



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

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

RMIT's mission is to empower people and communities to adapt and thrive across generations with education, research and civic engagement that are applied, inclusive and impactful.

RMIT generates impact through long-term partnerships in key industries and locations across the Asia Pacific, bringing together interdisciplinary teams to tackle complex challenges and empower our students to help create solutions with positive impact in our communities.

RMIT's approach is grounded in a diverse, open and collaborative community, with a strong commitment to Responsible Practice in Indigenous engagement embedded in every part of our institutional life.

RMIT is a leading dual-sector institution offering lifelong learning through programs and pathways accessible to the whole community. We are committed to growing a coherent tertiary education ecosystem, offering engaging, rigorous learning experiences which support students to succeed through life and work.

In the second horizon of RMIT's strategy to 2031, *Knowledge with Action*, we are focusing on building the applied initiatives and infrastructure to support the dynamic needs of our students, educators, researchers and communities and workforces, across the four goals of our strategy, which will:

- Build a coherent, connected lifelong learning system
- Extend RMIT's dynamic research and innovation system
- Grow civic partnership at scale
- Be a leading University of impact across the Asia Pacific

Ensuring student and staff safety

Our vision is that RMIT is a safe place for all staff and students, where everyone is included, respected and supported. RMIT takes an intersectional lens to student and staff safety initiatives, in line with our **Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access (IDEA) Framework**.

RMIT's Addressing Gender-Based Violence Strategic Action Plan 2023-2027 and RMIT's Gender based Violence Prevention and Response Policy outline our approach to reduce and prevent gender-based violence and to support those affected by it.

Our Social Cohesion Working Group drives actions to address safety on campus (including balancing freedoms of speech against freedoms from racism and oppression).

In 2025/6 RMIT will:

- Finalise actions for compliance with all seven GBV National Code standards
- Launch staff and student training on GBV and racism
- Continue evaluation of GBV prevention initiatives and training
- Finalise and launch RMIT's antiracism framework and action roadmap
- Streamline and optimise processes for raising psychosocial risks, resolving hazards, and managing acute risks
- Drive proactive initiatives and programs to build wellbeing and capacity.

Upholding freedom of speech and academic freedom

Freedom of intellectual inquiry, freedom of speech and institutional autonomy are founding values of universities around the world. RMIT's Policy Governance Framework states that policy documents will not impinge or impair freedoms related to academic freedom, freedom of expression and freedom of speech that are protected by the University in the Intellectual Freedom Policy.

Cyber and data security

RMIT is committed to its multi-year Cyber Program, which aims to enhance cyber capabilities and controls, foster a robust cyber culture, and implement multiple layers of protection. In 2025/6, we will:

- Maintain focused staff awareness and training initiatives
- Enhanced data protection capabilities and technological advancements
- Enhance our cyber maturity by attaining an overall Tier 3 NIST maturity level.

Strategies for Improving Equality of Opportunity in Higher Education

Inclusive Access to Education

RMIT has a long and proud history of commitments and action to ensure that opportunities to develop and succeed are open to everyone. Our **Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access (IDEA) Framework** creates a blueprint for our continued journey towards a more inclusive and accessible RMIT. The primary objective is that everyone feels included and enabled to thrive in every RMIT location, in all circumstances.

The IDEA framework identifies five domains that define the aspirations and priority action areas to progress our goal of being "Inclusive by design" for everyone, everywhere, all the time:

- **Access, participation and success:** We aim to build a more diverse student and staff profile with equity in retention, success and outcomes.
- **Culture, capability and leadership:** We will create an environment where all individuals are supported, are respected, and feel a sense of belonging.
- **Education and research:** We will demonstrate best practice in inclusion, diversity, equity and access through our education and research.

- **Infrastructure, service and operations:** We will provide inclusive facilities and services, and plan, resource and communicate our IDEA aspirations and achievements.
- **Community and partnerships:** We aim to engage reciprocally and in partnership with the communities we serve, promoting equity, diversity, inclusion and wellbeing.

In line with our strategic goals and priorities, and building on previous strategies including our Regional and Remote Students Action Plan, in 2026 RMIT will launch its latest Inclusive Access Plan to centre the needs of prospective students from under-represented backgrounds, to plan and provide for an inclusive student experience at RMIT. The priority actions for this plan include:

- Developing institution-wide targets for RMIT
- Shifting to a coordinated outreach model including a Secondary School Strategy for all teams who are undertaking outreach to prospective students in schools and communities
- Expanding RMIT's scholarships offer, and
- Creating more inclusive lifelong learning products and harmonised learning pathways and admissions. In 2025/6 RMIT will also:
 - Deliver a Gender Equity Action plan
 - Deliver improved processes and support for employees with disability accessing workplace adjustments to support wellbeing and inclusion, and
 - Deliver targeted wellbeing and support programs to support the mental wellbeing and safety of vulnerable staff and students (including staff working with high-risk student cohorts or who are exposed to traumatic events).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student access and success

RMIT is committed to a just and meaningful relationship with Indigenous communities. This means adopting 'Responsible Practice' by considering and enacting positive change for Indigenous Peoples as part of our everyday work.

