

RESEARCH PLAN 2016-2020



# Together, we can do this



The UNE Research Plan supports the UNE Strategic Plan 2016-2020.

## Aspiration

By 2020 we will be the University of Choice for students and researchers who desire to transform their lives and help to build resilient communities.

## Purpose

Our role is to develop individual aspirations, potential and capability and to enhance the future of our communities through quality research, fostering innovation and delivering a formative educational experience. Our heart is our single campus embedded in the community of the New England. The magnitude of our research and student participation is global. We will connect with our students for life. We will build enduring, global partnerships with industry, professions, business and government.

*Whether it is supporting grass-root community health projects, improving livestock genetic traits for breeders, or developing mathematical algorithms to predict the spread of invasive species, our researchers are working to provide solutions for an uncertain future.*

**Professor Heiko Daniel,  
Pro Vice-Chancellor Research**

## VALUES

- Creative, innovative, willing to change and take calculated risks
- Respectful, approachable and helpful
- Sustainable, robust and dependable
- Ethical, honest, accountable and authentic

## Priorities

The UNE Strategic Plan 2016-2020, “Together, we can do this” identifies six strategic priorities:

**Priority 1:** Deliver excellent research with high impact

**Priority 2:** Deliver a high quality student experience

**Priority 3:** Diversify and grow income

**Priority 4:** Digital dominance

**Priority 5:** Improve operational resilience

**Priority 6:** Create a bold and innovative culture



## Our Objectives

UNE has six key objectives in relation to strategic priority one for strengthening research to 2020:

- Define Centres of Excellence research strategy and implement Phase One of this strategy
- Establish and implement strategy to build HDR enrolments and completions
- Maintain a culture of research excellence
- Invest strongly in research areas of critical mass where UNE will be a leader
- Develop and implement a strategy for growth in international partnerships
- Recognition as a thought leader in our communities

In addition to the strategic priorities and objectives, the Vice-Chancellor has nominated two themes of strategic import: (1) Internationalisation and (2) Indigenous engagement and equity, both of which are incorporated across all six strategic priorities to ensure an integrated, university-wide focus on these issues of importance.

Progress will be measured against the performance indicators detailed across high-level Key Result Areas (KRA) set out in the UNE Business Plan 2016-2019.

## Our Strengths

UNE is dedicated to identifying and delivering innovations of value to society and industry, in Australia and internationally, with a particular emphasis on interdisciplinary research for tackling complex problems in rural and regional Australia. This research involves extensive engagement in large-scale collaborations within the university, nationally and internationally, and is underpinned by five thematic research priorities:

- **Australia's future food and water security:** smart science, smart technology
- **Climate change and environmental sustainability:** protecting biodiversity, effective policies
- **Health and wellbeing in rural communities:** social exclusion, health inequity, mental health, social policy
- **Our communities, our neighbours:** regional and rural development, sustainability, prosperity, governance and peace
- **Our past, present and future:** documentation, protection and promotion of cultural heritage, history, memory and identity in Australia and internationally.

*Improving outcomes for rural and regional communities is at the heart of UNE's Research Endeavour. UNE is addressing the most challenging threats to the health, sustainability and livelihoods of regional communities, throughout Australia and abroad.*

**Professor Annabelle Duncan,  
Vice-Chancellor and CEO**



## RESEARCH EXCELLENCE

The Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) 2015 results are the most recent confirmation of the high quality of our research. UNE has nine fields of research rated 'well above world standard' (ERA rating of 5) included Geology, Soil Sciences, Ecology, Zoology, 'Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences', 'Agriculture, Land and Farm Management', Animal Production, 'Human Movement and Sports Sciences', and 'Other Medical and Health Sciences'. A further eleven research fields were rated 'above world standard' (ERA rating of 4). Overall, 87 per cent of UNE's fields of research were rated at world standard or above under ERA 2015.

## Goal, Target, Strategies and Outcomes

The University of New England seeks to engage in the creation, development and application of knowledge; it is the discovery and creation of new knowledge in all forms that distinguishes us as a research university. We aim to influence the future through excellence in research in all our chosen fields, to inspire new generations of students and to excel in articulating and implementing ideas that contribute to solving the problems facing our society and global communities.

### ENACTMENT OF VALUES

The university will strengthen its focus on research and scholarship; provide an environment that promotes research excellence; and expand research capacity and capabilities.

### ENABLERS AND SUPPORTERS

- Effective business development units; effective technology platforms; cutting-edge research infrastructure
- Effective recruitment of research leaders; development and retention of future leaders; distinctive centres of research excellence
- Sustainable research investment including internal grants, research scholarships and postdoctoral programs

## Goal: Research Excellence

**We achieve international distinction in our chosen fields of research.**

**Long Term Target:** UNE is the nation's university of choice for research into issues of local and global significance.

