WELLBEING HEALTH AND SAFETY STRATEGY

2020-2025

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE AUSTRALIA

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The University of Newcastle acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands within our footprint areas: Awabakal Nation, Darkinjung Nation, Biripai Nation, Worimi Nation, Wonnarua Nation and Eora Nation. We also pay respect to the wisdom of our Elders past and present.

Cover Artwork: The Collaborative Art Project 2020 *Inspired and guided by Aunty Bronwyn Chambers*

Artists: Aunty Bronwyn Chambers, Tahleigha Compton, Chloe Fox, Jennifer De Luca, Victoria Merillo, Malvika Satelkar, Peter Power, Callan Hobson, Chris Krogh, Marion Braslin, Kimberley Stone, Julia Coffey, Oliver Salmon, Frances Joy, Luka Bungaree, Hunnah McNab, Joyleen Christensen, Megan McIlveen, Penny Costaridis, Keely Hine, Ben Ong, Jackie Watson, Zac Campbell.

Supported by: Jessica Brennan, Anne Marie Murland, Linda Cox, Joel Grogan, Chloe Hey

The connection to place and people are key elements of good mental health. The Collaborative Art Project is an example of how the bringing together of people, to share experiences, to pool ideas in a safe and guided way can result in an output that goes well beyond the product itself. This sense of belonging, inclusion, diversity of thought and feeling valued, are essential to psychological safety.

"I was overwhelmed by the pride shown by the students and staff for the Central Coast Campus who contributed in the Collaborative Art Project. All participants demonstrated the utmost respect and enthusiasm which is evident in the beautiful artwork that depicts their place of study, work and perfectly represents Darkinung Country to them."

Aunty Bronwyn Chambers, Elder in Residence at the Wollotuka Institute

CONTENTS

A message from our Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor ***1***

Our vision: Moving beyond-zero *3*

Our health and safety maturity *5*

Delivering our vision: Our priorities ***6***

A values-based culture *7*

Strong safety leadership *8*

A focus on wellness *10*

Robust systems and risk management *11*

Safe and supportive environments *12*

Implementing our strategy ***13***

Measuring our success ***15***

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHANCELLOR AND VICE-CHANCELLOR

"We are committed to developing a culture that strives for continuous improvement in health, safety and wellbeing. One that embodies strong leadership commitment, high levels of staff and student engagement, and is integrated into – not separate from – business decisions and processes."

"Affirming programs that equip students with the skills and knowledge needed to support and prioritise their safety and wellbeing will be essential in producing graduates who are able to connect and support themselves and their communities."

