing six schools within the Faculty will be reorganised into discipline groups to create seven schools, including:

- School of Engineering
- School of Surveying and Built Environment
- School of Mathematics, Physics and Computing
- School of Agriculture and Environmental Science
- School of Psychology and Wellbeing
- School of Nursing and Midwifery
- School of Health and Medical Sciences

The School of Agriculture and Environmental Science will be a research-intensive school with academic staff employed within aligned research centres or institutes considered for positions within the school, while remaining affiliated to their current research centre and institute.

INSTITUTE FOR LIFE SCIENCES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

To ensure the Institute for Life Sciences and the Environment can maintain its current growth momentum and support the objective of the USQ Strategic Plan to grow the quality and quantity of research outcomes, a review of the Institute's administrative and research facilities operational management structure was undertaken in 2021. The revised structure took effect on 27 September 2021.

Social responsibility and inclusion

Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

To embed diversity and inclusion into the University's integrated planning framework, the USQ Employee Diversity and Inclusion Framework was refreshed during 2021. The Framework continues to guide the strategic focus and priorities for initiatives and programs of work aimed at creating a sustainable impact on an inclusive working and learning environment. Priority areas of focus for 2021 under the USQ Strategic Plan, were the employment and inclusion of First Nations peoples and advancing gender equity at senior levels and in under-represented areas, such as Science Technology Engineering Mathematics and Medicine (STEMM).

Gender equity initiatives

The University conducted a six-month institution-wide campaign across both staff and students in preparation for the 2021 National Student Safety Survey (previously known as the Respect.Now.Always survey). The campaign was part of a strategy to build a greater level of awareness of the issues of sexual assault, sexual harassment and sexual violence, and the resources and supports available through the University for leaders, employees and students.

Mental Health First Aid and Bystander Intervention training were made available for first responders/identified groups most likely to witness or receive disclosures of sexual assault and sexual harassment. Bystander Intervention training was also extended to students for the first time.

Two major initiatives to support the University's strategies to advance gender equity in the priority cohorts of academic women at senior levels, women in STEMM, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, were undertaken in 2021. These initiatives had the following outcomes:

1. Academic Time Buy-Out Program

The Academic Time Buy-Out Program had five successful applicants from 10 applications, inclusive of two women in STEMM, one First Nations woman in STEMM, and two senior academic women in non-STEMM. The Program provides women with a period of time out of the workplace to complete their PhD by enabling the work area to backfill either a portion or the entirety of the individual's workload commitments for an agreed period.

2. Senior Women's Academic Development Program

The Senior Women's Academic Development Program had 10 successful applicants from 13 applications, inclusive of five Level D and five Level C women (including five women in under-represented STEMM disciplines). The Program is designed to provide tailored career development support for high potential senior academic women who want to progress their academic careers (through promotion or other avenues) in the next two years.

In 2021, three past participants in this program successfully applied for promotion to Professor.

SCIENCE IN GENDER EQUITY AUSTRALIA (SAGE) INITIATIVE

In late December 2020, USQ received notification that our application for an Athena SWAN Bronze Award was successful. Implementation of the Athena SWAN Action Plan commenced swiftly in 2021 and has made excellent progress in completing the initial actions that will be the foundation for the success of the four-year Action Plan. In 2021, USQ's SAGE Project team implemented several key initiatives to improve gender

equity in Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine (STEMM disciplines) at USQ, including the establishment of the SAGE Athena SWAN Committee, chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) and incorporating representation across a range of levels and diverse identities, to oversee the implementation and progress of the Action Plan. Recruitment of key positions including the Project Coordinator (SAGE) to oversee the delivery of the Action Plan and the Project Support and Evaluation Officer (SAGE), responsible for progressing the large number of human resources related actions that are scheduled to take place during the first year of the Action Plan, was also completed.

Each year from 2021 to 2023, two postdoctoral research fellows will be appointed to increase the number of women at USQ in STEMM disciplines where data indicates the gender disparity is greatest. In 2021, USQ appointed two Vice-Chancellor's Postdoctoral Research Fellows for Women in STEMM, Dr Tamara Sopek and Mahbuba Afrin. These new members of staff will be supported to grow and progress in their research and teaching careers to create a pipeline to a future gender-balanced workforce.

The People Portfolio conducted a 12-month trial subscription to Textio; a language data platform that will identify unconscious and gender bias and suggest more effective and engagement language in recruitment materials. There are several initiatives within the Action Plan that require the review of USQ's existing recruitment documents to remove gender biased language and it is anticipated that software will assist greatly with the progress of these actions. The SAGE project team also designed a survey for distribution to all women at USQ who have been appointed to a STEMM position in the last two years, to seek their opinions on USQ's onboarding process. The information gathered will be used to inform the development of improved onboarding processes. Changes to USQ's recruitment online application portal now collects information about career interruptions, to consider achievement relative to opportunity.

Also, in 2021, the Vice-Chancellor also established the inaugural Research Excellence Award for Women in STEMM to increase the visibility of and celebrate successful women in STEMM at USQ. The 2021 winner was Associate Professor Weena Lokuge from the School of Civil Engineering and Surveying.

With the release of the USQ Strategic Plan 2021-2025, USQ established a baseline and set targets for gender equity and diversity in STEMM and in May 2021, USQ Council approved a set of Key Result Indicators (KRIs) that support

the Strategic Plan. The KRI 'Increase workforce diversity' falls under the Performance Area 'Contributing to the sustainable development of our communities' and includes specific targets for women in STEM.

The SAGE Athena SWAN Committee also endorsed and supported staff attendance at several relevant professional development opportunities and events that demonstrate strong links to actions that aim to develop leadership skills and improve career pathways for women. Launched in 2021, the SAGE Dashboard has been created as a one-stop website that will provide USQ staff with information, resources and updates about the progress of the SAGE Action Plan.

First Nations Peoples initiatives

In 2021, the University focussed on two key areas under the USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Workforce Strategy, which is to *'enhance and elevate cultural sensitivity, safety and inclusion to enable genuine engagement'* and *'build a pipeline to employment, including a priority focus on leveraging the University's own student and graduate cohorts...and building Indigenous research workforce capacity'*. Activities included early pipeline and career pathway development to support the University's First Nations students in their studies, through sponsorship of two new postgraduate scholarships for Masters degree students as a potential entry point to academia.

In parallel, a supporting initiative was undertaken, ensuring the University's staff and students engage in a culturally inclusive and safe way when conducting research involving First Nations people and/or topics. This was accomplished by upskilling 20 of the University's Higher Degree Research supervisors through a sponsored microcredential in ethically and effectively supervising HDR students undertaking research involving First Nations people or methodologies, and/or with an Indigenous focus.

To support the expansion of the University's employment strategies and targets under the USQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Workforce Strategy, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Identified Position Recruitment Guideline was finalised. The Guideline provides guidance to work areas in appropriately creating identified roles, and creating culturally safe and inclusive recruitment and appointment processes for First Nations people. A dedicated website was also created on the USQ Careers website to assist in the attraction and recruitment of First Nations employees. The University's workforce profile of First Nations people currently sits at 2.51% with a target of 3.00%.

As part of the University's commitment to building a culturally capable workforce across the University and enhancing cultural sensitivity and safety, in 2021 a framework for a bespoke USQ Building Cultural Capability Program was developed to assist all University staff in developing greater awareness and understanding of First Nations peoples, histories and cultures. The framework was developed through an initial partnership with external Indigenous agency, MurriMatters, and leverages the acquisition of the highly acclaimed SBS Inclusion Modules (specifically the dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness module). Extensive consultation occurred with First Nations key stakeholder groups to ensure the program reflects the needs, issues, concerns and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students in a wider University context.

A pilot initiative of Career Coaching for First Nations professional staff members was also developed, recognising that staff in this cohort are clustered at the lower- to mid-levels of the classification range, with limited opportunities for secondments or higher roles. Six employees participated in the pilot program.

To enable employees, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, an opportunity to celebrate, reflect and connect through a shared and common purpose, a cross-University collaboration activity across both student and staff portfolio areas was undertaken for NAIDOC Week from 4 – 11 July 2021 to recognise this significant event in the First Nations calendar. Major events were held across three campuses with positive engagement and feedback.

The University appointed its inaugural Pro Vice-Chancellor (First Nations Education and Research) Professor Tony Dreise in September 2021 as an important step forward in shaping future directions and strengthening the voice of First Nations people in the University's teaching, research and engagement.

Goal: Maintaining our capacity for investment into our future

Reducing Our Carbon Footprint

At USQ, we understand that as an institution of higher learning we play a leading role in educating the leaders, professionals and policy makers of the future. We believe that transformational sustainability is an investment in both current and future generations and that solving problems that matter start with local solutions to global challenges. The launch of the new USQ Strategic Plan mid-way through 2021 has presented an opportunity for the University to reframe its long-term approach to sustainability that will inform the future development of a USQ Sustainability Strategy. The strategy will define the University's vision for sustainability for the following key activity areas: Learning & Teaching, Research, Engagement and Enterprise Operations.

The material impact of COVID-19 continues to be reflected in the University's energy and emissions profile as learning and teaching models pivot to operating in a COVID-normal environment. While the reduction in overall campus activity in 2021 has resulted in an improved greenhouse gas emissions profile, this learning opportunity has highlighted the impact our operations have on the environment.

Environmental Key Performance Indicators – 2021

With on-campus energy consumption generating more than 80% of the University's carbon emissions there is a strong commitment to energy conservation, efficiency and emissions reduction. As a large-scale consumer of energy (electricity and gas), the direct focus for the University's environmental initiatives in 2021 continued to centre on demand management (reducing electricity usage) and on campus energy generation.

The overall performance of the campus-wide solar array system continues to be strong across the Toowoomba and Ipswich campuses. The prolonged absence of solar generation on the Springfield campus due a severe hailstorm in late 2020 resulted in a lower annual generation of clean energy (2,685 megawatts in 2021 compared to 3,040 megawatts in 2020). This has resulted in a 16% increase in purchased energy for the Springfield campus in 2021.

With a continued focus on campus waste management and resource recovery programs, emissions generated from waste disposal have reduced by 48% across 2021 with increased recycling performance noted across all campuses. The University's progressive and adaptive approach to waste management has resulted in segregated waste streams being

rolled out across campuses in an effort to minimise waste that would otherwise be directed to landfill. In 2021 USQ joined forces with the Ipswich Hospital Foundation to roll out the Containers for Change program across Ipswich and Springfield campuses.

To enable an improved understanding of campus water usage and demand, a multi-year implementation program of smart water meters commenced on the Toowoomba campus. The progressive implementation across campuses will inform development of campus-specific water management plans to drive more efficient use and sustainable management of campus water resources.

Sound business model, service culture and learning culture

Ensuring informed decision-making

The modernisation of the Data Warehouse and Business Intelligence Platform continued in 2021 led by the Planning, Reporting and Analytics team. Driven by the University's business needs, the USQ Information Centre was launched in early 2021, providing a central source of decision-making data and information that all staff can access. Key provisions added to the Information Centre in 2021 include dashboards covering Academic Quality, Student Pipeline (from Application to Enrolment) and a series of dashboards supporting our People Portfolio. The Information Centre will continue to evolve over 2022 expanding centrally accessible data provision across Research, Finance and Facilities domains. The team also developed a data literacy program to support the progression of widespread data literacy across USQ. The program includes a combination of online learning modules in addition to a series of classroom-based learning sessions.

Load planning and associated decision-making was enhanced with the implementation of Oracle Enterprise Performance Management, which provided modules for the automated forecasting of future load based on predictive algorithms. A new process was introduced to support the implementation of the new system and maximise its application.

Service improvement

Service Improvement awareness and capability continued to develop across the University in 2021 with 42 service improvement opportunities, and the launch of 25 new digitised forms. Access and usage of online self-help content has expanded with over 1000 articles being accessed over 70,000 times. The Service Improvement team delivered a series of successful, hands-on workshops focussed on building

organisational capability in process mapping and current/future state analysis. In addition, the team undertook a pilot of Robotic Process Automation software to test how the software interacts with core systems.

The University's refreshed Project Management Framework was released for use across the organisation during the year. Based on industry best practice with a view to practical implementation within a University environment, the new Project Management tools have been simplified, streamlined and strengthened to include benefits realisation and capture key data to assist with assessment, review and ongoing monitoring through a project lifecycle. The framework is underpinned by a Project, Programme and Portfolio Management approach to inform consistent reporting and enhance governance, project assurance and decision-making.

As custodians of the University's policy library, the Service Improvement team provided guidance, training and support for the development or review of policy and procedure across diverse business areas. 2021 is on track to see the highest ever volume of policy change completed at the University with more than 600 policy changes completed, including 49 new policy instruments and 56 major reviews. This year, as part of on-going continuous improvement efforts, the Service Improvement team lead a holistic review of the University's approach to policy and procedure, which incorporated extensive stakeholder feedback. The outcomes of this process will inform process enhancements, improved resources and additional supports designed to enhance the user experience for all stakeholders engaged in developing and reviewing University policies and procedure.

USQ development and philanthropy

The primary objective for the University with regard to development and philanthropy during 2021 was to sustain the same level of fundraising success achieved in 2020. The addition of so many new donors in 2020 has made it challenging to sustain and/or expand, the high level of success. This challenge has been somewhat offset, however, by the appointment of a Donor Experience Coordinator in September, a new position which adds significant capability in stewardship and donor acknowledgement in recognition of the impact and importance of philanthropy at the University.

During 2021, the University transitioned to a new philanthropic endowment investment model. The approach is expected to drive investment returns into the future and provide expanded opportunities for donors interested in legacy gifts, this being a significant attracter for visionary donors. A major element of philanthropy in 2021 has been the expansion of the University's art collection through two major

gifts of art. The timing of these gifts aligns with development of the new Art Gallery space in B Block, Toowoomba Campus, with exhibitions planned for 2022 subsequent to the completion of the new Gallery.

