Role and functions

Basis of authority
The University is a body corporate governed by the University of Queensland Act 1998, as amended (the ‘Act’). The University was founded in 1910.

Functions
The University:
- disseminates knowledge and promotes scholarship
- provides education at university standard
- performs other functions given to the University
- exploits commercially, for the University’s benefit, any intellectual property developed
- confers higher education awards
- encourages the advancement and dissemination of knowledge and promotes the advancement of human welfare
- takes courses at the University

Our mission
The University has powers outlined more fully in the Act. They are included as part of the consolidated result in the University’s annual financial statements. At 31 December 2021, the University operated the following controlled entities:

- UQ Holdings Group
- JTech Group
- UniQuest Pty Ltd
- UniQuest Limited
- UQ College Limited
- UQ Health Care Limited
- UQ Holdings Pty Ltd
- UQ Sport Limited
- UQ Residences Limited
- University Controlled Trusts
- UQ Foundation Trust
- UQ Investment Trust Group
- UQ Investment Trust
- IMBCom Pty Ltd
- UniQuest Group
- Dandright Pty Ltd
- Jeta Therapeutics Pty Ltd
- Levanscoter Pty Ltd
- Neo-Rehab Pty Ltd
- Symbiosis Group Pty Ltd
- JTech Group
- SMJ-ICE CHILE SpA
- Other Controlled Entities
- UQ Jakarta Office Pty Ltd

Our vision
UQ’s Strategic Plan 2018-2021 outlines our objectives to achieve our vision of knowledge leadership for a better world.

Long-term objectives
UQ’s vision has been translated into three long-term objectives:
1. Transforming students into game-changing graduates who make outstanding contributions and address complex issues with a global perspective
2. Delivering globally significant solutions to challenges by generating new knowledge and partnered innovation
3. Developing a diverse community of knowledge seekers and leaders who embody a One UQ culture and use collaborative partnerships to connect and co-create.

Our values
Pursuit of excellence
We strive for excellence, seeking to apply the highest standards to benefit our communities.

Creativity and independent thinking
We welcome new ideas from our staff and students as well as from our alumni and our external partners. We support intellectual freedom, courage and creativity. We encourage the pursuit of innovation and opportunities.

Honesty and accountability
We act with integrity and professionalism and uphold the highest ethical standards. We are committed to transparency and accountability. Our decisions ensure responsible stewardship of the University’s resources, reputation and values. We lead by example in all areas, including our approaches to sustainability.

Mutual respect and diversity
We promote diversity in the University community – through our people, ideas and cultures. We create a vibrant, inclusive environment in which ideas flourish and future generations, regardless of background, are empowered. We respect our colleagues and work together for shared success.

Supporting our people
We ensure the safety and wellbeing of our people. We create an inclusive and supportive university community in which achievements are celebrated and rewarded. Our people have the opportunity to enrich their lives and pursue their goals.

Queensland Public Service (QPS) values
The University shares the QPS values, valuing our behaviour and the way we do business:
- Customers first
  - Supporting our people
  - Ideas into action
  - Creativity and independent thinking
- Unshakable potential
  - Pursuit of excellence
  - Be courageous
  - Honesty and accountability
  - Empower people
  - Mutual respect and diversity

Our operating environment
Statutory obligations
The chief purpose of the University is to provide education, research and innovation at university standard and through doing so, contribute to the public good of our community. We have been successfully achieving this for more than a century, increasing our student cohort from 83 in 1911 to more than 56,000 in 2021, and graduating more than 350,000 in that time.

Our research has also flourished. In the latest Excellence in Research in Australia (ERA) assessment in 2019, we were assessed in 98 4-digit Fields of Research, with 100 per cent rated at world standard or above. UQ was rated above world standard in more specialised fields of research than any other Australian university.

