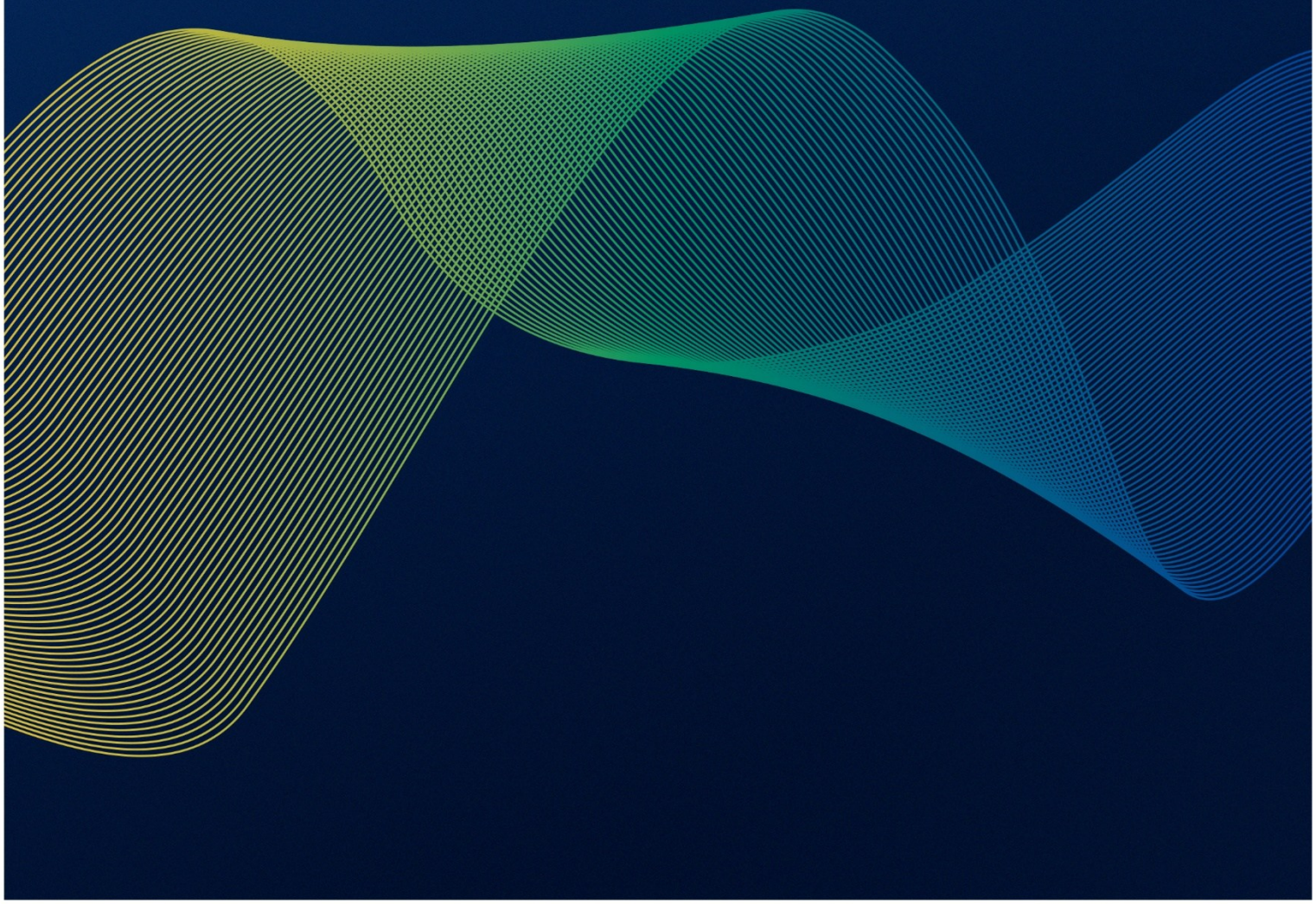
Australian Government

ATEC
Australian Tertiary Education Commission

UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA

2027 mission based compact between the ATEC and University of Canberra



Preface

This mission based compact is established between the Australian Tertiary Education Commission (ATEC) and University of Canberra in accordance with the *Universities Accord (Australian Tertiary Education Commission) Act 2026* (ATEC Act). This mission based compact highlights the significant contributions University of Canberra 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 University of Canberra. 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 University of Canberra's goals, missions and strategic plan, geographic location and local community, as well as the effect (if any) the proposed terms may have on University of Canberra's academic freedom.