Looking Ahead Strategic Plan 2020-2025

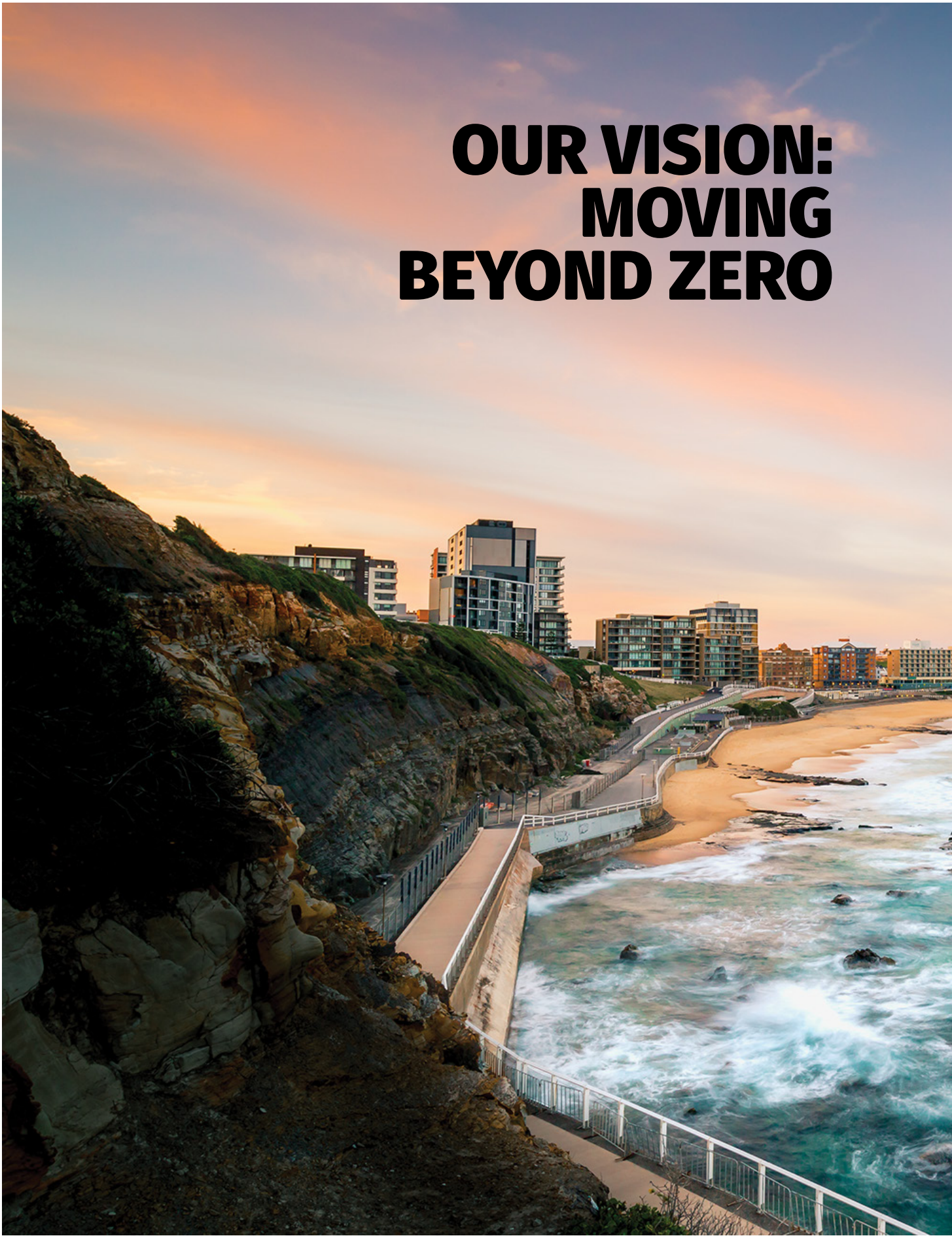
We are responsible for establishing and maintaining campuses where our staff and students feel safe, valued and empowered. This involves adopting a ***beyond-zero*** approach to our safety management and being an exemplar in meeting or exceeding international work, health and safety standards.

The success of the University depends on our people and we are committed to the safety and wellbeing of everyone who comes here to work or learn. This will be achieved by adopting a shared culture of care and a personal commitment to the safety and wellbeing of everyone on our campuses.

Professor Alex Zelinsky AO
Vice-Chancellor and President

Mr P.E. (Paul) Jeans
Chancellor

OUR VISION: MOVING BEYOND ZERO



We host large numbers of students, staff, contractors and visitors on our campuses. We also host a diverse range of activities including teaching, research, events, sports and retail services. The various physical environments and specialised activities present differing challenges in terms of safety. This includes a wide range of complex research infrastructure and equipment with significant inherent safety risks.

The concept of zero harm has driven our wellbeing, health and safety activities in recent years, with the expectation of continuous improvement to enhance the safety culture. We have been successful in minimising hazards and injuries, engaging staff, increasing the rate of preventative reporting, and improving safety processes and management.

The challenge now is to not only minimise injury and illness but to also promote positive health outcomes and wellness. Zero harm will no longer be the ultimate goal of our approach to wellbeing, health and safety. Rather, a ***beyond-zero*** approach will be adopted as the goal where people entering our campuses not only remain injury free but improve their physical and mental wellbeing while with us.

Newcastle Beach and Ocean Baths

OUR HEALTH AND SAFETY MATURITY

Our Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2021 was a foundation strategy with the aim of applying best practice, meeting legislative requirements and driving a positive safety culture. The Looking Ahead Strategic Plan 2020-2025 provides the opportunity to further develop and align our wellbeing, health and safety approach with our strategic priorities and goals.

