Sustainable budgeting also included sustainable actions, which reduced costs to both the environment and the bottom line. Around 90 per cent of the University’s funding comes from key areas: tuition fees, Commonwealth education funding, research funding, consultancy fees and commercial revenue.

**Capital reporting**

During 2020, the University introduced an enhanced capital management process and reporting framework. This initiative facilitated an enhanced capital management process and summary, providing a holistic understanding of all major capital programs (current and pipeline), comparison to budget and high-level view of capital decisions.

**UQ Solar Farm**

All major construction works for this project are now complete, with stages 1 and 2 (32 megawatts each) having been connected to the grid. Power generation commenced and will follow a 3-stage ramp-up process to full output. The Warwick Solar Farm was officially opened on 17 July 2020 by Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy Anthony Lynham; Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter Høj AC, and Minister for State Development, Tourism and Innovation Kala Jones – enabling UQ to become the first major university in the world to offset 100 per cent of its electricity use with renewable power produced from its own assets, once fully commissioned. The output will be about 160GWh per year, the equivalent of powering more than 25,000 households. Master of Sustainable Energy students were the first of many students to benefit from seeing renewable energy assets up close and working hand-on with UQ’s own data.

**Tesla Powerpack battery**

In January, UQ commenced operation of a $2 million battery storage system to help the University achieve its energy-neutral goals, generate revenue and hedge against electricity price volatility. With the energy equivalent of 500,000 standard AA batteries, the system uses an automated algorithm for optimising charging and discharging, developed in-house by UQ. Performance throughout 2020 indicated that the battery will pay for itself in less than 8 years originally forecast.

**UQ art collection conservation**

Funding was withdrawn for this project in 2020 due to pandemic funding impacts; however, assuming the supply of philanthropic sources and the availability of specialist conservationists, work may resume in 2021.

**Reuse and recycling station**

The University partnered with the UQ Union Environment Collective to host a new recycling station for students and staff. Designed as a receptacle for hard-to-recycle household items that can’t be recycled through household bins, the facility caters for small waste; soft plastic, mobile phones, batteries, ink cartridges, oral care products, eye glasses, stationery items, paper, and CDs and DVDs.

**Hydrogen buses**

In partnership with the Queensland Government, UQ will add 2 hydrogen fuel cell coach-style buses to its fleet by 2023, expected to be the first in the state. The buses’ emissions are expected to be 60-70 per cent lower than those of the diesel-powered intercampus shuttle buses they will replace, cutting about 100 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions per year. The hydrogen will be produced through electrolysis, using renewable power from the University’s Gattan solar farm.

**University staff**

UQ externally advertised 1,128 jobs for 2020 and placed 492 academic and 736 professional staff positions, along with an additional 980 direct appointments. The University received 29,104 applications. The primary medium for recruitment was the UQ jobs recruitment website, with several externally hosted recruitment websites also used extensively, particularly SEEK, LinkedIn and Global Academy Jobs. From 31 March 2019 to 31 March 2020, the University’s continuing and fixed-term workforce increased to 7,208 FTE, with a retention rate of 91.88 per cent and a separation rate of 8.12 per cent for ‘continuing’ staff members in 2020.

All new recruits were invited to attend a formal induction program in addition to on-the-job orientation. The Recruitment Services team was selected as a finalist for Best use of technology and Employer of choice (>1000 employees) in the 2020 Australian HR Awards, and Most courageous team in the 2020 Leadership HQ Awards.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy continued to be widely promoted by Human Resources. In 2020, 6 graduates were recruited into the Vice-Chancellor’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (Indigenous) Graduate Program, 7 candidates into the Professional Entry Pathways (PEP) Program, and 3 candidates into the Academic Pathways Program. From the 2019 program, 11 of the 21 were retained post-Pathways Program; UQ now employs 97 staff members of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent.

The table below shows University staff numbers as at 31 March 2020.

**Remuneration and benefits**

In the 2019-20 financial year, more than 20,000 ATO income statements were issued via the ATO’s new Single Touch Payroll – myGov system, with overall payroll, superannuation, payroll tax and ATO outgoings of just over $1 billion.