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

The ATEC must assess University of Canberra'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 University of Canberra 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 University of Canberra 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 University of Canberra'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 University of Canberra to provide relevant information consistent with subsection 30(2) of the ATEC Act.

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

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.

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Section 1: Context

Mission statement

The University of Canberra (UC) has a distinct purpose to educate students to meet future workforce needs, contribute to the productivity and sustainability of industry, and deliver applied research solutions that contribute to the health, wellbeing and social cohesion of our community.

Established under the University of Canberra Act 1989, UC plays a central role in the Territory's education, research, and community ecosystem, contributing to its economic, social, and cultural development. Our global reach connects Canberra to the world, strengthening the profile of the Territory.

UC's mission is to be the most accessible University in Australia, a global leader in driving equality of opportunity. We are committed to enabling participation in higher education for students from all backgrounds, particularly those from equity groups and with lower levels of academic preparedness. We believe that potential is not defined by where people come from, but by where they can go. We are building an inclusive education environment that meets learners where they are and supports lifelong learning.

UC plays a critical role in educating the current and future workforce needed for the growing and dynamic region. We produce graduates across priority sectors including health, education, information technology, construction, public administration, and the creative industries. Our adaptive course profile is closely aligned to the evolving needs of the ACT and surrounding regions, ensuring our graduates are work-ready and able to contribute meaningfully both during and after their studies.

Our approach to research is applied, collaborative, and impact driven. We work with government, industry, and community partners to deliver solutions that contribute to health and wellbeing, social cohesion, sustainability, and evidence-based public policy. Through this work, we strengthen Canberra's role as a centre for innovation and policy leadership.

UC is committed to shaping a more connected and responsive tertiary system, consistent with the ambitions of the Universities Accord. Through our Connected Plan, we are building a harmonised tertiary education ecosystem that integrates higher education, vocational learning, and industry engagement. UC is leading the sector, working as a connector between vocational and higher education across the ecosystem. Our long-standing partnerships with institutions such as the Canberra Institute of Technology, TAFE Queensland and TAFE NSW demonstrate our commitment to parity of esteem and seamless pathways between vocational and higher education.

We are also expanding our model of employer-supported education, recognition of prior learning, and flexible delivery. This includes increased online and hybrid learning opportunities and targeted pathways for cohorts such as veterans, emergency services personnel, and tradespeople, enabling them to upskill, transition careers, and continue contributing to the economy.

Looking ahead, UC will continue to deepen its role as a university of and for its region by driving participation, supporting workforce development, and delivering impactful research. Through our Connected Plan, we will strengthen our contribution to national priorities, build enduring partnerships, and position Canberra as a leading example of a connected tertiary ecosystem.

Enrolment strategy and priorities

Student composition

UC has worked steadily to diversify our student body. We've invested in international and domestic postgraduate pipelines and grown our online and blended offerings to provide greater flexibility.

We've seen year-on-year growth in high-demand courses aligned to workforce needs. In Semester 1, 2026, UC's commencing domestic undergraduate growth was 10.3% on 2025 (stronger than any other Australian university), demonstrating demand for UC's practically focused degrees. Total load for Higher Education Courses for 2026 is projected at 7,778 Equivalent Full-time Student Load (EFTSL), considerably higher than 2025 at 7,121 EFTSL.

Growth will continue in 2027, through pipeline from 2026, and further increased commencing student demand. In 2027 UC's load for Higher Education Courses is expected to be 8,090 EFTSL, exceeding allocated DSP of 7,847 EFTSL.

Table 1: UC student profile by student cohort and location / delivery mode

UC student profile	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Change 2021-25
International fee paying	22%	24%	26%	27%	29%	27%	5%
Domestic undergraduate and sub-bachelor	65%	59%	54%	52%	50%	50%	-15%
Domestic postgraduate	14%	17%	19%	21%	21%	23%	9%
Indigenous students	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	-
Canberra campus	94%	89%	85%	83%	78%	77%	-17%
Other locations	6%	6%	5%	6%	9%	9%	3%
Online	0%	6%	10%	12%	13%	14%	14%
Total student count	**16,559**	**17,272**	**17,638**	**18,258**	**19,342**	**19,662**	**3,103**

