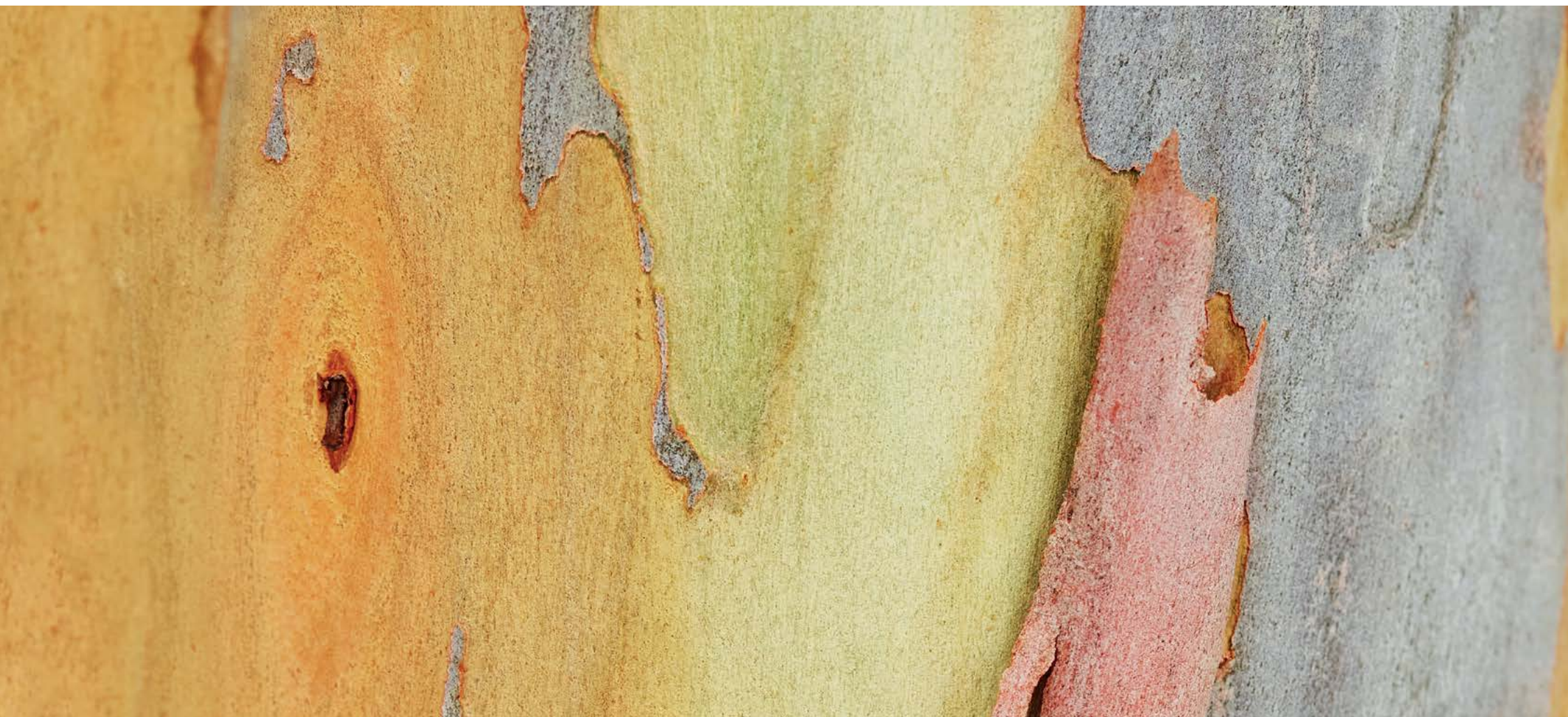


# LOOKING AHEAD

**THE UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE**  
**STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2025**

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**IMPLEMENTATION REPORT | DECEMBER 2021**







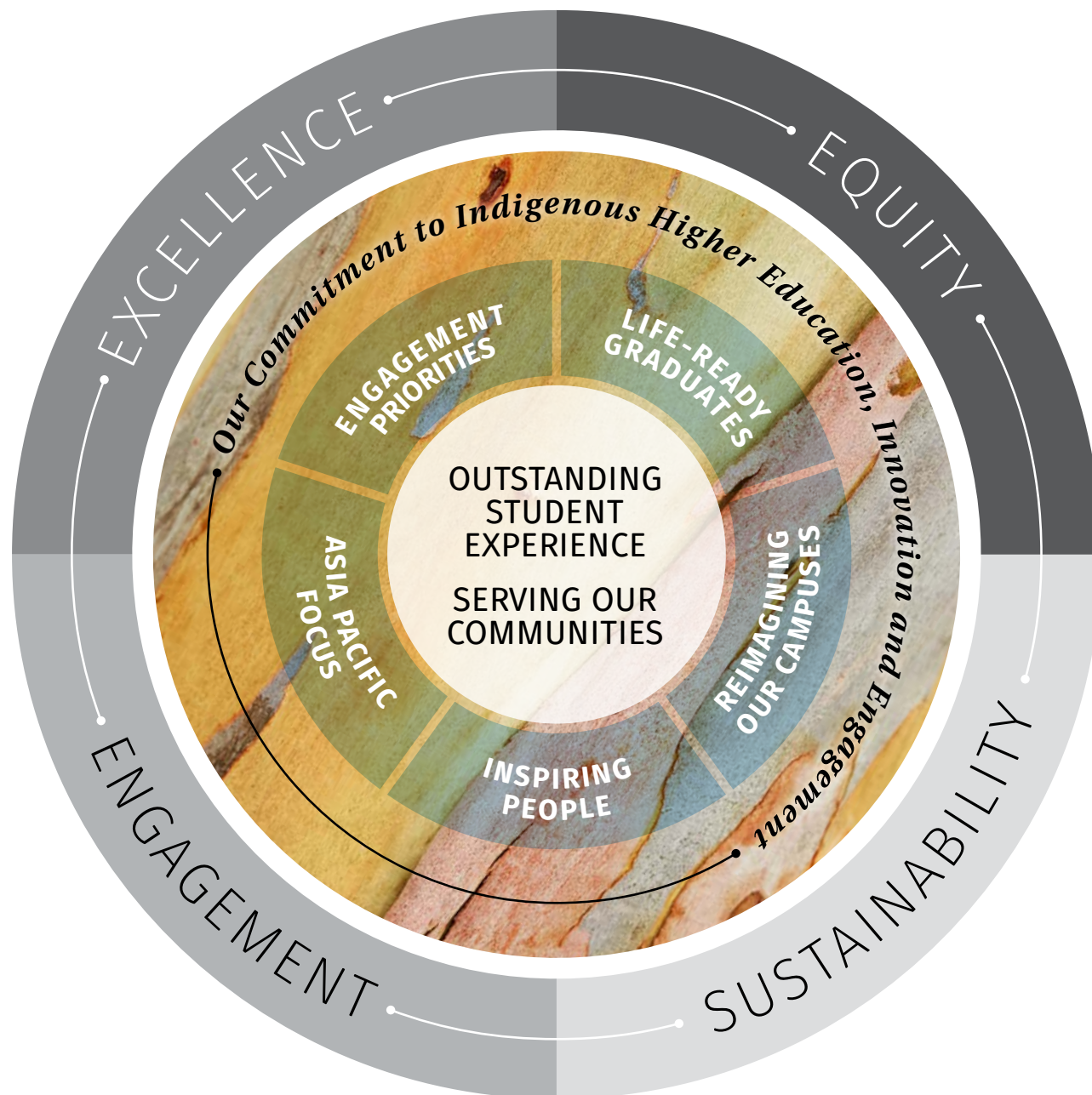
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# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