COVID-19 pandemic response

Managing COVID-19 related risks continued to be a key consideration in planning University operations throughout 2021. On several occasions, campuses were impacted by State Government directed lockdowns and other restrictions. The University learned to move swiftly to working and learning from home arrangements and has become agile in its response to the ever-changing external environment resulting from COVID-19. The University managed the impact of COVID-19 through a range of strategies including:

- Ongoing maintenance of USQ's COVID-19 Safe Framework.
- Integration of COVID-19 risk within University Safety Risk Management Plans.
- Internally and externally benchmarked COVID-19 risk management practices.
- Ongoing consultation with key internal stakeholders through the Pandemic Preparedness Working Group.
- Externally and internally facing COVID-19 risk management and wellbeing guidance.
- Provision of appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as masks and hand sanitiser, as well as increased cleaning protocols.
- Physical changes to the University environment, such as seating structures and room capacities.
- Distribution of timely COVID-19 University communiques.

To ensure the University continues to provide fit for purpose pandemic response, external consultants were engaged during 2021 to review existing processes. A desktop analysis of relevant University documents was completed which included a review of the University's pandemic plan and COVID-19 response communications. The University has a draft USQ Pandemic Response Guideline and COVID-19 Management Plan that is being used to guide decision-making.

ICT infrastructure

Major ICT Projects

Significant work was undertaken during 2021 to put leading edge digital collaboration and communication infrastructure facilities in the redevelopment several major physical hubs. In Toowoomba R Block, refreshed student computing spaces, blanket Wi-Fi coverage and contemporary collaboration spaces make this a digital rich and inviting space for students to come on campus and utilise our blended physical and

digital infrastructure. Cutting-edge teaching and collaboration spaces enabling modern cutting edge engineering teaching and research engagement feature in the new F Block Springfield engineering laboratories, opened in September 2021.

During the year, ICT Services partnered with the Academic Division to develop and support the technology related implementation of the Academic Plan. This has included enabling ICT programs of work, providing support for on-going enhancements to online exams and academic integrity processes and undertaking wider consultation on teaching space upgrade requirements. ICT Services have supported the development of an effective program structure to support critical technology work required to enable delivery of the Academic Plan, through stewardship of the emergent Academic Plan technologies portfolio. Establishing this portfolio of work through application of the new University's project management framework ensures effective and efficient governance across this significant investment.

In 2021, USQ's High Performance Computing Capacity was significantly upgraded with new 3084 computational core with 100 Teraflops of performance infrastructure commissioned in May 2021. This increased capacity will significantly increase the capability of USQ researchers to undertake computationally intensive research in a timely manner. Previous infrastructure has been repurposed to provide a teaching sub-cluster" which will provide an environment for the next generation of researchers to learn critical skills in high performance computing.

ICT Infrastructure investment

A major focus area in 2021 was enhancing the resilience of USQ digital infrastructure, including refreshing datacentre networks to ten-fold increase speed within the University, upgrading private cloud capacity to accommodate increasing digitisation and growth of USQ systems, and replacing data and systems backup infrastructure to improve resilience and reduce recovery time in the event of a system failure or a need to recover legacy data. Additional investment fibre optic infrastructure on Toowoomba campus has allowed the completion of dual homing all major buildings providing a 10-fold increase in network speed and significantly greater resilience in the event of a cable failure.

Digital governance

USQ's Strategic Plan has provided critical stimulus during 2021 for the refresh of enabling plans central to delivery of Digital and ICT Services across the coming five years. These plans include a digital strategy which aligns the University's key digital capabilities and programs of work to its strategic

objectives across a range of themes including academic plan technologies, virtual campus and digital workplace for staff and partners as well as framing the University's approach to data leverage and a cyber security strategy guiding the secure enablement of University operations in an increasing hostile cyber threat environment. The cyber security strategy highlights alignment with Australian Cyber Security Centre best practice and higher education sector best practice.

An Enterprise Information Management Framework has been developed to guide the principles, objectives, roles, and opportunities related to improving our use of data and information resources. It highlights, co-ordinates and aligns compliance, record keeping, privacy and cyber security initiatives with strategic use of data and is the first step in a multiyear journey towards improving maturity in this critical digital area.

Cyber security

An elevated cyber threat environment was a feature of 2021, and in line with USQ's Cyber Security Strategy, a number of key cyber security focus areas were progressed. A key focus was on protecting user identities through a combination of a new identity management system and related controls and improving user awareness and cyber safe behaviour through a targeted cyber security training plan which incorporates phishing simulation exercises as a key component. USQ continued to expand the use of multi-factor authentication and single sign on to all users of University systems. A significant hardening of infrastructure, particularly staff computers and the internal server infrastructure, was undertaken, using additional security configuration to reduce the exposure to a cyber-attack such as ransomware and provide the ability to isolate attackers from further action. Investment was made in expanding use of big data correlation and machine learning analysis at multiple points in the University's infrastructure to enable rapid detection and improved ability to respond to a threat or a cyber security incident. This combination reduces USQ's risk exposure in areas where malicious activity is being observed, and positions the University to respond to future threats in a rapid and agile manner.

Campus development

Campus Master Planning

During 2021, the University has progressed Campus Master Planning to inform future developments in line with the University Strategic Plan 2021-2025 and ensure the physical campuses meet the needs of students and staff, as well as providing engaging and welcoming spaces for the community.

USQ infrastructure

The Planning, Projects and Space team managed in excess of 40 projects during 2021, including the following key capital projects:

- A \$900,000 upgrade to the nursing simulated wards at Toowoomba campus was completed early in the year. The project created three new simulated wards with associated preparation rooms and provides capacity for enlarged amenities to be completed with future stages of work.
- The F Block project at Springfield campus was completed in April 2021 providing a high-quality engineering and research facility for the campus. The \$6 million building provides a highly transparent internal environment with state-of-the-art teaching space, and research facilities designed to allow interaction with teaching outcomes.
- A significant upgrade to the ground floor of R Block at Toowoomba campus was completed in August 2021. This student focussed refurbishment provides a permanent home for iConnect with a new café adjacent as well as student computing and collaboration areas. The \$5 million project enhances the student experience on the campus and links to both the Quad and refurbished Refectory.
- The \$4 million remodelling of B Block at Toowoomba campus has delivered a new art gallery and function space with dining capacity up to 200 people. The project is aimed at creating engagement with the wider Toowoomba community. The upper level of the building provides contemporary and efficient office space.
- Two projects have commenced in the second half of 2021 aimed at improving older areas of the Toowoomba campus. A \$3 million upgrade to three buildings at McGregor College to self-catering standard is underway, and a \$2 million upgrade to the Agricultural, Science and Engineering Precinct will upgrade roads, parking and drainage, extend two facilities and create a precinct more commensurate with high value research outcomes.
- Feasibility planning commenced for a new facility to be shared with the Department of Defence. The project is led by the Institute for Advanced Engineering and Space Sciences and is expected to provide high quality research space.

Strategic Asset Management Plan

The development of USQ's Strategic Asset Management Plan commenced in late 2021. The Strategic Asset Management Plan will align with University's Strategic Asset Management Framework and ISO 55000 principles, and will use outputs from the Campus Master Plan and objectives of the USQ Strategic Plan to guide asset management objectives. The Strategic Asset Management Plan will define USQ's approach to developing Asset Management Plans for the next 10-15 years and the role of asset management systems in supporting achievement of asset management objectives. Key activities and deliverables as part of the project will include an asset current state assessment (asset portfolio assessment), and understanding of applicable asset related legislative instruments, gap analysis and improvement plan.

Strengthening security systems capability

Community safety and security is the focus of the Campus Security team. A number of initiatives were undertaken in 2021 to enhance physical security measures for on campus operations. Campus Security introduced two new fleet vehicles to assist with the delivery of our security services. The new vehicles provide a clear visual security presence around campus with stunning livery. These vehicles also allow Campus Security to support the University community through efficient responses to emergency situations, vehicle escorts for staff and students to and from parking facilities and residential colleges, and general patrols ensuring the campuses are secure and safe.

Further physical security enhancements throughout 2021 were the improvements and increased capacity of the physical security infrastructure achieved through several minor projects, including:

- Hardware upgrades to mitigate the risks of a cyber security breach identified within electronic access control (swipe) system used by the University.
- Expanded Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) where additional multi-sensor units were installed across the three campuses, increasing system capacity by 67 cameras.
- Replacement of the CCTV server and storage hardware, increasing capacity to ensure compliance with industry standards regarding data/recording retention timeframes.

In addition to physical security enhancements, the University also undertook a review of its crisis management framework and organisational resilience. Work is underway to refresh the University's approach in responding to disruption from crisis and the program of works will:

- support effective management of crises and disruption, minimising the impacts to the organisation;
- enable a proactive business continuity culture enabling fast and effective decision making;
- provide measurable compliance with best practice guidelines, standards, and benchmarks; and
- deliver tools to enhance USQ's response capability and management of an event.

2021 Summary of Financial Performance

In 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to have business impacts on the University both domestically and internationally. Management focussed efforts on responsible financial management of all University activities and continued investment in strategic priorities consistent with our mission.

The receipt of a significant dividend from the long-term holding in Education Australia Limited (EAL) resulted in the direct share ownership of IDP Education Limited (IDP) and associated franking credits. Investment income of \$83.4M was recognised and contributed to the overall operating surplus for 2021 of \$79.4M. This is a favourable result given the adverse impact of COVID-19 driven reduction in our international student load and broader impacts across the organisation.

The Statement of Financial Position remained strong with an increase in cash and cash investments, as well as an increase in net assets. Liquidity is healthy and we have maintained a strong current ratio of 2.3. Debt remains very low, with the final payment being made in 2021 for the borrowings associated with the acquisition of the Springfield campus. Overall borrowings represent 0.5% of total equity.

Statement of Comprehensive Income

Despite the continued volatility of the operating environment, as a result of the unplanned dividend from EAL, USQ's operating surplus was \$79.4M. Acknowledging the impact of this significant one-off event, an adjusted operating deficit of \$4.0M compares favourably with the original budgeted deficit of \$9.9M.

Total income was \$423.9M and was \$88.0M higher than the 2021 original budget of \$335.9M, driven by the following major categories:

Income from Australian Government financial assistance was higher than both 2020 (+\$12.0M) and the original 2021 budget (+\$6.9M). The outcomes for 2021 were supported by the continuation of Commonwealth initiatives in relation to the transitional arrangements for the Job Ready Graduate funding as well the discounted Commonwealth-supported short courses. Additionally, the University received additional funding for the Commonwealth Research Support Program.

Fees and charges was an area which continued to be significantly impacted as a result of COVID-19. Income from international students was \$9.5M less than 2020, and \$6.3M less than the 2021 budget. Other activities such as operation of the Residential Colleges, on-campus commercial activities, and training and retail operations at the Queensland College of Wine Tourism were impacted less. Overall Fees and Charges were \$8.5M less than 2020 and a \$5.7M shortfall against the 2021 budget.

Revenue from consultancies and contracts, and other income was comparable to 2020 and exceeded the 2021 budget by \$3.7M. Investment income benefited from dividend payments from EAL and associated franking credits (\$83.4M), however returns from fixed term investments with approved financial institutions remained suppressed.

Total expenses were \$12.1M (3.6%) higher than 2020 and \$1.2M (0.4%) lower than the original budget. These movements were driven by the following major categories:

Employee related expenses increased by \$8.6M (3.7%) from 2020. While a focus was maintained on controlling the significant expenditure associated with employee costs, the overall result has been primarily driven by salary increases for staff (2.0%), engagement of additional staff in 2022 to progress a number of strategic initiatives, continued focus on vacancy management and a \$10.0M provision for restructure, which was announced to staff in December 2021. Overall employee expenditure in 2021 was \$3.8M (1.6%) more than the original budget.

Depreciation and amortisation costs saw an increase to both the 2020 actuals (\$0.4M) and the 2021 original budget (\$0.3M). The increase in costs reflects the combination of asset additions, disposal and movement in the valuation of the carrying amount of depreciable assets.

A loss on disposal of assets resulted from the write-off of damaged solar panels as a result of hail storm damage in 2020 to be replaced through an approved insurance claim, and the closure of the University-operated printing services and subsequent disposal of assets.

Other expenses increased by \$1.2M on 2020 expenditure, however were significantly less than planned (-\$7.8M) at \$80.4M. The impact domestically and globally of COVID-19 contributed significantly to the under-expenditure on travel and professional development activities, international student scholarships and stipends, and a reduction in international student recruitment costs due to restrictions on international arrivals.

The Statement of Financial Position reflects the financial strength of the University and its capacity to meet current financial obligations and support investment in strategic priorities.

Net Assets increased by \$55.8M (7.7%) driven by a number of factors:

Current assets increased by \$29.1M mainly due to the increase in cash and cash equivalents, and increased receivables that reflect the franking credits associated with the EAL dividends.

Non-current assets increased by \$41.2M (6.7%) driven by the net increase of in Other Financial Assets (\$20.3M) which included the value of shares held in EAL, IDP, AARNet, and the long-term investment with Queensland Investment Corporation. Other movements in noncurrent assets relate to capital additions, revaluations, depreciation and amortisation.

Total liabilities increased by \$14.5M and included recognition of contract liabilities for unearned revenue from research grants, consultancy and contract revenue, and unearned student tuition fees as well as the recognition of a provision for restructure through a proposed early retirement scheme.

