2025-2026 Mission-Based Compact Between the Commonwealth of Australia and Queensland University of Technology

Purpose

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 *Higher Education Support Act* 2003 (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.

All strategies should provide qualitative and/or quantitative measures of assessment.

Mission and Strategic Planning

Overall mission, strategic planning and key outcomes
QUT's strategic plan, Connections, covers the period 2023 – 2027. A key feature is the explicit inclusion of student experience as one of the three pillars of QUT focus, alongside transformative education and research relevant to our communities, reflecting our intensified attention to meeting the needs of our increasingly diverse student body. Progress on KPIs is reported to QUT Council quarterly. As The University for the Real World, real world connections underpin all activities.
https://cms.qut.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/1190247/qut-connections.pdf

Student and staff safety QUT is committed to preventing all forms of harassment, violence and harm, providing a safe and respectful environment for work and study. QUT recognises and condemns the prevalence of sexual harm and gender-based violence in universities and the broader community, and is a signatory to the *2024 Universities Australia (UA) Charter Against Sexual Harm*, taking proactive steps to prevent and respond to all forms of sexual harm.

More specifically, the *QUT Sexual Harm Prevention and Response Action Plan* released in early 2025 outlines a whole-of-university approach focused on prevention, response, recovery, and governance, through targeted actions, training, and policy improvements. QUT is investing in further improvements to initiatives such as after-hours transport, security systems, monitoring of student accommodation providers and training for staff and students.
https://www.qut.edu.au/about/our-university/safety-on-campus

In addition, QUT maintains a strong and ongoing commitment to diversity and inclusion, providing safe environments for people of all cultural backgrounds. QUT agreed to adopt the Universities Australia working definition of antisemitism and has committed to the implementation of all recommendations from the Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism and QUT's independent Middleton Review.

Foreign Interference
The university convenes a Foreign Interference and Influence Group to promote awareness of the concerns and offences, and to ensure adequate processes are in place to identify and raise foreign

interference risks. Controls have been put in place to assist areas responsible for academics and research programs, and our conflict of interest policy specifically includes a category of interest, 'relationship with a foreign entity'.

Cyber and data security
QUT's information security strategy outlines the direction of information security for QUT and provides a roadmap of key initiatives that will deliver practical solutions for an increasingly complex environment. Significant investments in digital transformation continue to be made and monitored by QUT Council.

Freedom of speech and academic freedom
QUT's policy, ***[Protection of academic freedom and freedom of speech](#)***, was adopted by Council at its meeting of 25 February 2021 and academic freedom was adopted as a QUT value in the Connections strategy, highlighting the centrality of this principle to everything we do. Any issues raised under the policy are monitored each year and reported to QUT Council.

Strategies for Improving Equality of Opportunity in Higher Education

QUT's Connections Strategy reinforces our history of connecting aspiration to opportunity, with support for students from under-represented backgrounds, pathways for Indigenous Australians, opportunities for entrepreneurial and professional experiences, and the creation of supportive research environments. By 2027, our goal is to have 30% of our student body drawn from targeted equity groups and 4% being Indigenous Australians. QUT is tracking well towards our KPI of 30% of students from under-represented groups by 2027 with an average of 29.4% in the last two years. Note Indigenous Australians are separately reported in our KPIs, which has seen improvements since 2020, but remains below target.

TAFE Queensland Articulation Pathways
QUT and TAFE Queensland have established an articulation agreement offering more than 57 pathways into eligible QUT bachelor degrees, removing barriers to access and providing increased opportunities to progress to higher education including bachelor degrees or onto further postgraduate studies. The articulation agreement enables students to receive advanced standing for their TAFE courses, allowing them to complete their studies sooner in addition to offers of guaranteed entry for dual awards.