# INTRODUCTION

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*The University of Newcastle's Looking Ahead Strategic Plan 2020-2025 sets an ambitious vision for the future, driven by its purpose to deliver an exceptional student experience and to serve our regions, as well as by our core values of Excellence, Equity, Engagement and Sustainability.*

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The two years since Looking Ahead was launched, however, have been characterised by immense disruption and uncertainty at the University and globally.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has meant that we, like most organisations, have necessarily diverted the majority of our attention to addressing impacts on our students, staff and partners, and have had to substantially change our operations to ensure that the effects of the pandemic do not threaten our long-term viability. Now, as New South Wales emerges from a second pandemic lockdown and into a 'COVID normal' future, we are taking the opportunity to reflect on what we have achieved through Looking Ahead to date, despite the challenges faced, as well as where progress has been constrained.

COVID-19 has had far-reaching and unprecedented consequences for the regional, national and global context in which we operate. Students, teachers, and a host of other staff supporting teaching and learning activities have had to rapidly adapt to remote learning, which has continued over a more extended period of time than anticipated at the onset of the pandemic. The closure of Australia's borders has similarly required a shift towards online and offshore education for international students across the sector.

The Australian Government's Job-ready Graduates Package reforms to higher education were announced and passed parliament in 2020. A range of measures are being rolled out through the package, including changes to the way Commonwealth Supported Places (CSPs) are funded, incentivising study areas considered to be of national priority, changes to funding supporting equity cohorts, and research funding arrangements that reward engagement with industry.

Growing Government concern around foreign interference in Australia has driven the development of protective policy, most notably the *Foreign Relations (State and Territory Arrangements) Act 2020*. Australian universities are implicated in the reporting requirements established by the legislation, which will need to be taken into consideration in relation to both existing and future arrangements with international parties.

Much has changed in the world around us since we launched our *Looking Ahead* Strategic Plan, however the events of the past two years show us that our vision is more necessary than ever. We have had to adjust some of our shorter term plans in response to these events, however our mission is unwavering; we will seek to deliver an outstanding student experience and to serve our communities, now more than ever.

# ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report provides an overview of our achievements to date, as well as challenges and constraints to progress, in each of the six strategic themes in *Looking Ahead*.

The Strategic Plan Implementation Roadmap on page 4 gives an indication of where our effort has been most heavily focused in the first two years of *Looking Ahead*, as a well as a high level view of where we expect effort to be expended over the remaining years of the strategy. It suggests that some great strides have been made in the face of significant trials, however across the majority of initiatives the groundwork is being laid and there is still much work to do to deliver on our objectives.

Throughout the report icons are used to indicate:



Achievements and progress



Challenges and constraints to progress

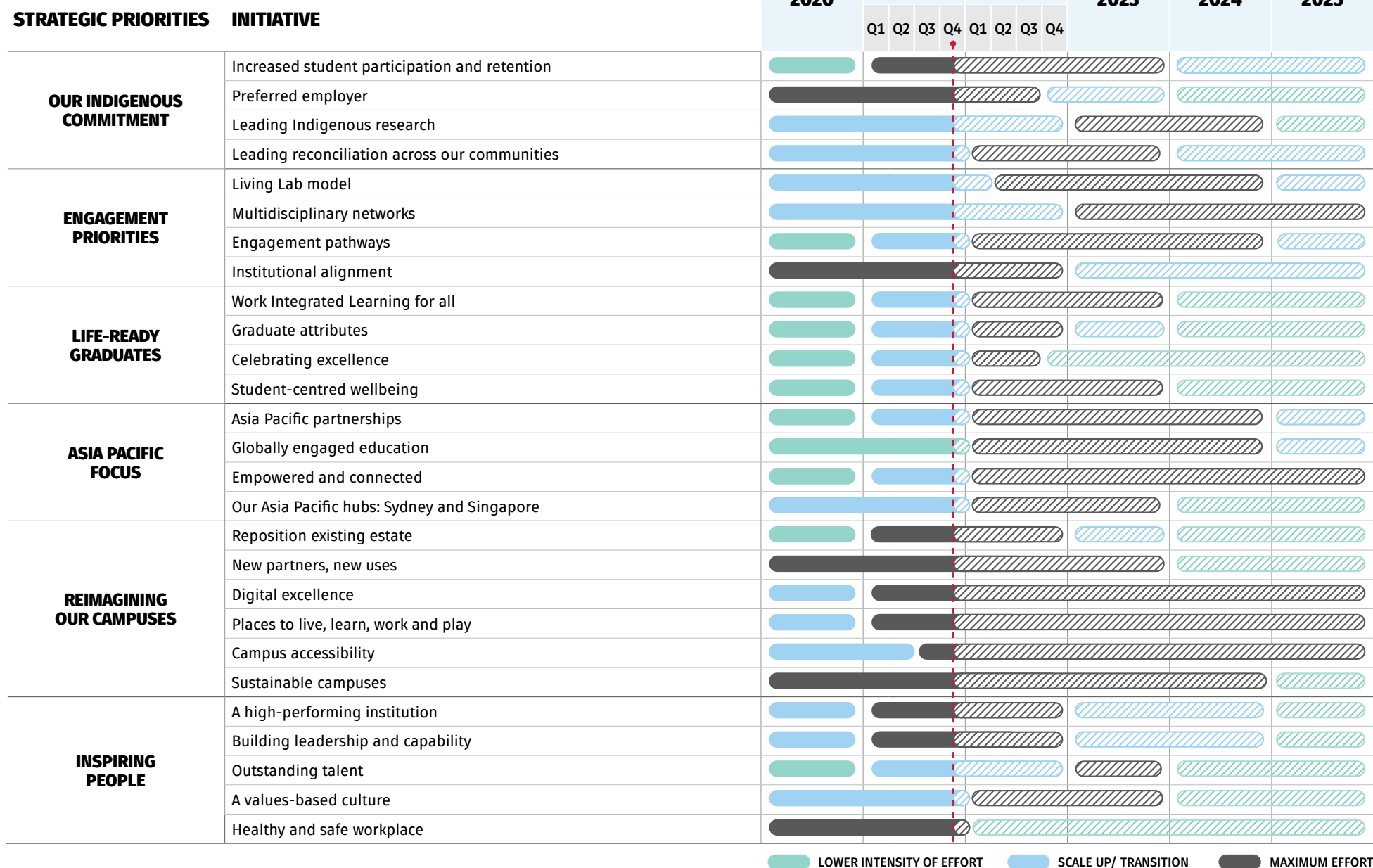
The final section of the report reviews progress on activities that seek to enable or provide a foundation for the successful implementation of strategic initiatives.