Table 2: Proportion of UC Commonwealth supported places (CSP) Student Headcount

Proportion of UC (CSP) student headcount	2023	2024	2025	2026	Change 2023-26
Domestic bachelor entrants admitted by VET	13.7%	14.1%	15.2%	16.0%	2.3%
Health (06)	25.2%	24.9%	24.0%	25.1%	-0.1%
Social Work (090501)	-	1.0%	1.8%	3.1%	3.1%
Education (07)	13.0%	13.9%	14.4%	15.7%	2.7%
Building (0402)	5.6%	5.3%	5.2%	5.0%	-0.6%
IT (01)	8.5%	8.6%	9.1%	8.6%	0.1%
FFUR	3.4%	4.0%	5.3%	5.5%	2.1%
Total CSP Student Count	**10,372**	**10,397**	**10,736**	**11,100**	**728**

Enrolment trends

Our Health programs have seen substantial enrolment increases in line with workforce trends, for example social work.

Table 3: UC student characteristics by total and key Fields of Education (FoEs) by student cohorts as a proportion of the total (%)

FoE cohort	Female	Disability	Low SES	Regional	Remote	First Nations	First in Family
CSP total	**57%**	**15%**	**7%**	**17%**	**0.2%**	**3%**	**34%**
Health	70%	17%	-	20%	0.2%	2%	35%
Behavioural Science	71%	20%	5%	16%	0.1%	4%	33%
Social Work	80%	16%	14%	22%	1%	5%	51%
Nursing	84%	18%	7%	21%	0.3%	3%	44%
Rehabilitation Therapies	63%	18%	8%	22%	0.3%	1%	36%
Education	70%	15%	8%	20%	0.2%	4%	42%
IT	25%	10%	3%	11%	0%	0.5%	29%
Building	15%	3%	3%	9%	0%	2%	34%

Our Master of Secondary Teaching grew by 47%, partly due to the STEP program. Our Master of Primary Education and Bachelor of Early Childhood also attracted large numbers of domestic students.

Contrary to declining domestic school leaver load across the sector, UC saw growth in our Bachelor of Information Technology, aligning with ACT cyber skill shortages.

Students admitted on the basis of VET grew from 13.7% of our domestic bachelor cohort in 2023 to 15.2% in 2025. With various initiatives in place, we expect this growth to accelerate into 2027.

Table 3: UC high demand CSP courses, Semester 1 EFTSL

High demand CSP courses, Semester 1 EFTSL	2025	2026	Change 2025-26
Bachelor of Nursing	218	237	9%
Bachelor of Physiotherapy	134	171	27%
Bachelor Of Science In Psychology	146	156	7%
Master of Social Work	46	87	89%
Master of Secondary Teaching	32	47	47%
Master of Primary Teaching	23	32	41%
Bachelor Of Early Childhood Education (Birth To Five)	25	34	33%
Bachelor Of Early Childhood And Primary Education	71	78	10%
Bachelor of Information Technology	112	118	5%
Bachelor Of Building And Construction Management (Honours)	65	77	19%

Enrolment strategy

Steady ACT youth population growth is anticipated (1.9% CAROG to 2030). Year 11-12 college enrolments have increased by more than 3% year-on-year since 2022, demonstrating a combination of population growth and increased appetite for education. UC anticipates continued domestic enrolment growth in our degrees aligned with ACT's workforce demand including Health, Education, Social Work, IT and Building.

A renewed partnership with TAFE Queensland, with new locations and modes of delivery across our creative industries suite, and signed a memorandum of understanding with TasTAFE to deliver building and construction education into Tasmania to support the state's priorities, are core to our enrolment strategy.

Our innovative use of Occupation Standard Classicisation for Australia (OSCA) to provide entry and block credit for OSCA level 1 & 2 occupations will enable more streamlined access to Recognised Prior Learning or Experience (RPL/RPE).

Expansion of targeted RPL and RPE schemes for veterans, emergency services personnel and industry partners (McDonalds, Salvation Army), widens access to study whilst recognising their existing skills and training.

Growth in enabling programs at Country University Centres and ACT schools has been achieved through CSPs and Fee-Free Uni Ready (FFUR). In 2027 UC will commence delivering programs in Tuggeranong (a region under-indexing on higher education) and launch a new Indigenous foundations pathway program.