Nature and range of operations
UQ offers study and research opportunities across one of the widest discipline ranges in Australia, through our 6 faculties and 8 internationally acclaimed research institutes, with expertise in social sciences, neuroscience, nanotechnology, food innovation, and many more. We currently offer around 360 programs and 3,400 courses including tertiary preparation, non-award, undergraduate, postgraduate coursework and higher degree by research.

Risks, opportunities and challenges
The University operates in a dynamic global environment. The COVID-19 pandemic again heavily impacted Australia’s higher education sector in 2021, primarily due to the ongoing closure of Australia’s international borders. This required staff to again deliver teaching in dual mode throughout the year, catering to on-campus learners as well as online and offshorer students, which presented challenges in curriculum design and pedagogy, and in ensuring a sense of belonging among all students both on- and offshore.

Domestically, the university sector faced increased financial pressures; regulatory changes and changing student, industry and government expectations – all of which were brought to the fore in 2021 with the introduction of the Job-ready Graduates Package, a major, new model for Australian higher education funding.

Within this context, UQ quickly responded to position the University to remain competitive and successful in the longer term. The UQ community worked hard to support international students, who were studying offshore and, as a result, international coursework load at UQ increased by 5 per cent in 2021 compared with pre-pandemic 2019 figures. However, much of this increase was due to students who had deferred in 2020 commencing their studies in 2021, which disguised a softening in new demand.

Operational challenges in the coming years include:
- diversifying research income to meet the true costs of the research enterprises and to respond to an increasingly competitive research funding environment
- responding to the accelerated change in pedagogical delivery methods and post-pandemic student expectations
- maintaining our campuses and facilities with continued demands for the rejuvenation of teaching and research spaces and technologies
- ensuring the University’s contribution to the public good is recognised through our teaching, innovation, and collaboration with partners
- addressing the need to continuously invest in core enterprise, IT and cyber-security systems.

Considerable opportunities for the future include:
- translating and commercialising our exceptional research and innovation capabilities to help build a resilient, knowledge-based economy
- offering lifetime learning opportunities for education, training, upskilling and knowledge-sharing – in Australia and internationally – with a particular focus on online learning
- implementing world-leading energy reduction strategies and our Sustainability Strategy
- introducing sector-leading initiatives to ensure that we are positioned as an employer of choice.

Environmental factors
As already noted, throughout 2021, the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic led to continuing uncertainty for students. This, coupled with competitor market factors such as the UK, USA and Canada relaxing their border restrictions ahead of Australia, certainly deterred some students from choosing Australia as their study destination during the year. Australia’s borders reopened to international students in mid-December 2021. Ensuring the return of our students is well managed, and that they...
can confluently travel between their home country and Australia, will be critical to retaining Australia’s leading position as a provider of quality international education. The Australian Government’s Job-ready Graduates Package, introduced in 2021, provided a level of funding certainty across the sector. The impact of the changes has been mitigated by the transition fund, which will remain in place until the end of 2022. However, position UQ for the future, considerable growth in enrolments will be necessary between 2023 and 2025. Simultaneously, UQ faces disruption arising from social, economic and technological changes, which have been intensified by the ongoing pandemic and necessitate continued fiscal restraint.

The impact of these disruptions on the future workforce was anticipated, through the strong focus on employability and internationalisation and further enhancing Australia’s competitive edge on global markets. Most importantly, through our involvement with global markets, we have also continued to invest in the areas of research and teaching, and enhanced our strategies and support to attract, retain and develop top quality staff. This has supported innovation among our academic staff, and helped enrich the student learning experience through initiatives such as UQx.

The continuing importance of quality flexible delivery is now more critical than ever, particularly as UQ seeks to position itself as a provider of high quality flexible learning to meet the changing needs of our alumni and the broader community. From a research perspective, tight fiscal conditions and government reforms are increasing the competition for funding, making it challenging to meet the ongoing costs of our research and facilities. While UQ benefited from an additional $100 million of Research Support Program funding, representing 10 per cent of the national total, and has been relatively successful in attracting industry funding, there is still a critical need to continue to diversify our research funding sources and partnerships. These partnerships will be critical to addressing major global challenges, which will mean a willingness of our research community and our research management policies, procedures and systems.

