



2025-2026 Mission-Based Compact Between the Commonwealth of Australia and FLINDERS UNIVERSITY	
Purpose	
<p>This compact is an agreement between the Commonwealth and the University. Entering into a Compact is one of the quality and accountability requirements, which a higher education provider must meet under the <i>Higher Education Support Act 2003</i> (HESA) as a condition of receiving a grant. Specifically, subsection 19-110(1) of HESA requires that Table A and Table B providers must, in respect of each year for which a grant is paid to the provider under HESA, enter into a Mission -Based Compact with the Commonwealth for a period that includes that year.</p> <p>All strategies should provide qualitative and/or quantitative measures of assessment.</p>	
Mission and Strategic Planning	
<p>Flinders University: Strategic Drivers</p> <p>The Making a Difference: The 2025 Agenda stated that Flinders will ‘proactively engage with business, industry, government and non-government organisations to deliver outcomes that promote economic development and change lives for the better.’ Flinders is currently finalising Strategy 2035 with Students first; The university for industry and enterprise; and Research that matters as the key strategic drivers to ensure Impact with purpose.</p> <p>Advancing Equity</p> <p>The University is dedicated to increasing opportunities for equity students through targeted programs and strategic initiatives. Notably, the opening of the Flinders City Campus resulted in 72% of domestic enrolments coming from Adelaide’s northern, western, and eastern suburbs, with equity students comprising 47% of the 2025 intake. The launch of Flinders Online has expanded access to high-quality asynchronous learning, attracting 66% equity students in its first year. In addition, regional, rural, and remote offerings such as the Bachelor of Allied Health in three regional locations have drawn 65% equity students, further broadening participation and access.</p> <p>Meeting Workforce and Skills Needs</p> <p>Flinders is addressing Australia’s national skills shortage by contributing to the defence sector through pioneering initiatives, including the country’s first Nuclear Engineering Major and the development of degree apprenticeships in mechanical, electrical and electronic, and civil engineering. In health care, the University continues to expand regional and rural offerings and has increased student numbers aligned with the recently funded Flinders HealthCARE Centre. Collaboration with the SA Department of Education has led to the launch of an innovative Technical College Fast-Track Pathway for Year 12 students, targeting engineering, early childhood education, and health care.</p> <p>Students and Staff Safety</p> <p>Flinders University places paramount importance on the safety of its students and staff. Through the Respect.Now.Always initiative, the university is actively implementing the National Code with work that includes a Safety on Campus Action Plan and the launch of a new ‘Consent and</p>	

Respectful Relationships Online Training Module’. This training is included in the Universities Australia Primary Prevention of Sexual Harm in the Good Practice Guide.

Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech

Recognising that academic freedom and freedom of speech are essential to knowledge creation and dissemination, Flinders upholds these principles through its Academic and Intellectual Freedom and Freedom of Speech Policy and legally binding provisions within its Enterprise Agreement. These instruments implement and extend the Model Code, affording additional protections to professional staff beyond those found in the Model Code.

Countering Foreign Interference

The University acknowledges the significant risk of foreign interference and has instituted robust systems and processes in accordance with the UFIT Guidelines. This framework covers policy, education, due diligence, internal accountability, and reporting, supporting compliance and strengthening Flinders’ capability for secure teaching and research. These efforts contribute to the university’s ongoing progress towards increased DISP accreditation levels.

Cyber and Data Security

Flinders has developed a comprehensive Cyber Security Strategy and roadmap to uplift controls and mitigate cyber risk across the institution. The strategy includes leadership and awareness programs to drive improvement in communication, education, and training for all university stakeholders.

Strategies for Improving Equality of Opportunity in Higher Education

Flinders University adopts a whole-of-institution approach to advancing equity, embedding it as a core principle and measurable outcome in our mission. Central policies such as the Support for Students Policy have sharpened our focus.

Under the HECG Equity Plan:

- three Equity Scholarships were introduced in 2024 targeting students from Adelaide’s northern suburbs, interstate, and regional, rural and remote locations.
- The opening of Flinders’ New City Campus has improved access to higher education for equity students from the north and east of Adelaide, offering over 120 courses including enabling courses that create pathways for students traditionally underrepresented in tertiary study.
- major investments have expanded online offerings, with Flinders Online providing digital pathway diplomas.

Our “pipeline of aspiration” initiative engages Low SES and RRR students across 192 secondary schools and Technical Colleges in SA, NT, NSW, and VIC, with more than 560 engagement activities in 2025 YTD, reaching 38,877 future student interactions through roadshows, career development programs, mentoring, and enrichment activities.

Innovative pathways such as the VET non-ATAR admission process, assessment centres, Inspire Change (First in Family), extension studies and uniTEST have driven significant engagement with equity groups. Fee-free University Ready programs, including Foundations, Foundations for Schools, and MAPP, have grown by 16.2% in enrolments year-on-year, with pass rates rising from 63% to 78% due to enhanced student support. The Foundations (Indigenous) pilot increased participation from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, as well as those from low SES and rural/remote backgrounds.

