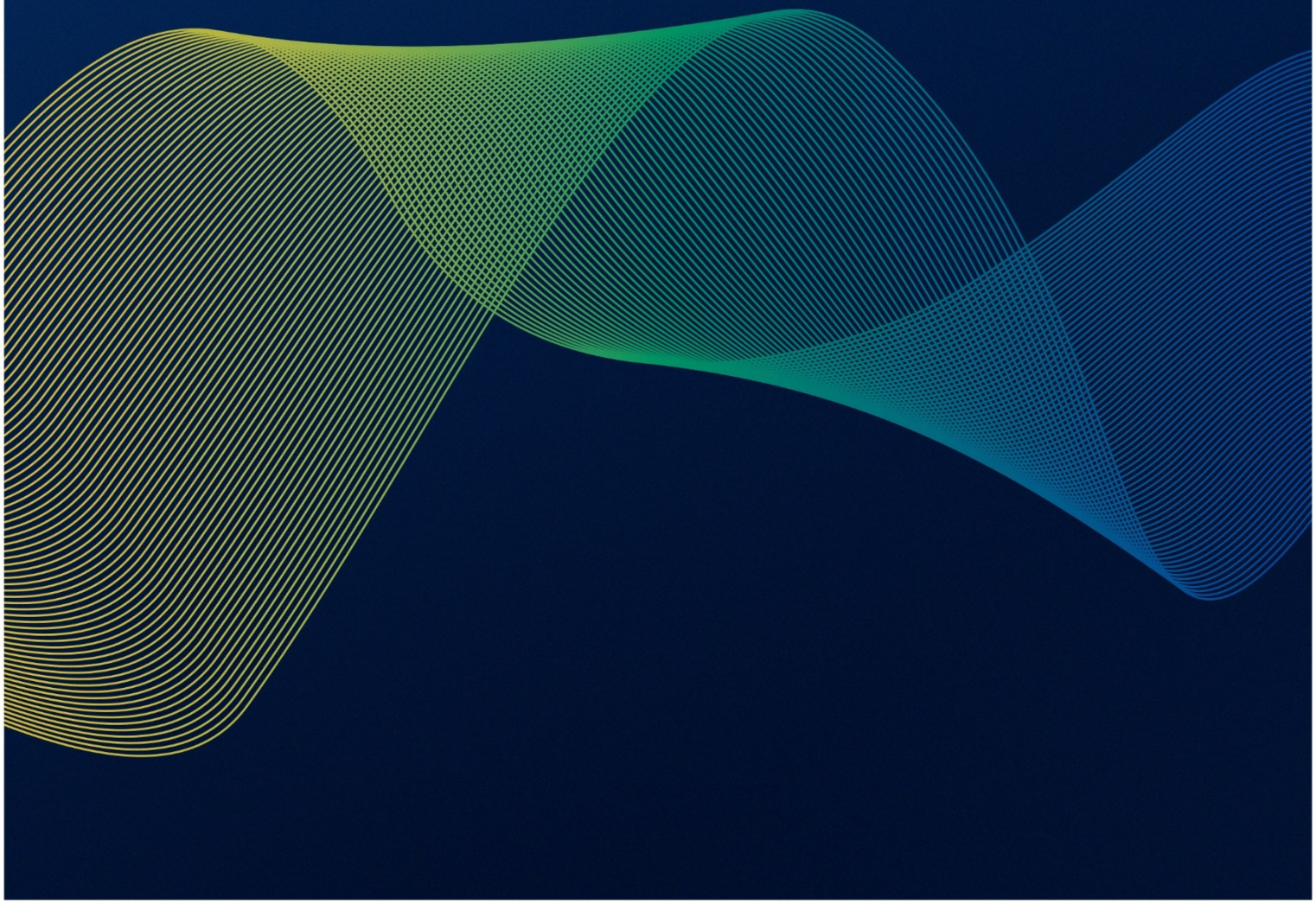
Australian Government

ATEC
Australian Tertiary Education Commission

Avondale UNIVERSITY

2027 mission based compact between the ATEC and Avondale University



Preface

This mission based compact is established between the Australian Tertiary Education Commission (ATEC) and Avondale University in accordance with the Universities Accord (Australian Tertiary Education Commission) Act 2026 (ATEC Act). This mission based compact highlights the significant contributions Avondale University will make to the priorities outlined in the ATEC's interim Statement of Strategic Priorities (SSP) as well as how it will achieve its own strategic goals, advance its mission, and deliver outcomes for its students and local community.

Following good faith negotiation, the form and terms of this mission based compact have been determined by the ATEC with Avondale University. In determining these matters, the ATEC has considered the strategic priorities and outcomes set out in the interim SSP, the purpose of compacts as set out in section 28 of the ATEC Act, and Avondale University's goals, missions and strategic plan, geographic location and local community, as well as the effect (if any) the proposed terms may have on Avondale University's academic freedom.