We have made good progress in our safety journey, but we need to continue to mature our safety culture. Maturity models provide a basis to understand current maturity and how to move up the maturity ladder to meet strategic goals. Safe Work Australia provides a three-tier maturity model that plots the journey from:

1. IMMATURE

Reactive, compliance focus, emerging capability

2. DEVELOPING

Informing, managing, developing awareness, towards improvement

3. MATURING

Proactive, generative learning, continuously improving

Apart from providing a safe and secure work environment, a mature safety culture has other benefits including attracting and securing talent, brand and reputation protection, and stakeholder value.

We are currently positioned mainly within the Developing maturity tier and are committed to moving wholly within the Maturing tier, in keeping with our strategic goal of ***beyond-zero*** performance.

This *Wellbeing, Health and Safety Strategy 2020-2025* supports the journey to a fully mature safety culture.

Birabahn, Callaghan Campus

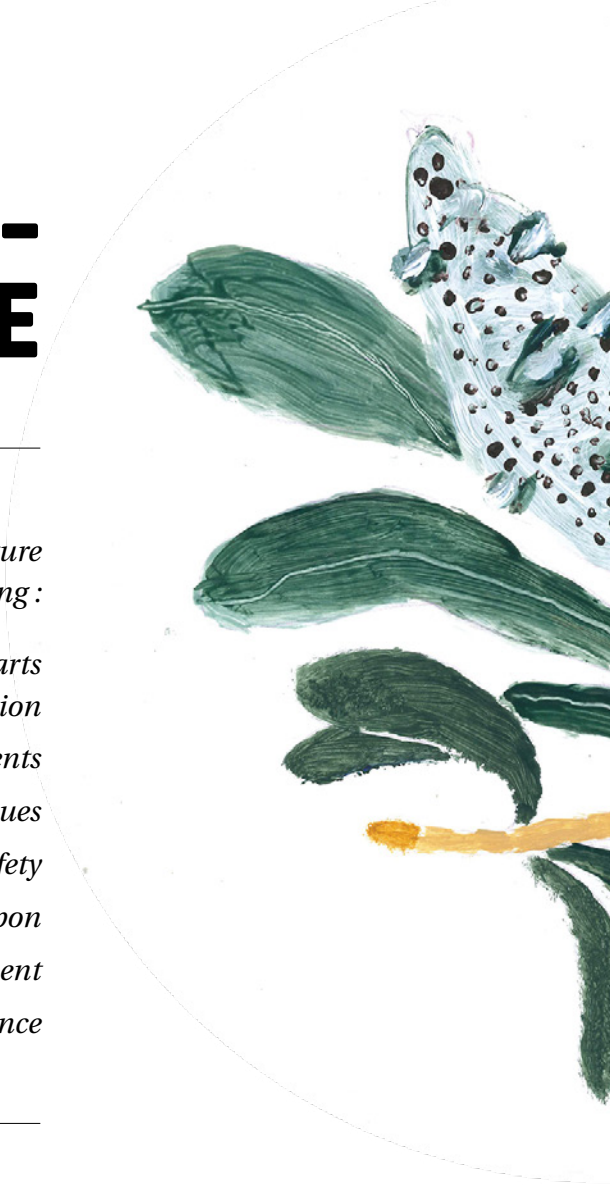
DELIVERING OUR VISION: OUR PRIORITIES

Our journey will be focused around five key priority areas that support an environment where people are safe, healthy and well.

To achieve our vision and adopt a ***beyond-zero*** approach, we will:

- foster leadership to support a proactive safety culture
- embed safety in organisational planning and thinking
- grow the dialogue and response to psychological wellbeing
- promote shared ownership of outcomes
- view safety as an outcome of business culture and strategy rather than a process
- think creatively and be open to new ideas
- commit to being a sector leader in safety performance
- commit to continuous improvement

A VALUES-BASED CULTURE



A values-based safety culture involves a culture of care and personal commitment including :

- active and open engagement across all parts of the organisation

- genuine concern for the wellbeing of staff and students

- accountable leaders who act on issues

- shared and individual responsibility for safety

- timely and reliable information that is acted upon

- ongoing innovation and improvement

- trust that is maintained through experience

KEY INITIATIVES

SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

Our staff, contractors and students need to have a clear understanding of their obligations as well as the benefits to everyone of an effective safety culture. We will:

- redesign our induction and orientation programs to emphasise our wellbeing, health and safety approach and expectations.
- grow the visibility and awareness of safety issues through an ongoing series of staff, contractor and student campaigns and training programs.

