

PART TWO: STRATEGY

LOOKING AHEAD STRATEGIC PLAN

The Looking Ahead Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025 is the University's roadmap to achieving its vision to be a world-leading university for its regions, underpinned by the values of excellence, equity, engagement and sustainability.

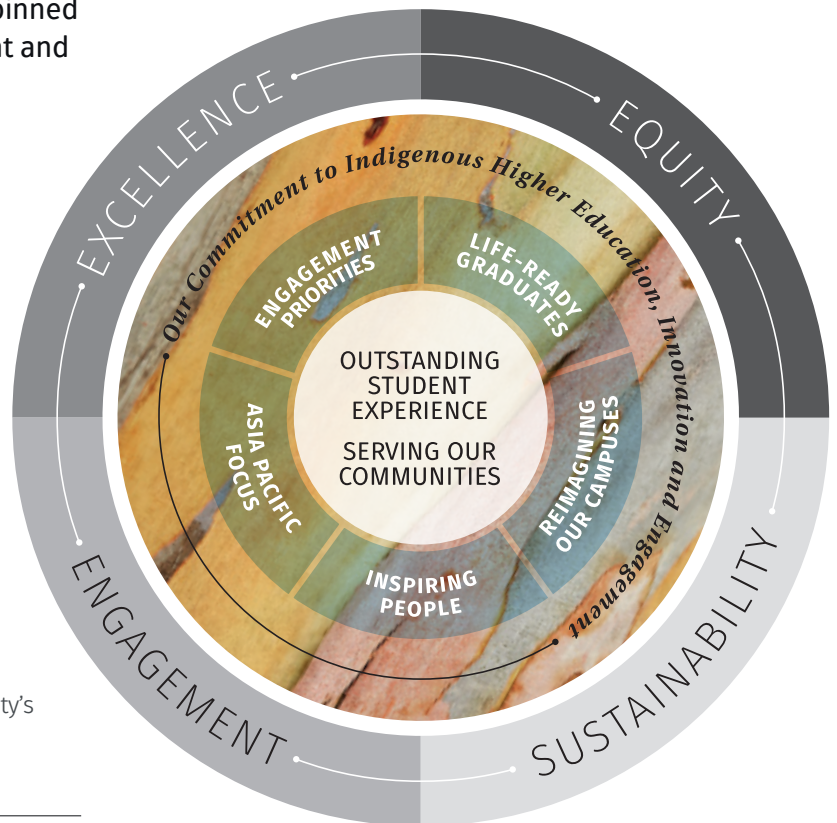
The Vice-Chancellor and Council oversee resourcing of the plan, ensuring it remains true to the essence of the University of Newcastle with initiatives and goals that are focused on an outstanding student experience and serving our communities.

The Looking Ahead Strategic Plan 2020-2025 is structured around five key pillars:

- Life-Ready Graduates
- Engagement Priorities – Better Healthier Living, Next Generation Resources, Connected Communities, and Growing Industries
- Asia Pacific Focus
- Reimagining our Campuses
- Inspiring People

Our commitment to Indigenous Higher Education, Innovation and Engagement is woven throughout.

Progress against the strategic plan's objectives are monitored quarterly, with results reported to the University's Council.



The *Looking Ahead Strategic Plan 2020-2025* is available at newcastle.edu.au/strategic-plan