**Human resources**

We fuel success through a positive and supportive culture that attracts and retains high-quality staff in diverse, inclusive, welcoming, safe and progressive workplaces. We design engaging learning experiences and recognise high performance and innovation; and we endorse sound business decisions and streamlined processes that incorporate change management knowledge and capability across the business.

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**Summary of Human resources**

The 2019 review of international admissions highlighted the success of the University’s efforts to increase student numbers from Queensland and interstate school leavers. The results of this concerted effort were pleasing, with UQ increasing outgoings of just over $1 billion.

**University staff selection and recruitment**

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Academic promotions

During the year, 114 academic staff members were promoted to Level E. A total of 56 staff were promoted to Level B, 57 to Level C, 50 to Level D and 37 to Level E.

Voluntary Separation Scheme

In 2020, the University chose to implement a Voluntary Separation Scheme (VSS) that allowed eligible staff to voluntarily resign from their employment (VSE) in entering into a separation agreement with UQ. All continuing academic and professional staff with more than one year of continuous service were eligible to apply. However, some staff members, such as fixed-term or casual staff and those who had already tendered their resignation, were ineligible. Access to a VSS payment was at the University’s discretion and all EEOs were confidential and reviewed by a small panel of senior executives.

The scheme attracted strong interest from academic and professional staff across the University. A large majority who registered an EEO were approved and subsequently entered into an arrangement to cease employment under the VSS. Most staff accepting a VSS ceased their continuing employment with the University on or before 31 December 2020.

Staff support

The Workplace Psychologist within the HR team continued to provide general assistance, referrals and case management support to staff members, with or at risk of having mental health issues. Where possible, assistance was also provided in managing the rehabilitation and return to work process, for those with mental health issues. Where necessary, workplace adjustments were implemented to facilitate workplace engagement.

Staff support initiatives included providing workplace adjustments for staff with mental health issues, and providing case management support for those with mental health issues. Where necessary, workplace adjustments were implemented to facilitate workplace engagement.

UQ Awards for Excellence

For 6 consecutive years, the University has hosted an annual UQ Awards for Excellence program, with nominations increasing each year. In 2020, 222 individual and team nominations were received, which included more than 900 staff. In order to formally recognise the significant efforts of staff during the pandemic, a new one-off category, Response to COVID-19, was introduced, which received 109 nominations. Across the 6 categories, 190 staff members received an award or commendation (6 teams and 7 individual winners, 14 teams and 14 individual commendations). By acknowledging and celebrating the achievements and behaviours of staff across all levels of the University, regardless of position, the Awards reflect and support UQ’s values.

2020 UQ Awards for Excellence winners

Innovation

Dr Anisha Balihar
Molecular Clamp Vaccine Team

Service

Lisa Kennedy
Life Course Professional Centre

Community, Diversity and Inclusion

Associate Professor Rhonda Faragher (Student Life) Team

Mental and Physical Health, Safety and Wellness

Guinness World Record Mindfulness (Student Life) Team

Leadership

Jennifer Karlon
Warwick Solar Farm Project Team

Response to COVID-19

Andrej Strachen
Professor James Ward
COVID-19 Data Analytics Team

Workplace relations

The Workplace Relations team continued to deliver and provide significant and strategic advice, representation and advocacy throughout 2020 in a range of matters predominantly relating to organisational change and restructuring, workforce transfers, disputes, performance and conduct. In addition, the team continued to provide comprehensive workplace advice, internal consultancy services, and advocacy, including external industrial tribunals and courts on a range of employment issues and matters.

A number of change processes across UQ organisational units were also supported, including the organisational restructuring of ICTE administrative staff, the restructuring of the School of Architecture and the restructure of UQ Library, as well as ongoing support and assistance provided for the impact of COVID-19 on university operations.

Workplace Relations continued to support the implementation of UQ’s 2019–2020 Enterprise Agreement, including delivering education and staff development sessions to UQ staff on its key changes. Work is currently underway on the next round of enterprise bargaining negotiations prior to the end of the current Agreement.

The work of the Human Resources Policy and Strategy team in streamlining and enhancing all existing human resources policies and procedures was also supported, with tools and templates to enable the development of new high-quality policies and procedures being provided.