UC will see continued growth in our international student base, diversifying our student profile in line with the Government's diversification and regional engagement agenda. While South Asia remains a significant contributor, UC has expanded its footprint across North Asia, Southeast Asia and Oceania. Southeast Asia is a central focus, with targeted growth strategies, transnational delivery, scholarships and uplifting in-country capability.

Table 5: UC EFTSL growth

EFTSL	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**
Domestic undergraduate	6,610	6,168	6,186	6,207	6,524	6,850	7,200	7,400
Domestic postgraduate	1,311	1,530	1,803	1,903	2,061	2,150	2,236	2,325
Onshore international	2,231	2,748	2,996	3,294	3,350	3,400	3,450	3,500
Offshore international	417	422	453	502	400	450	600	750
VET partners	259	237	242	297	300	400	500	550
Domestic enabling (CSP)	129	123	146	85*	121*	-	-	-
Fee-Free Uni Ready (FFUR)	-	-	-	130	130	290	290	290
Total domestic enabling / FFUR	129	123	146	215	251	290	290	290
UC College (excluding domestic enabling)	264	294	293	281	290	290	290	290
Total EFTSL	**11,220**	**11,522**	**12,119**	**12,700**	**13,176**	**13,830**	**14,566**	**15,105**
Growth	-	3%	5%	5%	4%	5%	5%	4%

**UC has used CSPs to cover gap between enrolment and FFUR allocation.*

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

UC plays a critical role in the economic development of Canberra and contributes directly to meeting the future skills and knowledge needs of the ACT and surrounding regional areas of NSW.

We prepare students for careers in industries experiencing skills shortages and supply graduates critical for the local workforce. We are aligned in areas of national and Territory priority, including health and the care economy, education, information technology and building and construction.

We play our part in closing the gap, lifting participation in higher education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, particularly in the ACT and its surrounding regions.

Action

ACT / NSW priorities

The ACT and surrounding regions are experiencing workforce shortages in essential care services, education, information technology, clean energy, engineering and construction and business management. UC will:

- Grow completions in health degrees and make a significant contribution to the aged care, disability, mental health and health sectors.
- Ensure health students gain practical care experience through innovative placements in nursing and allied health across our network of partners.
- Expand access to study for rural, regional and remote (RRR) communities, Indigenous students and students from equity backgrounds, notably through online delivery.
- Grow the education workforce through our postgraduate degree that allows 'career changers' to earn while they learn and qualify rapidly.
- Lead the skills development of teachers in the ACT and regions through our accessible and innovative microcredentials in leadership, AI, RRR education and Indigenous cultural competency.
- Enhance industry engagement to ensure our IT, Cyber, Robotics and AI graduates are work ready with both the technical skills and human capabilities needed in the field.
- Continue developing and promoting pathways between vocational and university education for building and construction professionals.
- Support the ACT and Australia's clean energy transition through the supply of graduates who have engaged in practical industry experience and projects in this area.

Retention

In 2025 UC introduced specific orientation and transition support programs for students entering UC via VET pathways, neurodiverse students and students from equity backgrounds.

Unverified 2026 data shows UC's domestic undergraduate retention rate increased to 82%. Commencing undergraduate Indigenous student retention is currently stable at 74.6%.

Expanded RPE and RPL assessment

UC will:

- Streamline entry and application processes and credit recognition based on prior learning and experience, reducing the time and cost of completing a qualification.
- Work with industry, professional bodies, and RTOs to convert training and experience to recognised credit (UC currently works with ACT Emergency services, the Australian Defence Force, Victorian Firefighters, Masters Plumbers Association and the Police Federation).

Support for rural and remote students

UC will:

- Expand access to rural and remote students through online delivery to meet community and workforce needs in regional areas.
- Offer CSPs to RRR students in online master's.