## CELEBRATING RESILIENCE AND INGENUITY

Although the unexpected and all-encompassing nature of the global pandemic has placed some limitations on some of our strategic activity in 2020-2021, it is important to celebrate the outstanding achievements of our staff and students in pivoting our operations and ways of working to continue delivering on our commitment to outstanding student experience and serving our communities.

- Formation of COVID-19 Health Response team, proactively leading the University's response to COVID-19 to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our students, staff and visitors to campuses.
- Rapid transition to online learning across our programs.
- Cross-disciplinary teams brought together and mobilised to design, produce and distribute medical equipment to address shortages across our regions' Local Health Districts.
- Team of Nurses from the School of Nursing and Midwifery deployed to assist Walgett Aboriginal Medical Services with COVID vaccination and testing in the local community
- Staff and community rallied around hundreds of students isolating in campus residences to organise grocery drops, support wellbeing and arrange dedicated COVID-19 testing.
- 2020 and 2021 University Open Days delivered online, with excellent engagement from prospective students.

# LOOKING AHEAD STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP



■ LOWER INTENSITY OF EFFORT
 ■ SCALE UP/ TRANSITION
 ■ MAXIMUM EFFORT

# OUR INDIGENOUS COMMITMENT

## MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT IN OUR REGIONS

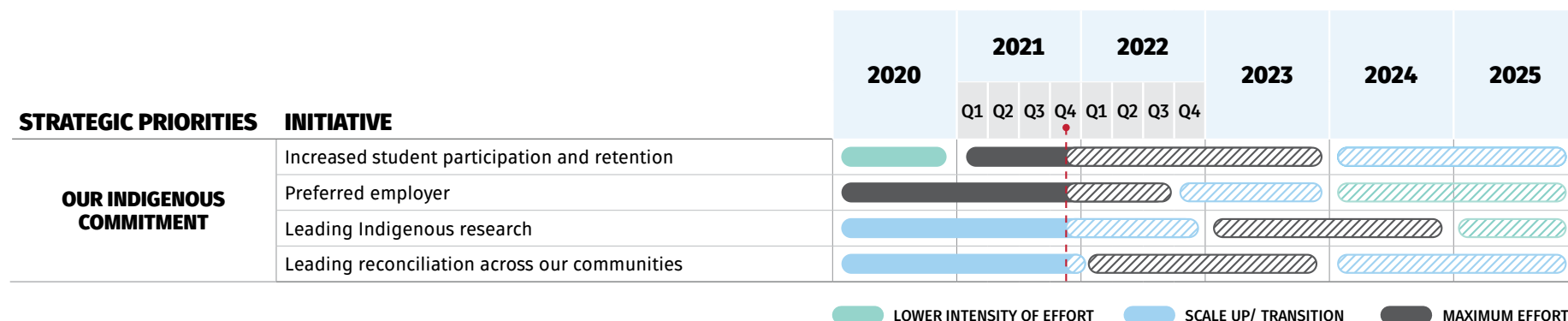


Work has been ongoing in **strengthening connections** with local organisations and communities including Aboriginal Medical Services and Local Aboriginal Land Councils. Strengthening local connections, the **Cultural Capability Framework 2020-2025** was co-designed with key University and community stakeholders with the aim of enriching the organisation with diverse perspectives and knowledge. The Framework is supported by Cultural Capability training, with 43.4% of staff having completed at least one module of the training by the end of 2021.

In 2021, amid the COVID-19 outbreak, University School of Nursing and Midwifery staff travelled to Walgett to support and assist the **Walgett Aboriginal Medical Services (WAMS)** and surrounding communities. This work built on an 18 month partnership between the University and WAMS, working towards a potential 'On-Country' component to be added to the University's Bachelor of Nursing program. This would see student nurses learning and working in Walgett as part of their degree. The program would allow students to remain in their community, complete their studies and, when registered, be able to give back to their community.



Aboriginal organisations and community members are often highly sought after to contribute to industry engagement initiatives. A challenge for the University is to ensure that we have a coordinated approach to community engagement and leverage pre-existing structures and relationships. The Office of Indigenous Strategy and Leadership and the Wollotuka Institute will lead the coordinated approach.





## OUR 2025 GOALS

### RECONCILIATION



The **Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group** was established in 2020 to oversee the development of the **Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)**. Building on the University's first RAP, developed in 2011, the Stretch RAP requires the University to further embed reconciliation initiatives into business strategies and Business As Usual (BAU). This Working Group has drafted the Stretch RAP for submission to Reconciliation Australia.

In support of Indigenous Business the University has developed an **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Procurement Strategy** and we are a member of Supply Nation, which provides Australia's largest leading database of verified Indigenous businesses.

Our Indigenous Commitment is a whole of University approach, meaning it is every staff member's responsibility. Supporting staff across the University to understand what this commitment means to them requires strategic planning and clear communication across all areas. The **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education and Research Framework** and the Reconciliation Action Plan provides direction for leaders.

### EQUITY

Our Indigenous staff representation will achieve parity for our region. We will employ and develop Indigenous academic staff across all faculties in the University.



## 2.7%

As at 31/12/21  
2021 target: 4.0%  
2025 target: 4.0%

Indigenous staff participation.

### EXCELLENCE

We will be world leaders in Indigenous: Health research, Education research, Global histories research and Language research.



## \$422.4k

As at 31/12/21  
unaudited HERDC income  
2021 target: \$2.6M  
2025 target: \$2.8M

Research income with an Indigenous Chief Investigator.

### SUSTAINABILITY

We will work with Indigenous people and be guided by Indigenous knowledges to look after and promote country and culture.



## 43.4%

As at 31/12/21  
2021 target: 44.6%  
2025 target: 100%

Staff completion of a cultural competency module.

### ENGAGEMENT

Our Indigenous students and staff will be supported, increasing retention rates across all areas of the University.



## -2.7%

As at 31/12/20  
2021 target: -2.2%  
2025 target: 4.0%

Indigenous staff participation.