Targeted support includes 24/7 on-demand assistance, with a 61% increase in student uptake in 2025, 63% of which occurs outside traditional hours, catering especially to those balancing study with other commitments. Integrated support aims to normalise help-seeking and close achievement gaps by embedding services into the student journey. The Post-enrolment Language and Learning Assessment (PELLA) reached 3,247 students in Semester 1, 2025, targeting first-year and postgraduate cohorts.

Flinders is committed to increasing First Nations student access, participation, and completion through coordinated strategies underpinned by its Reconciliation Action Plan and Indigenous Student Success Targets. Tailored support includes pastoral care, tutoring, academic and financial assistance, scholarships, accommodation, and community partnerships. The Indigenous-specific Foundation Studies Program, delivered at Yitpi Yartapuultiku, provides a culturally immersive pathway for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the Western suburbs of South Australia.

Future priorities include expanding confidence pipelines, increasing flexible fee-free University Ready programs and extending partnerships with Technical Colleges to rural/regional areas. Scaling the Foundations (Indigenous) program and expanding PELLA to cover literacy and numeracy for all first-year UG and PG topics are key. Academic literacy and learning support will be redesigned in partnership with students, and targeted support will be enhanced via a Flinders-developed AI tool (Study Buddy). Data and evaluation frameworks will be strengthened to better measure intervention uptake among equity cohorts.

Flinders University Council closely monitors equity measures and Academic Senate receives annual Student Success Reports and action plans, covering participation, retention, success, completion, graduate employability, and teaching quality, benchmarked against other universities and disaggregated by equity cohorts.

Strategies for Improving Teaching and Learning

Flinders University places a strong emphasis on learner engagement, recognising its central role in student success, retention, and wellbeing. The institution adopts strategic, evidence-based practices to ensure teaching and learning remains accessible and equitable. Results from the 2024 QILT Student Experience Survey indicate consistently positive feedback, with notable improvements in the learner experience. Flinders responds to these insights by supporting College and discipline-specific strategies through centralised policies and project support.

Flinders holistic student support framework is outlined in our [Support for Students Policy](#). It includes references to further intervention strategies such as our [Student Progress Policy](#) and [Procedures](#), which formalise the process for supporting students failing 50% or more of their course. Less formal interventions include student communication strategies to ensure students are aware of support services and other pro-active support outreach activities such as [Flinders Support Network](#). Flinders' Support for Students Policy is underpinned by a number of strategies and plans, such as the [Student Success and Retention Strategy](#), the [Indigenous Engagement and Education Strategy](#), and the [Whole-Of-University Wellbeing Strategic Plan](#).

Key initiatives include a pilot of targeted 'nudges', early interventions for at-risk students, delivered in partnership between academic and professional staff. This program is being extended and evaluated in 2025. The Continuous Quality Improvement Framework, introduced in 2024, underpins ongoing SFSP reviews and reporting, while student-staff partnerships are being explored to enhance support resources and awareness.

Central teams provide professional learning opportunities, peer review, and data-driven initiatives to staff. Course Quality Advisory Groups (CQAGs) have been strengthened by including student and industry representatives in annual program reviews. The Curriculum Simplification project has refreshed course offerings using market and educational data, with Academic Developers guiding design and delivery through the Curriculum Accelerator approach, prioritising teaching quality and industry engagement.

Flinders Online offers flexible, asynchronous study options, expanding access for students unable to attend traditional campus classes. Academics receive mentoring in best-practice online teaching, resulting in significant improvements to learning and teaching. Across the six Colleges, tailored projects address discipline-specific needs, such as mentor programs, outreach with student success advisors, increased student representation, orientation and transition pedagogy, industry-embedded topics and work-integrated learning, as well as embedded wellbeing and support content in partnership with Health, Counselling, and Disability Services.

Professional development is available through both central portfolios and College Teaching and Learning Academies, offering flexible opportunities for staff to enhance teaching and learning practices.

Looking ahead to 2026, Flinders will systematically roll out early intervention 'nudges' for all first-year and large postgraduate cohorts, especially those with many international students. The university will launch projects focused on assessment security and assurance of learning in the context of GenAI, including risk assessments and improved communication of requirements. Peer review of teaching and student feedback will be embedded into courses. Flinders Online will continue to target equity groups with diverse offerings, and support will be further embedded into topics. The effectiveness of College support strategies will be evaluated and standardised, with discipline-appropriate frameworks implemented university-wide, leveraging central portfolio expertise.