The terms of this compact are set out in section 2 and 3 of this document, and include Avondale University's delivery of the commitments set out in that section.

The ATEC must assess Avondale University's outcomes against the terms of this compact at least once per calendar year. For the purposes of paragraph 29(4)(b) of the ATEC Act, the ATEC's assessment methodology for this compact will require Avondale University to demonstrate it has made reasonable efforts to progress the agreed terms of the compact. Assessment is proposed to occur during 2028.

Assessment will focus on the extent to which providers have actively progressed commitments, recognising that full attainment of all outcomes may not be achievable in all instances. In considering whether reasonable efforts have been made, the ATEC will take into account:

the actions undertaken by Avondale University to progress its commitments, including relevant steps, initiatives, activities, or planning work aimed at achieving the intended outcomes; and

any factors it is aware of that are reasonably outside Avondale University's control that may have affected its ability to deliver the commitments set out in the compact.

In making an assessment, the ATEC may require Avondale University to provide relevant information consistent with subsection 30(2) of the ATEC Act.

The ATEC may conduct annual check-in meetings with Avondale University as needed, to discuss Avondale University's progress towards meeting the terms of this compact. If Avondale University has any concerns about their ability to meet the agreed terms of this compact, including as a result of matters reasonably outside Avondale University's control, Avondale University agrees to inform the ATEC as soon as possible.

As set out in section 30-45 of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* and section 46D(2) of the ATEC Act, assessment against the terms of this compact must be taken into account by the ATEC in making decisions on domestic and international student place allocations in 2028, helping to shape a high-performing, diverse higher education system.

In line with the ATEC Act, this mission based compact will be published on the ATEC's website within 28 days after the compact is entered into. It is the responsibility of the ATEC to ensure that the information in this compact is up to date.

This mission based compact is in effect from 1 January 2027 to 31 December 2027, unless varied or terminated earlier.

Contents

Preface **2**

Section 1: Context **4**

Mission statement 4

Enrolment strategy and priorities 5

Section 2: Performance domains **7**

National, State/territory and regional priorities 7

First Nations 9

Equity 11

Quality teaching 13

Joined-up tertiary system 15

Research 17

Section 3: Course and campus changes **19**

Section 1: Context

Mission statement

Avondale University (Avondale) was originally founded in 1897 (with various names over time) with deep roots in the community and a commitment to prepare graduates with a greater vision of world needs. Avondale's values of Excellence, Spirituality, Wellbeing, Integrity and Service are at the heart of our student and staff community. As a faith-based university, open to all students, Avondale believes strongly that education must be more than an academic pursuit. Avondale understands that to develop students into successful citizens their education must encompass the whole person (mental, social, physical and spiritual). Our academic programs and specifically designed co-curricular activities aim to deliver on this understanding. Our core values are an expression of this belief in whole person education. They are infused in Avondale's course offerings, the research we engage in, the extra-curricular activities offered to students and community service and volunteer initiatives. The University caters for students from diverse backgrounds who desire a values-based Christian higher education with a focus on student wellbeing, a holistic educational experience and academic excellence.

Our current Avondale Strategic Plan 2024-2027 highlights these values and our ongoing commitment to goals and targets for growth in areas that align with current national and sector priorities as a Table B provider. The Year in Review 2025 also provides a snapshot of progress.

As a dual sector institution, Avondale offers a bespoke range of vocational (VET) pathways and certificate programs, undergraduate, postgraduate and Higher Degree by Research offerings. Avondale has an open enrolment approach and welcomes applications from all prospective students.

Interdisciplinary research is a hallmark of Avondale, with three Research Centres leading the way in Lifestyle and Health; Christian Education; and Scripture, Spirituality and Society. The Centre for Advancement of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) supports scholarship development for staff.

There are two campuses. The campus at Wahroonga, Sydney is co-located with a large private hospital, and this supports the Bachelor of Nursing program with many work integrated learning opportunities, whilst the Lake Macquarie Campus near Morisset is the main campus supporting the full range of Avondale activities.

Avondale has five strategic priorities. These are:

- **Delivering an exceptional student experience** with a key goal of continuing to be in the Top 10 in Australia for high quality student experience
- **Securing our future** with a key goal to increase higher education student enrolments in courses and maximise Commonwealth supported places (CSP) place allocation – applicable specifically to nursing, teaching and counselling courses
- **Engaging in world-class research with impact** aiming to grow in research quality and productivity
- **Fostering staff talent and culture** recognising that staff are the bedrock of success so use the workforce plan to build staff capability especially in teaching quality, and in particular develop senior academic leaders
- **Achieving operational efficiency and excellence** with a key goal being to improve resource use, particularly space utilization across the calendar year.