Institutional Performance

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Student Enrolments and Load							
[a] Total Students	28202	27478	26458	25905	25670	25649	24872
[a] Total Student Enrolments	28680	28005	26921	26318	26063	26079	25281
Total Student Load	14726	14557	14241	14016	13655	13969	13421
Enrolments - Commencing Students	11704	11274	11067	10331	10475	10139	9560
Enrolments - All Undergraduate	21392	21131	20762	20746	20617	20373	19809
Enrolments - Higher Degree Research	598	691	752	818	871	924	973
Enrolments - Higher Degree Coursework	6690	6183	5407	4754	4575	4782	4499
Postgraduates as % of Total Students	25%	25%	23%	21%	21%	22%	22%
Load – All Undergraduate	11519	11492	11350	11363	11152	11288	10820
Load – All Postgraduate	3207	3065	2891	2653	2503	2681	2601
[b] Market Share and Student Demand							
USQ Share of Queensland Providers enrolments	11.4%	11.0%	10.4%	10.0%	9.7%	9.8%	*
USQ Share of Australian Distance Education enrolments	9.1%	8.3%	7.6%	7.0%	6.5%	5.3%	*
USQ Share of International Student enrolments (Australian Providers)	1.2%	1.0%	0.8%	0.6%	0.6%	0.5%	*
USQ Share of Australian graduations	1.4%	1.4%	1.2%	1.1%	1.0%	1.1%	*
USQ Share of International Distance Education enrolments	29.3%	23.2%	16.9%	11.2%	8.7%	2.3%	*
USQ Share of Queensland provider Distance Education enrolments	43.7%	40.8%	42.2%	39.7%	37.3%	30.9%	*
[c] Client Satisfaction and Teaching Quality							
[d] Overall Course Satisfaction (score/5)	3.82	3.90	3.91	3.90	4.00	4.05	4.08
Australian Graduate Survey							
[e] CEQ: % Good Teaching Satisfaction	88.5%	88.1%	87.0%	88.8%	88.6%	90.2%	*
[e] CEQ: % Generic Skills Satisfaction	95.5%	96.0%	95.3%	95.5%	97.8%	98.2%	*
[e] CEQ: % Overall Rating Satisfaction	91.3%	91.9%	90.3%	91.1%	92.9%	91.4%	*
[f] GDS: % Graduates in Full-Time Study	11.1%	9.2%	9.1%	9.0%	9.0%	12.2%	*
[g] GDS: % Graduates in Full-Time Employment	80.4%	77.6%	72.9%	76.2%	78.6%	79.2%	*
[h] GDS: Median Starting Salary	63000	65700	67700	69400	70700	72000	*
[i] GDS: % Graduates Seeking FT Employment	17.7%	20.2%	24.3%	21.7%	19.4%	18.4%	*
Student Performance							
[j] Student Retention	76.4%	75.3%	77.6%	78.6%	80.3%	80.1%	*
[k] Course Progression rate	77.9%	78.6%	77.9%	78.4%	79.2%	80.5%	*
Student Completions	4599	4472	4096	4003	3681	3949	*

Institutional Performance cont'd

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Flexibility							
% Enrolments Internal	13.4%	13.9%	11.7%	11.9%	11.9%	10.0%	10.7%
% Enrolments External	70.2%	70.1%	68.6%	66.9%	66.0%	67.9%	67.6%
% Enrolments Multi-Modal	16.4%	16.0%	19.8%	21.2%	22.0%	22.1%	21.7%
Web-Based Subjects Offered	339	416	994	1033	1055	1057	1053
Web-Based Student Enrolments in Courses	27969	26705	66900	64455	62086	65894	63681
Enrolment Trends							
Enrolment Density (= Ratio of Enrolments to Load)	1.92	1.89	1.86	1.85	1.88	1.84	1.85
Median Age of Students	29	29	29	29	29	30	30
[l] Research and research higher degrees							
Research Completions – PhD + Research Masters	60	85	78	84	104	108	*
Staff							
[m] Staff FTE – Academic (FT & FFT)	529	548	580	591	587	592	563
[m] Staff FTE – General (FT & FFT)	959	991	969	897	896	866	907
Casual Staff FTE	307	313	300	285	281	258	258
Student Staff Ratio (EFTS:FTE)	22.0	21.1	20.6	21.1	20.7	20.7	20.3
% Academic Staff with PhD	67%	67%	70%	67%	68%	67%	71%
% Academic Staff with Higher Degree	88%	88%	89%	85%	86%	85%	88%
Staff Separation Rate (%)	5%	8%	6%	8%	7%	4%	4%
Mean Age of Staff – Academic	50	51	51	50	50	50	50
Mean Age of Staff – General	44	44	43	43	44	44	44
% Academic Staff who are Female	50%	50%	50%	51%	53%	53%	53%
% Senior Staff who are Female	27%	28%	26%	26%	32%	32%	39%
% Staff covered by Collective Bargaining Agreements	96%	96%	96%	96%	96%	96%	96%
[n] Health and Safety							
[o] Lost Time Injury Frequency Rate (LTIFR)	5.30	3.42	5.49	5.29	4.17	2.67	4.09
Occupational Disease Rate	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
[p] Lost Work Day Rate	21.07	58.26	28.56	39.53	8.61	12.69	25.58
Fatalities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
[q] New Workers Compensation Claims	32	28	41	40	24	20	24
[r] Average Days to Return to Work	13.29	12.40	8.00	11.21	9.00	2.67	4.09
[s] Average paid Days	12.56	42.25	34.21	18.29	20.60	2.5	35.69
Internationalisation							
Market Breadth 1: Number Countries Serviced	88	86	86	90	96	90	82
Market Breadth 2: # Countries Accounting for 80%	12	12	11	11	11	11	13
International Student Load	2636	2217	2058	1933	1863	1807	1295

Institutional Performance cont'd

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Equity and Multiculturalism							
Females as % of Total Students (Domestic)	56.8%	56.2%	57.3%	57.8%	58.2%	58.8%	59.0%
Females as % of Commencing Students (Domestic)	58.2%	56.9%	59.8%	59.2%	59.1%	60.1%	61.6%
% of Females in Engineering (Domestic)	9.8%	10.2%	10.1%	9.9%	10.1%	11.5%	12.3%
Enrolments – Indigenous Students	2.8%	2.9%	3.0%	3.2%	3.5%	3.8%	3.9%
Indigenous Student Progression (Pass Rate Parity)	79.1%	78.9%	80.9%	82.8%	86.7%	85.4%	*
[t] Enrolments – People with Disabilities	1620	1708	1798	1741	1737	1928	2198
% of Students Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	28.9%	27.8%	28.3%	28.6%	28.4%	27.3%	27.9%

* Data not available at time of publication or lags a year behind

- [a] Reporting headcount and student - level of program count for consistency with reporting counts a level of program
- [b] Market share is based on enrolments
- [c] Client satisfaction is from data taken from USQ's internal Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) course survey; and the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) national survey of graduates. Graduate Outcomes are assessed using the Graduate Destination Survey (GDS) conducted by all universities; and a survey of employers of USQ graduates conducted by USQ
- [d] Ratings are from students undertaking courses using a 5 point scale to indicate their response to the comment: "Overall, I am satisfied with this course"
- [e] The CEQ percentages shown above are the proportion of all respondents that broadly agreed with the items on the two CEQ scales and the Overall Satisfaction Index. Respondents indicated broad agreement by rating the scale item as 3, 4 or 5 on a 5 point scale. The percentages shown are derived from figures supplied by GCCA which consisted of the percentage of graduates in each qualification level and broad area of study that rated the scale as 3, 4 or 5
- [f] These are Australian first-degree graduates in further full-time study
- [g] This is the number of Australian first-degree graduates in full-time employment as a percentage of those available for full-time employment. 2015 figures are based on the new GOS survey. Labour Force Indicators are based on a new set of principles
- [h] These are Australian bachelor degree graduates who were in their first full-time job

- [i] The number of Australian first degree graduates in part-time employment or unemployed seeking full-time as a percentage of those available for full-time employment
 - [j] Retention Rate Calculation: (Continuing Yr2) / (Total Yr1 – Grads End Yr1)
 - [k] Progression Rate calculations exclude Non award students
 - [l] 2017 Research outputs not completed or verified until June meeting of HDREC
 - [m] FTE refers to Full-Time staff Equivalents
 - [n] All system rules are applied, reported and recorded in respect with the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (QLD) and Workers Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003 (QLD)
 - [o] LTIFR = (number of injuries x 1 000 000) / total hours worked
 - [p] Lost work day rate = (total lost work days/total hours worked) x 200000
 - [q] New statutory claims: The number of new statutory claims that have been registered during a given financial year, irrespective of the claimants' accident dates
 - [r] Average days to first return to work: The average number of days taken to secure any form of return to work, where the return occurs within the reporting period. Only time loss claims are included in this calculation
 - [s] Average paid days: The number of paid days (partial or total) on a statutory claim divided by the number of new statutory claims, in a given financial year
 - [t] Enrolments are based on all students including domestic and international
- Note: Some data may have changed slightly from the previous Annual Report due to back dated student withdrawals or similar. If you require additional information, please contact the University.

General Statistics

STUDENT LOAD (EFTSL)*	2019	2020	2021
Attendance			
On Campus	4640.8	4310.0	3983.3
External/Online	9013.8	9659.1	9437.5
Commencement Status			
Commencing	5178.6	5002.1	4814.0
Continuing	8476.0	8966.9	8606.8
Discipline Area			
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	68.5	90.3	100.8
Architecture and Building	33.3	36.0	28.6
Creative Arts	893.6	849.0	802.3
Education	2142.3	2285.4	2393.0
Engineering and Related Technologies	1483.1	1478.5	1378.4
Health	2547.3	2725.7	2645.1
Information Technology	966.1	882.3	720.4
Management and Commerce	1369.8	1285.8	1083.5
Natural and Physical Sciences	1563.8	1645.9	1558.0
Society and Culture	2325.9	2424.1	2487.8
Mixed Field Programmes	261.0	266.3	223.0
Program Level			
Higher Degree Research	526.8	556.0	568.3
Higher Degree Coursework	1614.3	1707.8	1676.9
Other Postgraduate	357.5	415.0	354.8
Bachelor	9301.4	9407.4	9026.5
Other Undergraduate	509.5	575.9	636.5
Enabling	1212.9	1198.0	1059.4
Cross-institutional	40.9	25.9	20.9
Non-Award	91.4	83.1	77.6
Funding Source			
Commonwealth Funded	10774.8	11098.9	11050.0
Domestic Fee-paying	652.6	674.3	660.1
International	1857.6	1802.8	1294.5
Research Training Program	369.6	393.1	416.3
TOTAL STUDENT LOAD	13654.6	13969.0	13420.8

Note:

* Figures show the EFTSL for the full year, based on annual submissions to The Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE) before 2021. 2021 figures show the EFTSL for the full year, based on the 2021 Load and Monitoring data from University systems.

STUDENT ENROLMENTS*	2019	2020	2021
Gender			
Female	14498	14815	14534
Male	11141	10792	10290
Indeterminate/Unspecified	31	42	48
Attendance Mode			
On Campus – Toowoomba	4184	3843	3598
On Campus – Springfield	2305	2097	1918
On Campus – Ipswich	2235	2291	2539
External / Online	16946	17418	16817
Commencement Status			
Commencing	10441	10103	9521
Continuing	15229	15546	15351
Field of Education			
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies		15	28
Architecture and Building	109	116	93
Creative Arts	3360	3134	2807
Education	3903	4065	4171
Engineering and Related Technologies	3649	3662	3524
Health	3838	4063	4209
Information Technology	1107	960	904
Management and Commerce	3701	3253	2555
Natural and Physical Sciences	1914	1975	1981
Society and Culture	3452	3736	3836
Non-Award	512	536	677
Mixed Field Programmes	125	134	87
Program Level			
Higher Degree Research	869	921	971
Higher Degree Coursework	3371	3450	3333
Other Postgraduate	1151	1304	1132
Bachelor	15167	14950	14748
Other Undergraduate	1317	1415	1504
Cross-institutional	251	164	123
Enabling / Non-award	3544	3445	3061
International			
Offshore	474	451	346
On-campus	2323	1997	1555
Australian	22873	23201	22971
Indigenous			
Indigenous	808	886	900
Non-Indigenous	24862	24763	23972
TOTAL STUDENT ENROLMENTS	25670	25649	24872

* Figures show the headcount of students for the full year, based on annual submissions to The Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE) before 2021. 2021 figures show the headcount of students for the full year, based on the 2021 Load and Monitoring data from University systems.