Measure

Indicator	Data source	Provider baseline	Milestone for 2027	Expected outcome and timeframe
04 Architecture and Building				
Total student enrolments	HESC – Verified 2025	479	510	Increase total student enrolments to 550
Success rate	HESC – Verified 2024	88.09%	90.0%	High success rates for students studying in FOE Architecture & Building maintained
Retention rate	HESC – Verified 2024	82.05%	83.0%	Improve retention rate to 85.0% by 2029
07 Education				
Total student enrolments	HESC – Verified 2025	1,195	1,350	Increase total student enrolments to 1,490 by 2029
Success rate	HESC – Verified 2024	90.67%	91.0%	High success rates for students studying in FOE Education maintained
Retention rate	HESC – Verified 2024	79.04%	80.0%	Improve retention rate to 82% by 2029
02 Information Technology				
Total student enrolments	HESC – Verified 2025	836	880	Increase total student enrolments to 1,050 by 2029
Success rate	HESC – Verified 2024	88.92%	90.0%	Improve success rate to 91% by 2029
Retention rate	HESC – Verified 2024	82.76%	84.0%	Improve retention rate to 85% by 2029
06 Health				
Total student enrolments	HESC – Verified 2025	2,302	2,700	Increase total student enrolments to 2900 by 2029
Success rate	HESC – Verified 2024	92.81%	High success rate for students in FoE Health maintained	High success rate for students in FOE Health maintained
Retention rate	HESC – Verified 2024	81.46%	82%	Improve retention rate to 84% by 2029
090501 Social Work				
Total student enrolments^	UC supplied 2025	195	422	Increase total student enrolments to 473 students by 2029
Success rate^	UC supplied 2025	92.10%	High success rates for students studying in FoE Social Work maintained	High success rates for students studying in FOE Social Work maintained
Retention rate^	UC supplied 2025	73.30%	74.0%	Improve retention rates to 76.0% by 2029

^All indicators are for the domestic undergraduate student cohort, except for Field of Education 090501 Social Work, which includes postgraduate student cohort. Success rate includes both commencing and continuing students.

First Nations

First Nations leadership, access, participation and success

Vision

UC's Connected Strategic Plan and refreshed Indigenous Strategy 2027-2031 are grounded in Indigenous self-determination, recognising Indigenous peoples as leaders, partners and knowledge holders who shape the University's future.

We are committed to increasing Indigenous staff and student participation, particularly in leadership and governance, and embedding Indigenous knowledges, perspectives across teaching, research and engagement. Through genuine co-design with Indigenous staff, students,

Elders and communities, we aim to create culturally safe and empowering environments that strengthen belonging, reduce attrition, and improve progression, completion and graduate success.

Action

Expand First Nations staff and student involvement in leadership and governance

At the University of Canberra, Indigenous self-determination is advanced through Indigenous leadership, decision-making and governance.

Building on the appointment of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous), we will expand Indigenous staff and student representation across leadership structures, implement a refreshed co-designed Indigenous Strategy 2027-2031, and strengthen Indigenous participation in governance.

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous) will develop and implement the UC Indigenous Advisory Circle to ensure that Indigenous voices are given a platform to influence University decision making and governance.

The appointment of the Associate Dean Indigenous Teaching and Learning within the Office of Indigenous Leadership will ensure oversight and implementation of important initiatives and advance the Indigenisation of the curriculum.

We will invest in the expansion of the Ngunnawal Centre to provide culturally safe study and engagement facilities for Indigenous students. Attendance at the Ngunnawal Centre has increased four-fold in the last several years, demonstrating a significant increase in utilisation and need for support.

We will expand our community and school-based outreach and partnerships to drive more meaningful collaborations and pathways for Indigenous staff and students. This includes working across Catholic, Independent and public school systems.

Guided by the Indigenous-led Ngunnawal Centre, we will enhance culturally safe pathways, scholarships, student supports and research opportunities, including targeted initiatives for Higher Degree by Research (HDR) candidates.

We will continue to utilise scholarships, bursaries and other support schemes, including the Snow Scholarships, to attract Indigenous students to UC.

We will invest in dedicated recruitment resources to support the attraction of Indigenous academics and professionals to UC, fostering a culturally safe work and educational environment for both staff and students.

Future priorities include Indigenous Graduate Attribute implementation in curriculum, staff cultural intelligence capacity building to expand access, retention and success for Indigenous students to thrive, belong and succeed.

Measure

Indicator	Data source	Provider baseline	Milestone for 2027	Expected outcome and timeframe
First Nations total enrolments	HESC – Verified 2025	240	250	Increase First Nations enrolments to 270 by 2029
First Nations success rate	HESC – Verified 2024	78.45%	80%	Increase First Nations success to 82%
First Nations retention rate	HESC – Verified 2024	75.82%	76.0%	Maintain First Nations retention at mid to high 70%

All 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 ambition is to be the most accessible university in Australia and a global leader in driving equality of opportunity. We will continue to prioritise enabling a diverse range of students to overcome hurdles to entering and succeeding at university.