# ENGAGEMENT PRIORITIES

## LIVING LAB MODEL



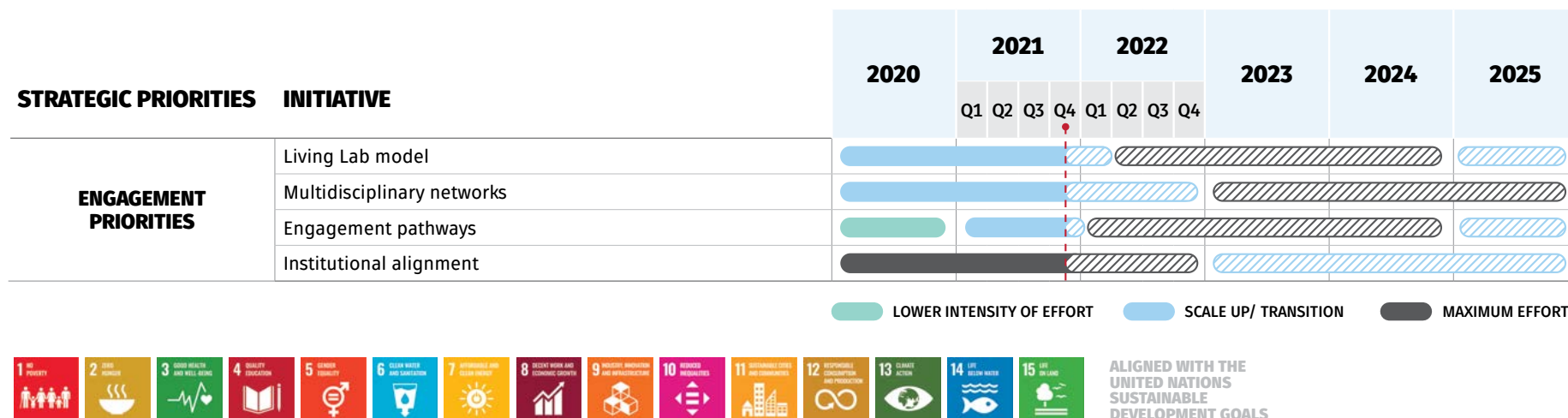
**Growing Industries:** The Hunter Region was announced as a “Green Hydrogen Hub” by the NSW Government, and is set to receive National Energy Resources Australia (NERA) Hydrogen Technology Cluster Seed Funding. The University and HunterNet collaborated closely on the successful submission. The University has also signed on as the Research and Development (R&D) partner in a \$3 million feasibility study into the development of a green hydrogen hub at the Port of Newcastle, being led by Port of Newcastle and Macquarie’s Green Investment Group.

**Better, Healthier Living:** The One Footprint Health Strategy was developed, supported and approved by local government and industry partners. The Health Innovation Living Lab has been established at John Hunter Hospital.

**Next Generation Resources:** Newcastle Institute for Energy and Resources (NIER) released a “Water Research Roadmap”, facilitating partnerships with Hunter Water and industry to ensure our regional communities are resilient and enjoy water security.

**Connected Communities:** The Future Arts Science Technology Lab (FASTLab) research model was established to promote digital innovations and connect our communities. The FASTLab is the creative industry’s vehicle for connection across the Australian Government’s nine STEM focussed research priority centres.

Next steps in delivering the Living Lab concept will be to establish collaborative, open and transparent governance structures, KPIs and resourcing.



## INSTITUTIONAL ALIGNMENT



There have been **strategic investments in the University's research portfolio**, providing internal support for research initiatives. A **shared research infrastructure and resources user model** has been introduced, to centralise equipment and streamline processes. In addition, **HDR student support** has been enhanced with 30 scholarships awarded in the last round of the Vice-Chancellor's PhD Priority Training Scheme.



Through the Enabling Change process, organisational changes have been implemented across Colleges, Divisions and Schools that seek to ensure our business units and operations are aligned to institutional goals and areas of priority. In 2021, this process was paused for Research and Innovation Division in recognition that additional information was needed to guide the future direction of the Division, taking into account shifts in the leadership of the research portfolio, and emerging Government priorities for Australian research. Two external strategic reviews have been commissioned of the Knowledge Exchange and Enterprise (KEE) Unit and broader Research and Innovation Divisions respectively. While this activity will help to ensure research support at the University is optimised and aligned to strategic priorities, it has impact on capacity to progress Engagement Priorities initiatives in the near term.







## MULTIDISCIPLINARY NETWORKS



The **STEMM Operating Model** has been developed, and our new Institutes have been aligned to Colleges. Further work in transdisciplinary research is underway, with the establishment of an **'Engineers and Scientists in Scrubs'** group to develop closer collaborations between medical and engineering research.

Further, the Bioresearch building was opened and operational in 2021. This building will further enhance and enable greater collaboration between researchers and research groups.



In 2020, engaged students, community members and staff participated in a collaborative, team-based problem solving **'Grand Challenge'**. The circumstances of work and study from home in 2021 have made progress in establishing and running further Grand Challenges difficult, however, our **'COVID-19 Equipment Shortage'** team won an Australian Financial Review (AFR) Industry Engagement award for responding to the needs of the Health system in providing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

## OUR 2025 GOALS

### ENGAGEMENT PATHWAYS



The Central Coast Clinical School and Research Institute building was completed and opened in 2021, as well as the NIER (Hunter Water) precinct, Q Building and I2N Williamtown – all of which will foster and support industry engagement. Also on the Central Coast, the Food and Agribusiness Doctoral Training Centre at Ourimbah was launched in 2021. There has been progress with industry and research partnerships on our Newcastle campuses, with the introduction of the ResTech and Technotia Laboratories.

Also in 2021, the University formed a new partnership with Southern Green Gas to develop green hydrogen. This partnership, also supported by the Australia Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) and the NSW Government, will see our researchers focus on creating carbon-neutral energy from Australian R&D and renewable resources.

The University is continuing work to make it easier for our external partners and community to engage with us, with a new website design and improved digital “single front door” for external industry stakeholders.

Next steps will include establishing a formal strategy for engaging with industry, aiming to increase industry engagement opportunities, develop staff capability to engage with industry partners and define Divisional, College, School and individual roles and responsibilities.

### EQUITY

We will continually increase the number of students and staff participating in multidisciplinary collaboration, workplace learning, and professional development.



# 44.3%

As at 31/12/21  
2021 target: 46.2%  
2025 target: 51%

Research projects and activities that involve external industry and/or community partners.

### EXCELLENCE

We will see continued growth in our performance in independent external rankings for teaching and research excellence.



# 276

As at 30/09/21  
2021 target: 303  
2025 target: 250

Average World Rank.

### SUSTAINABILITY

We will adopt innovative teaching, research and engagement models that not only support the future of our regions but also drive positive change nationally and globally.