General Statistics cont'd

STAFF (FTE)	2019	2020	2021
ALL STAFF			
Gender			
Female	1046	1002	1016
Male	718	714	711
Classification			
Academic Staff	789	795	766
General Staff	975	921	962
Current Duties Term			
Tenured	1167	1138	1138
Limited Term	316	320	331
Other Term			
Casual	281	258	258
TOTAL STAFF	1764	1716	1728

ACADEMIC STAFF

Faculty			
Faculty of Business, Education, Law and Arts	332	335	329
Faculty of Health, Engineering and Sciences	249	250	250
Open Access College	39	34	32
College for Indigenous Study, Education and Research	15	18	17
Non-faculty	155	157	138
Level			
Above Senior Lecturer	142	151	151
Senior Lecturer (C)	151	137	142
Lecturer (B)	250	255	230
Lecturer (A)	247	253	243
TOTAL ACADEMIC STAFF	789	795	766

Notes:

1. FTE indicates Full-Time Equivalence of full-time, fractional full-time and casual staff
2. Casual staff numbers are estimates provided on June 30 each year.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Statement of Comprehensive Income
for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

	Note	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Revenue and Income from continuing operations			
Australian Government financial assistance			
Australian Government grants	2.1	188,068	166,806
HELP-Australian Government payments	2.1	77,533	86,821
State and Local Government financial assistance	2.2	4,284	3,823
HECS-HELP student payments		6,647	7,948
Fees and charges	2.3	49,967	58,424
Royalties, trademarks and licences		79	46
Consultancy and contracts	2.4	8,682	8,016
Other revenue and income	2.5	3,811	4,931
Investment income	3	84,812	8,127
Gain on disposal of assets		-	30
Total revenue and income from continuing operations		423,883	344,972
Expenses from continuing operations			
Employee related expenses	4	238,295	229,727
Depreciation and amortisation	5	17,795	17,442
Repairs and maintenance	6	6,258	5,162
Borrowing costs		158	417
Impairment of assets		629	503
Loss on disposal of assets		1,007	-
Other expenses	7	80,353	79,141
Total expenses from continuing operations		344,495	332,392
Net result from continuing operations		79,388	12,580
Items that will not be reclassified to profit or loss			
Gain/(loss) on equity instruments designated at fair value through other comprehensive income ('FVOCI')	17(a)	(38,995)	10,333
Gain/(loss) on revaluation of property, plant and equipment	17(b)	15,453	(4,007)
Total other comprehensive income		(23,542)	6,326
Total comprehensive income		55,846	18,906

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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Statement of Financial Position
as at 31 December 2021

	Note	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
ASSETS			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	8	81,168	45,555
Receivables	9	26,792	4,907
Contract assets	9	6,573	7,655
Inventories		343	998
Other financial assets	10	119,000	145,000
Non-current assets classified as held for sale		-	868
Other non-financial assets	11	11,112	10,924
Total current assets		244,988	215,907
Non-current assets			
Other financial assets	10	76,055	55,805
Property, plant and equipment	12	577,264	554,698
Intangible assets	13	1,522	2,706
Other non-financial assets	11	1,065	1,454
Total non-current assets		655,906	614,663
Total assets		900,894	830,570
LIABILITIES			
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	14	21,800	22,107
Borrowings	15	771	1,553
Provisions	16	50,263	39,300
Other liabilities		1,031	622
Contract liabilities	14	34,885	28,644
Total current liabilities		108,750	92,226
Non-current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	14	1,603	2,935
Borrowings	15	3,321	3,785
Provisions	16	9,674	9,924
Total non-current liabilities		14,598	16,644
Total liabilities		123,348	108,870
Net assets		777,546	721,700
EQUITY			
Reserves	17	272,221	295,763
Retained earnings		505,325	425,937
Total equity		777,546	721,700

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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Statement of Changes in Equity
for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

	Note	Reserves \$'000	Retained Earnings \$'000	Total \$'000
Balance at 1 January 2020		289,437	413,357	702,794
Net result		-	12,580	12,580
Gain on equity instruments designated at FVOCI	17(a)	10,333	-	10,333
Loss on revaluation of property, plant and equipment	17(b)	(4,007)	-	(4,007)
Total comprehensive income		6,326	12,580	18,906
Balance at 31 December 2020		295,763	425,937	721,700
Balance at 1 January 2021		295,763	425,937	721,700
Net result		-	79,388	79,388
Loss on equity instruments designated at FVOCI	17(a)	(38,995)	-	(38,995)
Gain on revaluation of property, plant and equipment	17(b)	15,453	-	15,453
Total comprehensive income		(23,542)	79,388	55,846
Balance at 31 December 2021		272,221	505,325	777,546

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Statement of Cash Flows
for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

	Note	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Cash flows from operating activities			
Australian Government grants (i)		271,279	255,539
OS – HELP (net)	27(g)	-	245
State Government grants		4,052	4,359
Local Government grants		94	105
HECS - HELP - student payments		6,539	8,180
Receipts from student fees and other customers (i)		67,904	64,479
Interest received		1,604	3,080
Dividends and distributions received		7,486	4,450
Payments to suppliers and employees		(318,573)	(296,439)
Finance costs		(158)	(417)
GST paid		900	(973)
Net cash provided by operating activities	25	41,127	42,608
Cash flows from investing activities			
Receipts/(payments) for financial assets		19,692	4,503
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment		674	379
Payments for property, plant and equipment		(23,940)	(17,030)
Payments for intangible assets		(307)	-
Net cash used in investing activities		(3,881)	(12,148)
Cash flows from financing activities			
Repayment of lease liabilities		(103)	(1,085)
Repayment of borrowings		(1,530)	(2,395)
Net cash used in financing activities		(1,633)	(3,480)
Net Increase in cash and cash equivalents		35,613	26,980
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year		45,555	18,575
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	8	81,168	45,555

(i) The comparative has been changed to correct the classification of \$14.0M in Fee-Help and SA-Help receipts in 2020, from receipts from students to receipts from Australian Government Grants.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Notes to the Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

Note 1 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

The principal accounting policies adopted in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all years reported unless otherwise stated.

The University of Southern Queensland is a Higher Education Provider established under the University of Southern Queensland Act 1998 and is a statutory body as defined in the Financial Accountability Act 2009. The University of Southern Queensland is domiciled in Australia with a principal address of West Street, Toowoomba.

a) Basis of preparation

These annual financial statements represent the audited general purpose financial statements of the University. They have been prepared on an accrual basis and comply with the Australian Accounting Standards and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board. The University applies Tier 1 reporting requirements.

Additionally, these statements have been prepared in accordance with the following statutory requirements:

- *Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Financial Statement Guidelines)*
- *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019* issued pursuant to the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*
- *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*

The University is a not-for-profit entity and these financial statements have been prepared on that basis. Some of the Australian Accounting Standards requirements for not-for-profit entities are inconsistent with the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) requirements.

Date of authorisation of issue

These financial statements were authorised for issue by the University Council on the 21st February 2022.

Historical cost convention

These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, except for equity financial assets and certain classes of property, plant and equipment that have been measured at fair value through other comprehensive income.

Critical accounting estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Australian Accounting Standards requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It also requires management to exercise its judgement in the process of applying the University's accounting policies. The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis.

The areas involving a higher degree of judgement or complexity, or areas where assumptions and estimates are significant to the financial statements are disclosed below:

Timing of revenue/income recognition

Judgement is required to determine whether material contracts have enforceable and sufficiently specific performance obligations per AASB 15, and if so, the timing (recognition of revenue in the Statement of Comprehensive Income) of satisfaction of those obligations. Refer notes 2.1 to 2.5.

Depreciation of plant and equipment

An estimate of the useful lives of assets is used to calculate annual depreciation expense. An increase/(decrease) in lives would result in a lower/(higher) annual expense recognised in the Income Statement. Estimates of lives involve an assessment of the period of time an asset is expected to be available for use by the University. Refer note 5.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

Investments in equity instruments

The fair value of investments in equity instruments must be estimated for recognition, measurement and disclosure purposes. An increase/(decrease) in fair value would result in an increase/(decrease) in net assets and equity. Refer note 10.

Property, plant and equipment

The fair value of land, buildings and infrastructure assets must be estimated for recognition, measurement and disclosure purposes. An increase/(decrease) in fair value would result in an increase/(decrease) in net assets and equity. Refer note 12.

Provisions

Employee provisions are estimated by applying probability percentages to leave balances at the end of the reporting period, estimating future wages increases and on-costs and applying discount rates to determine present value. Changes to any of these variables would change employee benefits expense in the Statement of Comprehensive Income. Refer note 16.

The Provision for Early Retirement Scheme was estimated using current employee payroll information, historic trend data for similar schemes and management judgement as to probable future expenditure obligations. Changes to any assumptions would affect employee benefits expense in the Statement of Comprehensive Income. Refer note 16.

b) Income Tax

The University is exempt from Australian income tax under the provisions of Division 50 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

c) Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of associated GST, unless the GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). In this case, it is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of the expense.

Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included with other receivables or payables in the statement of financial position.

Cash flows are presented on a gross basis. The GST components of cash flows arising from investing or financing activities which are recoverable from or payable to the ATO, are presented as operating cash flows.

d) Controlled entities

University of Southern Queensland (South Africa) Pty Ltd was incorporated on 16/02/2000 to meet South African legislative requirements in order to deliver higher education programs in that country. The company has never traded and holds no assets or liabilities.

e) Joint venture

The University is a 50% joint venture partner with the Queensland Department of Education in the Queensland College of Wine Tourism. Due to the immaterial effect of applying equity accounting, 100% of the assets, liabilities, income and expenses of the joint venture have been consolidated into these financial statements.

Separate special purpose financial statements are prepared for the joint venture and audited annually by the Queensland Audit Office.

f) Comparative amounts

Where necessary, comparative information has been reclassified to enhance comparability in respect of changes in presentation adopted in the current year.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Notes to the Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

g) Rounding of amounts

Amounts in the financial statements have been rounded off to the nearest thousand dollars.

h) New accounting standards and interpretations

New accounting standards issued but not yet mandatory for the 31 December 2021 reporting period, have been assessed as having no material implications for the University and an election to early adopt has not been made.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND

Notes to the Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

	Note	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Note 2.1 Australian Government financial assistance including Australian Government Loan Programs (HELP)			
(a) Commonwealth Grant Scheme and Other Grants	27(a)		
Commonwealth Grant Scheme (i)		142,456	130,887
Indigenous, Regional and Low-SES Attainment Fund (i)		12,702	12,386
National Priorities and Industry Linkage Fund		4,750	-
Indigenous Student Success Program		2,102	1,926
Higher Education Disability Support Program		158	99
Total Commonwealth Grant Scheme and Other Grants		162,168	145,298
(b) Higher Education Loan Programs	27(b)		
HECS-HELP		63,229	72,796
FEE-HELP		11,812	11,485
SA-HELP	27(h)	2,492	2,540
Total Higher Education Loan Programs		77,533	86,821
(c) EDUCATION Research	27(c)		
Research Training Program		6,030	5,569
Research Support Program		9,432	3,705
Total EDUCATION Research Grants		15,462	9,274
(d) Other Capital Funding	27(e)		
Linkage Infrastructure, Equipment and Facilities Grant		-	16
Total Other Capital Funding		-	16
(e) Australian Research Council	27(f)		
Discovery Projects		1,183	823
Linkage Projects		69	113
Total Australian Research Council		1,252	936
(f) Other Australian Government financial assistance			
Non-Capital			
Commonwealth research		8,593	11,204
Other Commonwealth		593	78
Total Non-Capital		9,186	11,282
Total Other Australian Government financial assistance		9,186	11,282
Total Australian Government financial assistance		265,601	253,627

(i) Grants for regional and enabling loading are included in the new Indigenous, Regional and Low-SES Attainment Fund from 2021 onwards. Comparatives for 2020 have therefore been adjusted, with \$7.5M moved from Commonwealth Grants Scheme income.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Notes to the Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

2021 **2020**
\$'000 **\$'000**

Accounting Policy

Commonwealth Grants Scheme (CGS) and Other Grants

CGS funding for student places (course advances) have been assessed as meeting the enforceability and sufficiently specific criteria of AASB 15. Revenue is recognised over time, as and when the course is delivered to students across each semester.

Revenue from the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (previously the Access and Participation Fund) has been assessed as meeting the enforceability and sufficiently specific criteria of AASB 15. Revenue is recognised over time as the tailored activities are delivered to students.

Specific performance obligations required by AASB 15 have not been identified in the agreements for the following funding programs. Income is therefore recognised in accordance with AASB 1058 when the grant is received.

- Transition Fund Loading, Regional Loading Program and Enabling Loading Program;
- National Priorities and Industry Linkage Fund;
- Indigenous Student Success Program; and
- Higher Education Disability Support Program (previously Disability Support Funding)

Higher Education Loan Programs

These programs assist students to pay their course fees and have been assessed as meeting the enforceability and sufficiently specific criteria of AASB 15. Revenue is recognised over time, as and when the course is delivered to students across each semester.

Education Research

Specific performance obligations required by AASB 15 have not been identified for either the Research Training or Research Support Programs. Income is therefore recognised under AASB 1058 when the grant is received.

Australian Research Council (ARC)

Funding from the ARC has been assessed as meeting the enforceability and sufficiently specific criteria of AASB 15. Revenue is recognised over time as the research activities are performed and access to research findings are made available to the funding body. Costs incurred are used to measure progress towards satisfaction of the performance obligation.

Capital funding

Australian Government capital funding is recognised as income under AASB 1058 as the non-financial asset is acquired or constructed.

Other Australian Grants

Other grants are assessed individually. If the agreement is considered to be enforceable and to have sufficiently specific performance obligations, revenue is recognised under AASB 15 over time as the services or research activities are performed. Costs incurred are used to measure progress towards satisfaction of the performance obligation.

Otherwise, income is recognised under AASB 1058 at fair value when the University obtains control of the right to receive the grant, it is probable that economic benefits will flow to the University, and they can be reliably measured.

Note 2.2 State and Local Government financial assistance

Non-Capital		
State Government research grants	3,558	2,916
Local Government research grants	94	105
Other State Government grants	632	802
Total State and Local Government financial assistance	4,284	3,823

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Notes to the Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

	2021	2020
Note	\$'000	\$'000

Accounting Policy

Agreements for funding received from State and Local Governments are assessed individually. If the agreement is considered to be enforceable and to have sufficiently specific performance obligations, revenue is recognised under AASB 15 over time as the services or research activities are performed. Costs incurred are used to measure progress towards satisfaction of the performance obligation.

Otherwise, income is recognised under AASB 1058 at fair value when the University obtains control of the right to receive the grant, it is probable that economic benefits will flow to the University, and they can be reliably measured.