UC commits to creating a cohesive, inclusive, and empowering student experience that supports every learner's success and promotes equity in experience and outcomes for underrepresented groups.

We will provide a holistic, innovative approach that combines personalised care and practical assistance, alongside providing flexibility in study and maximising recognition of prior experience and learning.

Action

UC's equity cohort

UC's undergraduate cohort demonstrates a high concentration of equity characteristics not reflected in current funding definitions. A majority (74%) enter with ATARs below 80, or without an ATAR; 34% are first in family; and 18% are mature-age – factors strongly associated with increased support needs. UC will work with ATEC on any opportunities to reconsider the government definition of low SES students.

Expanding access

UC is:

- expanding delivery of enabling programs through CUCs, growing a pipeline of RRR students.
- building our outreach programs and aspiration initiatives (e.g. Small Schools Program).
- developing more online and hybrid degrees so students can study in their community e.g. social work, counselling, Juris Doctor.
- expanding flexible offerings through online delivery, enabling students to balance work and study.

Expanding support and success initiatives

Two in five students who leave UC prior to completion identify financial difficulties as the primary reason. We are responding to this by maximising our scholarships, bursaries, and cost of living support. For example, over 3,600 students accessed UC's free food pantry more than 30,000 times in 2025, and approximately $300,000 of direct financial support was provided to hundreds of students without access to Commonwealth Prac Payments.

The next most frequently reported reason for leaving university is wellbeing challenges. UC provides:

- free medical, psychological and wellbeing services to all students,
- free vaccinations,
- public health campaigns,
- accommodation support,
- mental health and bystander training,
- financial first aid; and
- social connection programs.

UC also runs dedicated support and skills development groups for neurodiverse students and students experiencing anxiety.

UC is implementing personalised, targeted, proactive communication and support to equity students through our Coaching for Success Program. In 2025, we delivered more than 1,000 one-on-one coaching sessions, resulting in approximately 90% of students being retained into second year of study.

Utilising HECG, we have engaged a neurodiversity specialist in learning support, and a financial advisor and a career coach for equity students to assist students to obtain employment while at university.

Our unverified data suggests the above initiatives are having an immediate impact on student success with institutional rates improving to 91.6% in 2026 and 79.8% for Indigenous students. We have also observed improved domestic undergraduate retention rates at 82% for 2025.

Measure

Indicator	Cohort	Data source	Provider baseline	Milestone for 2027	Expected outcome and timeframe
Total enrolments	Students with disability	HESC – Verified 2025	1,235	1,300	Innovative VET pathways increase accessibility for students with disability; attract 1390 students with disability by 2029
Total enrolments	Students from low SES backgrounds	HESC – Verified 2025	633	761	Increase low SES enrolments by 2029
Total enrolments	Regional	HESC – Verified 2025	1,631	1,848	1,923 regional students by 2029
Total enrolments	Remote	HESC – Verified 2025	12	<1% students	Maintain similar proportion of remote students (1%) in 2029
Success	Students with disability	HESC – Verified 2024	85.41%	88.00%	Improve success rates to 90% by 2029
Success	Students from low SES backgrounds	HESC – Verified 2024	86.20%	88.00%	Improve success rates to 90% by 2029
Success	Regional	HESC – Verified 2024	89.35%	90.00%	Maintain success rates at 90% until 2029
Success	Remote	HESC – Verified 2024	83.19%	84.00%	Improve success rates to 85% by 2029
Retention	Students with disability	HESC – Verified 2024	77.12%	78.00%	Improve retention rate to 80% by 2029
Retention	Students from low SES backgrounds	HESC – Verified 2024	75.12%	76.00%	Improve retention rate to 78% by 2029
Retention	Regional	HESC – Verified 2024	79.04%	80.00%	Improve retention rate to 82% by 2029
Retention	Remote	HESC – Verified 2024	77.78%	79.00%	Improve retention rate to 80% by 2029

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

Through expert design by highly skilled educators and learning designers, combined with innovative and transformative education technology, we will continue to provide high-quality learning experiences.

We will achieve this by embedding active student engagement, access to technology-enhanced learning spaces, providing opportunities for practice and feedback to develop skills, and delivering educational experiences that stretch student learning.