RECOGNISING INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

A **beyond-zero** approach to safety is characterised by ongoing innovation and improvement. We will:

- revise our safety awards and recognition program for engagement, innovation and improvement.
- identify and promote best practices and support broad adoption.

COMPELLING AND TRANSPARENT EVIDENCE

A strong safety culture is informed by staff, contractor and student knowledge and experience. We will:

- ensure that safety reporting is used to grow understanding of current performance and to drive improvement.
- further develop the suite of performance indicators to capture both lead and lag indicators, helping ensure that our decisions are fully informed.

MEASURING SUCCESS

We will see increased perception of - and participation in - wellbeing, health and safety among our staff and students.

STRONG SAFETY LEADERSHIP

Leadership in safety is a fundamental part of our business and is integral to success. Strong and effective safety leadership involves:

- consultation and clear two-way communication
- role clarity and shared involvement
- systematic management of risks
- organisational learning
- appropriate training
- an environment of trust and respect

KEY INITIATIVES

EQUIPPING OUR LEADERS

Our leaders have a critical role in actively fostering a safety culture. We will:

- develop and implement a wellbeing, health and safety Leadership Program to support enhanced leadership capability at all levels and to ensure a consistent approach.
- identify and support "champions" to promote and facilitate good wellbeing, health and safety practices.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

Our leaders and managers are accountable for safety performance. We will:

- embed leadership and management responsibility and accountability through performance reviews, the University Leadership Framework and further development of the Professional Staff Capability Matrix.
- increase engagement with Council and Executive Committee to support governance oversight of this Strategy and implementation of initiatives.

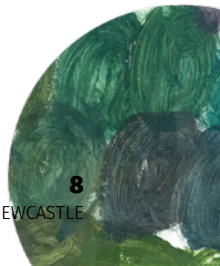
DRIVING POWERFUL CONVERSATIONS

Effective communication drives change and improvement. We will:

- develop new conversations that focus on wellbeing, health and safety as an outcome of our Strategy, business decisions, culture and performance.
- ensure that performance discussions and evaluations between supervisors and staff include safety performance.

MEASURING SUCCESS

We will see increased visibility and effectiveness of our safety leadership among our staff.



D Building, Callaghan Campus

A FOCUS ON WELLNESS

There is a growing need to support physical and psychological wellness as part of a shared commitment to enhanced wellbeing for our staff and students. A focus on wellness involves:

- the University as a health promoting organisation
- wellbeing contributing to staff / student satisfaction and productivity
- shared commitment to wellness outcomes
- understanding incentives to enhance wellness
- identification and active management of mental health risks
- destigmatising and actively discussing mental health
- engaging with community wellbeing promotions
- identifying and engaging with our researchers in this field for their expertise and advice

KEY INITIATIVES

PROMOTING WELLNESS

Physical and psychological wellbeing benefits our staff and students individually as well as the University through stronger organisational performance. We will:

- develop a communications and promotions program that states our commitment and approach to wellness, including physical and physiological wellbeing.
- redevelop our web-based information and tools including establishment of a Wellness Hub.

GROWING OUR FOCUS ON MENTAL HEALTH

Psychological ill health is a growing concern in contemporary workplaces. While we have established programs that address the mental health of students, we need to build a stronger set of resources, processes and services to support the mental health of our staff. We will:

- introduce a Mental Health and Wellbeing Program for staff that lifts our response in this area.
- ensure our Mental Health and Wellbeing Program aligns with our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion programs in supporting psychologically safe environments across our campuses.

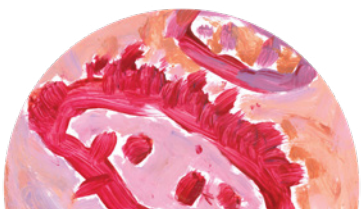
WELLNESS SERVICES

Wellness services can encourage participation and provide support when needed. We will:

- review existing benefit programs and uptake and consider new Corporate Health Benefit Programs such as Private Health Fund partnerships.
- we will ensure the availability and effectiveness of the University Health Service, counselling services and other allied health services offered on our campuses.