FEE-FREE Uni Ready Places
In 2025, QUT's FFUR program, the University Preparation Program welcomed a diverse student body across its two intakes. Nearly a third of all enrolled students came from under-represented groups, specifically Indigenous Australian, Rural and Remote, and Low-Socioeconomic backgrounds. The program also successfully attracted students from outside Brisbane, with more than a third of the cohort traveling from regional areas to attend the face-to-face course. First semester 2025 results are positive with more than 85% of students passing all required subjects. Semester 2, 2025 saw additional growth in the program with 36 students commencing and 31 continuing after census.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student support
- QUT's [Oodgeroo Unit](#) supports Indigenous Australians by providing admission pathways, orientation programs, academic support, pastoral care, and facilities that connect students to wider student success and support services and are culturally supportive and responsive to their needs.
    - Measured via improvements in Indigenous Australian students' participation, retention, success, and completion rates.
- QUT provides 44 beds in student accommodation and various 12-month accommodation scholarships available to eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students relocating to

QUT. These scholarships are valued at up to $32,100 for the first year and $15,500 for the second year. Additionally, the scholarship ensures participants have access to pastoral care, social, cultural, and life skills opportunities aimed at strengthening their academic, cultural, and personal develop while building connections within the QUT community.

Equity and regional and remote student support
- QUT runs a large Equity Scholarships Scheme with approximately 2,500 scholarships awarded annually to students with financial hardship and complex life circumstances.
- Disadvantage based on relocating from a regional/remote location is taken into consideration. Other forms of financial support include emergency bursaries, work integrated learning bursaries and a loans scheme.
  - These retention strategies are measured via recipient numbers, retention levels, and through an annual student survey.
- *QUT's Priority Schools Adjustment Scheme (PSAS)* enhances access and opportunity to students from more than 150 schools in Queensland and 1,000 schools nationally by increasing the number of QUT offers to quality applicants from disadvantaged secondary schools. Demand has increased since a modified scheme was announced in 2023.

Widening Participation
- QUT's Widening participation comprises a comprehensive program of activities which aims to build awareness of available tertiary education and career opportunities; build aspiration for tertiary study; increase motivation, engagement and achievement; and build awareness of available financial assistance.
- It engages with more than 20,000 students each year and is measured via student and staff surveys; case studies; and QTAC admissions data with the aim of increasing the number of school students who attend QUT (physically or remotely) and study our high-quality course offerings from these target demographics and geographical locations.
- Strategies to increase the retention and success of equity group students include resources and reasonable adjustments for students with a disability, academic help and workshops support, writing and speaking skills, maths, science and IT support, and career advice, support and training.

Student Success and Support Plan
QUT is compliant with the Support for Students Policy requirements legislated in 2023, including the signposting of support policies and procedures for ease of student access.
QUT's programs and schemes to assist under-represented students include but are not limited to:
- *Centralised Assessment and Selection Program (CASP)* for First Nations people
- Significant annual scholarships, financial support and accommodation support services for our students, to help offset the high cost of living in Brisbane.
- *Free learning support services available 24/7 to help students develop their academic skills and confidence regarding academic writing, researching and referencing, spoken communication and foundational maths, science and IT skills. More than 93% of students report they are extremely (78%) or somewhat (15%) satisfied with the service.*
- *Peer-led outreach campaigns targeting at-risk students to connect them with timely, strengths-based student success and study support (participating students 1.9 times more likely to be retained by QUT)*
- *Specialist disability advisors*
- zero wait time for counselling appointments, ensuring immediate support when it is most needed. In addition, a *24/7 mental health support line is available*
- Approximately 1 in 3 equity students engaged with Student Success services and evidence shows students who engaged with co-curricular support are almost twice as likely to continue studies at QUT.

Strategies for Improving Teaching and Learning

QUT monitors learning and teaching performance through internal student surveys every teaching period and annual course performance reports, which are reviewed by the relevant academic boards each cycle as well as through formal course reaccreditation processes.

Significant professional development is provided to academics and those supporting learning and teaching to ensure best practice approaches are fully available and supported through the university's physical and digital transformation agendas

External surveys are also used to monitor overall course performance against national trends. QUT's QILT results for *Overall Educational Experience - % Positive* responses have improved each year since 2022 and are above the national average.