Enrolment strategy and priorities

In 2025 approximately 80% of students were undergraduate students with 61% of students under 30 years of age though as Figure 1 below illustrates the age range varies, and 87% of students indicated a faith orientation. Seventy two percent of student enrolment is in units on campus, with 28% of enrolment being online or mixed mode. Whilst the campuses are in NSW and draw many students from there (74%), students from QLD are 13%, and Victoria 8%, of students overall. Current international student numbers are modest and reduced from past years.

Avondale will set a goal of a 10% enrolment increase for total enrolment in 2027.

Avondale's enrolment priorities focus on growth across all courses and study levels and welcomes students from all backgrounds and schools. As a private faith-based institution the Avondale student recruitment team invest significant time visiting faith based high schools and high school expos. While our team initially prioritise schools within 2 hours drive of our campuses, the program includes schools from around Australia and New Zealand.

Post COVID, Avondale has prioritised domestic load growth over international student load growth. Consistent marketing engagement with our primary domestic channel ensures that Avondale anticipates further domestic load growth. In anticipation of the expected domestic growth, we anticipate opening discussions with ATEC regarding additional CSP places. Nursing, teaching, and a broadening of eligible classifications of counselling students will be priorities for discussion.

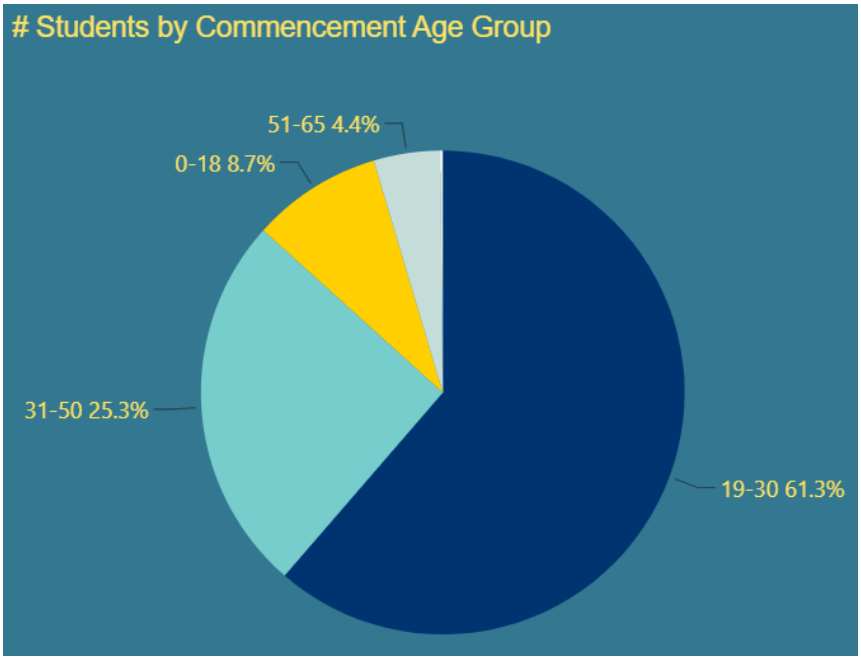
Avondale has a significant number of students from low SES families at 26.6% of all students in 2025. Currently Avondale offers an Undergraduate Certificate in University Preparation as a pathway to university study, however, to support additional growth in this target audience Avondale is keen to offer the same FEE-FREE Uni Ready program as is offered at Table A providers.

Utilising Avondale's reputation for quality graduate outcomes, Avondale will focus on sustainable growth and engagement with international students. In keeping with national priorities this growth will come predominantly from students studying in Nursing and Teaching undergraduate degrees. New student accommodation adjacent to our Wahroonga campus opens opportunities for additional students on the Wahroonga campus.

Avondale recognises the demand from students for flexible delivery of learning and skill development. A significant redevelopment of existing units into micro-credential units that offer flexible delivery modes will support additional growth, particularly postgraduate (PG) units. The addition of micro credentials will allow Avondale to more successfully target PG career-changers, and individuals undertaking mid-career reskilling. Micro credentials will be offered on campus, online and in hybrid environments with short intensives providing flexibility to students.

To support the above enrolment increase Avondale has a number of strategies that target specific cohorts. In line with state and federal government strategic priorities, and to support institutional growth priorities, Avondale will seek additional Commonwealth Government funded places when future offers are released.