Note 2.3 Fees and Charges

Course fees and charges			
Fee paying onshore overseas students		33,710	40,301
Fee paying offshore overseas students		5,484	8,405
Continuing education		98	102
Fee paying domestic postgraduate students		2,410	2,483
Fee paying domestic undergraduate students		164	159
Fee paying domestic non award students		30	44
Other domestic course fees and charges		166	120
Total course fees and charges		42,062	51,614
Other non-course fees and charges			
Student services and amenities fees from students	27(h)	1,078	1,063
General sales and services		799	735
Residential colleges sales		1,457	1,053
Bookshop sales		2,287	2,050
Other sales		2,284	1,909
Total other fees and charges		7,905	6,810
Total fees and charges		49,967	58,424

Accounting Policy

Course fees and charges

Course fees and charges relates to undergraduate programs, graduate and professional degree programs and continuing education. Revenue is recognised under AASB 15 over time, as and when the course is delivered to students across each semester. The University uses an input method (time elapsed) to measure progress towards satisfaction of the performance obligation.

If courses have been paid in advance by students or by the government, the University recognises a contract liability until the services are delivered.

Non-course fees and charges

Revenue from student services and amenities fees is recognised under AASB 15 over time, as and when the amenities are provided to the student. The University uses an input method (time elapsed) to measure progress towards satisfaction of the performance obligation.

Other sales and services are recognised under AASB 15 at a point in time when the goods or services are provided.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Notes to the Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

	Note	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Note 2.4 Consultancy and contracts			
Consultancy		1,236	1,700
Contract research		7,446	6,316
Total consultancy and contracts		8,682	8,016

Accounting Policy

Consultancy and research agreements are assessed individually. If the agreement is considered to be enforceable and to have sufficiently specific performance obligations, revenue is recognised under AASB 15 over time as the services or research activities are performed. Costs incurred are used to measure progress towards satisfaction of the performance obligation.

Otherwise, income is recognised under AASB 1058 at fair value when the University obtains control of the right to receive the funds, it is probable that economic benefits will flow to the University, and they can be reliably measured.

Note 2.5 Other revenue and income

Discounts received		74	58
Donations and bequests		1,375	363
Facilities hire		433	379
Global Learning Programs		76	316
Non-government grants		13	11
Rebates, subsidies and recoveries (i)		836	3,164
Scholarships and prizes		3	70
Other		1,001	570
Total other revenue		3,811	4,931

(i) 2020 included \$1.8M in COVID-19 Payroll Tax Relief from the State Government.

Accounting Policy

Donations and bequests, non-government grants and the 2020 State Government COVID Relief payment are recognised as income under AASB 1058 immediately on receipt. Other revenue is recognised under AASB 15 at the point in time the transaction is completed.

Note 2.6 Reconciliation of revenue and income

Total Australian Government financial assistance including Australian Government loan programs (HELP)	2.1	265,601	253,627
Total State and Local Government financial assistance	2.2	4,284	3,823
HECS-HELP student payments		6,647	7,948
Total fees and charges	2.3	49,967	58,424
Total royalties, trademarks and licences		79	46
Total consultancy and contract fees	2.4	8,682	8,016
Total other revenue and income	2.5	3,811	4,931
Total		339,071	336,815
Total revenue from contracts with customers as per AASB 15		296,593	315,528
Total income of not-for-profit as per AASB 1058		42,478	21,287
Total		339,071	336,815

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Note 3 Investment income		
Interest	1,285	2,582
Dividends (i)	83,377	5,543
Trust distributions	317	2
Net fair value gain on financial assets at fair value through profit or loss (FVPL)	(167)	-
Net investment income	84,812	8,127

(i) In 2021, the University received two dividend distributions from Education Australia Limited (EAL); the first as an in-specie distribution of shares in listed company IDP Education Limited (IDP) and the second as cash. Both distributions included fully franked imputation credits. In accordance with AASB 9 *Financial Instruments*, dividends must be recognised as income unless the dividend clearly represents a recovery of part of the cost of the investment.

The University engaged an independent expert to assist with the determination of the accounting treatment of these dividends and concluded:

- the dividends were not clearly a recovery of the cost of the investment, but rather a realisation of the post-acquisition gains of the investment in EAL; and
- the cost of the investment is the historical cost, being the amount of cash paid to acquire the investment at the time of acquisition (\$10,000).

Accounting policy

Interest income is recognised as it accrues.

Dividend income is recognised when the right to receive payment is established (generally when shareholders approve the dividend), it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the dividend will flow to the entity and the amount of the dividend can be measured reliably, unless the dividend clearly represents a recovery of part of the cost of the investment. Franking credits applicable to a dividend are recognised as income in the same period as the dividend is recognised.

Trust distributions and associated franking credits are recognised as income in the period the distribution is declared.

Note 4 Employee related expenses

Academic		
Salaries	90,026	85,341
Contributions to funded superannuation and pension schemes	14,346	13,614
Payroll tax	5,256	5,129
Worker's compensation	203	244
Long service leave	1,420	3,226
Annual leave	7,254	7,328
Total academic	118,505	114,882
Non-academic		
Salaries	90,039	85,340
Contributions to funded superannuation and pension schemes	14,790	13,449
Payroll tax	5,362	5,075
Worker's compensation	203	254
Long service leave	1,517	2,981
Annual leave	7,879	7,746
Total non-academic	119,790	114,845
Total employee related expenses	238,295	229,727

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Notes to the Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

	Note	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
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Accounting policy

Payments to superannuation plans are expensed as incurred.

The UniSuper Defined Benefit Division is the predominant plan within the University. It is deemed to be a Defined Contribution Plan under Australian Accounting Standards. The University's obligation is limited to fixed contributions expensed each period.

Note 5 Depreciation and amortisation

Depreciation	12	16,445	15,889
Amortisation	13	1,350	1,553
Total depreciation and amortisation		17,795	17,442

Accounting policy

Depreciation

Construction work in progress, land and heritage and cultural assets are not depreciated. All other assets are depreciated from the month of acquisition or, in respect of assets constructed, from the time the asset is complete and ready for use. Depreciation is calculated using the straight-line method to allocate their cost or revalued amount, net of residual values, over their estimated useful lives.

Annual depreciation rates, which have not changed since the previous year, are as follows:

Buildings	1%-10%
Infrastructure	1%-10%
Plant & equipment	
Computer equipment	20%
Motor vehicles	20%
Other plant	10%

Right-of-use assets and leasehold improvements are depreciated/amortised over the shorter of the lease term and the useful life of the improvement or the lease period.

Amortisation

Intangible assets (software costs) are amortised from the point at which the asset is ready for use on a straight-line basis over a 5 year estimated useful life with zero residual value.

Note 6 Repairs and maintenance

Buildings	1,999	1,594
Other	4,259	3,568
Total repairs and maintenance	6,258	5,162

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Note 7 Other expenses		
Advertising, marketing and promotional expenses	4,476	4,978
Cleaning materials and services	3,005	2,312
Commissions	988	2,196
Cost of goods sold	3,384	2,021
Information technology expenses	9,986	8,480
Non-capitalised equipment	6,544	5,009
Printing, copying and stationery	756	1,159
Professional and consultancy fees	8,556	7,698
Research expenditure and grants contributions	2,458	3,198
Scholarships, grants and prizes	10,604	10,024
Special Payments - ex gratia payments (i)	-	31
Student activity costs (ii)	222	2,716
Teaching materials and services	12,142	13,336
Telecommunications	979	1,067
Travel, entertainment and staff recruitment and development	4,006	4,198
Utilities and services	6,556	6,288
Other	5,691	4,430
Total other expenses	80,353	79,141

(i) Payments on termination of employment

(ii) 2020 included spending on a COVID-19 Student Support Package

Accounting policy

Special payments include ex-gratia expenditure and other expenditure that the University is not contractually or legally obligated to make to other parties. In compliance with the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019*, the University maintains a register setting out the details of all special payments greater than \$5,000. The total of all special payments (including those of \$5,000 or less) is disclosed in the above note.

Note 8 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash at bank	1,596	13,081
Cash on hand	33	35
Deposits at call	79,539	32,439
Total cash and cash equivalents	81,168	45,555

Accounting policy

For statement of cash flows presentation purposes, cash and cash equivalents includes cash on hand, cash in operating bank accounts and deposits held at call with financial institutions with maturities of three months or less that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Notes to the Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Note 9 Receivables and contract assets		
Current		
General and student receivables		
General receivables	4,894	4,574
Student receivables	432	1,347
Less: allowance for expected credit loss	(76)	(73)
Total general and student receivables	5,250	5,848
Other receivables		
Net GST receivable	1,547	2,447
Other receivables (i)	26,568	4,267
Total other receivables	28,115	6,714
Total receivables	33,365	12,562
Contract Assets (included in receivables)	6,573	7,655

(i) Includes franking credits receivable on dividends paid by EAL (refer note 3).

Contract assets represent trade and other receivables where the University has the right to consideration for goods and services conditional upon satisfaction of contract performance obligations.

Accounting policy

Classification and measurement

Trade receivables are held to collect contractual cash flows and give rise to cash flows representing solely payments of principal and interest. These are classified and measured as debt instruments at amortised cost.

Student trade receivables are due for settlement no more than 30 days from the date of recognition or in accordance with contract conditions.

Impairment

A simplified impairment approach is adopted to calculate expected credit losses (ECL's). Therefore, the University does not track credit risk, but instead recognises a loss allowance based on lifetime ECL's at each reporting date. A provision matrix has been established, based on historical credit loss experience and adjusted for forward-looking factors specific to the debtors and the economic environment.

Note 10 Other financial assets

Current		
Financial assets at amortised cost	119,000	145,000
Total current other financial assets	119,000	145,000
Non-current		
Financial assets at FVPL		
Managed funds	6,141	-
	6,141	-
Investments in equity instruments designated at FVOCI (i)		
Shares in unlisted corporations	6,414	55,805
Shares in listed corporations	63,500	-
	69,914	55,805
Total non-current other financial assets	76,055	55,805

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Notes to the Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

(i) The movements in equity instruments at FVOCI are set out in the table below:

Equity instrument	Opening Balance 1.1.2021 \$'000	Additions \$'000	Revaluation (refer note 17(a)) \$'000	Closing Balance 31.12.2021 \$'000
Shares in unlisted corporations				
AARNet Pty Ltd	5,713	-	(39)	5,674
EAL	50,092	-	(49,352)	740
	55,805	-	(49,391)	6,414
Shares in listed corporations				
IDP	-	53,104	10,396	63,500
	-	53,104	10,396	63,500
	55,805	53,104	(38,995)	69,914

The significant decrease in the fair value of EAL was a result of EAL's divestment of its major asset, being shares in IDP. A portion of these shares were sold to third parties for cash and the balance was distributed to EAL shareholders as a \$53.1M in-specie dividend, recognised as income in note 3 and as a non-current investment in note 10 (refer to the addition to the University's investment in IDP in the table above). Also refer note 3(i).

Accounting policy

Financial assets are classified, at initial recognition, as subsequently measured at amortised cost, FVOCI and FVPL. The classification at initial recognition depends on the financial asset's contractual cash flow characteristics and the University's business model for managing them.

Financial assets at amortised cost

Financial assets are initially measured at amortised cost if the asset is held for the purpose of collecting contractual cashflows of principal and interest on specified dates. Subsequent measurements use the effective interest rate method and are subject to impairment. Interest is recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income as accrued. Gains and losses are recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income when the asset is derecognised, modified or impaired.

The University's financial assets at amortised cost comprise short term deposits invested for periods of greater than 90 days and less than 12 months.

Financial assets at FVPL

Financial assets with cashflows that are not solely payments of principal and interest are classified and measured at FVPL. Subsequent measurement is at fair value with net changes recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income. Distributions are recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income as accrued.

The University's FVPL assets comprise unlisted units in a fund managed by the Queensland Investment Corporation.

Investments in equity instruments designated at FVOCI

The University has elected to classify, irrevocably, its equity investments under this category as they meet the definition of equity under AASB 132 *Financial Instruments: Presentation* and are not held for trading. Initial and subsequent measurement is at fair value with net changes recognised in OCI.

Dividends and associated franking credits are recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income when the right of payment has been established, except when the University benefits from such proceeds as a recovery of part of the cost of the financial asset, in which case, such gains are recorded in OCI.

Equity instruments designated at FVOCI are not subject to impairment assessment.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
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2021 **2020**
\$'000 **\$'000**

The University's FVOCI assets comprise shares in unlisted companies Education Australia Limited and AARNet Pty Limited and in the listed company IDP Education Limited.

Refer note 19(c) for further information on the University's valuation techniques.