Learner Success and Achievement
QUT's Connections strategy includes specific performance indicators for learner success and achievement through the measurement of: Commencing QUT retention, Overall student experience, sense of belonging and overall graduate outcomes. Overall university performance is monitored as well as discipline areas and specific student cohort groups where applicable.

Student success services, including engagement patterns and impact analysis, are reported on annually to Faculty Executive Leadership teams and the University Learning and Teaching Committee.

Overall retention is monitored as well as specific priority-group outcomes to determine the effectiveness of different strategies and approaches. Recent campaigns have targeted students on leave of absence, supporting them to return successfully to study and a campaign targeting international students to engage them with study support and professional practice peer programs to prepare them for placements.

Three key programs underpinning our student success approach include our Get on Track, Stay on Track and Get Back on Track programs which are designed to improve the success of commencing students, those who are showing signs of being at risk or disengaged and those who are experiencing progression challenges or probation due to unsatisfactory academic performance. These three programs have seen significant improvements in commencing students returning the year after they commenced, with our six largest courses all seeing increases of between 5-7% more students returning the following year than any of the previous 3 years. Similar improvements were also recorded in students moving from year 2 to year 3 of their degrees.

Further information: [Enabling student success](#); [Peer mentoring and support](#); [Maths, science and IT support](#); [language and learning skills](#); [Student orientation and transition](#); [student life and development](#); [Support for Students Policy](#); [Questo](#); [Keystones of Success](#); [Specialist disability advisors](#)

The embedding of real-world learning experiences throughout QUT programs continues to be a focus to maintain positive graduate outcomes. We continue to perform strongly with high employment rates as well as positive support from respondents on how well their degree prepared them for employment. Graduate outcomes will continue to be monitored through our KPIs.

With a broad range of coaching, mentoring and networking opportunities, we provide ways for students to build meaningful networks. Our Career Mentoring program also connects students with alumni over a six-month program where students are encouraged to create strong relationships during and after their studies, deepening understanding of industry, expanding

industry networks and enhancing employability skills, with over 3000 student interactions on our dedicated platform.

Further information: [Work integrated learning](); [WIL & international internships](); [Career mentoring]()

Teaching Quality

The QUT Academy of Learning and Teaching provides a suite of scholarly, modularised professional development for staff in foundations of learning and teaching, real-time learning, and leadership in learning and teaching. In 2024-2025, 1763 staff members participated in modules including in priority areas such as Artificial Intelligence and Assessment Design, Foundations of Academic Integrity, and Indigenous Knowledges and Perspectives in Learning and Teaching.

In 2024, QUT launched a new 12 month 'Pathway to Academic Excellence Program' for early career and teaching intensive academics staff, aligned with the globally recognised Advance HE Professional Standards Framework. A report on staff engagement with professional development in learning and teaching is provided to Faculties annually and reported at the University Learning and Teaching Committee.

QUT invests in sessional staff development and provides funding to enable sessional academics to be paid to complete up to two foundational modules in learning and teaching each year. In 2024-25, more than 300 sessional staff were supported to undertake paid professional development.

In 2025, QUT's celebration of learning and teaching focused on two timely and thought-provoking themes: Creating Supportive Learning Environments and Integrating AI in Learning and Teaching with more than 800 staff participating

Student Belonging and Advocacy

A new university KPI was added on Student Sense of Belonging and Student Advocacy as we see these are two important ways to monitor engagement and support for program delivery. These areas are monitored through national survey data and results are analysed at institutional, faculty and course levels to inform curriculum design and curricula and co-curricular support services.

QUT has introduced a new whole-of-university curricula initiative in all undergraduate degrees: *[QUT You]()* units offer the chance to work with students from diverse disciplines, mimicking real-world professional environments.