Figure 1: Students by age group at commencement of study for 2025



Section 2: Performance domains

National, State/territory and regional priorities

A tertiary education system which meets Australia's current and future skills and knowledge needs

Vision

Avondale focuses on professional programs providing graduates who support current and future community needs. Avondale's nursing, Initial Teacher Education (ITE), lifestyle medicine and counselling courses align with the first two listed priorities in the Statement of Strategic Priorities (SSP) addressing national/state strategic priorities. Avondale intends to build on recent growth in nursing and ITE programs and implement continual improvement strategies to deliver an excellent student experience and nationally recognised levels of full-time graduate employment.

Avondale will continue to expand the impact of Lifestyle Medicine given it is an area vital for health improvements in Australia and crucial for chronic disease prevention and reducing the burden of disease. It also has application to Pacific countries given the lifestyle factors strongly impacting adverse health outcomes there.

Action

Growth and impact

Focus growth endeavours on two key SSP priorities which are health and ITE programs and identify where partnership opportunities can support growth outcomes and Avondale has CSP funding.

- Grow nursing resources and capacity to support two commencing cohorts each year to support wider flexibility for commencing students.
- Focus on filling MTch places given the availability of CSPs.
- For Lifestyle Medicine, Avondale is seeking to use this area to positively impact health in Australia and in the Pacific region through higher degree study as well as short course and microcredential opportunities. The intent is to broaden the short course opportunities to reach more individuals and target health professionals who can influence individuals' health through their activities.
- Expand flexible delivery options where professional accreditation allows.

Retention

Evaluate the trial role supporting ITE students with course-related enquiries to assess the impact of early intervention on risks to study load reduction or withdrawal and measure its effectiveness against key outcomes for retention and completion. The position commenced in April 2026 and is contracted to December 2026 and subject to review for continuation.

- Analyse the lower than sector average of retention in ITE courses for factors that can be addressed.
- Consider additional strategies for supporting learning needs of students with a disability given the evidence of lower retention. Included is further staff development in knowledge of ways to support such students and adjusting pedagogy to reduce barriers to success.
- Subject to the review of the position above, consider a similar role to support students in nursing.

Note: The retention rate for 2025 for 06 Health is calculated to be 89% and for 0701 Education, 88.8% (unverified data at time of submission).

Success

Analyse the impact of increased resources targeted at enhancing academic and non-academic supports and initiatives to cultivate student engagement and a sense of belonging, and to support academic progress, and provide interventions for at-risk students.

- Review the Studiosity contract to broaden the reach of the Connect Live program which currently only services a small number of students. These supports can improve assessment outcomes.

- Analyse the role of the Student Success Coordinator for impact on retention and identify key areas where academic support provided through the Learning Advisors and Studiosity, and student engagement activities delivered through Student Life and in the Residence Halls, ACE Lab, Counselling, and Equity services can be improved to benefit student completions.

Note: The success rate for 2025 for 06 Health is calculated to be 94.1% and for 0701 Education, 88.6% (unverified data at time of submission).

Measure

Indicator	Data source	Provider baseline	Milestone for 2027	Expected outcome and timeframe
06 Health				
Total student enrolments	HESC – Verified 2025	306	350	Further growth in domestic students is likely subject to CSP availability
Success rate	HESC – Verified 2024	94.06%	95%	Continue to exceed the national average for success rate
Retention rate	HESC – Verified 2024	82.56%	84%	Grow retention towards the national average over 3 years
0701 Teacher Education				
Total student enrolments	HESC – Verified 2025	290	330	Increase MTch students through 2027 and beyond
Success rate	HESC – Verified 2024	92.31%	93%	Continue to exceed the national average for success rate
Retention rate	HESC – Verified 2024	75.00%	80%	Grow retention towards the national average over 3 years

Indicators are for the domestic undergraduate student cohort. Success rate includes both commencing and continuing students.

First Nations

First Nations leadership, access, participation and success

Vision

Avondale will continue the development and implementation of a cultural competency roadmap through genuine relationships with First Nations peoples and organisations. Avondale seeks substantive and sustained positive change driven first and foremost by strong personal and professional relationships characterised by mutual respect and understanding. A long-term, whole-of-system commitment to building cultural awareness, responsiveness, competence and safety embedding First Nations people and knowledge in the governance and all levels of leadership of the university will drive sustained improvements not only in First Nations outcomes but in outcomes across the institution.

Action

Avondale will improve the embedding of First Nations knowledge in our courses with an institution-wide holistic approach that informs leadership, management, and learning and teaching. It includes initiatives targeted at every phase of the student life stages with a goal of both increasing First Nations student numbers but also improving the cultural competency and communication skills of all university staff, with a particular focus on academic and student support staff, to ensure we achieve parity in retention, progression, and successful outcomes for First Nations students, faculty and staff.

Develop a First Nations cultural competence roadmap with expert input from First Nations academics including Emerita Prof Tracey Bunda AM, Assoc Prof Katelyn Barney, Dr Shanelle Fiaalii, and the wide network of First Nations ministries (ATSIM) across our church community.