Note 11 Other non-financial assets

Current		
Prepayments	11,112	10,924
Total current other non-financial assets	11,112	10,924
Non-current		
Prepayments	1,065	1,454
Total non-current other non-financial assets	1,065	1,454

Accounting Policy

A prepayment is recognised as an asset when payments for goods or services have been made in advance of the University obtaining the right to access those goods or services.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Notes to the Financial Statements
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Note 12 Property, plant and equipment

	Note	Construction work in progress \$'000	Land \$'000	Buildings \$'000	Infrastructure \$'000	Heritage & cultural assets \$'000	Leasehold improvements \$'000	Plant & Equipment # \$'000	Right-Of-Use Assets \$'000	Total \$'000
At 1 January 2020										
Cost		6,015	-	-	-	-	2,013	52,886	1,687	62,601
Valuation		-	44,471	598,483	53,923	2,399	-	-	-	699,276
Accumulated depreciation		-	-	(154,982)	(12,793)	-	(260)	(34,671)	(85)	(202,791)
Net book amount		6,015	44,471	443,501	41,130	2,399	1,753	18,215	1,602	559,086
Year ended 31 December 2020										
Opening net book amount		6,015	44,471	443,501	41,130	2,399	1,753	18,215	1,602	559,086
Revaluation gain/(loss)	17(b)	-	(1,140)	(3,012)	115	30	-	-	-	(4,007)
Additions		11,311	-	-	-	10	-	5,623	151	17,095
Disposals/write downs		(65)	-	-	-	-	-	(348)	-	(413)
Transfers		(11,435)	-	7,203	3,432	-	171	629	-	-
Impairment		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(306)	(306)
Reclassification to held for sale		-	-	-	-	-	-	(122)	(746)	(868)
Depreciation charge	5	-	-	(9,925)	(1,562)	-	(71)	(4,151)	(180)	(15,889)
Closing net book amount		5,826	43,331	437,767	43,115	2,439	1,853	19,846	521	554,698
As at 31 December 2020										
Cost		5,826	-	-	-	-	2,185	55,800	538	64,349
Valuation		-	43,331	610,375	56,924	2,439	-	-	-	713,069
Accumulated depreciation		-	-	(172,608)	(13,809)	-	(332)	(35,954)	(17)	(222,720)
Net book amount		5,826	43,331	437,767	43,115	2,439	1,853	19,846	521	554,698

Plant and equipment include all operational assets; computer equipment, motor vehicle and general plant

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
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	Note	Construction work in progress \$'000	Land \$'000	Buildings \$'000	Infrastructure \$'000	Heritage & cultural assets \$'000	Leasehold improvements \$'000	Plant & Equipment # \$'000	Right-Of-Use Assets \$'000	Total \$'000
Year ended 31 December 2021										
Opening net book amount		5,826	43,331	437,767	43,115	2,439	1,853	19,846	521	554,698
Revaluation gain/(loss)	17(b)	-	418	15,622	(588)	1	-	-	-	15,453
Additions		17,353	-	-	-	244	-	6,379	385	24,361
Disposals/write downs		-	-	-	(557)	-	-	(209)	-	(766)
Transfers		(20,864)	-	18,500	775	-	-	1,552	-	(37)
Depreciation charge	5	-	-	(10,048)	(1,465)	-	(83)	(4,736)	(113)	(16,445)
Closing net book amount		2,315	43,749	461,841	41,280	2,684	1,770	22,832	793	577,264
As at 31 December 2021										
Cost		2,315	-	-	-	-	2,185	60,073	924	65,497
Valuation		-	43,749	644,879	57,324	2,684	-	-	-	748,636
Accumulated depreciation		-	-	(183,038)	(16,044)	-	(415)	(37,241)	(131)	(236,869)
Net book amount		2,315	43,749	461,841	41,280	2,684	1,770	22,832	793	577,264

Plant and equipment include all operational assets; computer equipment, motor vehicle and general plant

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

Accounting policy

Construction work in progress

Assets under construction recognise the extent of completion of construction work, as represented by progress payments to date. Contracts signed for the purpose of construction projects that have not been completed at year end have been disclosed as commitments for capital expenditure (refer note 22).

Land, buildings, infrastructure and heritage and cultural assets

Independent valuers performed the following valuations at 31 December 2021:

- Desktop valuation of land, building and infrastructure assets (last comprehensive valuation – 31.12.2019)
- Desktop valuation of heritage and cultural assets (last comprehensive valuation – 31.12.2020)

These assets are measured at fair value, based on periodic, but at least triennial, valuations by external independent valuers less subsequent accumulated depreciation if applicable.

Increases in the carrying amounts arising on revaluation are recognised in other comprehensive income and accumulated in equity as the property, plant and equipment revaluation reserve (refer note 17(b)). To the extent that the increase reverses a decrease previously recognised in profit or loss, the increase is first recognised in profit or loss. Decreases that reverse previous increases of the same asset class are also recognised in other comprehensive income to the extent of the remaining reserve attributable to that asset class. All other decreases are charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Income.

Leasehold improvements and other property, plant and equipment

These assets are measured at historical cost, less any accumulated depreciation and impairment losses if applicable. Historical cost includes expenditure that is directly attributable to the acquisition of the items.

Right-of-use assets

Right-of-use assets are initially measured at cost, being the present value of the remaining unpaid lease payments. Subsequent measurement is at cost less any accumulated depreciation and impairment losses and adjustment for any re-measurement of the lease liability.

The University has elected to measure a class of right-of-use assets arising under concessionary (peppercorn) leases at cost in accordance with AASB 16.

Recognition thresholds

Items of property, plant and equipment with an initial cost or valuation in excess of the following thresholds are recognised for financial reporting purposes in the year of acquisition:

Land	\$1
Buildings	\$10,000
Construction in progress	\$10,000
Plant and equipment	\$5,000
Leasehold improvements	\$10,000
Infrastructure	\$10,000
Heritage and cultural assets	\$1
Right-of-use assets	\$5,000

Derecognition

An item of property, plant and equipment is derecognised upon disposal or when no future economic benefits are expected to arise from the continued use of the asset. Any gain or loss on de-recognition of the asset (calculated as the difference between the net disposable proceeds and the carrying amount of the item) is included in the Statement of Comprehensive Income in the year the item is derecognised.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Notes to the Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

	Note	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
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Impairment

Property, plant and equipment are reviewed for impairment whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying amount may not be recoverable.

An impairment loss is recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income for the amount by which the asset's carrying amount exceeds its recoverable amount, unless the asset is carried at a revalued amount in accordance with another standard. The recoverable amount is the higher of an asset's fair value less costs of disposal and value in use.

For the purposes of assessing impairment, assets are grouped at the lowest levels for which there are separately identifiable cash flows.

The impairment testing undertaken by the University indicated that there were no materially impaired property, plant and equipment assets in 2021.

Note 13 Intangibles

Software costs			
Opening balance – 1 January		2,706	4,259
Additions		307	-
Disposals		(46)	-
Impairment		(95)	-
Amortisation charge	5	(1,350)	(1,553)
Closing balance – 31 December		1,522	2,706
Cost		19,053	19,095
Less: Accumulated amortisation		(17,436)	(16,389)
Less: Impairment		(95)	-
Total intangibles		1,522	2,706

Accounting policy

Software costs comprise purchased software and internally developed software with a cost of \$100,000 or more. Items with a lesser value are expensed in the period they are incurred.

Expenditure on development activities, relating to the design and testing of new or improved products, are recognised as intangible assets when it is probable that the project will, after considering its commercial and technical feasibility, be completed and generate future economic benefits and its costs can be measured reliably.

Capitalised expenditure comprises all directly attributable costs, including costs of materials, services, direct labour and an appropriate proportion of overheads. Expenditure on research activities related to software development are expensed in the period they are incurred.

Impairment

Intangible assets that have an indefinite useful life are not subject to amortisation and are tested annually for impairment. An impairment loss is recognised in the of Statement of Comprehensive Income or the amount by which the asset's carrying amount exceeds its recoverable amount, unless the asset is carried at a revalued amount in accordance with another standard. The recoverable amount is the higher of an asset's fair value less costs of disposal and value in use.

The impairment testing undertaken by the University indicated that there were two intangible assets impaired during 2021.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Notes to the Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

	Note	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Note 14 Trade and other payables and contract liabilities			
(a) Trade and other payables			
Current			
OS-HELP liability to Australian Government	27(g)	343	343
Trade payables		6,892	7,022
Accrued expenses and other creditors		14,565	14,742
Total current trade and other payables		21,800	22,107
Non-Current			
Trade payables		1,603	2,935
Total non-current trade and other payables		1,603	2,935
(b) Contract liabilities			
Current			
Australian Government		23,655	17,617
Other		11,230	11,027
		34,885	28,644

Contract liabilities represent unearned research grant, consultancy and contract revenue and unearned student tuition fees, where the University has not yet satisfied the performance obligation of the contract.

Accounting policy

Trade and other payables

Trade and other payables represent liabilities for goods and services provided to the University prior to the end of the financial year, which are unpaid. The amounts are unsecured and are usually paid within 30 days of recognition.

Contract liability

A contract liability is the obligation to transfer goods or services to a customer for which the University has received consideration from the customer. If a customer pays consideration before the University transfers goods or services to the customer, a contract liability is recognised when the payment is made, or the payment is due (whichever is earlier). Contract liabilities are recognised as revenue as and when the performance obligations are satisfied.

Note 15 Borrowings

Current			
Unsecured loans - Queensland Treasury Corporation		576	1,529
Lease liabilities		195	24
Total current borrowings		771	1,553
Non-current			
Unsecured loans - Queensland Treasury Corporation		2,699	3,276
Lease liabilities		622	509
Total non-current borrowings		3,321	3,785
Total Borrowings		4,092	5,338

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
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for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

2021 **2020**
\$'000 **\$'000**

Accounting policy

Borrowings are initially recognised at fair value, net of transaction costs incurred. Borrowings are subsequently measured at amortised cost. Any difference between the proceeds (net of transaction costs) and the redemption amount is recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income over the period of the borrowings using the effective interest method.

Borrowings are removed from the statement of financial position when the obligation specified in the contract is discharged, cancelled or expired. The difference between the carrying amount of the borrowing and the consideration paid is recognised as other income or other expenses.

Borrowings are classified as current liabilities unless the University has an unconditional right to defer settlement of the liability for at least 12 months after the end of the reporting period.

(a) Class of borrowings

Unsecured loans - Queensland Treasury Corporation (QTC)

- 10 year, \$15.0 million, 6.22% pa fixed interest loan to assist the University with the purchase of land and buildings at the Springfield Campus. Fully repaid in June 2021.
- 10 year, \$5.8 million, 3.03% fixed interest loans to assist the University to install a sustainable energy solution across the three Campuses.

Lease liabilities

- Commercial land, motor vehicles and equipment.

(b) Fair value

The fair value of the QTC loans approximate their carrying values.

Note 16 Provisions

Current provisions expected to be settled within 12 months		
Employee benefits		
Annual leave	14,234	13,959
Long service leave	3,557	3,542
Early Retirement Scheme (i)	10,000	-
Total within 12 months	27,791	17,501
Current provisions expected to be settled after more than 12 months		
Employee benefits		
Annual leave	2,317	1,725
Long service leave	20,155	20,074
Total after more than 12 months	22,472	21,799
Total current provisions	50,263	39,300
Non-current		
Employee benefits		
Long service leave	9,674	9,924
Total non-current provisions	9,674	9,924
Total provisions	59,937	49,224

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

	Note	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
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(i) To meet the goals and objectives of the University's Strategic Plan 2021-2025 within a shifting higher education landscape, a number of transformational changes to the workforce are required. As part of this strategy, the University proposes to offer a voluntary early retirement scheme in 2022. A class ruling application on the proposed scheme was lodged with the Australian Taxation Office in 2021 and is awaiting approval.

Accounting policy

Short-term obligations (expected to be settled within 12 months)

Liabilities for short term employee benefits, including wages, salaries, leave entitlements and non-monetary benefits due, but unpaid at reporting date, are recognised in the statement of financial position at the remuneration rates expected to apply at the time of settlement and include related on-costs.

Liabilities for non-accumulating sick leave are recognised when the leave is taken and measured at the rates paid or payable.

Other long-term obligations (expected to be settled after 12 months)

The liability for other long-term employee benefits represents obligations that are not expected to be settled wholly before 12 months after the end of the reporting period. The long service leave provision is measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made by the employer resulting from employees' services provided up to the reporting date. Consideration is given to future increases in wage and salary rates, including on-costs, and the University's experience with staff turnover history. Estimated future cash outflows are discounted using the rates applicable to Commonwealth Government securities at reporting date, which most closely match the terms to maturity of the related liabilities.

Regardless of the expected timing of settlements, provisions made in respect of employee benefits are classified as a current liability, unless there is an unconditional right to defer the settlement of the liability for at least 12 months after the reporting date, in which case it would be classified as a non-current liability.

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Note 17 Reserves

(a) Other financial assets at FVOCI			
Balance – 1 January		55,805	45,472
Net gain/(loss) on fair value revaluation	10	(38,995)	10,333
Balance – 31 December		16,810	55,805
(b) Property, plant and equipment revaluation surplus			
Balance – 1 January		239,958	243,965
Net gain/(loss) on fair value revaluation	12	15,453	(4,007)
Balance – 31 December		255,411	239,958
Total reserves		272,221	295,763

Note 18 Financial Risk Management

Financial risk management objectives and policies

The University's financial instruments comprise cash at bank, receivables, short-term deposits held by banks, investments in equity instruments, accounts payable and borrowings.

The University's activities expose it to a variety of financial risks: market risk (including currency risk, price risk and cash flow interest rate risk), credit risk and liquidity risk. The University's overall risk management program focuses on the unpredictability of financial markets and seeks to minimise potential adverse effects on the financial performance of the University.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Notes to the Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

(a) Market risk

(i) Foreign exchange (currency) risk

Foreign exchange risk represents the potential for loss from fluctuating foreign currency rates. To mitigate this risk, where possible, the University negotiates international contracts and charges overseas student in Australian dollars. Management does not consider the financial impact of foreign exchange risk to be material and no further disclosures are provided.

(ii) Price risk

Price risk represents the risk that the value of other financial assets, being University funds managed by QIC and the shareholding in IDP Education Ltd (refer note 10) could fluctuate as a result of market movements. Management regularly monitors these investments and will make recommendations for action were required.

(iii) Cash flow interest rate risk

Interest rate risk represents the effect that a fluctuating interest rate may have on the financial performance and position of the entity. The University manages its short-term cash flow risk by investing in a mixture of on-call cash funds and fixed term deposits with maturities between 90 days and 12 months and by borrowing long-term funds on a fixed rate basis.

The following tables summarise the sensitivity of the University's financial assets and financial liabilities to cash flow interest rate risk. A sensitivity of +/- 1% has been used to represent reasonably possible changes in interest rates over a 12 month period.