Strategies for Improving Research, Research Training, and Innovation

Flinders strategies for improving research and innovation include resourcing a dedicated Researcher Development and Training team targeting the professional growth and upskilling of our research community at all career stages spanning academic and professional staff. Over 120 programs each year are offered including induction programs for new researchers, an ECR mentoring program, separate research leadership programs for ECRs, MCRs and Senior researchers, a First Nations Researchers Collective, programs targeting enhanced support for external research funding and training on statistics, Open Science, Research Ethics and Integrity, Intellectual Property, Indigenous Intellectual Property, financial management. Internal grants and support are provided to foster transdisciplinary teams to tackle the largescale wicked problems and funding opportunities required to address these research issues. Examples of recent successes stemming from these strategies include the award of Flinders second ARC Industrial Transformation Training Centre, an NHMRC Centre for Research Excellence and Flinders researchers leading our first ARC Centre of Excellence proposal to progress to the final interview stage. Targeted funding and internal support is provided for Category 1 Fellowships, Medical Research Future Fund and other Category 1 grants leading to the award of the University's first ARC Australian Laureate Fellowship, the first ARC Industry Laureate Fellowship, in 2024 our best ever ARC Future Fellowship outcomes, in 2025 our best ever ARC DECRA Early Career Fellowship outcomes, in 2025 our best ever NHMRC Investigator Award outcomes and in having the 6th highest MRFF research income reported nationally in the HERDC for the last 2 years. The Research Partnerships team works with research partners in industry and government to foster collaboration and pursue large scale funding opportunities.

Such strategies have driven research income growth of close to 100% over the last 5 years to reach >\$130M, at the same time Flinders has set strategies targeting publishing in the high-quality research outlets. Of the nearly 3,000 articles published, 75% appear in Q1 journals (top 25% of journals by discipline). Flinders percentage of articles published in the top 10% of journals has also increased, reaching nearly 45% in 2024. We aspire to increase this and achieve 50% in 2-3 years. This is essential to advancing key priorities, aligning with the University's strategic objectives of enhancing research excellence, increasing global visibility and competitiveness, and fostering international collaborations.

Flinders delivers best-practice HDR [training](#) supported by high quality supervisors and resources for [online candidature management](#) and [professional development](#). Our commitment is articulated in the Charter for HDR Students and Supervisors Responsibilities and the [Statement of Minimum Resources](#). Supervisors engage with peer-reviewed [professional development](#). Students exit with Doctoral Graduate Attributes to support career aspirations. [ResearchNow](#) profiles enable students and supervisors to showcase research outputs, projects, outcomes, contributions and impacts.

The Enterprise Scholarships and National Industry PhD Program positioned Flinders as an industry-engaged research leader. Since 2022, over 60 Enterprise Scholarship opportunities have supported internships, while 17 National Industry PhD have been awarded since 2023, including the highest number of NIPP grants nationally in 2025, enhancing graduate career readiness and contribute to national innovation and workforce development.

Strategies for Engaging with Industry

Flinders University is dedicated to strengthening industry engagement to ensure our graduates are work-ready and equipped with authentic, industry-relevant learning experiences. Our priorities focus on building collaborative partnerships that foster employability, drive innovation, and respond to evolving workforce needs across diverse sectors.

A central priority is embedding genuine industry involvement in curriculum design and delivery, as well as providing meaningful work-integrated learning (WIL) opportunities. Examples of our industry partnerships and initiatives include:

- Degree Apprenticeships: In partnership with defence prime ASC, we launched a Mechanical Engineering apprenticeship in 2025, with Electrical and Electronic Engineering planned for 2026 (subject to SA Skills Commission approval).
- Sports Industry Collaborations: Diplomas in Sports Management have been co-designed and co-delivered with the Port Adelaide Football Club and the South Australian Cricket Association, offering students valuable industry insights and practical experience.
- Banking and Finance Partnerships: Our ongoing partnership with NAB provides placements, internships, and industry-led curriculum delivery.
- Sector Engagements: Productive collaborations with SA Water, the AgriTech sector, the Cyber Security sector, and Wilderness School extend authentic learning into growing industries.
- Innovation Labs: Collaboration with SA Water on innovation labs offers students hands-on experience with industry-driven challenges and solutions.
- Work-Integrated Learning (WIL): Over 20,000 WIL placements in industry are managed, ensuring students connect theory with real-world practice.
- External Events: In the past year, Flinders hosted 16 external industry events, facilitating 487 unique industry connections for students and staff.
- Entrepreneurial Programs: 71 high school students have participated in Flinders New Ventures Institute programs, with industry mentors—including competitors—supporting students to launch entrepreneurial ideas.
- Local Government Partnerships: Collaborations with Marion Council support the delivery of youth innovation and entrepreneurial programs, while partnerships with Marion and Mitcham Councils offer tailored graduate internship programs.

These initiatives demonstrate our commitment to providing students with direct industry engagement, practical experience, and pathways to employment. Through these strategic partnerships, Flinders ensures that graduates are prepared to meet contemporary workforce demands and contribute to innovation in their chosen fields.

For more information, please visit:

- [New Ventures Institute](#)
- [Degree Apprenticeships](#)

SIGNED for and on behalf of
THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

In the presence of:

by

Jessica Mohr

Full name (please print)

First Assistant Secretary

Position
of the Department of Education

Rachel Searl

Witness (please print)

Executive Officer

Position or profession of witness (please print)

Signature

01/12/2025

Date

Signature

SIGNED for and on behalf of
FLINDERS UNIVERSITY

In the presence of:

by

Professor Romy Lawson

Full name (please print)

Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor

Position

Anthony Hails

Witness (please print)

Executive Officer

Position or profession of witness (please print)

Signature

12 November 2025

Signature