Strategies for Improving Research, Research Training, and Innovation

University-level objectives, strategies and measures for *[research, innovation and research training]()* are in place under the new Connections strategy. Outcomes are measured at both the Faculty/Portfolio and university level. Three key areas of current focus:

Research uplift – increase capacity for transformative research relevant to our communities – academic, end-user, government and industry

1. Grow research income by diversifying sources of funding
2. Build on the importance of industry, government and community to QUT's real world positioning and increase the number of mutually beneficial opportunities
3. Identify leading global research partners and actively pursue collaborative opportunities
4. Support high-quality research across the university and continue to support the evolution of research centres and other research structures as focus points for investment and transformative research
5. Build capacity and capabilities of Indigenous Australian researchers as outlined in the Indigenous Australian Employment and Research Strategies

Research excellence, impact and relevance - Conduct high-quality fundamental and applied research to advance knowledge and address local, national and global problems and opportunities using the below strategies:

1. Leverage existing relationships and establish new partnerships – academic, end-user, government and industry – that enhance QUT's real-world relevance and impact
2. Build and support Indigenous-led research and research respectfully co-designed with Indigenous Australians
3. Facilitate knowledge transfer and commercialisation of QUT intellectual property within a supportive research commercialisation culture
4. Increase Indigenous community engagement and partnerships, develop best-practice protocols for Indigenous research, conduct ethical and responsible research, and embed Indigenous Australian research methods in the QUT teaching curriculum and research training

Research training and development - Provide outstanding research training and development that supports employability and creation of the next generation of excellent researchers with the below strategies:
1. Establish QUT as a destination of choice for research students through exposure to cutting-edge research and sector-leading support
2. Deliver signature research training, professional development, infrastructure and support in a flexible, inclusive and academically rigorous learning environment

Measures – external research income, research centre annual performance report, research infrastructure utilisations/external investment, research commercialisation event/workshop attendance and offerings and outcomes, research publication quality, impact evidence

Strategies for Engaging with Industry

QUT utilises various mechanisms to both deepen existing *engagement with industry* as well as identify and foster new collaborations such as the project with partner organisations Lava Blue and James Cook University to develop and commercialise specialty, high-purity alumina materials for advanced applications, supporting Australia's strategic goal of securing critical mineral supply chains and advancing renewable energy technologies. These include:

- The Office of Industry Engagement facilitates and enhances interactions between researchers and external partners to support the development of research projects, commercialisation of IP, and establishing start-ups and spin off companies.
- QUT appoints jointly funded Industry Chairs to actively promote engagement with industry.
- QUT partners with industry and the community to provide students with opportunities to learn in and through work, internships, professional placements and industry projects, known as Work Integrated Learning (WIL). More than 90% of QUT's students are involved in WIL opportunities, and can include internships, work placements and projects across a variety of disciplines such as engineering, law and applied health.
- QUT is a significant participant in the Cooperative Research Centres (CRC) Grants program which provides funding for industry-led research collaborations. QUT is active in 11 CRCs.
- QUT prioritises industry partnerships through successful participation in 11 ARC Industrial Transformation Research Hubs, 10 ARC Industrial Transformation Training Centres and seven NHMRC Centres of Research Excellence.
- QUT supports HDR Students engaging with industry partners, including by industry co-supervision, industry-embedded internships and industry scholarships, with projects co-designed by QUT and the partner. Around 45% of QUT HDR students have some form of industry engagement as part of their studies at QUT.
- QUT has established a Games Engagement supporting office to coordinate industry engagement, enabling partnerships that deliver research, innovation, and workforce outcomes aligned with the 2032 Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games.
- Faculties establish Industry Advisory Boards that provide advice in relation to courses for students and identify opportunities for engagement with industry.

SIGNED for and on behalf of

THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

by

Jessica Mohr

Full name (please print)

First Assistant Secretary

Position

of the Department of Education

Signature

01/12/2025

Date

In the presence of:

Rachel Searl

Witness (please print)

Executive Officer

Position or profession of witness (please print)

Signature

SIGNED for and on behalf of

QUEENSLAND UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

by

Margaret Sheil

Full name (please print)

Vice-Chancellor and President

Position

Signature

In the presence of:

Kym Woods

Witness (please print)

Executive Assistant to Vice-Chancellor and President

Position or profession of witness (please print)

Signature