Workforce planning and performance management

As the Government’s restrictions on social activity tightened, by the end of March 2020, most classes were made available online, and most staff were required to work from home for an indefinite period. Weeks of intense planning were spent to ensure that UQ students and staff quickly grew accustomed to studying and working from home, using Zoom’s videoconferencing platform and other supporting technologies.

From March through to July (and beyond), 6,700 UQ staff worked from home to facilitate teaching and research. While 1,300 staff remained on campus to maintain grounds, facilities, and research integrity and continuity.

Where work in particular areas of the University diminished because of the pandemic, staff were redeployed to other areas through a skill exchange program, UQ Marketplaces, and/or participated in special projects such as delivering hampers to isolated and disadvantaged students.

On 29 May, UQ issued a roadmap for a safe return to campus which resulted in staff safely returning to campus work life in line with government restrictions and health protocols.

HR response to COVID-19

The Workplace Relations team, the Workplace Psychologist and Mental Health Coordinator all contributed subject matter expertise to the Executive and key stakeholders in developing the University’s HR COVID-19 action plan, and providing extensive support material for staff. This ensured UQ’s approach was consistent with the University’s Human Resources, Mental Health Strategy and the sector-wide response. This work was undertaken during a time of complex and fast moving changes to Australia’s industrial landscape.

HR policy and strategy

Policy team reviewed and drafted more than 100 documents in the Policy and Procedures Library (PPL) as part of implementing the Streamlining and Enhancing Policies and Procedures (SEP) management strategy, rationalising the existing 62 policies down to approximately 25. All policies are now drafted, and consultation with key stakeholders to finalise these drafts continues as required. To date, the Senate has reviewed Diversity, Equity and Inclusive Belonging policies and associated procedures have been approved. The drafted policies will serve to complement and support the configuration and implementation of the Human Capital Management System (HCMS).

Workplace diversity and inclusion

In 2020, the Workplace Diversity and Inclusion team continued to deliver a number of significant outcomes in support of UQ’s commitment to building a safe, respectful and inclusive workplace for all members of the UQ community. The most significant of these was a more strategic approach which enables the Chairs of all Strategic Diversity and Inclusion Committees to attend UQ Senate Sub-Committees for Equity and Inclusion, promoting greater cross-university sharing and a more interactive approach to diversity and inclusion matters.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff

UQ is on track to achieving the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff ERT representation targets outlined in UQ’s Enterprise Agreement. Key deliverables in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander portfolio include: The Daapay Post, a new newsletter focusing on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stories, events and employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Islander (Indigenous) staff; implementation of the Academic
HUMAN RESOURCES

Activities, including Promoting Women’s health and Men’s health, were included in the University’s Wellbeing Strategy for UQ staff. The Wellbeing Strategies were developed in consultation with UQ staff, including representatives from across the University. The strategies aim to promote physical and mental health and well-being, provide support and resources for staff, and encourage a culture of sustainability and resilience. The strategies also provide a framework for staff to support each other and work towards common goals.

Disability

Disability support and progress was made in the area of disability employment, with achievements including a high successful employment rate of 8% for new staff employed in 2020. The University’s Disability Support Team continued to provide support to staff and students with disabilities, including through the implementation of the Disability Discrimination Act 2000 (Cth) and the Australian Human Rights Commission’s Disability Discrimination Code of Practice 2019.

Work/life balance

The UQ Wellbeing Program aims to boost staff psychological and physical wellbeing through a range of lifestyle and community engagement activities. During 2020, the pandemic brought a number of challenges, including reduced contact with colleagues and reduced access to support services. However, the University continued to provide support to staff and students through the implementation of the UQ Wellbeing Program, which includes the following initiatives:

- Staff vaccination program
- Innovative wellness options
- Staff flu program participation increased by approximately 7% per cent in 2020, with 6,085 staff members and HDR students receiving the vaccination in 2020. More than 2,000 participants were enrolled in the 2020 UQ Flu Program.

The University is committed to promoting positive physical and mental health and well-being for all staff and students across the University. The University is also committed to providing support and resources for staff and students with disabilities, including through the implementation of the Disability Discrimination Act 2000 (Cth) and the Australian Human Rights Commission’s Disability Discrimination Code of Practice 2019.