We will upskill and support our educators to incorporate future skills, in particular digital and AI skills, in curricula and to effectively manage the challenges and opportunities that AI poses for authentic and robust assessment.

Action

Enhancing the skills of our educators

UC provides our teaching staff with the training and resources to provide high-quality curriculum, learning activities and assessment.

We work with our educators to keep them abreast of the latest developments in education that impact on student learning. We ensure educators can bring their research and expertise into their teaching.

We will:

- Co-design and deliver with ANU and CIT a revised certificate of teaching, including microcredentials for higher education teachers.
- Keep our community updated on the rapidly changing impact of AI on education.
- Extend our compulsory AI academic training, as well as providing professional development and supporting AI communities of practice.
- Enhance our support for academics in using the latest educational technologies through learning design support alongside teaching staff to present high quality online and blended learning and assessment experiences for students.
- Provide academic staff with access to training that supports them to take a trauma informed, person centred approach to student interactions and that promotes safe and inclusive education.
- Increase academic capacity to teach Indigenous perspectives through culturally safe teaching and learning practices training.
- Assist educators to develop and/or convert post graduate courses to block mode delivery through partnerships with educational designers and implementing the UC principles for quality block model teaching.

Drive quality learning experiences

We provide our students with a high-quality education, with wrap around support to promote success in study and in their career, whilst promoting their wellbeing.

We will:

- Drive flexibility, quality and innovation across UC curricula.
- Support our diverse learners through embedding Universal Design for Learning principles across the curricula.
- Map our curriculum to the National Skills Taxonomy.
- Trial Cogniti AI agents for enriching content and learning experiences.
- Implement our new AI assessment framework across all units of study.
- Create and delivery multiple ways for student to connect with peers, including through signature learning events.
- Implement the co-designed UC Social Cohesion Action Plan to foster a safe, inclusive community on campus and online and a sense of belonging for staff and students.

UC will propose an alternative set of measures of teaching quality for our 2028 compact.

Measure

Indicator	Data source	Provider baseline	Milestone for 2027	Expected outcome and timeframe
Overall educational experience	QILT SES – Verified 2025	76.6%	78.0%	Improve Overall education experience to 79% by 2029
Skills development	QILT SES – Verified 2025	81.8%	82.5%	Improve Skills development to 84% by 2029
Teaching quality and engagement	QILT SES – Verified 2025	80.1%	80.5%	Improve Teaching quality and engagement to 82.0% by 2029
Student support and services	QILT SES – Verified 2025	72.5%	74.0%	Improve Student support and services to 77% by 2029

Joined-up tertiary system

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

Vision

Tertiary Harmonisation is a key pillars of the Connected plan. Breaking down barriers between vocational and higher education is instrumental to expanding access to study.

We emphasise that a joined-up tertiary system includes not only TAFEs, but RTOs and organisations providing worker training.

We will continue to work with our vocational and industry partners, and investigate new collaborations, to expand entry pathways, design new curricula and credit recognition to reduce the time and cost of a university degree.

We will work collaboratively to design seamless pathways between secondary education, VET and higher education to support student mobility and career progression.

Action

Expand UC as a qualification partner with TAFEs and RTOs

UC will be a hub for co-delivery of qualifications in partnership with TAFEs and RTOs. We will:

- Co-design curricula that will enable seamless movement of students between the institutions in both directions.
- Create Guaranteed pathways supported by personalised consultation for students. UC has 7 Diploma to 11 UC degree guaranteed pathways with 1 year credit currently with CIT. In 2027 we will expand this to include an additional pathway into the Bachelor of IT, further boosting our enrolments via tertiary harmonisation.
- Commence offering creative arts degrees with TAFE Queensland at the Coomera campus. We will utilise our long standing and successful partnership model with TAFE QLD at their South Bank and Mount Gravatt campuses.
- Explore new strategic partnerships including with TasTAFE, starting with a degree in building and construction.
- Continue collaborative planning, data sharing and pathways design with TAFE NSW and University of Newcastle, University of Wollongong, Western Sydney University and Charles Sturt University, to achieve a systematic and consistent approach to partnership and credit management with TAFE NSW for the benefit of students.
- Adopt the National Credit Recognition Framework (NCRF) when it is available.
- Prepare proposals for co-location of facilities, infrastructure and teaching spaces with CIT at Bruce and Woden.
- Review our systems and web presences to ensure pathways from vocational education to UC are seamless and easy for students to access.

