



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

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.

1. University Mission and Strategy

The University's mission is "to excel in education, engagement, and research in spiritual practices and Christian beliefs and their contemporary application". Key outcomes for the University in the next three to five years include:

1. Grow enrolments to 750 EFT by 2030
2. Increase the number of industry partnerships, including adding new Colleges
3. Develop, resource and implement a comprehensive marketing plan
4. Ensure operating budget surpluses from 2028 onwards

2. Workforce and skills

- Supplying the needs of the University's church and faith-based partners for religious leaders
- Implementing and improving accredited programs for emerging national needs in ministry and pastoral and spiritual care that promote community good will and well-being

Measures:

1. Complete restructure of the undergraduate Theology and Ministry awards
2. Introduce undergraduate awards in Pastoral and Spiritual Care

3. Student and staff safety

- Implement changes and updates to policies and procedures related to the National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence

Measures:

1. Update policy and procedure
2. Launch a training program for staff and students aligned to the Code

4. Countering foreign interference

- Proportional approach relative to the University's size and scope, monitored through Enterprise Risk Management Framework
- Ensuring all international agreements are signed off at Vice-Chancellor level

Measures:

1. Annual report to Finance and Risk Committee on risk controls for foreign interference, and incident reports as occur

5. Cybersecurity

- Continuous monitoring and review of systems and regular training

Measures:

1. Quarterly report to Finance and Risk Committee on risk controls for cybersecurity, and incident reports as occur

6. Social Cohesion

- Update and implement enhancements to policies and procedures to ensure best practice in line with TEQSA's complaints and appeals Statement of Regulatory Expectations and Social Cohesion guidelines

Measures:

1. Annual report to Council

7. Related documents

[Strategic Plan 2030](#)

[University Policies and Procedures](#)

Strategies for Improving Equality of Opportunity in Higher Education

A major priority for 2025 and 2026 is enhancing the provision of effective support for CALD students. In the second half of 2025 a pilot initiative is being undertaken in the Graduate Certificate in Professional Supervision. The focus is to make the course more accessible to CALD students. The plan is to extend key learnings from the pilot to other courses in 2026.

Measures:

1. Review of Graduate Certificate in Professional Supervision CALD pilot project, focusing on student retention and student satisfaction.
2. Adapting learning and teaching principles to other awards.
3. Report to the Academic Board at the end of 2026.

Related documents

<https://www.whitley.edu.au/professional-supervision-clinical-pastoral-education/>

Strategies for Improving Teaching and Learning

The University's focus on ensuring high quality teaching is evidenced by its sustained success in the QILT Student Experience Survey results. Areas for improvement include ensuring the University's unique collegiate structure continues to provide students effective support and relevant opportunities for critical, engaging learning experiences throughout their studies.

Measures:

1. Maintain ranking in top 5 Australian Universities in QILT Student Experience Survey

There are two specific areas of focus in 2026.

1. Assurance of Learning

- Update policies and procedures as well as processes related to Assurance of Learning in response to the impact of Generative Artificial Intelligence on assessment and research.

Measures:

1. Updated Policies and Procedures
2. Annual report to Academic Board on the effectiveness of the assessment and learning and teaching reforms on Assurance of Learning.

2. Benchmarking and External referencing

- Benchmarking exercises with external faith-based Universities, University Colleges and other Higher Education Institutions to continue and grow.

Measures:

1. Increase the number of benchmarking partners
2. Annual report to the Academic Board

Related documents:

[Admissions transparency – student profiles](#)

[QILT outcomes for 2024](#)

Strategies for Improving Research, Research Training, and Innovation

The University's Research Strategy continues to underpin its commitment to research excellence in FoR 50 Philosophy and Religious Studies and cognate disciplines. In 2025 the University has worked to broaden its research strategy to include research impact and research engagement alongside research innovation as integral to its research profile. This sharpening of strategic focus has been assisted by the appointment of a new Dean of Research Strategy and alignment of internal resource allocations to support research impact and engagement more explicitly. The University's priority regarding research commercialisation continues to be tailored to supporting its direct industry partners – the churches, religious orders and faith-based organisations that sponsor and support the colleges. Innovation in research training will include the introduction of oral examination for HDR awards and improving the process for mentoring ECRs to achieve accreditation to supervise HDR candidates.

Measures:

1. Ongoing cyclical evaluation of research quality. Evaluation of History discipline that follows the successful pilot evaluation of Biblical Studies undertaken in 2025.
2. Increased engagement with stakeholders (churches, religious orders and faith based organisations) to continue strong industry funding outcomes.
3. Develop researcher capacity to apply for Category 1-4 external grants.
4. Increase visibility and reach of the University's research through support for engagement.
5. Implementation of oral examination process for HDR awards.
6. Increase the number of ECRs accredited as HDR candidate supervisors.

Related documents:

[School of Graduate Research](#)
[Research Repository](#)

Strategies for Engaging with Industry

The University of Divinity is a wholly-industry based University, with its governing body, Colleges, staff and students drawn from and resourcing its partners in the churches, religious orders and faith-based organisations – the industry partners are integral to the existence of the University. Strategic priorities include development and growth of new awards that meet emerging needs in the University's partners, continuing to build research projects in partnership with those partners, and increasing enrolments in the Doctor of Professional Practice (DPP) award.

Measures:

1. Develop and deliver an Graduate Certificate and Undergraduate Diploma award in Pastoral and Spiritual Care to meet the needs of various industry partners.
2. Continue to increase enrolments in the Doctor of Professional Practice award.

Related documents:

[Doctor of Professional Practice](#)

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

SIGNED for and on behalf of
University of Divinity
by

Professor James McLaren

Full name (please print)

Vice-Chancellor

Position

Signature

Date: 11/11/2025

In the presence of:

Rachel Searl

Witness (please print)

Executive Officer

Position or profession of witness (please print)

Signature

In the presence of:

Hannah Hornsby

Witness (please print)

University Secretary

Position or profession of witness (please print)

Signature

Date: 11/11/2025