**Key Performance Indicators:** National Competitive Grant Income; Industry-based Research Income; HDR Load; HDR Completions; High-quality Research Publications; Research Areas of International Excellence; Industry Partnerships; International Research Partnerships

**Performance Measures:** Grow total research income, competitive grant income, HDR completions, high-quality research outputs by 10%

RE1: Research Productivity				
	Proposed Strategy /Project/Action	Expected Outcome	Responsible Officer	Timeframe
RE1.1	Conduct research that is of regional, national and international significance and aligned to the university's thematic research priorities.	<p>Major thematic areas developed and made operational as multidisciplinary research priorities with projects being managed across schools; including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Food &amp; Water Security (eg. SMART Farm, RINPAS, Livestock Genetics)</li> <li>▪ Health &amp; Wellbeing (eg. CRN Mental Health, CRaIN H&amp;WB, HNECC Research Hub)</li> <li>▪ ePedagogies (eg. VITAL)</li> <li>▪ Building Resilience (eg. Disaster Preparedness &amp; Mgt, Social Protection)</li> <li>▪ Effective Governance (eg. AgLaw, Rural &amp; Regional Law and Policy, Social Justice)</li> </ul>	HoS, DVC, URC, Chairs of Research, PVCRC	Annual Review by URC

RE1.1.1	Increase research capacity by recruiting, retaining and rewarding excellent researchers.	Increased research income by 10% per year	HoS, DVC, URC, Chairs of Research, PVCR	Annual Monitoring and Periodic Review
RE1.1.2	Mentor and accelerate research staff in achieving recognized international standing and become future leaders.	Strengthened leadership capability across the University consistent with our values	HoS, DVC, PVCR, PVCA	Quarterly School Operational Plan Review
RE1.1.3	Develop succession strategies in each School/Discipline grouping focused on research needs aligned to priorities.	Identified future leadership capability across the University consistent with our values	HoS, DVC, Chairs of Research	Quarterly School Operational Plan Review
RE1.2	Build creative collaborations with partner universities, industry, professions, business and government to cement our position as a global competitive research partner.	Major new partnerships developed and operational as multidisciplinary collaborations with projects being managed across schools	HoS, DVC, URC, Chairs of Research, PVCR	Annual Monitoring and Periodic Review
RE1.2.1	Support and accelerate cross-disciplinary, multi-institutional and international funding applications, especially for researchers working in smaller disciplines.	Increased research income by 10% per year	HoS, DVC, PVCR, PVCER	Annual Monitoring and Periodic Review
RE1.2.2	Achieve greater leverage from activities including SSP	New national and global research partnerships developed and operational as multidisciplinary	HoS, DVC, PVCR, PVCER	Quarterly School

	programs, international conference travel, industry visits, and other projects and collaborations, by formalising partnership agreements at organisational level.	collaborations with projects being managed across schools		Operational Plan Review
RE1.2.3	Accelerate the number of collaborative agreements with international partner institutions whereby researchers undertake short projects at their respective partner institution in a common learning environment.	At least three new international research collaborations per year	HoS, DVC, URC, Chairs of Research, PVCER	Annual Review by URC
RE1.2.4	Strengthen existing links and establish new links with industry and government partners to ensure the capture of joint commercial opportunities.	Increased research income by 10% per year	HoS, DVC, PVCER, PVCER	Annual Monitoring and Periodic Review
RE1.3	Embed research performance management, benchmarks and KPIs across the University's academic and support areas.	KPIs in place as part of all School Operational Plans and Business Unit Plans	HoS, DVC, URC, Chairs of Research, PVCER, Directors, CSO	Annual Monitoring and Periodic Review
RE1.3.1	Provide practical advice and support to researchers, e.g. through information and planning days or fora, to help	Increased research income and high-quality publication output by 10% per year	HoS, DVC, Chairs of Research, PVCER	Annual Monitoring and Periodic Review

	them achieve at a higher level.			
RE1.3.2	Use the PPDR system and institutional knowledge to identify those researchers performing just below significant thresholds and work with them to get them above the line.	Strengthened research performance across the University consistent with our values	HoS, DVC, Chairs of Research	Annual PPDR rounds

## RE2: Research Training

	Proposed Strategy /Project/Action	Expected Outcome	Responsible Officer	Timeframe
RE2.1	Maintain a culture of research excellence that continues to build our HDR enrolments and completions.	Collaborations with hub schools and other local schools for professional learning and recruitment of HDR students through the accomplishment of the AITSL standards Increased HDR enrolments by 5% per year Increased HDR completions by 10% per year	HoS, Chair Research, Chair T&L  HoS, DVC, URC, Chairs of Research, PVCRC	Annual Monitoring and Periodic Review
RE2.1.1	(a) Offer a greater number of international stipends in targeted areas. (b) Offer a greater number of	By 2018, UNE will support 200 stipends to doctoral research candidates	PVCR	Annual UNE scholarships rounds