Expand access and credit for students to UC degrees from other forms of training

Our RPL and RPE will be streamlined pathways for access, recognising life and learning before UC for entry to degrees and credit during study. We will:

- Expand and promote our Veterans and Occupation Standard Classification based for entry and credit.
- Partner with industry to recognise formal training programs as pathways to university – for example our partnerships with Capability Co and McDonalds.
- Co-design new qualifications and micro-credentials with organisations and industry to upskill existing staff and volunteers (e.g. our Professional Certificate in Foundations for Working and Volunteering in Community Organisations with the Salvation Army).

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	UC internal enrolment and performance data – 2025. UC policies on credit and admissions.	Cert IV = 12 credit points Diploma = 24 credit points	Determine credits for Advanced diplomas and Vocational degrees	Clear and consistent approach to recognition of credit from VET qualifications
Domestic students admitted to a bachelor course on the basis of VET	UC internal enrolment and performance data – 2025. Proportion of students admitted on the basis of VET, of all (commencing and continuing) domestic bachelor students.	1,409 (16%)	17%	18-20% consistently from 2027 onwards
Attrition rate of domestic bachelor students admitted on the basis of VET	UC internal enrolment and performance data – 2025. Commencing domestic bachelor students via VET pathway, who did not continue the following year in 2026 (excluding completions in 2025 and 2026).	25.6%	24%	Less than 23% by 2029
Success rate of domestic bachelor students admitted on the basis of VET	UC internal enrolment and performance data – 2025. Sum of student EFTSL for units passed / the sum of student EFTSL all units attempted.	85.6%	86%	Maintain 86%

Research

Sustaining national capability and supporting innovation through research and research training

Vision

UC strives for mission-based, ethical and impactful research through collaboration with industry, government and communities, delivering tangible benefits locally, nationally and internationally.

We aim to demonstrate our commitment to the Capital Region through working collaboratively with our communities and organisations to build knowledge and develop research-backed solutions. Our focus is on mission-led research that addresses social challenges and drives research impact both locally and globally.

UC's research strengths and concentrations of activity and impact are in the areas of climate, environment and public policy; health, wellbeing and human performance; society and civic capacity; and technology, learning and development.

Action

Grow our domestic higher degree by research enrolments and completions

- Implement a new scholarship strategy for HDR students that prioritises our areas of research strength, student experience and employability, Indigenous student recruitment and support and international collaborations.
- Increase the stipend rate to $40,000 per year for all continuing and commencing scholarship holders and to $50,000 a year for Indigenous HDR scholarship holders to assist with the rising cost of living. Both of these will be indexed annually.
- Increase our HDR student project support to up to $8,000 per candidate.
- Provide weekly stipends to HDR students completing industry placements during their candidature.
- Increase our efforts in identifying and supporting career pathways for HDR graduates including industry and government roles and entrepreneurship and commercialisation.
- Implement a new streamlined application process for HDR students.
- Employment of Faculty Associate Deans Indigenous at Level D and E to increase Indigenous HDR supervision capacity.
- Leverage AI to support ethical use by HDR students and researchers including in ethics applications publications, grants and examination of research students.
- Implement a common Research Masters to drive student experience and success.
- Expand Industry PhDs to drive enhanced collaboration, industry engagement and impact and graduate employability.

Unverified 2026 data shows our completion rate is 10% higher than 2024 levels.

Enhance research capability, capacity and impact

- Embed revised Performance Expectations in research and HDR supervision in performance and promotion processes.
- Develop a researcher development curriculum aligned with the researcher life cycle, particularly for mid-career researchers.
- Run internal seed funding grants for mission-led, multidisciplinary research focused on mid-career researchers.
- Expand our Impact Library.
- Develop a Field-of-Education strategy to drive research in areas of strength.
- Leverage international and industry education partnerships to expand research particularly in Europe and Southeast Asia.
- Introduce 2-3 international Cotutelle HDR supervision arrangements with strategic international partners.

Measure

Indicator	Data source	Provider baseline	Milestone for 2027	Expected outcome and timeframe
HDR domestic enrolments	HESC – Verified 2025	372	380	Maintain at 390 HDR domestic enrolments by 2029
HDR domestic completions	HESC – Verified 2024	35	60	65 domestic completions per year by 2029

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.