# 103%

As at 31/12/21  
2021 target: 100%  
2025 target: 100%

Percentage of 2021 HERDC Income target.\*

### ENGAGEMENT

We will grow partner-led multidisciplinary collaborations designed to deliver real-world outcomes, impact and scalability that increase research income and Work Integrated Learning opportunities for students.



# 44.3%

As at 31/12/21  
2021 target: 46.2%  
2025 target: 25%

Proportion of grants with investigators representing at least two different research disciplines.

\* The KPI measure for this Goal will change in 2022.

# LIFE-READY GRADUATES

## GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES



Graduate Attribute Themes have been identified through staff, student, alumni and employer surveys and working groups, around concepts including: 'Distinctive to the University of Newcastle'; 'expected of graduates of any university of high standing globally'; and, 'communicable and memorable'. The Attributes have been circulated to all staff and students for consultation and input, with the next step to be mapping them to the University's Academic Programs.

The attributes will be centred on themes of:

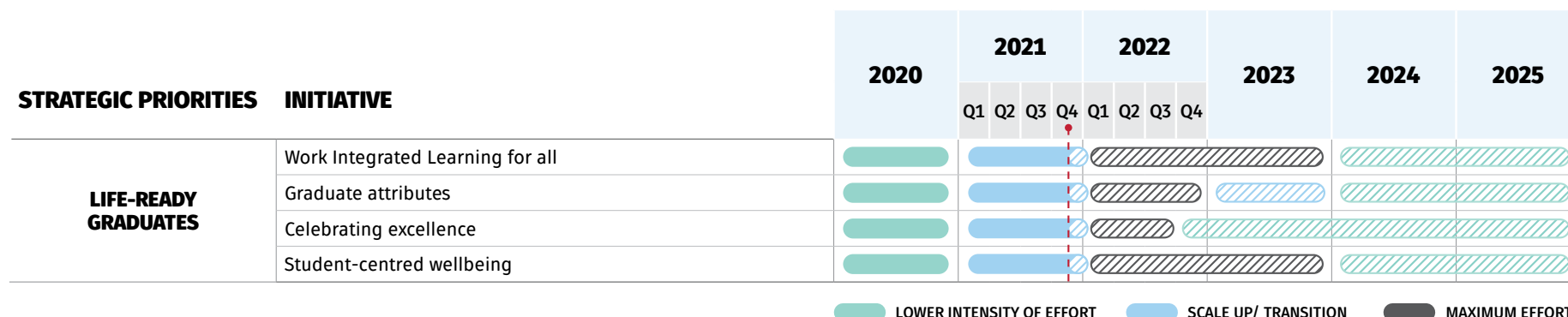
- Cultural understanding, especially Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Career readiness, creative and entrepreneurial mindsets
- Community mindedness, being of and for our regions with a social and sustainability mindset
- Being informed, critical thinkers and evidence-based decision makers
- Being effective communicators able to think ethically and act and influence others with professionalism.



## WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING FOR ALL

Work Integrated Learning (WIL) for All activities have been defined in terms of three proposed levels with the expectation of an authentic placement opportunity for all students before graduation. A working group has formed and a **review all of the University's existing WIL opportunities** is underway. Groundwork in this space took place in 2020 through course optimisation, whereby the University's first focus (before reviewing existing WIL opportunities) was to streamline course offerings in order to create 'space' in programs for embedded WIL. In addition, COVID-19 restrictions have affected the availability and feasibility of some WIL placements in 2020 and 2021.

The **Career Connect** program has been launched to build greater awareness of holistic employability skills. The **Employability Excellence Awards** have been established to build community buy-in and profile of WIL, as well as to recognise and celebrate the successes of students, staff and community partners. The Employability team in Academic Division has also doubled in size through the Enabling Change program.



ALIGNED WITH THE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



## CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE



**Academic achiever scholarships** are now available for new students including a leadership program from 2022, while **Academic Excellence Scholarships** have been established for the top 52 students in each year. This work is also supported through recognition of achievement at graduation ceremonies.



For staff, there has also been a large increase in international teaching awards through membership of **AdvanceHE**.

Adapting expectations in a COVID-19 world has hindered Progress in the Celebrating Excellence initiative.





## OUR 2025 GOALS

### STUDENT-CENTRED WELLBEING



A number of reviews and improvements have been made to affiliated entities and services offered on our campuses. This has included a review of the **Health Service**, integration of **NUSport** as an affiliated entity and the creation of **NUServices** to manage food options on campus. This work will ensure our campuses offer essential support and wellbeing services to our students and staff.

The University supported the development of a **COVID-19 Hardship scholarship** scheme to assist students in this difficult time. Beyond this, University staff assisted the University of Newcastle Students' Association (UNSA) and local businesses in supporting students on Callaghan campus with food drops while in lockdown. More than \$20,000 worth of specialty items and groceries were sourced and hand-delivered to our students in need.

There has also been the development of the UNSA **Support a Friend** initiative, and **Mental Health First Aid** training is being offered and prioritised to our student representatives and staff, to equip them with the skills to support peers and each other. Planning for student-centred peer support is well underway to complement extensive existing clinical support.



Challenges, particularly in light of COVID-19, have included overwhelming demand for counselling services, and engaging students who are in need of psychological support.

### EQUITY

We have the same retention and success rates for all of our students – whether they be students from Indigenous, Low SES or regional/remote backgrounds, with a disability or not.



**-4.1%**

As at 31/12/20  
2021 target: -3.3%  
2025 target: 0%

Retention of our students with a disability (variance to overall cohort).

### EXCELLENCE

We will be one of the top Universities in Australia for Student Satisfaction and Graduate Employment as measured by the Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT) Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS).



**66.0%**

As at 31/03/21  
2021 target: 80.6%  
2025 target: 83.2%

Quality of overall experience (SES).

### SUSTAINABILITY

Student wellbeing as measured by the Student Healthy Lifestyle Survey will increase every year.



**25.1**

As at 30/09/21  
2021 target: 21.0  
2025 target: 21.0

Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10).

### ENGAGEMENT

All undergraduate students will have a Work Integrated Learning opportunity within their program.



**73.3%**

As at 31/12/19  
2021 target: 76.0%  
2025 target: 100%

WIL participation (undergraduate).



# ASIA PACIFIC FOCUS

## EMPOWERED AND CONNECTED



The first comprehensive University-led **alumni survey** was launched; a research-based initiative designed to better understand the needs of our global alumni community. More than 5,700 alumni responded, with the findings to inform future alumni programming. Key insights are:

1. 80% of alumni feel the strongest affiliation with their discipline of study/School.
2. 98% of our alumni community are proud to be graduates of this University.
3. The desire to give back via mentoring is strong.
4. Desire to access ongoing learning is strong in all age cohorts with professional development and networking very important for younger and middle-aged cohorts.
5. Familial affiliation is strong.