	<p>stipends for Indigenous Doctoral candidates.</p> <p>(c) Offer a greater number of stipends for Doctoral candidates linked to Industry.</p>			
RE2.1.2	Market effectively at international level to attract high-quality international HDR candidates.	Increased HDR completions by 10% per year	HoS, DVC, PVCER, PVCER	Annual Monitoring and Periodic Review
RE2.1.3	Enter into agreements with overseas partner organisations or governments, whereby HDR candidates from those countries will undertake part or all of their program at UNE.	Increased International HDR enrolments by 5% per year	HoS, DVC, PVCER, PVCER	Annual Review by URC
RE2.1.4	Provide supervisory development programs to expand supervisory capacity and excellence in targeted areas.	Increased awareness of and engagement with supervisory training programs	PVCR, DDoGS	Annual Review by URC/GRS
RE2.2	Support HDR students, especially our indigenous and other under-represented groups, and international students, through targeted pastoral care, academic support and professional	<p>Improved support and retention of low socio-economic students. Improve retention by 1% per annum</p> <p>Improved recruitment and successful completions of increasing percentage of aboriginal students.</p>	HoS, DVC, PVCER, DDoGS	Annual Monitoring and Periodic Review

	development programs.	Improve retention by 1% per annum		
RE2.2.1	Strengthen the role of School HDR Coordinators, and provide additional points of contact, to manage issues of concern to postgraduate students as they arise.	High student satisfaction levels (measured by QILT or other relevant, external measures)	HoS, DVC, GRS, HDR Coordinators	Annual Monitoring and Periodic Review
RE2.2.2	Conduct regular workshops at School/Discipline level for HDR candidates on School research processes, research planning and project management, research analysis and writing.	Increased awareness of and engagement with HDR training programs	HoS, DVC, Chairs of Research, HDR Coordinators	Quarterly School Operational Plan Review
RE2.2.3	Conduct an annual UNE Postgraduate Conference, providing a forum for HDR candidates to present their early research findings.	Increased awareness of and engagement with postgraduate conference across schools	GRS, Chair GRS, HDR Coordinators, DDoGS	Annual event

### RE3: Research Environment

	Proposed Strategy/ Project /Action	Expected Outcome	Responsible Officer	Timeframe
RE3.1	Invest strongly in research areas	Major partnerships expanded	HoS, DVC, URC,	Annual

	of critical mass where UNE will be a world leader and can exemplify the necessary standards of research excellence.	Increased research income by 10% per year	Chairs of Research, PVCR	Review by URC
RE3.1.1	Recruit leading researchers where strategic gaps have been identified in key areas of research strengths.	Recruitment strategy operational and actively managed across schools	HoS, DVC, PVCR	Quarterly School Operational Plan Review
RE3.1.2	Strongly acknowledge and reward successful researchers by a variety of means.	High staff satisfaction levels	HoS, DVC, PVCR	Quarterly School Operational Plan Review
RE3.1.3	Conduct a variety of internal Research Support and Development Schemes that identify and support the differing stages of the research career, with a particular emphasis on supporting early-career researchers.	Increased awareness of and engagement with research support and development programs	HoS, PVCR	Regular UNE researcher mentoring and support programs both at central and at School level
RE3.1.4	Offer a greater number of UNE Postdoctoral Fellowships to high-achieving researchers.	By 2018, UNE will double the number of Postdoctoral Fellowships available to early-career researchers (UNE-PDF)	PVCR	Regular UNE-PDF rounds
RE3.2	Build sustainable centres of excellence in our defining areas	New centres of excellence established	HoS, DVC, URC, Chairs of Research,	Annual Review by

	of research specialisation.		PVCR	URC
RE3.2.1	Identify key research areas focused on end-user research needs aligned to priorities.	Enhanced alignment of research activities with thematic research priorities	HoS, DVC, Chairs of Research, PVCR	Quarterly School Operational Plan Review
RE3.2.2	Develop and implement an impact strategy.	Enhanced contributions that excellent research makes to the society, economy, environment, culture, public policy, health or quality of life	URC, PVCR, PVCER	Annual Review by URC
RE3.3	Upgrade and maintain specific research facilities to ensure access and availability of state of the art infrastructure.	UNE VITAL will facilitate and support full engagement with the research capacity of eLearning and ePedagogy	HoS, DVC, URC, VITAL Mgt Cttee	Annual Review by URC
RE3.3.1	Progressively upgrade research infrastructure by prioritising the annual CapEx budget allocations.	By 2019, UNE will double the CapEx investment in research infrastructure	HoS, DVC, CSO, PVCR, CFO	Quarterly School Operational Plan Review Annual Review by URC