



2025-2026 Mission-Based Compact Between the Commonwealth of Australia and The University of Sunshine Coast

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

The University of the Sunshine Coast's (UniSC) vision is to create a better tomorrow. As a growth university, our purpose is to transform lives through learning and knowledge in every place we operate and with every community we serve through accessible, high-quality education and impactful research. The 2025–2028 Strategic Plan (Link: [UniSC Strategic Plan 2025-2028 – For a Better Tomorrow](#)) is built on four pillars, which are underpinned and strongly aligned to UniSC's mission compact and the national priorities:

1. Transformative Student Experience

Students are at the heart of all we do as a university. Securing the future of UniSC's educational service delivery through growth and diversification, focused on equity, expanding online learning, and innovation in our learning and teaching model. UniSC will transform its learning and teaching model to place students at the centre of high-quality, flexible, and personalised blended learning experience.

Measured by: Success will be measured through participation, progression, retention, completions, and national student experience indicators (Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching - QILT).

2. People First

UniSC is a people first workplace that cares for the health, safety and wellbeing of our students and staff, where our work has meaning and impact, and our culture and values are embedded in every step of what we do.

Measured by: Performance is assessed through employee engagement and safety outcomes.

3. Local and Global Impact

Partner engagement and research focus is on sustainability, social and environmental justice, addressing global challenges, expanding strategic partnerships, deepening connections in the Asia-Pacific, and enhancing our global reputation through key strategies.

Measured by: Our impact is assessed through graduate outcomes, industry partnerships, research income, applied collaborations, and contribution to regional economic development.

4. Sustainable and Resilient

The University provides vibrant and optimised physical, digital and campus operations through the University's domestic and global footprint. UniSC builds on the unique character of each place we operate in and each community we serve embracing our local context, optimising deployment of resources, and engaging key partners to drive innovative and strategic outcomes.

Measured by: Progress is measured through emissions reductions, infrastructure milestones, and financial health indicators.

Approach to National and Sector Priorities**Workforce and Skills Needs:**

UniSC continues to align its programs with industry demand, with immediate focus on health, education, and technology.

Student and Staff Safety:

UniSC applies a university wide approach to safety and wellbeing, strengthening governance, reporting, and training to ensure compliance with new gender-based violence legislation by 1 January 2026.

Countering Foreign Interference (CFI):

UniSC maintains strong governance and compliance aligned with Security of Critical Infrastructures (SOCI), Defence Industry Security Program (DISP), and government guidelines including the CFI and Foreign Arrangements Scheme.

Cyber and Data Security:

Cyber resilience is strengthened through the NIST Cybersecurity Framework, proactive monitoring, and capability building under UniSC's Cyber Security and Investment Plan and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Security Policy.

Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom:

UniSC upholds these principles through governing policy and Staff Code of Conduct, supported by training and transparent reporting.

Strategies for Improving Equality of Opportunity in Higher Education

UniSC remains deeply committed to removing barriers to access, participation, retention, and completion for students from under-represented and disadvantaged backgrounds. Equity is embedded across every aspect of the University's strategy and operations through key plans, including the First Nations Education Strategy, the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Plan, Disability Access and Inclusion Plan, and the Student Health and Wellbeing Strategy, all supported by KPIs tracking participation, success, and graduate outcomes.

With one of the highest proportions of regional and equity student participation, UniSC continues to lead in expanding access to higher education through major campus investments, such as UniSC Moreton Bay, and strategic co-locations with Vocational Education and Training partners, creating seamless, place-based pathways that transform opportunity across the region.

Key Priorities 2025–2026

Developing a Student Success and Equity Plan: Providing a university wide framework to deliver on our commitment to ensure every student has the opportunity to thrive academically, professionally and personally through all stages of their journey.

Measured by: The Annual Student Success and Equity Report.

Raising Aspirations and Outreach: Building aspirations for higher education through partnerships with schools, community organisations, and industry, particularly targeting First Nations, regional/remote, low-SES students, and students with disability.

Measured by: Enrolment KPIs for equity cohorts.

Pathways and Access: Expanding admissions and bridging pathways, including the First Nations Direct Entry and Access Scheme, First Nations Medical Access Pathway, Tertiary Preparation Pathway, and strengthened VET-to-higher education transitions.

Measured by: Pathway participation and progression rates.

Retention, Success and Graduate Outcomes: Strengthening curriculum-embedded success strategies, using learning analytics and early-warning systems to support at-risk students, and enhancing proactive and timely pastoral and academic support.

Measured by: Progression, completions, QILT outcomes, and graduate employment rates.

Inclusive and Accessible Learning Environments: Ensuring courses are designed with universal design principles, inclusive of First Nations histories and perspectives, and embedded technology enhanced learning for flexible access.

Measured by: Proportion of courses meeting universal design standards, staff completion of diversity training, and student feedback.