Avondale will pursue culturally appropriate outreach programs in partnership with First Nations organisations and address financial challenges with scholarships, accommodation and facilities access, and cost-of-living support measures.

Key steps to be taken on First Nations leadership, access, participation, and success in 2027 include but are not limited to:

- The establishment of a First Nations oriented working party focused on whole-of-institution preparation and implementation of a cultural competence roadmap and a Reconciliation Action Plan.
- The establishment of a First Nations unit for students with dedicated and qualified staffing and specific goals to improve First Nations students' access, retention, and success rates (see measure below), including the employment of a Cultural Support Officer in the Lake Macquarie campus.
- Revision of the whole curriculum to incorporate First Nations knowledge and perspectives.
- Expansion of targeted scholarships, accommodation support, and cost-of-living support measures, with a focus on supporting on-campus in-person learning.
- Fostering indigenous-informed research partnerships to address health and education gaps for First Nations communities.
- Identifying and fast-tracking early academic career interests of First Nations graduates.

Note: the success rate for 2025 for First Nations students is calculated to be 94.1% and for retention 81.4% (unverified data at time of submission).

Measure

Indicator	Data source	Provider baseline	Milestone for 2027	Expected outcome and timeframe
First Nations total enrolments	HESC – Verified 2025	35	37	40 total enrolments in 2030
First Nations success rate	HESC – Verified 2024	89.50%	90%	Meet the Avondale course specific success rate by 2030
First Nations retention rate	HESC – Verified 2024	77.78%	78.03%	Meet or exceed the average Table B provider retention rate by 2030

Indicators are for the domestic undergraduate student cohort. Success rate includes both commencing and continuing students.

Equity

Increasing access, participation and attainment of under-represented groups and priority cohorts

Vision

Our vision is for Avondale to be an institution that provides all students with access to an inclusive and equitable learning community, and to all the resources and information necessary to empower their academic and personal success. Through high-quality teaching and mentoring, the fostering of genuine relationships, provision of holistic and targeted support, and the development of appropriate access pathways we will ensure that every learner who comes to Avondale is equipped with the confidence and skills required to succeed in their study and their post-study endeavours.

Action

Refine Avondale's student-at-risk tracking system that facilitates early identification and intervention of appropriate support services including those specific to equity groups. The Student Success Coordinator manages the system across our full range of general and targeted student support services, as well as case manages those students most in need of regular, personalised support.

Assess the effectiveness of this system through the comparison of disaggregated student retention and attrition figures with historical data as well as the QILT student satisfaction survey and internal student surveys. Qualitative data will also be gathered through informal feedback provided by individual students. Emphasis is on ensuring that equity group retention and success continue to converge with or outperform that of the wider student cohort.

Review the Support for Students Policy and Procedure that sits within the office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic. Senior DVCA staff identify and monitor student needs and barriers to access, including those specific to equity groups, and work with the University's support providers to match these with appropriate support services. This includes improvements to existing support services as well as recommending new student support initiatives.

Continue the Student Management (SMS) and Learning Management systems (LMS) upgrade through 2027. Procedures relating to the communication of support service information, referrals, and tracking and monitoring the delivery of support services will be revised to take advantages of new functionality in the SMS and LMS.

Other key initiatives in 2027 include but are not limited to:

- Establishing learning & teaching support officers to drive improvements in learning technologies with a particular focus on universal design and equity group support.
- Expanding disability support including assistive technology for both on campus and distance students.
- Providing hardship grants and accommodation subsidies, as well as other cost-of-living and financial support initiatives including expanding the range of equity scholarships.
- Expanding the peer assisted study program focusing on equity group students with low social capital.
- Improving our pathways program with integrated support and improved accessibility for equity group students.

The success and retention rates for 2025 for equity group students is calculated to be as follows:
(unverified data at time of submission)

Success rates:

Students with Disability: 86.9%

Students from low SES backgrounds: 87.4%

Regional: 92.4%

Remote: 55.2% (based on low numbers)

Retention rates:

Students with Disability: 83.8%

Students from low SES backgrounds: 91.3%

Regional: 94.4%

Remote: 100%

This data compared to 2024 indicates further work is needed on success for students with a disability but with positive trends for other groups.