MEASURING SUCCESS

We will see increased satisfaction in terms of physical and psychological wellness among our staff and students.



ROBUST SYSTEMS AND RISK MANAGEMENT

An effective Work Health Safety (WHS) management system includes systematic risk assessment and management, policies, procedures, training, signage and systems that provide the underpinning "infrastructure" to manage WHS programs. Robust systems and risk management involve:

- active involvement of staff and students in the identification of risks

- well designed and understood processes for assessing and managing risks

- comprehensive, up-to-date and clear policies and procedures

- fit-for-purpose and user-friendly IT support systems

- appropriate training

- legislative and regulatory compliance

KEY INITIATIVES

A HOLISTIC RISK APPROACH

Our approach to risk as it relates to WHS will involve a life-cycle view. We will:

- ensure our WHS risk approaches are aligned to Enterprise Risk Management Systems and integrated into core business decision making.
- review our resourcing levels and approach to risk management throughout the research life-cycle in high risk work and research areas.
- review and manage procurement, storage, use and disposal of hazardous materials.

SUPPORTING PLATFORMS

We want to make it easy for our people to fulfil their WHS obligations. We will:

- review the use of the AIMS system and other safety systems with a view to simplifying use, automating manual processes and extending use to all students, as well as exploring new systems solutions for complex and time-consuming compliance processes.
- explore opportunities for data integration, reporting and analytics to support a better-informed understanding and approach to supporting WHS.

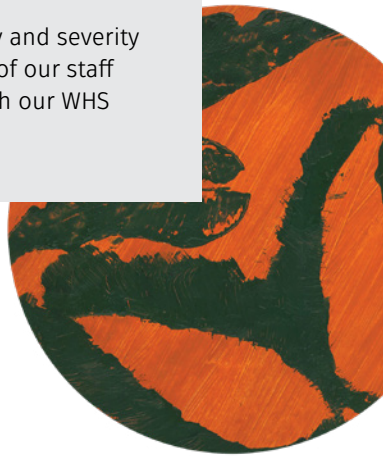
EFFECTIVE POLICIES AND TRAINING

It is vital that all our people understand their obligations and where to turn for assistance. We will:

- review and update all our WHS policies and procedures to ensure they are fit-for-purpose and readily accessible.
- refresh and promote the WHS training program to ensure our staff, students and contractors receive appropriate and timely training.

MEASURING SUCCESS

We will see a decreased frequency and severity of work-related injury and illness of our staff and students as measured through our WHS performance indicators.



SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENTS

The University has the objective of creating safe and vibrant campus environments for students, staff and our communities. Safe and vibrant environments involve:

- a focus on our spaces and their impact on wellbeing, health and safety

- public spaces that foster engagement, vibrancy, social connection and safety

- social spaces that encourage personal connections

- the right infrastructure to ensure safety on campuses at all times

- built environments that consider wellness for occupants as a core requirement

- engagement with community partners to promote wellbeing, health and safety beyond our campus borders

KEY INITIATIVES

SAFE CAMPUSES

Safety on our campuses is a key expectation of our students, staff and other stakeholders. We will:

- develop and implement a high-risk reduction program based on identified hazards across campuses and continue to manage estate compliance and health and safety obligations to ensure the ongoing safety of our built environments.
- continue to implement the Security Improvement Program focusing on safety infrastructure such as lighting, CCTV, signage, help points and security technology.

ENGAGING SPACES

Campus spaces should not only be safe but also promote wellbeing and social inclusion for our students and staff. We will:

- create a feeling of connectedness to our University by providing reasons for students and the community to engage with us, physically and digitally.

BUILDING A HEALTHY FUTURE

Campus infrastructure should support the wellness and safety of our occupants and visitors. We will:

- update our Campus Master Plans to identify opportunities to create improved public spaces that are vibrant, activated and safe.

