

WESTERN SYDNEY
UNIVERSITY



**Schools Engagement
Strategic Plan 2017–19**

Schools Engagement Strategic Plan 2017–19

OVERVIEW

Western Sydney is an exciting place to be. An increasingly important, dynamic and diverse hub of business, industry and innovation, it is the nation's third largest economy and one of the fastest growing population and employment centres in Australia.

With multicultural communities of more than two million people from 170 nations, Western Sydney's global links are creating unlimited opportunities for international business, investment, education and cultural exchange.

New schools are being established, and the number of students at many existing schools is increasing. This will accelerate as greenfields suburbs are populated, housing density intensifies and infrastructure developments such as the airport at Badgery's Creek are progressed.

Western Sydney University is committed to furthering the success and well-being of people across the region and beyond. The challenges of rapid growth, increased competition and a constantly changing world can be met through educational partnerships which recognise all stakeholders as co-creators of knowledge and incorporate multidisciplinary approaches, critical thinking, real world experience, communication, creativity, agility, problem-solving and good citizenship.

The *Schools Engagement Strategic Plan 2017–19* provides a framework to drive, sustain and enhance mutually beneficial school/University collaborations which:

- are co-designed and link to stakeholder objectives and priorities,
- engender student, family, community and industry participation,
- incorporate personalised, diverse and contemporary approaches to learning and teaching,
- recognise and respond to learner needs, experience and aspirations, and
- have a robust evidence base.

The plan will empower school and university students to envisage and achieve their educational and life ambitions including contributing positively to local, national and global communities.

It encompasses primary and high schools; public, Catholic systemic and independent schools.

The plan is linked to the overarching goals of the University's *Securing Success: 2015-2020 Strategic Plan*, including particularly to:

- be a distinctively student-centred university;
- be a vibrant research-led university with regional, national and global impact;
- provide a unique learning experience that is innovative, flexible and responsive; and
- be a leading advocate and champion for the Greater Western Sydney region and its people.

The plan is aligned to the University's *Learning Futures Plan 2016-2020* which places students at its centre and is supported by innovative learning designs, experiences, environments and enablers.

It is connected to the University's research themes which correspond to the challenges facing Western Sydney communities and resonate significantly elsewhere, including urban living and society, health and wellbeing, education and aspirational change, and environmental sustainability.

VISION

Western Sydney University and the school sector work in collaboration to secure success for our students and the Greater Western Sydney region through innovation and discovery in a dynamic and technology-enabled world.

AIMS

1. To build and enhance sustainable University/school relationships that facilitate identification and achievement of common or complementary goals
2. To co-create new knowledge and capacity in Greater Western Sydney through stakeholder collaboration, including with the school, industry, government and community sectors
3. To engage school and university students in educational opportunities which accelerate success
4. To engender a shared sense of ownership and pride about Western Sydney and its university among school students, teachers, staff, parents and other stakeholders, celebrating achievements and making the University a first choice destination for post-school study

STRATEGIC FOCI

ENGAGEMENT

- Engage with the school sector at all levels, with a focus on Western Sydney, to build mutual awareness, relationships and partnerships
- Partner with business, government, community and other organisations to broaden the scope, perspectives and reach of school-related initiatives and create student career pathways
- Build relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and facilitate their involvement in programs to share learning and advance First Nations futures
- Connect school students, parents, families and communities with the University to raise awareness of the opportunities it offers, and create regional loyalty and pride
- Consolidate public communications about Schools Engagement programs to increase participation, reduce duplication and ensure a good fit of schools with activities
- Enable stakeholder co-design of school/University activities including the planning, prioritisation, implementation and review of approaches and programs, to increase ownership, relevance and effectiveness
- Establish relationships and collaborations to support initiatives in new and existing priority areas including Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM), health and well-being, learning applications of new technologies, refugee student support, entrepreneurship and social cohesion, to positively impact on learning outcomes in those areas
- Foster and support the participation of a wide range of University staff in schools engagement to share and build knowledge, provide a robust resource base and enhance programs
- Celebrate achievements and publicise activities in the wider community to raise the profile of the University, the schools and the region, and engender support

KNOWLEDGE AND CAPACITY

- Establish and extend University/school learning partnerships, programs and activities to enrich the academic and professional development of school sector staff and University staff
- Undertake school-related research to generate new knowledge, and disseminate the results to inform policy and practice
- Enable closer school sector collaboration in research and empower schools to undertake their own research to optimise relevance and evidence-based practice
- Provide schools with access to academic and technical expertise, data, resources, facilities and equipment to support learning and teaching
- Extend pre-service teacher involvement in Schools Engagement to enhance programs and contribute to pre-service teachers' professional development
- Through collaboration address identified priorities, including for example Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics, new school curricula and emerging technologies, to advance learning and teaching
- Identify and pursue external funding and sponsorship opportunities to co-create, expand and diversify schools engagement programs to extend reach and effectiveness

ASPIRATION, ATTAINMENT, RECOGNITION AND PROSPECTS

- Create, enhance and promote a variety of innovative opportunities and pathways to empower school students from all backgrounds and a range of academic levels to increase their educational attainment and increase their post-school options
- Utilise stakeholder feedback, including school student input, new pedagogies and best practice approaches in the design and enhancement of programs to meet needs and increase achievement
- Employ emerging technologies and distance learning to extend the reach and appeal of programs
- Enrich the learning and development of gifted and talented students so they reach their potential for success

- Raise the educational aspirations and achievement of school students with a demonstrated capacity to succeed but who might not see post-school study as an option or who need extra support and encouragement to reach their goals
- Build Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school students' skills and confidence, aspirations and attainment, Aboriginal cultural connections and higher education preparedness and participation to advance their futures
- Help to address students' needs in specific subject areas to enhance their prospects
- Increase student engagement and skills in STEAM to increase interest in post-school study and employment in those areas
- Run, partner in and support programs that recognise and reward the achievements of school students to generate regional pride and connectedness
- Provide experiential learning for University students that will be of benefit to them personally and professionally

MEASURES

The following measures will be used to assess performance. Performance indicators will be included in each annual Action Plan.

- Extent of positive learning outcomes for school and University students
- Level of participation in programs by stakeholder groups
- Number of University/school sector interactions
- Quality of the stakeholder experience
- Percentage of Western Sydney University preferences from participating school students

SCHOOLS ENGAGEMENT

9678 7309 (Penrith)

4620 3906 (Campbelltown)

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westernsydney.edu.au/schoolsengagement