31 December 2021	Carrying Amount \$'000			Interest Rate Risk +/- 1%	
	Total	Maturity < 1 year	Maturity > 1 year	Result \$'000	Equity \$'000
Financial assets					
Cash and cash equivalents	81,168	81,168	-	634/(634)	634/(634)
Receivables	33,365	33,365	-	-	-
Term deposits	119,000	119,000	-	1,320/(1,320)	1,320/(1,320)
Other financial assets	76,055	-	76,055	-	-
	309,588	233,533	76,055	1,954/(1,954)	1,954/(1,954)
Financial liabilities					
Payables	23,403	21,800	1,603	-	-
Borrowings	4,092	771	3,321	-	-
	27,495	22,571	4,924	-	-
Total inc/(dec)				1,954/(1,954)	1,954/(1,954)

31 December 2020	Carrying Amount \$'000			Interest Rate Risk +/- 1%	
	Total	Maturity < 1 year	Maturity > 1 year	Result \$'000	Equity \$'000
Financial assets					
Cash and cash equivalents	45,555	45,555	-	321/(321)	321/(321)
Receivables	12,562	12,562	-	-	-
Term deposits	145,000	145,000	-	1,473/(1,473)	1,473/(1,473)
Other financial assets	55,805	-	55,805	-	-
	258,922	203,117	55,805	1,794/(1,794)	1,794/(1,794)
Financial liabilities					
Payables	25,042	25,042	-	-	-
Borrowings	5,338	1,553	3,785	-	-
	30,380	26,595	3,785	-	-
Total inc/(dec)				1,794/(1,794)	1,794/(1,794)

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

(b) Credit risk

Credit risk represents the risk that a customer may default on the payment of a debt. The maximum exposure to credit risk at balance date in relation to each class of recognised financial asset is the carrying amount of those assets as indicated in the financial statements.

The University does not have any material credit risk exposure to any single receivable or group of receivables.

(c) Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk represents the risk that an entity may have insufficient funds to meet its short term financial obligations. The University manages liquidity risk by maintaining a balance between continuity of funding, flexible deposits and accessibility to loan facilities when required. As the tables above indicate, the University maintains a significant excess in the carrying value of financial assets over financial liabilities. Management therefore do not consider liquidity to be a material risk to the financial performance or position of the University and no further disclosures are provided.

Note 19 Fair value measurements

Accounting Policy

The fair value of financial assets and financial liabilities must be estimated for recognition and measurement or for disclosure purposes. The University classifies fair value measurements using a fair value hierarchy that reflects the significance of the inputs used in making the measurements.

Fair value measurement of non-financial assets is based on the highest and best use of the asset by market participants.

(a) Fair value measurement

The carrying value, less impairment provision where applicable, for all financial assets and financial liabilities approximate their fair values.

(b) Fair value hierarchy

The University categorises assets and liabilities measured at fair value into a hierarchy based on the following level of inputs used in measurement:

- Level 1 – quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets or liabilities
- Level 2 – inputs other than quoted prices within Level 1 that are observable for the assets or liability either directly or indirectly
- Level 3 – inputs for the asset or liability that are not based on observable market data (unobservable inputs).

The University measures and recognises the following assets and liabilities at fair value in the statement of financial position according to these levels on a recurring and non-recurring basis as indicated:

Fair value measurements at 31 December 2021

	Note	Total \$'000	Level 1 \$'000	Level 2 \$'000	Level 3 \$'000
Financial assets					
Financial assets at FVPL	10	6,141	6,141	-	-
Equity investments at FVOCI	10	69,914	63,500	-	6,414
Total financial assets		76,055	69,591	-	6,464
Non-financial assets					
Land	12	43,749	-	-	43,749
Buildings	12	461,841	-	-	461,841
Infrastructure	12	41,280	-	-	41,280
Heritage and cultural collection	12	2,684	-	2,684	-
Total non-financial assets		549,554	-	2,684	546,870

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Notes to the Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

Fair value measurements at 31 December 2020

	Note	Total \$'000	Level 1 \$'000	Level 2 \$'000	Level 3 \$'000
Financial assets					
Equity investments at FVOCI	10	55,805	-	-	55,805
Total financial assets		55,805	-	-	55,805
Non-financial assets					
Land	12	43,331	-	-	43,331
Buildings	12	437,767	-	-	437,767
Infrastructure	12	43,115	-	-	43,115
Heritage and cultural collection	12	2,439	-	2,439	-
Total non-financial assets		526,652	-	2,439	524,213

(c) Valuation techniques used to derive level 2 and 3 fair values

Recurring fair value measurements

Financial assets at FVPL (level 1) – units in an unlisted managed fund have been valued using the unit redemption price on the last day of the year.

Equity investments at FVOCI (level 1) – shares in a listed public company have been valued using the quoted price on the last trading day of the year.

Equity investments at FVOCI (level 3) – shares in an unlisted public company have been valued on a cost approach for other assets and liabilities of the company in 2021 and a combined methodology approach, using quoted prices adjusted for non-observable inputs for listed investments, combined with a cost approach in 2020. Shares in an unlisted private not-for-profit company have been valued using an asset based methodology.

Land (level 3) – initially assessed using a market approach (direct comparison) and then applying a discount to the rate per square metre to acknowledge the specialised nature and use of the University's land.

Buildings and infrastructure (level 3) – a market approach is not available given the limited comparable sales of these specialised use assets. Valuations were therefore undertaken using a current replacement cost approach. This approach estimates the replacement cost of the asset utilising market data and cost guides available on current construction costs and depreciates those costs, based on condition and age factors, to arrive at the fair value. This approach incorporates componentisation and residual values where appropriate.

Heritage and cultural collection (art collection) (level 2) – valuation is based on using inputs other than quoted prices that are observable for the artwork, including auction records, consultation with art dealers and private sale information. Comparisons are then made with current market prices for similar assets and adjustments made accordingly.

Note 20 Key management personnel disclosures

(a) Names of responsible persons and executive officers

The following persons, holding positions that had authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the University, were the key management personnel of the University during the financial year:

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

Council Member	Position	Appointed/(Ceased)
Mr John Dornbusch	Chancellor	
Professor Geraldine Mackenzie ¹	Vice-Chancellor	
Professor Grant Daggard ¹	Chair, Academic Board	
Professor Pauline Collins ¹	Academic Staff Member	
Mr Scott Sorley ¹	Non-Academic Staff Member	04.01.2021/(06.10.2021)
Miss Rachel Hennessy ¹	Non-Academic Staff Member	07.10.2021
Mr Grant Vickery	Student Member	(18.04.2021)
Mr John Dowling	Student Member	19.04.2021
Ms Heidi Dugan	Graduate of the University	
Ms Rachel Barlow	Governor-in-Council Member	
Mr Chris Bazley	Governor-in-Council Member	
Dr A Carol Cox AM	Governor-in-Council Member	(06.10.2021)
Mr Brett Delaney	Governor-in-Council Member	
Assistant Commissioner Charysse Pond APM	Governor-in-Council Member	
Aunty Lorraine Hatton OAM	Governor-in-Council Member	29.03.2021
Mr George Fox AM	Additional Member and Deputy Chancellor	

¹ Council members who were also University employees.

Executive Officers	Position	Appointed/(Ceased) as a KMP ²
Professor Geraldine Mackenzie	Vice-Chancellor	
Professor John Bell	Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation)	
Mr Athol Kerridge	Chief Financial Officer	
Mr Michael Thomas	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services)	
Professor Karen Nelson	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)	
Professor Barbara de la Harpe	Executive Dean, Faculty of Business, Education, Law and Arts	
Professor Glen Coleman	Executive Dean, Faculty of Health, Engineering and Sciences	
Mr Josua Pienaar	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students)	(30.11.2021)
Mr Ren Yi	Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International)	
Mr John Cole OAM	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Engagement)	(01.10.2021)
Mr Shawn Walker	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Engagement)	04.10.2021
Professor Tony Dreise	Pro Vice-Chancellor (First Nations Education and Research)	27.09.2021

² Appointed/(ceased) dates reflect the commencement/cessation in the KMP role and may not necessarily reflect employment service dates.

Further information in relation to the Council and the Executive appears in the body of the Annual Report under the section relating to Governance and Senior Executive.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Notes to the Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

(b) Remuneration of Council Members and Executives

Council members who were not University employees received remuneration in accordance with the approved Council Remuneration Policy and associated Council Remuneration Schedule. Council members who were also University employees received only their substantive role remuneration while attending to Council business. Council members who were also public service employees of other entities received remuneration by their employing entity in accordance with arrangements with that entity. The University accepts financial responsibility for travel costs related to Council meetings and Council activities.

The Remuneration Sub-Committee of the University Council sets executive remuneration policy of the University's key executive management personnel appointed by Council. The remuneration and other terms of employment for the key executive management personnel are specified in employment contracts.

The remuneration of Council members and Executives appear in the tables below.

	2021	2020
Remuneration of Council Members (excl. Vice-Chancellor)		
\$ Nil - \$ 14,999	2	2
\$ 15,000 - \$ 29,999	2	-
\$ 30,000 - \$ 44,999	3	4
\$ 60,000 - \$ 74,999	2	2
\$ 90,000 - \$104,999	1	1
\$105,000 - \$119,999	1	1
	11	10

Remuneration of Executives (incl. Vice-Chancellor)		
\$ 15,000 - \$ 29,999	-	1
\$ 45,000 - \$ 59,999	-	1
\$ 90,000 - \$104,999	1	-
\$105,000 - \$129,999	1	-
\$255,000 - \$269,999	1	-
\$345,000 - \$359,999	1	2
\$360,000 - \$374,999	1	1
\$375,000 - \$389,999	1	1
\$390,000 - \$404,999	2	1
\$405,000 - \$429,999	1	-
\$420,000 - \$434,999	1	2
\$435,000 - \$449,999	-	2
\$450,000 - \$464,999	1	-
\$705,000 - \$719,999	1	1
	12	12

(c) Key management personnel compensation

	\$'000	\$'000
Short-term employee benefits	4,206	4,124
Post-employment benefits	613	585
Other long term benefits	94	167
Total	4,913	4,876

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

	2021	2020
	\$'000	\$'000

Remuneration packages for key executive management personnel comprise the following:

- Short-term employee benefits which include:
 - Monetary benefits - salaries, allowances and leave entitlements paid during the entire year or for that part of the year during which the employee occupied the specified position
 - Non-monetary benefits - provision of motor vehicle and other non-cash benefits together with fringe benefits tax applicable to each benefit
- Long-term employee benefits include long service leave paid
- Post-employment benefits include employer superannuation contributions
- Redundancy payments are provided for within individual contracts of employment. Contracts of employment may also provide for notice periods or payment in lieu of notice on termination, regardless of the reason for termination
- Performance bonuses are not paid to Executive Officers at the University

(d) Loans to key management personnel

No loans were made, guaranteed or secured, directly or indirectly by the University to any key management personnel during the year.

(e) Other transactions with key management personnel

There were no other transactions with key management personnel during the year.

Note 21 Remuneration of auditors

During the year, the following fees were paid for services provided by the auditor of the University:

Audit of financial statements		
Fees paid to Queensland Audit Office	201	203
Total paid for audit and review	201	203

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Note 22 Commitments for Expenditure

Capital expenditure commitments

Capital expenditure contracted for at the reporting date but not recognised as liabilities, payable as follows:

Property, plant and equipment		
– within one year	6,172	11,755
Total property, plant and equipment expenditure commitments	6,172	11,755
Intangible assets		
– within one year	133	-
Total intangible asset expenditure commitments	133	-
Total commitments	6,305	11,755

Property, plant and equipment commitments include \$1.7M in building upgrade works (2020: \$7.6M).

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Notes to the Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

2021
\$'000 **2020**
\$'000

Note 23 Related parties

(a) Key management personnel

Disclosures relating to Council members and executive officers are set out in note 20.

(b) Transactions with related parties

The following transactions occurred during the year with the QCWT (refer note 1(e)):

Sale of goods and services	12	12
Purchase of goods and services	1	1
Joint Venture capital contribution	375	375

Note 24 Monies held in trust

The University administers a bank account (AusAID) to facilitate the distribution of grants to students from third world countries. As the University performs a custodial role in respect of transactions and balances, they are not recognised in the financial statements.