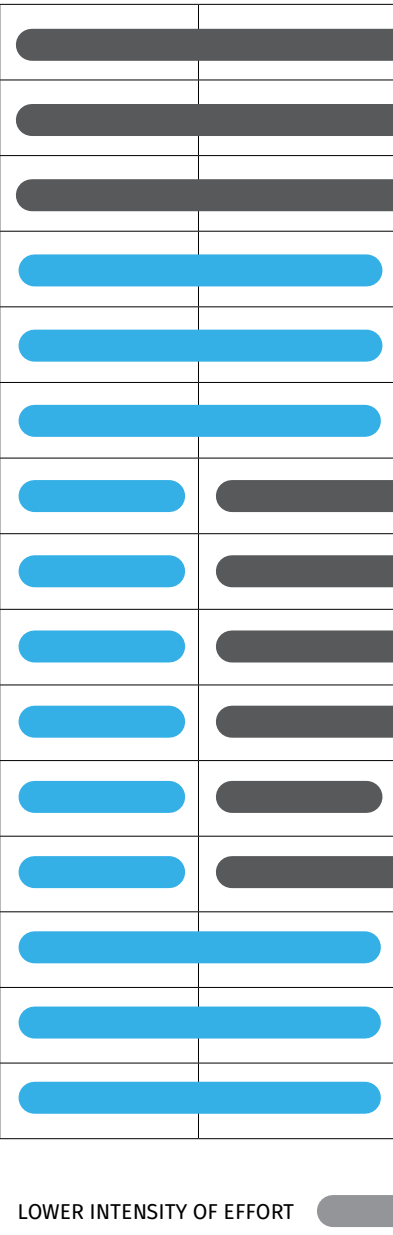
MEASURING SUCCESS

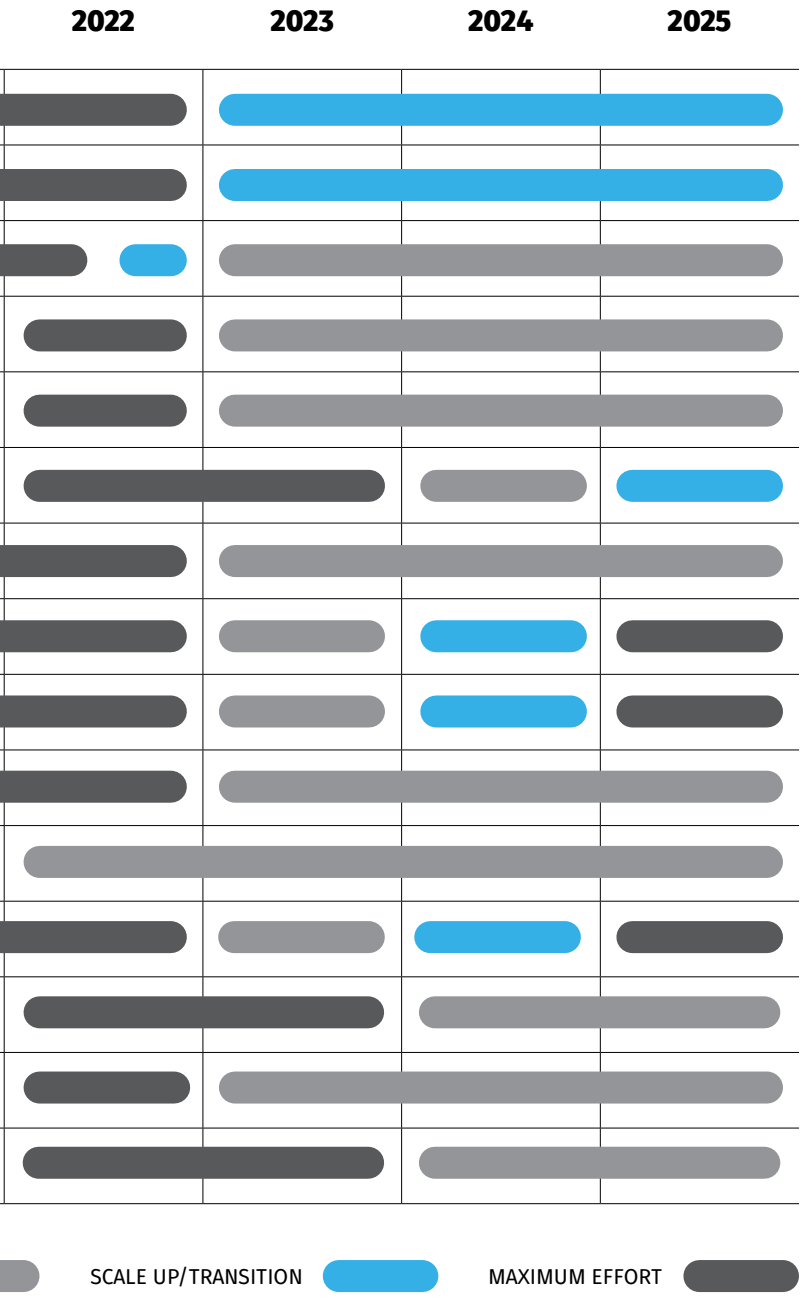
We will see a reduction in the number of health and safety incidents that have a physical environmental contributing factor as measured through our WHS performance indicators.