Strategic Equity Investments through Higher Education Continuity Guarantee (HECG) funding:

HECG funding continues to support initiatives that enhance access, participation, and success for equity cohorts at UniSC. Investments focus on outreach, transition, wellbeing, and academic support, supported by strengthened data insights to monitor outcomes. All activities align with the targets set out in UniSC's Equity Plan 2024-2025, ensuring transparency, accountability and progress of our commitments.

Strategies for Improving Teaching and Learning

UniSC is committed to strengthening teaching and learning to ensure every student can succeed. Building on the 2025–2028 Strategic Plan, UniSC are enhancing the student experience, lift QILT outcomes, and embed early interventions for at-risk students. Over the next four years, UniSC will continue to transform its learning and teaching model through a dedicated transformational project, called PACE, placing students at the centre of a high-quality, interactive, and place-based learning experience. This model will be underpinned by flexible and personalised program architecture, renewed curricula, strong industry connections, and comprehensive learner engagement and support. The transformation will introduce a modern academic calendar designed to enhance flexibility, improve progression opportunities, and strengthen the overall student experience.

Key Priorities 2025–2026

Equitable and Transparent Access: UniSC maintains clear admissions processes and broadens enabling and academic pathways for diverse cohorts. A focus on equity and inclusion ensures students with different backgrounds and needs are inspired to participate, and supported from the first contact, through the transition in, and throughout their UniSC journey.

Measured by: Equity participation, admissions transparency, conversion from pathways to enrolment, and student success.

Quality Curriculum and Teaching: Curriculum renewal follows UniSC's Curriculum Design Framework, ensuring programs are learner-centred, standards-based, future focused, and embed First Nations capabilities. An evidence-based review framework demonstrates maturity and identifies areas for celebration and investment. UniSC will expand Work Integrated Learning (WIL) and industry-linked projects to enhance career readiness and strengthen collaboration through external advisory input. Graduates will possess strong discipline knowledge and transferable skills in problem-solving, technology use, and collaboration.

Measured by: QILT student satisfaction and teaching quality, program performance (including retention, progression and completion), employer feedback and satisfaction, graduate employment outcomes, and WIL participation.

Early Intervention and Student Success: Learning analytics, progression monitoring, and targeted case management will identify and support students at risk, including those with low early engagement and studying courses with high fail rates. Strategies include embedded student success resources, personalised academic support including personalised learning plans, and proactive student support and advising initiatives.

Measured by: Improved retention, progression, and completion rates.

Co-curricular Student Support: Co-curricular programs, peer mentoring, volunteering, and employability workshops will enrich student experience and wellbeing. Tailored international student support will ensure successful transition and strengthen engagement, belonging, and success.

Measured by: Participation rates, student wellbeing indicators, and international student satisfaction.

Professional Development for Educators: Academic staff are supported to innovate in pedagogy and technology, with a strong focus on responsible integration and use of AI supported by UniSC's AI-Enabled Framework (AIEF) and an AI-enabled Education Action Plan. Professional recognition pathways (Advance HE, Foundations of Teaching) and the UniSC Education Fellowship scheme ensures teaching excellence.

Measured by: Staff participation in professional development and recognition programs.

Innovation in Learning Technologies: Technology Enhanced Learning and Teaching (TELT) standards and AI-enabled Learning Standards (Artificial Intelligence) continue to guide the integration of contemporary digital tools and simulation to support personalised and flexible learning.

Measured by: Student satisfaction with digital learning and reduced academic misconduct.

Strategies for Improving Research, Research Training, and Innovation

UniSC is committed to strengthening research, research training, and innovation to deliver meaningful outcomes for our regions and contribute to national and global priorities. Across our campuses, the next generation of researchers are answering some of today's most pressing issues, focused on ensuring healthier people and a healthier planet. UniSC continues to build critical research mass, supporting researcher and Higher Degree Research (HDR) development, deepening local and global partnerships, and advancing research commercialisation.

Research at UniSC is supported by best practice frameworks to ensure appropriate governance and legislative compliance under the Australian Code for Responsible Conduct of Research. UniSC's achievements are measured by external research income, research quality, research publications, partnerships, research translation and impact, investment in research infrastructure, researcher development programs and collaborative interdisciplinary projects.

Key Priorities 2025–2026

Impactful and Emerging Research: UniSC continues to grow research capacity in areas of strength and regional relevance, including sustainability, health, human factors, green transportation, and environmental risk monitoring. In 2026 the Better Tomorrow Research Plan and Indigenous Research Plan will be implemented to support our research and strategy. New cross-disciplinary teams will be created to address complex challenges via the Future Forward Initiative.

Measured by: Research income and investment, research quality and impact, industry and community partnerships, and Indigenous research outputs.