2025 HIGHLIGHTS

OUR INDIGENOUS COMMITMENT

Excellence: Research Income Indigenous Chief Investigator

Financial Year: \$6.2m
2025 Target: \$3m

LIFE READY GRADUATES

Engagement: WIL Participation

Financial Year: 99.9%
2025 Target: 100%

ASIA PACIFIC FOCUS

Engagement: Cumulative Philanthropic Income

Financial Year: \$117.3m
2025 Target: \$75m

REIMAGINING OUR CAMPUSES

Excellence: Satisfaction with Physical and Digital Environments

Financial Year: 79.5%
2025 Target: 80%

INSPIRING OUR PEOPLE

Equity: Senior Academic Women

Financial Year: 39.2
2025 Target: 37.5%

KPI	Unit	Results (Actuals)			2025		As at	
		FY2024	FY2025	YOY Variance	Target ^{1,2,3}	Benchmark ¹		
Student Load and Revenue³								
Commonwealth supported places (CSP)	Load	EFTSL	19,907	20,226	— 2%	19,734	-	31/12/25
	Revenue	\$M	431.0	463.4	▲ 8%	453.9	-	
Fee paying domestic (FPD)	Load	EFTSL	765	1,011	▲ 32%	854	-	
	Revenue	\$M	21.8	26.2	▲ 20%	25.8	-	
Fee paying international (FPI)	Load	EFTSL	3,016	3,833	▲ 27%	3,338	-	
	Revenue ⁴	\$M	117.4	158.9	▲ 35%	136.9	-	
Student Retention								
Student retention (UG) ⁵	%		84.7	86.6	▲ 1.9	-	84.4	31/12/25
Workforce Productivity								
Student/Staff ratio ^{6,11}	#		24:1	25.5:1	-	-	22.1	31/12/25
Academic staff proportion ^{6,7,8}	%		35.5	39.2	▲ 10%	-	38.6	
Professional staff proportion ^{6,7,8}	%		60.6	52.8	▼ -13%	-	56.8	
RESEARCH INCOME⁹								
Category 1: Australian competitive grant	\$M		56.0	TBC	-	-	-	31/12/25
Category 2: Other public sector	\$M		22.5	TBC	-	-	-	
Category 3: Industry and other	\$M		53.3	TBC	-	-	-	
Category 4: Cooperative Research Centre (CRC)	\$M		1.4	TBC	-	-	-	
Total HERDC Income ⁹	\$M		133.3	TBC	-	150	-	
Work Health and Safety								
TRIFR (total recordable frequency rate)	#		5.68	6.1	▼ 8%	-	-	31/12/25
WHS events (hazard/near miss/incident)	#		877	939.0	▼ 7%	-	-	
AIMS action within 14 days	%		71.0	82.0	▲ 15%	100	-	
Safety induction completion rate	%		97.1	94.1	▼ -3%	100	-	
Executive Safety Walk and Talk completion rate	%		82.0	81.0	— -1%	100	-	
Key Financial Metrics¹⁰								
Total Operating Income	\$0		684,005	757,985	▲ 11%	700,642	-	31/12/25
Total Operating Expenses	\$0		588,485	646,010	▲ 10%	630,501	-	
EBITDA	\$0		95,520	111,975	▲ 17%	70,141	-	
EBITDA Margin	%		14.0	14.8	▲ 6%	10	-	

1 Each Operational KPI has either a 2025 target or a sector benchmark reported. Where a sector benchmark is given, this is not a target but provides an indication of our university's performance relative to competitors. | 2 Load and revenue targets were set in end of year 2024 as part of 2025 budget process. | 3 Results include 'internal' campuses only (excludes Singapore and CIE). | 4 Revenue figures represent gross income from international student load, and do not include scholarships, discounts, fee waivers or agents' fees. | 5 Retention is calculated according to HEIM, figures are reported as per the previous year, ie. FY2025 is equivalent to FY2024. 2023 is the latest available benchmark. | 6 Student to staff ratios (SSR) are calculated using the Department of Education Skills and Employment methodology and consists of full-time, fractional full-time and casual academic teaching staff in an Academic Organisational Unit. The benchmark is sourced from Higher Education Statistics 2023 Student Staff Ratios, published by the Department as at 13 March 2025 which is the latest available. | 7 The benchmark reported is sourced from the AHEIA Universities Benchmarking Report, published August 2024. The results and benchmark exclude casuals. | 8 Excludes proportion of Senior Management. | 9 The 2025 audited result is not available. Figures are unaudited HERDC. The 2025 specifications draft is currently under review, and the outcome of the review and subsequent finalisation of the specifications will have an impact on the final 2025 HERDC amount. | 10 Full Year Budget is equal to target for Financial metrics. | 11 Rating icons assume a threshold of 2% variance.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR 2026 AND BEYOND

In 2026, the University of Newcastle will launch the next iteration of its Strategic Plan; Looking Ahead 2030. The Strategic Plan acts as the University's guiding framework that sets out our vision, purpose and priorities for the next five years. The plan ensures that decisions are made in alignment with the University's core values and long-term goals.

Throughout 2025 the University engaged a diverse range of stakeholders, including community members, industry representatives, staff, and University leaders, and drew on existing student feedback to ensure that the strategic plan is informed by a broad spectrum of perspectives and insights.