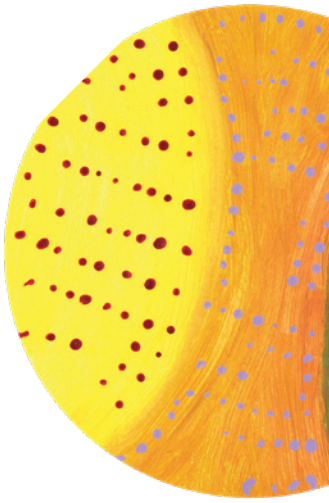
IMPLEMENTING OUR STRATEGY

Annual wellbeing, health and safety operational plans will be developed to support the achievement of this Strategy.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	INITIATIVE
A VALUES-BASED CULTURE	Shared responsibility
	Recognising innovation and continuous improvement
	Compelling and transparent evidence
STRONG SAFETY LEADERSHIP	Equipping our leaders
	Accountability and responsibility
	Driving powerful conversations
A FOCUS ON WELLNESS	Promoting wellness
	Growing our focus on mental health
	Wellness services
ROBUST SYSTEMS AND RISK MANAGEMENT	A holistic risk approach
	Supporting platforms
	Effective policies and procedures
SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENTS	Safe campuses
	Engaging spaces
	Building a healthy future




2022
2023
2024
2025
SCALE UP/TRANSITION
MAXIMUM EFFORT



MEASURING OUR SUCCESS

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	2025 GOAL
OVERALL	We will be an exemplar in meeting or exceeding international work health and safety standards
A VALUES-BASED CULTURE	We will see increased perception of - and participation in - our safety culture among our staff and students
STRONG SAFETY LEADERSHIP	We will see increased visibility and effectiveness of our safety leadership among our staff
A FOCUS ON WELLNESS	We will see increased satisfaction in terms of physical and psychological wellness among our staff and students
ROBUST SYSTEMS AND RISK MANAGEMENT	We will see decreased frequency and severity of injury and illness of our staff and students as measured through our WHS performance indicators
SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENTS	We will see a reduction in the number of health and safety incidents that have a physical environmental contributing factor as measured through our WHS performance indicators

These measures are our headline expression of what success in wellbeing, health and safety looks like and will be supported by a detailed set of lead and lag indicators that will form the basis of regular reporting to the Council and Executive Committee.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

Performance Measure	Baseline		2025 Target
	Year	Result	
University score in the SafeWork Australia Wellness, Health and Safety Maturity Model	2019	2	3
Your Voice and Student Feedback on The University of Newcastle (SFUN) survey questions	2019	79.9%	85%
Your Voice survey questions	2019	74.4%	80%
Your Voice and Student Feedback on The University of Newcastle (SFUN) survey questions	2019	64.4%	80%
The University will report on: • Total Recordable Injuries, including Total Class 1, Class 2 and Class 3 injuries • Total Recordable Injury Frequency Rate (TRIFR)	2019	16 5.65	0.0 0.0
Incidents and injuries related to physical environmental factors	2019	LTI: 14	LTI (Physical): 0

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