Measure

Indicator	Cohort	Data source	Provider baseline	Milestone for 2027	Expected outcome and timeframe
Total enrolments	Students with disability	HESC – Verified 2025	157	161	171 total enrolments in 2030 – 2% annual increase
Total enrolments	Students from low SES backgrounds	HESC – Verified 2025	217	219	232 total enrolments in 2030 – 2% annual increase
Total enrolments	Regional	HESC – Verified 2025	167	170	180 total enrolments in 2030 – % annual increase
Total enrolments	Remote	HESC – Verified 2025	<5	<5	Increase in total enrolments by 2030
Success	Students with disability	HESC – Verified 2024	90.13%	90.45%	At least 93% success rate by 2030
Success	Students from low SES backgrounds	HESC – Verified 2024	86.76%	87.45%	At least 93% success rate by 2030
Success	Regional	HESC – Verified 2024	91.75%	91.89%	At least 93% success rate by 2030
Success	Remote	HESC – Verified 2024	100.0%	100.0%	At least 93% success rate by 2030
Retention	Students with disability	HESC – Verified 2024	72.73%	73.54%	At least 80% retention rate by 2030
Retention	Students from low SES backgrounds	HESC – Verified 2024	73.44%	74.17%	At least 80% retention rate by 2030
Retention	Regional	HESC –Verified 2024	72.92%	73.71%	At least 80% retention rate by 2030
Retention	Remote	HESC – Verified 2024	Not applicable	In line with regional retention rate	In line with regional retention rate by 2030

Indicators are for the domestic undergraduate student cohort. Success rate includes both commencing and continuing students.

Quality teaching

Raising the quality and recognition of higher education teaching

Vision

Grounded in our faith tradition and commitment to the greater good, our vision is to place students at the centre of future-focused learning and enable curricular and co-curricular environments that promote inclusion, belonging and service to others. We want to re-imagine learning and teaching for 2027 so that students are empowered to succeed in a rapidly changing world and contribute meaningfully to careers responding to national priorities and global challenges.

Action

Skills development (QILT SES)

Target core skills needed for job-ready graduates and embed skills into curriculum with the goal of enhancing students' workforce capability.

- Review current curriculum and identify any skills gaps through strengthening partnerships and industry-led feedback on course design and content. Create and promote flexible entry pathways which recognise micro credentials, VET qualifications and prior learning. Work on this project has already commenced by engaging industry expertise through external advisory accreditation panels, and this process will be further enhanced by holding course-specific roundtables in 2027 to seek further recommendations on future-ready graduate skills and designing more flexible modular learning.

Teaching quality and engagement (QILT SES)

Expand evidence-based pedagogies to enhance the quality of teaching and student engagement with the aim of promoting socially cohesive learning communities that create a sense of belonging.

- Expand on Centre for Advancement of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL)'s current Learning and Teaching Student Success series to include a focus on relational pedagogy, transition pedagogy and opportunities for indigenising the curriculum where we will engage sector experts such as Professor Sally Kift, Professor Tracey Bunda and Associate Professor Katelyn Barney to share evidence-based practice and cultural knowledge. To increase support and improve digital inclusion for cohorts studying online we will implement strategies for building a greater sense of belonging informed by evidence-based scholarship and the expertise of Associate Professor Nicky Dulfer. In 2027, the Learning and Teaching committee will monitor regular reports from the various Schools on implemented strategies.

Design and Assessment reform (QILT SES)

Progress innovation in redesigning curriculum and assessment so that learning outcomes are aligned with authentic and future-facing skills and capabilities.

- In 2027 the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) will establish a working group to review core programs and the alignment of learning outcomes and assessments with real world contexts and national skills priorities. In 2026-2027, there will be a continued proactive approach to assessment redesign and innovation in the age of generative AI to promote academic integrity and ethical practice with CASTL facilitating disciplinary and interdisciplinary showcases and roundtables convened to share and promote good practice from within and beyond the university.

Staff professional development

Further build staff knowledge and capability with the aim of delivering on national priorities.

- CASTL to implement a targeted professional development program which requires staff to complete core training in universal design for learning to support equity. In 2026-2027 to employ learning designers to work with the Schools of Education and Nursing to embed equity strategies for diverse cohorts. There will also be ongoing staff training to increase cultural competence and responsiveness by engaging in training workshops with the National Centre for Cultural Competence.

- New academic staff without a formal teaching qualification to complete the Contemporary Approaches to University Teaching MOOC, presented under the auspices of the Council of Australasian University Leaders in Learning and Teaching (CAULLT), or an approved equivalent. Continuing staff may undertake the course where it supports strategic priorities, subject to line manager approval.
- Set an annual requirement of 20 hours of professional development focused on teaching quality, applying to part-time and full-time academics. Workshops will be badged and formally certified so participation is recorded and portable, and the 20 hours will be written into workload allocation models.

With a renewed focus on skills development, the quality of teaching and engagement, design and assessment reform, and staff professional development we anticipate these actions will help deliver improvements in the student experience, strengthen academic success and enable graduates to enjoy productive careers.