Partnerships and Collaboration: UniSC is enhancing revenue diversification through an integrated plan to leverage industry and government partnerships, new research collaborations, philanthropy, and alumni engagement. Through this plan, end-user and industry partnerships will be expanded to ensure research is applied and impactful. Strategic alliances are being strengthened to further build capability, attract funding, and enhance international benchmarking. The UniSC Innovation Centre will continue to evolve as a hub for collaboration and entrepreneurship.

Measured by: Growth in collaborative projects, partnership agreements, research income, and commercial outputs.

Researcher and HDR Development: UniSC's Graduate Research School facilitates world class higher degree experience. Supported by the People First pillar, UniSC will strengthen research support for all staff and HDR students, building capability and fostering a research-active culture that drives progress toward the 2025–2028 Strategic Plan.

The University attracts and retains high-quality HDR students in areas aligned with institutional strengths. Streamlined candidature management, expanded research training programs, and targeted researcher development programs will ensure capability growth. Initiatives include leadership development, ethical use of AI in research, working with industry, and skills for securing competitive funding, delivering a diversification of research income across all categories.

Measured by: HDR enrolments and completions, training participation, research income and partnerships.

Commercialisation and Innovation: UniSC will continue to invest in commercialisation initiatives. The University is building stronger pathways for research translation and commercialisation. Intellectual Property Policy, Intellectual Property database and improved systems supports researchers to identify, protect, and scale innovations. Enhanced collaboration with industry and start-ups through the Innovation Centre fosters entrepreneurship, creates new opportunities for student involvement, and delivers commercial outcomes.

Measured by: Commercialisation revenue, spin-offs, licences, and industry engagement metrics.

Strategies for Engaging with Industry

UniSC is committed to building deep, mutually beneficial partnerships with industry that enhance student employability, drive research translation, and contribute to regional and national prosperity. Engagement builds alignment across the university through student placements, industry-funded research, scholarships, co-designed programs, and shared infrastructure, with partners ranging from local, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to global organisations. Current collaborations include TURBINE, Geospatial Intelligence, SRJ Walker Wayland, BOSCH, Bunnings/TKD, Unitywater, Cisco, the Sunshine Coast Health Institute (Link: [Sunshine Coast Health Institute](#)), Microsoft, Youi, Veolia, Queensland Hydro, Sanofi, HavenXR, Epic Games (Links: [Explore Design](#), [Design Studio](#)) and Remote Energy, among others. UniSC will also deliver the region's first fully local medical program by 2030 (or earlier), developed in consultation with our key partners including the Sunshine Coast University Hospital and Health Service, Queensland Health, and key community stakeholders. These collaborations integrate student learning, applied research, and innovation in ways that create lasting regional and national benefit.

Key Priorities 2025–2026

A dedicated Industry Engagement Unit provides a single point of contact for industry partners, delivering clarity, consistency, and responsiveness. This unit connects industry with students through events, internships, and placements; facilitates collaborative research; and supports professional development for both students and industry. The UniSC Industry Engagement Strategy (2023–2027) has clear actions to embed engagement across the University and provide a transparent governance structure to enable relevant reporting on impact and outcomes. Industry engagement is recognised in academic promotion pathways, reinforcing its role as a core university activity.

In 2025 and 2026 targets include the acquisition of two 'tier one' (multinational) partners aligned with key teaching, learning and research areas. Future years continue a process of industry partner acquisition to enable relevant industry interface for all key teaching and research areas. This collaboration provides a key driver toward enhanced graduate outcomes, market-fit product and industry facing research opportunities.

Measured by: Performance metrics include WIL opportunities, industry student scholarships, co-creation of teaching and learning products, contract research funding, co-investment or shared infrastructure, co-funded industry positions, on-campus industry participation and graduate and employer satisfaction rates.

Revitalisation of the UniSC Innovation Centre: The Innovation Centre continue to play an important role for UniSC, in conjunction with Collider (Link: [Collider](#)), a hub for startups, scaleups, and high-growth businesses. It provides access to office facilities, skills labs, mentoring, investor networks, and collaboration opportunities with UniSC researchers and students. Future focus areas include advanced manufacturing, robotics, digital/ICT, energy and transportation, green economy initiatives, health innovation, and creative industries.

Measured by: The number of tenants, partnerships formed, and commercialisation outcomes.

Currently there are several future energy projects and Southeast Queensland infrastructure projects are being progressed through collaborative discussions with Energy QLD, Veolia, Remote Energy and QLD Department of Transport and Main Roads.

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 the Sunshine Coast (UniSC)

By

Professor Helen Bartlett

Full name (please print)

Vice-Chancellor and President

Position

Signature

In the presence of:

Rachel Searl

Witness (please print)

Executive Officer

Position or profession of witness (please print)

Signature

In the presence of:

Sheree Hackwood

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