In partnership with Jack Ma Foundation, Alibaba and Hangzhou Normal University, the Ma & Morley Stage 1 scholars' undertook a **virtual China immersion experience**.



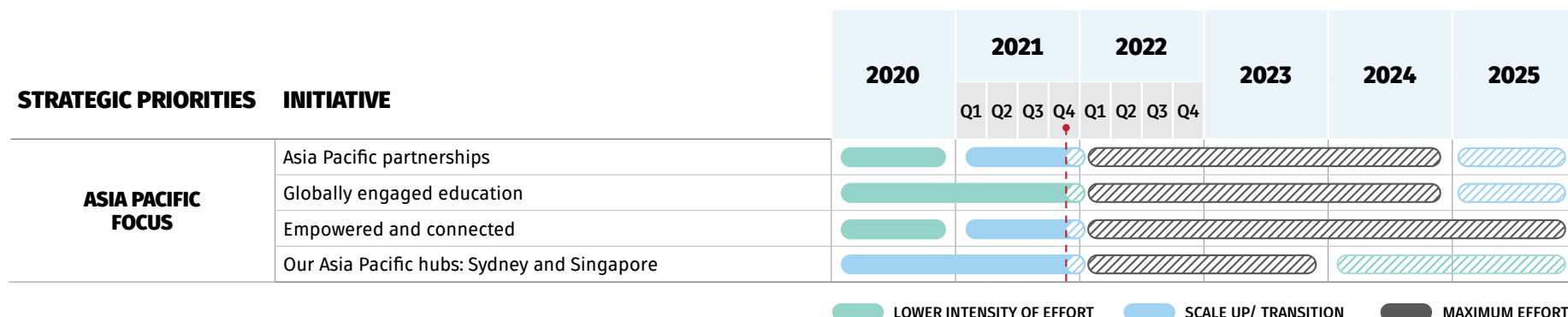
## OUR ASIA PACIFIC HUBS: SYDNEY AND SINGAPORE

The application for our Singapore campus **Newcastle Australia Institute of Higher Education to register as a Private Education Institute (PEI)** was submitted in September 2021. Strategic planning for priority programs are currently in progress with the Colleges.

Singapore will take a cohort of business and commerce students from China into their programs in 2022 to enable Chinese students who are close to completing their studies, and who have not been able to enter Australia due to COVID-19, an opportunity to study in Singapore. Progress is continuing on the teaching model to be implemented in Singapore for the six Postgraduate courses that will be launched once PEI approval is granted.



Similarly, in **Sydney**, whilst currently in a holding pattern due to the border closure, we are progressing plans to collaborate with Kaplan to reduce overheads and build readiness to receive students when Australia's borders re-open.



ALIGNED WITH THE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

## GLOBALLY ENGAGED EDUCATION



A **3Ps strategy** to grow international student recruitment has been developed: Price, Pathways, Product. The Price Strategy includes a streamlined fee reduction. An **International Student Recruitment Plan** has been agreed at Executive Committee and College plans are now being developed in consultation with each College.



While **travel restrictions associated with COVID-19** impacted international students during 2020 and 2021, the University is entering a recovery phase as border restrictions begin to ease. The **NSW International Student Arrivals Pilot Plan** has received Commonwealth approval. The first two flights will land in Sydney in December and students will enter two-weeks quarantine. The University's allocation is approximately 8 students per flight.

The University secured a partnership with **Van Lang University and Nurture Higher Education (UK)** offering a unique joint teaching program in Vietnam. Students undertake both Van Lang and University of Newcastle courses in Ho Chi Minh City, receiving a degree from both institutions on successful completion in disciplines including commerce and international business. This partnership complements existing arrangements with UTCC (Bangkok) and BINUS (Jakarta).

The University has established an **Offshore Learning Centre (OLC)** at Northeastern University Qinhuangdao in partnership with Australian Education Management Group (AEMG). Trimester 3 began in August 2021 with over 30 students enrolled.









## OUR 2025 GOALS

### ASIA PACIFIC PARTNERSHIPS



A **Partnership Framework** is in development to ensure our choice of partners and type of arrangements complement and align with strategic priorities.

A **New Policy Proposal Committee** is being established to consider the merit of new transnational program concepts and ensure that the University's international strategy, its current country and program profile, local regulations, local tax regimes, and other activities of the University in the same country are taken into account.

A strategic approach is being taken to develop **priority partners** for mobility opportunities once borders open. Over 100 applications were received for **student mobility** opportunities for 2022 in the Waikato University strategic exchange partnership, exceeding the target of 50 applicants. Work is also underway to identify other priority partners, targeting a limited number of strategic partners focussed on larger scale exchange, as well as synergistic disciplines and schools.

The Global Experience team are working to deliver a wide range of **virtual global opportunities** to diverse 'destinations'. The virtual events are rolling out during Winter 2021 and will offer students looking for a global experience various options including Virtual Internships in Fiji, Malaysia, Thailand, Japan, China and the USA.



The Australian government has been increasingly anxious about foreign influence on universities, prompting the development of protective policy designed to counter foreign interference and investment. This creates an additional layer of complexity in the University's international engagement, as it does for the sector as a whole. A Foreign Interference Committee that reports to Executive Committee is being established to provide governance oversight.

### EQUITY

We will see continued growth in the number of students participating in inbound and outbound mobility opportunities in the Asia Pacific Region, making us a leader in student mobility, measured as a proportion of our student cohort.



## 180

As at 31/12/21  
2021 target: 1313  
2025 target: 1550

Outbound student mobility.

### EXCELLENCE

We will establish three partnered institutes that deliver demonstrable improvements in our research engagement, our education programs, our student experience, and promote the stature of the University on a global stage.



## \$5.7m

As at 31/12/21, unaudited HERDC income  
2021 target: \$4.0M  
2025 target: \$4.1M

Research income with an Asia Pacific sponsor.\*

### SUSTAINABILITY

We will diversify our student cohort and experience by growing the number of students from Asia and the Pacific and reach the national average for international student commencements.



## 14.1%

As at 31/12/21  
2021 target: 24.5%  
2025 target: 32%

Proportion of Fee Paying International EFTSL to total EFTSL.

### ENGAGEMENT

We will see an increase in uptake of engagement opportunities for Alumni that enable them to contribute to our University's outcomes.



## 22.6k

As at 31/12/21  
2021 target: 16.7K  
2025 target: 25K

Engaged Alumni.\*

\* The KPI measure for this Goal will change in 2022, pending approval from Council.

# REIMAGINING OUR CAMPUSES

## REPOSITION EXISTING ESTATE



To guide future planning and development of the University's Newcastle campuses, an **Academic Strategy for the Newcastle region** is in development that takes into account emerging trends, regional and planning context, and stakeholder feedback on future campus identities. The Sydney campus has been repositioned as a shared facility with Kaplan Higher Education, and tools have been developed to measure space utilisation to inform future planning.