Measure

Indicator	Data source	Provider baseline	Milestone for 2027	Expected outcome and timeframe
Overall educational experience	QILT SES – Verified 2025	91.90%	More than 89%	Achieve an outcome in the top 10 for the university sector
Skills development	QILT SES – Verified 2025	89.80%	More than 87%	Achieve an outcome in the top 10 for the university sector
Teaching quality and engagement	QILT SES – Verified 2025	91.20%	More than 89%	Achieve an outcome in the top 10 for the university sector
Learning resources	QILT SES – Verified 2025	89.40%	More than 85%	Achieve an outcome in the top 10 for the university sector

Joined-up tertiary system

Strengthening collaboration and coordination between vocational education and training (VET) and higher education

Vision

Avondale is a dual sector university with a vision to grow VET enrolments and VET pathways to further study from VET courses such as from VET Outdoor Leadership programs into ITE programs. A VET refresh strategy is underway at the university exploring ways Avondale can identify VET offerings in areas of need and to create pathways into higher education. Whilst growth in this area is constrained by the absence of Smart & Skilled funding, and fee free TAFE courses, Avondale is exploring ways to be competitive in the offerings to students.

Action

Avondale will participate in the NSW Education Department consistent credit arrangements forum in alignment with tertiary harmonisation. Avondale will ensure entrants from Enrolled Nurse into the Bachelor of Nursing have maximum credit awarded of 1 year wherever appropriate. The nursing program reaccreditation review underway will include discussions with TAFE NSW as part of that process.

Avondale will examine admission policy to ensure it is best structured to support the transition of students from VET study to higher education courses. Avondale has amended the admission policy in recent years to support academic entry to all courses for any prospective student with a Certificate IV, and for some courses a Certificate III and will further monitor sector changes.

Avondale will undertake a review of the current VET programs it offers to identify ways to broaden the course availability. Avondale's Registered Training Organisation (RTO) can deliver training nationwide, with approval for offshore delivery to international students. Avondale is currently permitted to deliver a total of 19 skill sets and 351 units of competency across its 5 qualifications but is constrained by market forces related to fees. Avondale intends to continue to pursue Smart & Skilled funding for courses and build on the existing contract that provides funding for part qualifications only and address the competitive disadvantage that higher fees cause. The university will liaise with potential clients where relationships can be mission aligned and support skill development in those areas including entities such as Sanitarium, Vitality Works Adventist Development and Relief Agency, Sydney Adventist Hospital, Adventist Schools Australia, Churches, and Age care facilities.

Avondale will work with Mamarapha College in Perth to create a pathway from their accredited courses in ministry & health into courses at Avondale and create expanded opportunities that along with scholarship options, may support First Nations students gaining higher qualifications.

To address a constraint on staff capacity to work within the two sectors, Avondale's People & Culture department will continue to monitor and identify staff who are able to train and assess in VET (with a current Cert IV in Training & Assessment) to broaden the pool of potential teachers.

The measure following notes an average of 2.2 units credit for VET qualifications on course entry. However, some students use a VET qualification for entry that is not appropriate for credit. For example, in 2025, a Cert IV in Veterinary Nursing or a Cert IV in Business Administration were used for entry to a Bachelor of Nursing but not credit. However, a Diploma of Nursing allows both entry and typically the entire first year (8 units) as credit. Given the typical profile of students entering undergraduate courses with varied cognate backgrounds, it is not expected the measure will change significantly over time, though if as intended there is a growth in Diploma of Nursing entries, the average will likely move higher. Actions 1 and 2 outlined above may also lead to a positive impact on the measure.

Measure

Indicator	Data source	Provider baseline	Milestone for 2027	Expected outcome and timeframe
Average amount of credit provided to domestic bachelor students admitted on the basis of VET	Avondale supplied – 2025	2.2 units	2.3	Ensure credit is offered for appropriate VET level study completed
Domestic students admitted to a bachelor course on the basis of VET	Avondale supplied – 2025	45	50	Aim is to reach additional Enrolled Nurse students seeking to upgrade to Registered Nurse

Research

Sustaining national capability and supporting innovation through research and research training

Vision

Avondale is dedicated to fostering a robust research ecosystem that supports its people, partnerships, and operational systems in delivering high-quality, impactful, and sustainable research across its three Broad Fields of Education—Health (06), Education (07), and Society and Culture (09). Grounded in authentic, faith-based learning and discovery, Avondale University seeks to equip staff and students to make a positive global impact, particularly within Australia, New Zealand, and the South Pacific. Guiding this approach will be stakeholder feedback, sector benchmarking, and alignment with Australia's national research and development priorities.