Key initiatives

See our Summary of Activities on pages 16–17.

Summary

The landscape of higher education in Australia is rapidly evolving as the Commonwealth places greater emphasis on employment outcomes, national priorities, and an innovation-led approach to our future economy. The National Innovation and Science Agenda states, we need to embrace new ideas in innovation and science, and harness new sources of growth to deliver the next age of economic prosperity in Australia 1, which has major implications for research and research training.

Staff will be an essential part of UQ’s success as we focus on delivering high-quality service to all members of our UQ community in coming years, and it’s critical that we equip our graduates with the transferable skills that will enable them to be leaders across a range of industries.

Looking ahead

The University has just released its ‘Strategic Plan 2022–2025’, which articulates our mission to ‘deliver for the public good through excellence in education, research and engagement with our communities and partners, local, national and global’. This reflects UQ’s core mission and highlights our commitment to delivering for the public good and the connection between UQ and our community and partners. These will be key elements of our direction in the coming 4 years.

The coming year is likely to see the gradual shaping of a post-pandemic economy, and in this context, the University must provide leadership in education, research and innovation, and the competitive edge of Australia. We will continue to support research translation and impact of research; the increased competition for funding, and UQ is committed to working with partners to respond to emerging economic and workforce needs, and to contribute to ensuring a sustainable future for our communities.

2022 will also see our focus move to enhancing our alignment with the daily operations of UQ with the goal of preparing to become a Strategic RTP organisation by 2025. Further, through our Queensland Commitment and closer engagement with regional centres, for example, through the delivery of two-end- to-end regional medical education programs – we will demonstrate and expand our role as the University for Queensland.

We will continue to diversify our funding through increasing government and non-government sources, and further develop a university-wide system that is agile and efficient, and which allows us to direct our resources to ensuring the continued quality of our teaching, research and global impact. Our staff have proven themselves to be adaptable, innovative and responsive in the response to the challenges of 2021, and we will work to ensure that UQ can continue to attract this calibre of talent for the future.

Key statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>38,385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>38,565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>38,791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>38,908</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Staff FTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>7,179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>7,117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>7,483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>7,462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>7,495</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Graduates Package</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>12,353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>13,736</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>14,693</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>15,383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>16,273</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Figures for 2021 are preliminary. Data will be finalised in mid-2022.
2 These have been related to post of how gender figures have been classified. As such, the data has been recomputed to reflect these changes retrospectively. Female and male percentages may not add up to 100 per cent as persons classified as ‘Unknown’, ‘sex not stated’, ‘sex not relevant’ or ‘sex not included’ are not included.
3 This figure will be adjusted to reflect the exclusion of funding load from the detailed rows. ‘EFTSL’ is equivalent full-time student load.
4 Commonwealth funded load comprises Commonwealth Grants Scheme load, Research Training Program load and extended domestic postgraduate research load. ‘Research training load’ is defined as the number of students enrolled in a research degree as classified under the Research Training Scheme for 2011 onwards and is preliminary.
5 The staff classifications shown here align with the reporting of data to the Department of Education.
6 The staff figures are based on historical data due to improvements made in UQ’s reporting systems.
7 Revenue received for the teaching of the undergraduate student load.
8 This includes Commonwealth, non-government, and state government undergraduate revenue.
9 Revenue consists of funding through the Research Training Program and Research Support Program.
10 This includes total expenditure from the Research Support Fund and National Health and Medical Research Council.
11 Revenue includes non-government competitive grant research funding.
12 This includes income, dividends, and other gain/losses (gains) on the endowment and long and term investment portfolio.
13 Revenue includes investment income, donations and scholarships, other fees and charges, and sales of goods and services.
14 UQ transferred its Ipswich campus to the University of Southern Queensland on 7 January 2015.