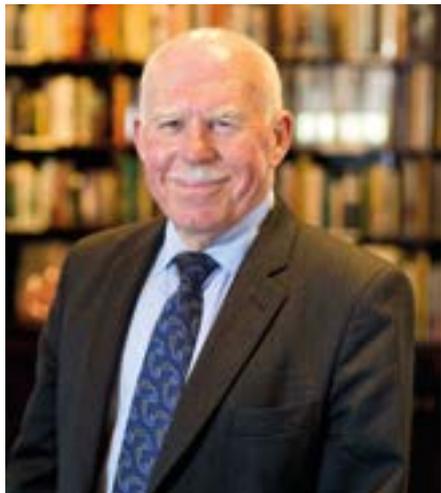


Chancellor's message



UON continued to consolidate its position as a world-class teaching, learning and research institution, and as a leader in equity, Indigenous education and regional transformation.

We maintained our commitment to excellence in teaching and learning, producing work-ready graduates, innovators and entrepreneurs. UON was destination-of-choice for 30,226 domestic and 6,955 international students from 115 countries. In 2016 we saw 6,929 students graduate from our campuses. The diversity of this student body is particularly encouraging as are our recruitment and retention rates, including those for low-socio economic students (SES) with many drawn from communities where they may be 'first in household' to attend university. Regardless of background, our goal is to provide all students with an enjoyable, safe, successful and ongoing association with UON.

The University continues to distinguish itself as a high-impact, research-driven institution. We invested in projects to attract and retain the best students and staff; supported world-class research and formed partnerships with like-minded companies that support the aims of the university. UON ranked as the top university in the Innovations Connections Ranking for industry collaboration; was positioned 8th in Australia for research ranked 'well above world standard' in the Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) 2015 assessment and was recognised for innovation in leadership, joining an elite group of 31 global universities in the Leadership Circle of the Global Consortium of Entrepreneurship Centres (GCEC).

We continue to build on our solid foundation, encouraging an operating culture that is curious, collaborative and courageous. Our *NeW Futures Strategic Plan 2016-2025* supports us as we continue to grow and pursue excellence to reach our stated goals.

It has been a great source of pride to see some of our most passionate and talented staff recognised for their outstanding work again this year and to see so many of our students showcased through award wins, scholarships and research bursaries.

While the higher-education sector in Australia currently faces a degree of uncertainty, around funding and other issues; our financial position allows us to continue to invest to ensure our teaching, learning and research objectives are met.

We remain indebted to those donors, partners and alumni who continue to generously support UON.

I thank my colleagues on the University Council for their significant contribution. I also thank our Vice-Chancellor and President, Professor Caroline McMillen, her senior management team and staff, alumni and other friends of the University for their commitment and support throughout the year. I remain confident that under the strategic direction of NeW Futures, UON will continue to thrive as a sustainable, accountable and equitable, world-class institution.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'P. Jeans'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mr PE. (Paul) Jeans
Chancellor

Vice-Chancellor's message



After the excitement of our C50 celebrations in 2015, UON saw 2016 in with energy and focus as we launched our NeW Futures Strategic Plan 2016-2025. This plan is built on our vision that UON stands as a global leader distinguished by our commitment to equity and excellence, and to creating a better future for our regions through innovation and impact.

On the world stage, we were recognised for the first time among the top 250 universities in both the Times Higher Education and QS World University Rankings reflecting UON's performance and growing international reputation and impact.

We celebrated the historic 10th anniversary of our UON Singapore Campus and we were delighted to be accredited by the USA-based Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, an honour earned by fewer than five per cent of the world's business programs. The focus on being a 'global partner of choice' resulted in a 45% increase in international undergraduate students commencing at UON in 2016. We also continued our work to provide next-generation teaching and learning through stackable and accessible courses using online and blended educational approaches including launching (with online provider edX) the world's first Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) in Natural History Illustration which attracted over 13,000 enrolments from across the world.

We maintained our strong focus on equity and social justice and in 2016, our enrolments of indigenous students increased above 1000 – which was an Australian first and our largest ever indigenous student cohort. We are proud

that our indigenous student cohort represents 3.5% of total enrolments and that these enrolments are represented across all five of our Faculties.

We were also proud to open the UON-led Centre International de Formation des Autorités et Leaders (CIFAL) focussing on Disaster Preparedness and Risk Reduction as part of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research. The 2016 Universities Conference, hosted in the always impressive HMRI facility, brought together international university leaders to engage with academic, community and business leaders on the role of universities in regional transformation.

Across our regions, we started 2016 with a great graduation ceremony at UON Port Macquarie, including celebrating our first two doctoral graduates at UON Port Macquarie. Our UON Centre for Rural and Remote Mental Health in Orange and the Rural Adversity Mental Health Program were awarded \$19 million from the NSW Government, and the Federal Government awarded \$1.5 million to our innovative UON Gomeroy gaaynggal Centre in Tamworth. A new \$72.5m Central Coast Medical School and associated Health and Medical Research Institute in Gosford, supported by \$32.5m from the Federal Government and \$20m from the NSW Government, will provide cutting-edge education and research facilities for the Central Coast community. This project is the result of strong collaboration and partnership between UON Central Coast, Gosford City Council and the Central Coast Local Health District.

UON's educational precinct in the Newcastle CBD, including the landmark \$95m NeW Space facility which 'topped out' in 2016, was enhanced by the NSW Government's \$9.8 million investment toward the \$18 million city-based Hunter Innovation Project. This Project, which includes the creation of a new Innovation Hub in the centre of Newcastle, represents a partnership between UON, the Newcastle City Council, Hunter DiGit and Newcastle Now. This announcement followed the launch of the University's Integrated Innovation Network, supported with \$1m from the NSW Government, which saw innovation hubs open in Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Williamtown and Muswellbrook.

Our researchers broke new ground across all fields and all Faculties – whether it was developing world-first microscopic technology innovations, discovering a new species of frog or challenging the established view on the authorship of Shakespeare's plays, UON continued to disrupt orthodoxies held in 'global academies.' We continued to perform strongly in highly competitive programs with \$25m awarded for ARC and NHMRC funded research and we built a strong portfolio of industry funded research, ranking 3rd in NSW and 9th in Australia on this measure. Recent data released by AusIndustries placed UON as the top University in the country for business and industry engagement in their Industry Connection metric. This signals we are on track to deliver our NeW Futures goal to deliver global and regional impact as a result of contributions to business improvement, entrepreneurship, the creation of start-ups and new businesses, and the supply of industry ready graduates.

Our UON Academy initiative, created to support the professional development of our sessional staff, was awarded the ATEM Best Practice Award, and we were delighted that the University was recognised with a national Women's Gender Equality Agency citation as an Employer of Choice for Gender Equality. As an institution we also worked together in workshops across UON to consider how we can build on our momentum to develop a curious, collaborative and courageous culture.

I would wish to thank all of our staff, students, partners, alumni and generous benefactors and friends for a notable first year in delivering on the vision of NeW Futures. We have much to do – but I am confident we have built the momentum and agility that will help us navigate some of the choppy waters of global and national higher education reforms, not to mention Brexit and other geopolitical seismic events.

Professor Caroline McMillen
Vice-Chancellor and President