Action

Implement the new Research Strategic Plan: In late 2025, the Avondale University 5-year Research Transition Plan (2021-2026) was comprehensively reviewed, with insights from this review informing the development of the new Avondale University Research Strategic Plan (2026-2031), adopted in 2026. This new plan is centred on four strategic priorities:

- **Investing in researchers:** To cultivate a vibrant, inclusive, and enabling research culture in which researchers are valued, supported, and empowered to pursue high-quality, strategically aligned research that delivers academic excellence and real-world impact.
- **Growing research partnerships:** To extend the reach, quality, and impact of Avondale's research through purposeful, mutually beneficial partnerships with denominational entities, universities, industry, government, and local communities.
- **Enhancing research excellence and impact:** To advance world-class research excellence and promote the translation, visibility and real-world impact of research outcomes across academic, professional and community contexts.
- **Strengthening research operations and sustainability:** To provide efficient and effective governance, systems and support services that enable high-quality research and research sustainability.

Develop a Research Operational Plan: The new *Avondale University Research Strategic Plan (2026-2031*) will be supported by a *Research Operational Plan (2026-2031)*, to be developed in 2026, which will draw on findings from the evaluation of the previous plan and incorporate recommendations arising from the recently reaccredited Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy courses.

Key focus areas for research and research training throughout 2027 are:

- Enhancing research capability and capacity among staff
- Strengthening the Higher Degree by Research (HDR) program
- Promoting an inclusive research culture
- Expanding local, national and international partnerships
- Engaging with stakeholders
- Expanding competitive grant and engagement income
- Increasing world-class research output
- Strengthening governance processes
- Promoting responsible research practices
- Providing effective support services and infrastructure
- Recognising research excellence
- Advancing research with real-world impact
- Strengthening research communication
- Improving financial sustainability.

Avondale's research ecosystem approach recognises the dynamic interaction between people, partnerships and operational systems in achieving research outcomes and impact, with progress in each focus area complementing outcomes in others. Therefore, progress is expected in each focus area throughout 2027, with this progress reported against success measures identified in the *Research Operational Plan (2026-2031).*

Measure

Indicator	Data source	Provider baseline	Milestone for 2027	Expected outcome and timeframe
HDR domestic enrolments	HESC – Verified 2025	25	27	30 by 2031
HDR domestic completions	HESC – Verified 2024	6	6	7 by 2031

Section 3: Course and campus changes

Course closures

Before closing any undergraduate or postgraduate course of study in which Commonwealth supported students have been enrolled for more than two years without its immediate replacement by a course of study that leads to the same occupation or provides a similar specialised skill (including any suspension of intake of students for more than one consecutive academic year), the provider must notify the ATEC of its plans in writing.

Notification of actual or potential closures must occur as soon as reasonably possible before final decisions to close courses are made, or before any information on the potential course closure is made public (whichever comes first). Notification must occur via email to studentprofiles@atec.gov.au as information on proposed course closures becomes available.

Providers must provide a list of all courses proposed for closure and a short justification (e.g. low student demand).

Where a proposed course closure falls within one or more of the areas of Commonwealth concern, providers must identify the relevant courses and provide additional information. Areas of Commonwealth concern include whether the course:

- prepares students for an occupation experiencing a skills shortage
- is in a field where closure may create a skills shortage, including where the provider is the sole or dominant national provider
- is a specialised course linked to a regional economy
- is in a field identified as an ATEC priority in the interim SSP:
  - health, aged care and disability support
  - education, including early childhood education and care
  - sovereign capability and food security, including advanced manufacturing and critical minerals
  - digital and technology
  - housing and construction
  - climate change and Net Zero transformation
- is funded under a specific Commonwealth initiative such as Nuclear-Powered Submarine places.

Where a closure relates to one or more Commonwealth concerns as listed above, the provider must provide information on:

- the expected high-level impacts on staff and students arising from the closures, including numbers of students and staff affected, and how these impacts are being mitigated including alternative options available for students
- the consultation undertaken with staff, students, community and other stakeholders
- how the provider is meeting relevant requirements under the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021, including the proposed teach out provisions to ensure existing students can complete their chosen course of study
- potential options to retain the course, including through cooperation with another provider or the movement of Commonwealth supported places to another provider (where applicable).

If the ATEC has any concerns about the potential course closure based on the information provided, the provider must engage with any discussions that the ATEC may seek to have, to reach a mutually agreeable arrangement with the provider regarding the course closure.

Where a provider determines that a closure does not relate to any identified Commonwealth concerns, they are only required to notify ATEC of the name of the course being closed via email to studentprofiles@atec.gov.au and classify it as a routine/low concern closure.

Campus changes

Providers must notify the ATEC if the provider proposes to enrol Commonwealth supported students in a course of study at a new campus or educational facility, or if the provider proposes to close a campus where Commonwealth supported students are enrolled.