Respect for Indigenous cultures in Australia - RMIT University

RMIT is strategically committed to growing the Indigenous Higher Education learner cohort with a targeted 10% increase on 2025 numbers.

The RMIT Indigenous student experience is shaped by:

1. Embedding culturally responsive approaches through recruitment, outreach, and admissions processes
2. Ensuring Indigenous learners can access, thrive, and succeed through Vocational Education, Higher Education, and Postgraduate pathways
3. Enhancing the retention of Indigenous learners, and
4. Strengthening collaborative relationships with Indigenous community and organisations.

Strategies for Improving Teaching and Learning

Building on the foundations laid in the first years of our *Knowledge with Action* strategy, RMIT offers high-quality multi-sector education programs that support learners to achieve their lifelong educational, employment, and life ambitions. Our educators remain deeply committed to excellent teaching, with their practice and innovation recognised, rewarded and celebrated, alongside active support for their career aspirations.

Our learners seek flexible, personalised pathways, while employers demand adaptable, realworld capabilities. As a large, diverse, dual-sector university, RMIT is well-placed to respond to global and local challenges through educational innovation, civic engagement and system-wide

renewal. We are actively shaping our response in real time, within clear strategic frameworks, scaling what works and embedding long-term impact.

RMIT will continue to position itself as a leading test bed and adviser for Australian Universities Accord reforms, prototyping innovative models and forward-looking skills-based approaches to education, inclusive practices and tertiary harmonisation. By proactively engaging with rapidly emerging technology and an interdisciplinary approach across our program levels, we are delivering the mindsets, skills and experiences our students will need for the changing world of work. This investment in the future – scaling learner capabilities in ethical global citizenship, digital fluency and the responsible use of AI, critical engagement, and adaptiveness and delivering skills for Regenerative Futures and Responsible Practice – will drive improved success, outcomes and civic engagement for our learners. A Graduate Certificate in Tertiary Teaching will provide formal qualifications for our educators.

The next phase of our learning and teaching strategy developed for our Education Plan 2026-28 responds to major shifts in education and the workforce, including AI-driven disruption, changing learner needs and expectations, social, political and environmental crises and national reform:

1. **Delivering teaching excellence:** Scaling our active, authentic applied pedagogy where all learning is applied and all assessments are authentic. Curriculum utilises AI and technologies and aligns to industry practices to ensure relevance, currency and quality.
2. **A purposeful learning suite supporting student aspirations and outcomes:** Progressing our curriculum architecture that is flexible and modularised, supporting products and pathways for inclusive lifelong learning. Learning aligns to RMIT's values and industry and learner demand, meeting the needs of our communities, partners and employers.
3. **An inclusive, contemporary student experience:** Embedding inclusive learning, systems and support to ensure RMIT is a university where access to educational opportunities are aligned to learner aspirations and that access and success are possible regardless of educational background, history or current employment.
4. **Educator of the future:** Supporting educator capability, careers and success with a focus on building scholarship of learning and teaching. We will scale educator focused roles across all disciplines and reduce administrative burden to build wellbeing and foster transformative learning experiences.
5. **AI ready graduates:** engaging RMIT's community in responsible educational AI, building capability for educators and learners and optimising AI as a tool for learning and support.
6. **Support lifelong learning through fit for future systems, processes and infrastructure:** Investing in key systems and processes that enable a seamless lifelong learning ecosystem and ensure a smooth learner experience.

Strategies for Improving Research, Research Training, and Innovation

RMIT's *Knowledge with Action* Direction 2 articulates a goal to extend RMIT's dynamic research and innovation ecosystem. We are evolving an increasingly integrated, connected and accessible research and innovation ecosystem to enable positive impact with our partners and community.

Our focus is centred around five key actions:

- Deepening our research impact culture and capabilities
- Fostering partnerships for sustained impact at scale
- Scaling up applied, transdisciplinary research
- Growing impact-focused research training, and
- Accelerating research translation and commercialisation.

We continue to provide the enabling environment to improve both research excellence and impact performance, evident through top quartile publications, international collaboration, and industry-partnered research measures, as well as improving research translation and

commercialisation outcomes. RMIT's eight Enabling Impact Platforms (EIPs) are one part of the long-term plan driving our success in developing high-impact potential initiatives that strategically connect researchers from multiple disciplines with industry partners to solve critical global problems. In order to continue building on this success, in 2026 RMIT will:

- Establish an RMIT Research Infrastructure Strategy to enhance capabilities and maximise successful research and translation, including through shared infrastructure with strategic partnerships
- Establish RMIT-wide approach to research entrepreneurship and venture formation, including support for translation, mentoring, capability development and strategic partnerships
- Build transdisciplinary capacity to progress high-potential IP, secure major funding, and deliver large-scale impact initiatives aligned with precinct and industry opportunities
- Develop and implement academic, HDR and professional staff career development and progression that recognises impact-focused research and engagement and service excellence
- Position RMIT as a leader in inclusive, respectful, and equitable research through Athena Swan, Indigenous Research Network, HR Excellence in Research, Respectful Research Training and Working Together with Men, and
- Develop and deliver on an AI enabled RMIT R&I Roadmap for enhancing support to the research community and uplifting AI competencies for responsible use.