Note 25 Reconciliation of net result to net cash provided by operating activities

Net result for the period	79,388	12,580
Depreciation and amortisation	17,795	17,442
Net (gain)/loss on sale of non-current assets	1,007	(30)
In-specie dividend distribution	(53,104)	-
Asset impairment	95	306
Unrealised movement in FVPL	167	-
Change in operating assets and liabilities		
(Increase) / decrease in receivables and contract assets	(20,803)	(1,764)
(Increase) / decrease in inventories	656	133
(Increase) / decrease in other non-financial assets	200	(895)
Increase / (decrease) in trade and other payables	(1,639)	12,503
Increase / (decrease) in provisions	10,714	6,294
Increase / (decrease) in other liabilities and contract liabilities	6,651	(3,961)
Net cash provided by operating activities	41,127	42,608

Note 26 Events occurring after the end of the reporting period

No other matters or circumstances have arisen since the end of the reporting period which could significantly affect the operations or financial position of the University.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Notes to the Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

Note 27(b) Higher Education Loan Programs
(excluding OS-HELP)

	Note	HECS-HELP (Australian Government payments only)		FEE-HELP		SA-HELP		Total	
		2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Cash payable/(receivable) at beginning of year		832	1,758	981	(181)	15	(21)	1,828	1,556
Financial assistance received in cash during the reporting period		64,499	71,870	12,218	12,647	2,615	2,576	79,332	87,093
Cash available for the period		65,331	73,628	13,199	12,466	2,630	2,555	81,160	88,649
Revenue and income earned	2.1(b)	63,229	72,796	11,812	11,485	2,492	2,540	77,533	86,821
Cash payable at end of year		2,102	832	1,387	981	138	15	3,627	1,828

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Notes to the Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

	Note	Research Training Program		Research Support Program		Total	
		2021	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020
		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Financial Assistance received in CASH during the reporting period (total cash received from the Australian Government for the Programs)		6,030	5,569	9,432	3,705	15,462	9,274
Net accrual adjustments		-	-	-	-	-	-
Revenue for the period	2.1(c)	6,030	5,569	9,432	3,705	15,462	9,274
Surplus/(deficit) from the previous year		-	-	-	-	-	-
Total revenue including accrued revenue		6,030	5,569	9,432	3,705	15,462	9,274
Less expenses including accrued expenses		(6,030)	(5,569)	(9,432)	(3,705)	(15,462)	(9,274)
Surplus/(deficit) for reporting period		-	-	-	-	-	-

	Total Domestic Students		Total Overseas Students	
	2021	2020	2021	2020
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Research Training Program fees offsets	4,157	3,507	15	111
Research Training Program stipends	1,827	1,752	31	199
Research Training Program allowances	-	-	-	-
Total Support	5,984	5,259	46	310

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Notes to the Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

Note 27(e) Other Capital Funding

	Note	Linkage Infrastructure, Equipment and Facilities Grant			Total	
		2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000	2020 \$'000	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Financial Assistance received in CASH during the reporting period (total cash received from the Australian Government for the Programs)		-	-	-	-	-
Net accrual adjustments		-	16	-	-	16
Revenue for the period	2.1(d)	-	16	-	-	16
Surplus/(deficit) from the previous year		40	40	40	40	40
Total revenue including accrued revenue		40	56	40	40	56
Less expenses including accrued expenses		-	(16)	-	-	(16)
Surplus for reporting period		40	40	40	40	40

Note 27(f) Australian Research Council Grants

	Note	Discovery Program		Linkage Program		Total	
		2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000
Financial Assistance received in CASH during the reporting period (total cash received from the Australian Government for the Programs)		1,183	1,443	69	(45)	1,252	1,398
Net accrual adjustments		-	(620)	-	158	-	(462)
Revenue for the period	2.1(e)	1,183	823	69	113	1,252	936
Surplus/(deficit) from the previous year		628	409	319	209	947	618
Total revenue including accrued revenue		1,811	1,232	388	322	2,199	1,554
Less expenses including accrued expenses		(1,222)	(604)	(209)	(3)	(1,431)	(607)
Surplus for reporting period		589	628	179	319	768	947

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND
Notes to the Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 December 2021

	2021	2020
Note	\$'000	\$'000
Note 27(g) OS – HELP		
Cash received during the reporting period	-	253
Cash spent during the reporting period	-	(8)
Net Cash Received	-	245
Cash surplus/(deficit) from the previous year	343	98
Cash surplus for the reporting period	14(a) 343	343

Note 27(h) Student Services and Amenities Fee		
Unspent/(overspent) revenue from previous period	1,226	1,464
SA-HELP revenue earned	2.1(b) 2,492	2,540
Student services fees direct from students	2.3 1,078	1,063
Total revenue expendable in period	4,796	5,067
Student services expenses during period	(3,980)	(3,841)
Unspent student services revenue	816	1,226

University of Southern Queensland Management Certificate

We have prepared the annual financial statements pursuant to the provisions of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* and other prescribed requirements and we certify that:

- (a) the financial statements are in agreement with the accounts and records of the University of Southern Queensland; and
- (b) in our opinion –
 - (i) the prescribed requirements for establishing and keeping the accounts have been complied with in all material respects;
 - (ii) the financial statements have been drawn up to present a true and fair view of the transactions of the University of Southern Queensland for the period of 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021 and of the financial position as at 31 December 2021 in accordance with prescribed accounting standards and conform with the Guidelines for Australian Higher Education Providers issued by the Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment;
 - (iii) the amount of Australian Government financial assistance expended during the reporting period was for the purposes for which it was intended and the University of Southern Queensland has complied with applicable legislation, contracts, agreements and program guidelines in making expenditure;
 - (iv) the University of Southern Queensland charged Student Services and Amenities Fees strictly in accordance with the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* and the Administration Guidelines made under the Act. Revenue from the fee was spent strictly in accordance with the Act and only on services and amenities specified in subsection 19-38(4) of the Act;
 - (v) at the time of this Certificate there are reasonable grounds to believe that the University will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due; and
 - (vi) the financial statements and notes satisfy the requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.


J DORNBUSCH
Chancellor

Date – 21st February 2022


G MACKENZIE
Vice-Chancellor

Date – 21st February 2022


A KERRIDGE
Chief Financial Officer

Date – 21st February 2022

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Council of the University of Southern Queensland

Report on the audit of the financial report

Opinion

I have audited the accompanying financial report of the University of Southern Queensland.

In my opinion, the financial report:

- a) gives a true and fair view of the entity's financial position as at 31 December 2021, and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended
- b) complies with the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*, the Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019, the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013 and Australian Accounting Standards.

The financial report comprises the statement of financial position as at 31 December 2021, the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, notes to the financial statements including summaries of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the management certificate given by the Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer.

Basis for opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with the *Auditor-General Auditing Standards*, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of my report.

I am independent of the entity in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's *APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Australia. I have also fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code and the *Auditor-General Auditing Standards*.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Key audit matters

Key audit matters are those matters that, in my professional judgement, were of most significance in my audit of the financial report of the current period. I addressed these matters in the context of my audit of the financial report as a whole, and in forming my opinion thereon, and I do not provide a separate opinion on these matters.

Valuation of specialised buildings (\$461.8 million)

Refer to Note 12 of the financial statements.

Key audit matter	How my audit addressed the key audit matter
<p>Buildings (comprising primarily specialised buildings) were material to the University at balance date and were measured at fair value using the current replacement cost method that comprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gross replacement cost, less • accumulated depreciation <p>The University performs comprehensive revaluation of all its buildings every three years, or whenever a material variation is expected to have occurred, with desktop valuations conducted in the intervening period.</p> <p>In making these judgements, the University engaged an external valuation expert to perform a comprehensive valuation in 2019. Indexation has been applied to the 2020 and 2021 balances.</p> <p>The University derived the gross replacement cost of its buildings at balance date through using unit prices that required significant judgements for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identifying the components of buildings with separately identifiable replacement costs. • developing a unit rate for each of these components, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ estimating the current cost for a modern substitute (including locality factors and on-costs), expressed as a rate per unit (e.g., \$/square metre) ○ identifying whether the existing building contains obsolescence or less utility compared to the modern substitute, and if so, estimating the adjustment to the unit rate required to reflect this difference. <p>The measurement of accumulated depreciation involved significant judgements for forecasting the remaining useful lives of building components.</p> <p>The significant judgements required for gross replacement cost and useful lives are also significant for calculating annual depreciation expense.</p>	<p>My audit procedures included, but were not limited to:</p> <p>In a previous year when a comprehensive valuation was conducted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessing the competence, capability and objectivity of the valuation specialist. • Assessing the adequacy of management's review of the valuation process. • Obtaining an understanding of the methodology used and assessing the design, integrity and appropriateness using common industry practices. • On a sample basis, evaluating the relevance, completeness, and accuracy of source data used to derive unit rates for the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – modern substitute – adjustment for excess quality or obsolescence. <p>In the current year when indexation was applied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessing the competence, capability and objectivity of the valuation specialist. • Assessing the adequacy of management's review of the valuation process. • Evaluating the reasonableness of the indices used against other publicly available information about movements in values for replacement costs of similar assets. • Assessing the ongoing reasonableness of the asset useful lives by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – reviewing management's annual assessment of useful lives – assessing the appropriateness of useful lives where assets were disposed of prior to the end of their useful lives – reviewing assets with an inconsistent relationship between condition and remaining life. • Performing reasonableness tests to confirm depreciation is calculated in accordance with the University's accounting policies and industry standards.

Other information

Other information comprises the information included in the University of Southern Queensland's annual report for the year ended 31 December 2021 but does not include the financial report and my auditor's report thereon.

The Council is responsible for the other information.

My opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with my audit of the financial report, my responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report, or my knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact.

I have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of the entity for the financial report

The Council is responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*, the Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019, the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013 and Australian Accounting Standards, and for such internal control as the Council determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

The Council is also responsible for assessing the entity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless it is intended to abolish the entity or to otherwise cease operations.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances. This is not done for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal controls but allows me to express an opinion on compliance with prescribed requirements.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the entity.

- Conclude on the appropriateness of the entity's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. I base my conclusions on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the entity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the Council regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

From the matters communicated with the Council, I determine those matters that were of most significance in the audit of the financial report of the current period and are therefore the key audit matters. I describe these matters in my auditor's report unless law or regulation precludes public disclosure about the matter or when, in extremely rare circumstances, I determine that a matter should not be communicated in my report because the adverse consequences of doing so would reasonably be expected to outweigh the public interest benefits of such communication.

Report on other legal and regulatory requirements

Statement

In accordance with s.40 of the *Auditor-General Act 2009*, for the year ended 31 December 2021:

- a) I received all the information and explanations I required.
- b) I consider that, the prescribed requirements in relation to the establishment and keeping of accounts were complied with in all material respects.

Prescribed requirements scope

The prescribed requirements for the establishment and keeping of accounts are contained in the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*, any other Act and the Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019. The applicable requirements include those for keeping financial records that correctly record and explain the entity's transactions and account balances to enable the preparation of a true and fair financial report.



Bhavik Deoji
as delegate of the Auditor-General

22 February 2022

Queensland Audit Office
Brisbane

Annual Report Compliance Checklist

Summary of requirement	Basis for requirement	Annual report reference
Letter of compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A letter of compliance from the accountable officer or statutory body to the relevant Minister/s 	ARRs – section 7 Page 1
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Table of contents 	ARRs – section 9.1 Page 2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Glossary 	Page 3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public availability 	ARRs – section 9.2 Inside front cover
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpreter service statement 	<i>Queensland Government Language Services Policy</i> ARRs – section 9.3 Inside front cover
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copyright notice 	<i>Copyright Act 1968</i> ARRs – section 9.4 Inside front cover
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information Licensing 	<i>QGEA – Information Licensing</i> ARRs – section 9.5 Inside front cover	
General information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introductory Information 	ARRs – section 10 Page 3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government's objectives for the community and whole-of-government plans / specific initiatives 	ARRs – section 11.1 Pages 28–29
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency objectives and performance indicators 	ARRs – section 11.2 Pages 30–67
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency service areas and service standards 	ARRs – section 11.3 Pages 30–67
Financial performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary of financial performance 	ARRs – section 12.1 Page 68
Governance – management and structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisational structure 	ARRs – section 13.1 Pages 9–10
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive management 	ARRs – section 13.2 Pages 11–15
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government bodies (statutory bodies and other entities) 	ARRs – section 13.3 Pages 16–21
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Sector Ethics 	<i>Public Sector Ethics Act 1994</i> ARRs – section 13.4 Page 26
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human Rights 	<i>Human Rights Act 2019</i> ARRs – section 13.5 Page 26
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Queensland public service values 	ARRs – section 13.6 n/a
Governance – risk management and accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk management 	ARRs – section 14.1 Page 24
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit committee 	ARRs – section 14.2 Pages 24–25
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal audit 	ARRs – section 14.3 Page 23
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External scrutiny 	ARRs – section 14.4 Page 25
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information systems and recordkeeping 	ARRs – section 14.5 Page 25
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information Security attestation 	ARRs – section 14.6 n/a

Governance – human resources	• Strategic workforce planning and performance	ARRs – section 15.1	Pages 56–62
	• Early retirement, redundancy and retrenchment	Directive No.04/18 <i>Early Retirement, Redundancy and Retrenchment</i> ARRs – section 15.2	Page 17
Open Data	• Statement advising publication of information	ARRs – section 16	Inside front cover
	• Consultancies	ARRs – section 33.1	https://data.qld.gov.au
	• Overseas travel	ARRs – section 33.2	https://data.qld.gov.au
	• Queensland Language Services Policy	ARRs – section 33.3	https://data.qld.gov.au
Financial statements	• Certification of financial statements	FAA – section 62 FPMS – sections 38, 39 and 46 ARRs – section 17.1	Page 112
	• Independent Auditor’s Report	FAA – section 62 FPMS – section 46 ARRs – section 17.2	Pages 113–116

FAA *Financial Accountability Act 2009*

FPMS *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019*

ARRs *Annual report requirements for Queensland Government agencies*

USQ at a Glance

Senior Executive

Vice-Chancellor

Professor Geraldine Mackenzie

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

Professor Karen Nelson

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)

Professor John Bell

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services)

Michael Thomas

Pro Vice-Chancellor (Engagement)

Professor John Cole (until 1 October 2021)

Shawn Walker (from 4 October 2021)

Pro Vice-Chancellor (International)

Professor Ren Yi

Pro Vice-Chancellor (First Nations Education and Research)

Professor Tony Dreise (from 27 September 2021)

Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students)

Professor Josh Pienaar

Executive Dean (Business, Education, Law and Arts)

Professor Barbara de la Harpe

Executive Dean (Health, Engineering and Sciences)

Professor Glen Coleman

Chief Financial Officer

Athol Kerridge

Statistics

STAFF	2020	2021
Academic	793	766
Professional	945	962
FINANCIALS*		
Total Revenue (\$'000)	344,972	423,883
Total Assets (\$'000)	830,570	900,894
Total Equity (\$'000)	721,700	777,546
STUDENT NUMBERS		
Female	14,814	14,534
Male	10,792	10,290
Indeterminate/Unspecified	42	48
STUDENT CATEGORIES		
Domestic (headcount)	23,200	22,971
International (headcount)	2448	1901
Undergraduate (load)	11,287	10,820
Postgraduate (load)	2681	2601

*Draft unaudited financial statements

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The Annual Report is also available online at

www.usq.edu.au/about-usq/about-us/plans-reports

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Australia

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22 Caves Rd

Stanthorpe Queensland 4380

Australia

The University of Southern Queensland acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands and waterways where the University is located. Further, we acknowledge the cultural diversity of First Nations peoples and pay respect to Elders past, present and future.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND

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