A number of **infrastructure development and improvement projects** have been progressed, including delivery of a new Bioresearch facility and upgrades to the Aquatic Centre at Callaghan to provide a world class, accessible sporting facility. The Conservatorium Concert Hall seating has been upgraded to improve user experience, while refurbishment of the V and ICT Buildings at Callaghan is underway to support new ways of working, teaching and learning. 'Local Connections' restaurant also opened in the Shortland Building. In addition, the Hunter Building has been closed to reduce fire and hazardous materials risks.



There is an increasing need to attend to risks within an ageing estate, diverting capital from transformational initiatives that support our Strategic Plan. The limited adaptability of the existing built environment to meet new ways of working, teaching and learning is a further challenge.

### STRATEGIC PRIORITIES INITIATIVE

|                          |                                      | 2020                      | 2021       |            |            |            | 2022       |            |            |            | 2023                | 2024                | 2025                |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
|                          |                                      |                           | Q1         | Q2         | Q3         | Q4         | Q1         | Q2         | Q3         | Q4         |                     |                     |                     |
| REIMAGINING OUR CAMPUSES | Reposition existing estate           | Lower Intensity of Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Scale Up/Transition | Scale Up/Transition | Scale Up/Transition |
|                          | New partners, new uses               | Max Effort                | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort          | Max Effort          | Max Effort          |
|                          | Digital excellence                   | Scale Up/Transition       | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort          | Max Effort          | Max Effort          |
|                          | Places to live, learn, work and play | Scale Up/Transition       | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort          | Max Effort          | Max Effort          |
|                          | Campus accessibility                 | Scale Up/Transition       | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort          | Max Effort          | Max Effort          |
|                          | Sustainable campuses                 | Max Effort                | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort | Max Effort          | Max Effort          | Max Effort          |



In 2020, **NUServices** was established to manage on-campus commercial activities and improve campus services and amenities. While the University has had an increased focus on activating campuses with a calendar of events across the year, COVID-19 restrictions have limited opportunities for physical and digital campus activation. Despite this, a **range of initiatives** have been delivered including an eSports lounge, digital bus stop, sentiment panels, digital lighting display, digital kiosks on campus, and reactivation of student clubs. A pop-up gym was also established at Ourimbah, while refurbishment of the Aquatic Centre at Callaghan was leveraged to draw the community to campus.



ALIGNED WITH THE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

LOWER INTENSITY OF EFFORT SCALE UP/ TRANSITION MAXIMUM EFFORT

## SUSTAINABLE CAMPUSES



A **Water Efficiency Management Plan** has been developed in consultation with Hunter Water, which has seen water consumption across the Callaghan campus reduced by 5% per annum. Contributing to success in this area has been the installation of two 1.1 million litre water tanks at The Forum.

The Q Building in the Honeysuckle Precinct opened in 2021 and is the **first fully certified 6 star Green Star (As Built) building in regional NSW**. At Callaghan, 99.83% of building fabric from the demolition of the McMullin Building was diverted from landfill.

The University's **solar panel program** was running at 575kWe across the campus footprint as at Q4 2021 and an additional 570kWe will be operational in 2022. A range of sustainability-focused education programs and initiatives have also been implemented in Residential Living.



While a range of important quick wins have been achieved to date, enacting a more substantial organisational change, as well as campus user behavioural change, will be a challenge requiring focus in the continuing implementation of the strategic plan.

## CAMPUS ACCESSIBILITY



With a focus on improving public transport connections in the Newcastle area, the University has **engaged regularly with Keolis Downer**, the operator of Newcastle Transport with responsibility for designing and operating bus and light rail services. **Campuses are now better connected** with the introduction of a Gosford/Ourimbah Shuttle, and inclusion of the new Q Building at Honeysuckle in the Callaghan/City Shuttle route. Real time transport information and tracking has also been made available through the MyUON App. A suite of physical security measures have been implemented, including a revamped Security team presence.



A challenge in this domain has and will continue to be a heavy bias towards car ownership in the region, with the potential for behavioural change resistance to increased adoption of public transport.

## DIGITAL EXCELLENCE



Significant improvements have been made in **foundational capabilities** including Cloud infrastructure and network. The University's cyber security posture and awareness have also been enhanced through a new Cyber Security Awareness Campaign.

There has been a continuing roll out of Customer Relationship Management (CRM), Service Management functionality and development of student apps. Further contributing to **student digital experience**, progress has been made across core Learning and Teaching capabilities including Enrolments, Workload Allocation Management, Learning Management and Curriculum Management.

Work has commenced to deliver an **uplift in capability across core corporate business systems** including HR, Finance and Travel Management. In support of research excellence, the University has developed Australia's first Field of Research Classifier solution based on **Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning algorithms**.



COVID-19 has required the redirection of effort away from strategic projects to support remote learning and working. The growing cyber threat landscape will also continue to require greater focus.





## NEW PARTNERS, NEW USES



The Central Coast Clinical School (CCCS) and Central Coast Research Institute have been delivered as part of the Gosford Hospital Precinct in partnership with the Local Health District. The CCCS was set to open its doors to students from Semester 2 2021, however COVID-19 restrictions ultimately meant classes had to run online. Also on the Central Coast, the University is partnering with the State and Federal government to develop a **new campus in the Gosford CBD**.

The Q Building at Honeysuckle was completed, incorporating the University's Innovation Network, and opening to students from Semester 2 2021, also until COVID-19 restrictions pushed learning online.

New research and commercial partners have been established at Callaghan, including a larger, purpose-built facility for ResTech, as well as exploring development of a manufacturing facility for Glucose Biosensors.

Work is underway to establish a stronger presence at the **John Hunter Hospital Precinct** through relocation of parts of the School of Medicine and Public Health office and later year students to the main hospital building.

## OUR 2025 GOALS

### EQUITY

Our environments will be accessible to all through anywhere, anytime digital platforms, and an estate that responds to the needs of all in our community.



**-4.0%**

As at 30/06/2021  
2021 target: -3.9%  
2025 target: 0.0%

Satisfaction with Campuses and Facilities (Student with a Disability Variance to Overall satisfaction).

### EXCELLENCE

Student and staff satisfaction with our physical and digital environments will increase, as measured through satisfaction surveys.



**72.9%**

As at 30/06/21  
2021 target: 74.0%  
2025 target: 80.0%

Staff and student satisfaction with our physical and digital environments.

### SUSTAINABILITY

We will be carbon emissions neutral by 2025.



**31,332**

As at 31/12/20  
2020 target: 17,000  
2025 target: 0

Carbon emissions (tonnes).