Strategies to mitigate foreign interference

RMIT applies a risk-based approach to managing foreign interference threats by prioritising efforts on areas of highest exposure and acting in accordance with the government Guidelines to Counter Foreign Interference in the Australian University Sector. Mechanisms, initiatives, policies and frameworks supporting and contributing to RMIT's management of foreign interference risk include:

- Education and knowledge sharing by way of dedicated advisory, resource development, and targeted training and awareness on risk, obligations, and best practice
- Foreign Interference Due Diligence Assessments on international research collaborations and partnerships to ensure compliance with national standards, codes and laws
- Declarations of Foreign Interest process based on Government Guidelines to support identification and mitigation of potential risk
- Robust policies e.g. the Research Policy and Higher Degrees by Research Policy, and
- The development of a Global Resilience Strategy to support foreign interference management across the Group which will improve leadership, culture, capabilities, and alignment between risk policies, systems, resources and values.

Strategies for Engaging with Industry

RMIT maintains a diverse range of industry partnerships and engagement, reflecting our founding mission and many decades of extensive, direct collaboration with industry across sectors and jurisdictions.

Through our *Knowledge with Action* strategy, we are building RMIT's reputation as a "go-to" partner for government and industry to address workforce innovation and skills needs in sectors facing high demand or disruption. We engage a diverse and large alumni community, activating key RMIT locations as precinct platforms for long term partnerships to create innovative and regenerative solutions for the urban communities and industry partners that we serve.

Thriving precincts delivering local and regional impact

RMIT will develop industry partnerships and activity through strategic initiatives and innovation hubs aligned with RMIT's four ambition areas (Social Innovation, Smart Sustainable Cities, Emerging Technologies, and Regional (Asia-Pacific) Collaboration), grounded in priority industry clusters. In Australia during 2025/6 and throughout Horizon 2 of our strategy, RMIT will:

- Develop the Regenerative Futures Institute (RFI) to integrate research, education, partnership and living labs for more impactful climate responses
- Advance renewal and activation of the City North Social Innovation Precinct, connected to RFI, with the City of Melbourne and Victorian Government
- Grow community-focused health activities (including education delivery, and co-location with industry and community services) in Bundoora West and the northern metro corridor of Melbourne, and
- Mature RMIT's approach to strategic industry partner engagement capabilities.

Partnerships to build priority workforce skills

RMIT will continue to work with government and industry on collaborative approaches to scalable, industry-engaged delivery of workforce skills and lifelong learning in Australia and Southeast Asia. In 2025/6 this will include:

- Launch and scale of Victoria's first degree apprenticeship in engineering
- Exploring opportunities for co-designed, industry-partnered 'earn-and-learn' models
- Developing additional shortform learning co-designed with industry in areas including digital health, regenerative futures, and broader technology skills, and
- Exploring opportunities to upskill Australia's priority workforces in advanced technologies and critical industries.

Strengthening Asia Pacific ties

RMIT is extending partnerships and presence across the Asia Pacific region through offshore and transnational education and deepening industry and community partnerships, to deliver impact across the region.

RMIT Vietnam will strengthen our role as Vietnam's leading international university and a regional anchor through new Hanoi and Saigon campuses, building on the launch of the Hanoi node of the Australia-Vietnam Policy Institute in September 2025. In 2025/6 RMIT will also build out our presence, local connections and partnerships:

- In Singapore: following renewal of RMIT's agreement with Singapore Institute of Management and launch of our Singapore Country Commitment in 2024
- In Indonesia: as we prepare to launch our Southeast Asia Industry and Innovation Hub
- In India: we will nurture and grow our BITS-Pilani partnership and plan for our South Asia Industry and Innovation Hub
- In China: we will strengthen and expand our partnership with Shanghai University of International Business and Economics, and
- In Melbourne: we will position the Asia Hub as a front door for Asia-Pacific engagement and intelligence.

SIGNED for and on behalf of In the presence of: THE
COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

by

Jessica Mohr

Rachel Searl

Full name (please print)

Witness (please print)

First Assistant Secretary

Executive Officer

Position

Position or profession of witness (please print)

of the Department of Education

Signature

Signature

01/12/2025

Date

SIGNED for and on behalf of

In the presence of:

RMIT University

by

ALEXANDER (ALEC) JOHN CAMERON

BROOKE GRIFFIN

Full name (please print)

Witness (please print)

VICE-CHANCELLOR AND PRESIDENT

CHIEF OF STAFF

Position

Position or profession of witness (please print)

Signature

Signature

Date: 9 October 2025

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