### ENGAGEMENT

Our environments will be used by staff, students, industry, partners and our communities at all times of the day and throughout the year.



**76**

As at 31/12/21  
2021 target: 108  
2025 target: 140

WiFi utilisation across our campuses (baselined in 2019-20 at 100).

# INSPIRING PEOPLE

## A HIGH-PERFORMING INSTITUTION



The Academic Performance Expectations Framework has been reviewed and reshaped. **Foundations for Inspiring People** (Academic staff) was launched in July 2021, and delivers a holistic framework with measures of quality across all three domains of academic work – research, teaching and engagement. An Academic Dashboard has been developed and is designed as a tool to support academic career planning and development by bringing publicly available metrics together and enabling users to benchmark themselves against others across the University.

The **Adaptability Framework** has been launched to build the University's capability and maturity in managing change. Training programs for leaders and staff have been implemented, with 32 Prosci practitioners accredited, and a Community of Practice established.



While several leaps forward have been made in this area, maintaining change management momentum has been challenging in the context of COVID-19 restrictions.

## BUILDING LEADERSHIP AND CAPABILITY



A pilot **Student Cadet Program** has been introduced, with 15 successful candidates beginning 12 week cadetships in July 2021. COVID-19 restrictions meant that commencement of the program was delayed, and subsequently required that participants complete their cadetships working remotely from home.



Discounted **Graduate and Undergraduate Certificates** were promoted to staff for Semester 2 enrolment, as opportunities to advance careers or provide a pathway to further study, though long term cost implications may prevent the continuation of this approach in future years. A **Leadership toolkit** has been developed and offered through SharePoint.

| STRATEGIC PRIORITIES | INITIATIVE                         | 2020 | 2021 |    |    |    | 2022 |    |    |    | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|------|------|----|----|----|------|----|----|----|------|------|------|
|                      |                                    |      | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1   | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |      |      |      |
| INSPIRING PEOPLE     | A high-performing institution      |      |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |      |      |
|                      | Building leadership and capability |      |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |      |      |
|                      | Outstanding talent                 |      |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |      |      |
|                      | A values-based culture             |      |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |      |      |
|                      | Healthy and safe workplace         |      |      |    |    |    |      |    |    |    |      |      |      |



ALIGNED WITH THE  
UNITED NATIONS  
SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT GOALS



## OUR 2025 GOALS

## HEALTHY AND SAFE WORKPLACE CULTURE



The **Wellbeing Health and Safety Strategy 2020-2025** was launched in 2021, and the **Wellbeing Health and Safety Charter 2020-2025** has been published.

An additional focus has been on building a mentally healthy workplace and supporting staff during the Enabling Change Program with the Wellness through Change program, including training and maintaining a register of Mental Health First Aid Officers for confidential peer support.



In this area there is a risk of poor accountability for the identification of psychological health and safety issues reducing the effectiveness of the University's pivot to focus on wellness.

## A VALUES-BASED CULTURE



The **Women in Leadership Program** was implemented in 2020 as an annual, year-long flagship leadership capability program. The program aims to further develop Senior Academic and Professional women's leadership skills, knowledge and confidence as well as increasing their opportunity to participate in positions of leadership.



The **Athena Swan working party** was formed, with 'Cygnets' having been drafted in preparation for the University's submission for Silver accreditation.

**Professional and Academic Mentoring Programs** have been piloted. These two distinct programs provide a framework for mentees to receive support and guidance from more experienced, senior staff to help develop their skills and confidence, build networks and more effectively navigate their career goals and paths at the University.

## OUTSTANDING TALENT



While the primary focus of effort in this initiative is planned for the mid to later years of *Looking Ahead*, some key foundational activities have been progressed, including launching the **Inspiring People Strategy**, ahead of crafting the University's Employee Value Proposition. **Staffing profiles** have also been developed for all work units as part of the Enabling Change program, to be utilised for future succession planning.

### EQUITY

We will be among the first Australian universities to achieve Silver 'Athena SWAN' accreditation, reflecting our leadership in Diversity and Inclusion supporting staff and student success.



# 33.3%

As at 31/12/21  
2021 target: 32.7%  
2025 target: 37.5%

Senior academic women.



# 48.7%

As at 31/12/21  
2021 target: 49.1%  
2025 target: 50.0%

Senior professional women.

### EXCELLENCE

We will be one of the top Universities in Australia for Student Satisfaction and Graduate Employment as measured by the Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT) Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS).



# 11.3%

As at 31/03/21  
2021 target: 10.5%  
2025 target: 10.9%

Share of UAC First Preferences.

### SUSTAINABILITY

We will be an exemplar in meeting or exceeding international work health and safety standards.



# 2

As at 20/05/2020  
2020 target: 2  
2025 target: 3

Safe Work Australia Maturity score.

### ENGAGEMENT

We will be a leading university in the sector for staff engagement.



# 72.8%

As at 30/06/21  
2021 target: 78.0%  
2025 target: 80%

Your Voice Staff Engagement Scale.



# IMPLEMENTING OUR STRATEGY

The successful implementation of the *Looking Ahead* Strategic Plan is supported by a range of enabling and foundational activities that seek to ensure our operations are efficient and our capabilities are aligned with our strategic direction.

The **Enabling Change Program** was implemented and has progressed significantly. The Program has sought to ensure our Schools, business units and operations are aligned to institutional goals and areas of priority, as well as the short and long term financial sustainability of the University. Areas of focus have included:

- a major organisational restructure, requiring careful management to ensure appropriate business continuity, as well as support staff throughout the change
- reduced capital expenditure
- course optimisation process
- change management capability building through the Adaptability Framework
- early work to review and revise our Academic Workload Allocation Model

Progress has been made to establish a coordinated **Portfolio and Program Management** approach at the University to ensure the programs of work and projects we invest in reflect the best use of limited resources, aligned with our strategic objectives. The **Portfolio Resources Allocation Committee (PRAC)** was established in 2020 to oversee the prioritisation of University investment in capital programs and projects, and monitor portfolio performance. The governance structures and processes established under PRAC have increased the transparency and robustness of our decision-making models and reporting, with a focus on delivering maximum benefits to stakeholders. Steps have also been taken to establish a Program Management approach for non-capital strategic programs and projects, to enhance visibility of planned activity across the organisation and support prioritisation of resources and effort. A range of tools and templates have been developed to support staff in adopting Portfolio and Program Management practices.

An additional, substantial piece of foundational activity has been the work undertaken to implement the University's new **Learning Management System, Canvas**, in readiness for 2022. Courses are in the process of being 'lifted and placed' into Canvas. Learning Designers will next work with course coordinators to deliver improvements to online course sites through the Course Online Enhancement Project.



Thank you to the staff, students,  
alumni and community members  
who contributed to the  
implementation of this plan to date.



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