

Academic Plan 2021–2025

*Graduates confident
to face the future*



Introduction

Griffith University was established in 1975 to be a different type of university, committed to equity, inclusion and the success of our students. As the first university in Australia to offer degree programs in Modern Asian Studies and Environmental Science, we have always had a global focus and commitment to sustainability.

Griffith has continued to be a values-driven university, which has grown in size, reputation and impact over the last 45 years. We have a proud and sustained history of excellence in learning and teaching, having won more national teaching awards than any other university, including four Australian University Teachers of the Year.

Griffith University's Strategic Plan 2020–2025 sets out an ambitious agenda of Creating a future *for all*. It is underpinned by the principles of excellence, ethics and engagement, which also inform this Academic Plan 2021–2025, **Students: Graduates confident to face the future.**

Implementing the Academic Plan will ensure we continue to build on our enviable record and achieve, by our 50th anniversary in 2025, four overarching goals:

1. Create the Griffith Graduates of the Future program to support student success in learning and in transitioning to employment.
2. Undergo a digital transformation that improves the learning experience for all and that provides our faculty with advanced digital teaching skills.
3. Create, often in partnership with industry, a set of stackable micro-credentials that support employees and entrepreneurs to thrive throughout their careers.
4. Increase international students to 25% of student numbers.

Context: COVID-19 and its consequences

The period covered by the Academic Plan, 2021–2025 will be marked by unprecedented challenges and disruptions, as well as opportunities. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to be felt for the duration of the plan and will necessitate a radical revision of our approaches to learning, teaching, assessment and the student experience. This will require innovative approaches that balance the imperative to be sustainable with our commitment to success for all students, irrespective of their background.

It is likely that travel restrictions will remain in place for some time, putting at risk our goal of achieving an international student cohort of 25% of student numbers. Our domestic students will be unable to undertake global mobility experiences. Requirements to maintain physical distancing will prohibit the return to large group teaching and assessment for the foreseeable future, with the risk that, until the virus is contained, there may be ongoing periods of sporadic restrictions that further jeopardise on campus, face-to-face teaching and other activities.

Fees charged to students for Commonwealth Supported Places, and the income Griffith receives for these students will change significantly from 2021. There will be limited capacity to significantly grow domestic student numbers. There will be challenges to adjust to reduced overall income for Science, Engineering and some Health disciplines (with reduced student contribution), but higher income for the University in humanities, social science and business, disciplines in which students will pay considerably more.

As a result of these challenges, in 2020 Griffith embarked on a major project, Roadmap to Sustainability (R2S), to ensure it still achieves its strategic objectives by 2025.

International student support during COVID-19

Chidinma Ejiogu is immensely grateful for the assistance she received through a community program that helped feed Griffith's struggling international students through the height of the COVID-19 crisis. The Master of Global Public Health student said the packaged meals meant she saved money for rent and other necessities. More than 3,200 free meals were provided weekly for about five months and Griffith University Vice President (Global) Professor Sarah Todd said the gift of free meals was pragmatic assistance to students in need, many of whom had been left jobless during the pandemic.



Griffith's response to COVID-19

Creating a future *for all* sets out our bold ambition to develop a cutting edge Griffith Graduate of the Future program to enable our students to be future capable, agile and resilient, and well prepared to succeed in disruptive and challenging work environments, post-COVID. We will adopt a coherent integrated approach that addresses (i) quality program design with students as partners, (ii) efficiency and effectiveness of systems and processes, and (iii) high quality professional development for staff and students.

To support the Griffith Graduates of the Future program, R2S will include a major refresh of our program portfolio, to ensure it reflects the needs of a rapidly changing workplace, while significantly reducing the overall number of programs and courses. We will partner with students and employers to design industry-relevant and professional degrees that prepare students well for future employment. Our degree programs will enable students to gain knowledge and experience within and outside of their discipline.

We will use our experience as a leader in technology-enhanced learning, which has served us well in response to COVID-19, to accelerate the digital transformation of the University. Increasingly, our students' learning will move seamlessly from face-to-face in contemporary learning spaces to the high quality virtual environment, giving them flexibility to choose how and when they learn. Learning will rely much less on face-to-face lectures; rather students will experience more small group teaching and engagement, both in-person and virtually.

We will develop micro-credentials, to address the increasing demand of workers to continuously reskill and adapt to their changing workplaces. Where possible, students will be able to stack micro-credentials as part of full degrees.

Griffith has always been a university that welcomes students from diverse backgrounds, and over the last 45 years has offered life changing opportunities to students who might never otherwise have had the chance to attend university. Attracting, retaining and graduating students from low socioeconomic, international, regional or remote backgrounds and students with a disability will continue to be a key priority.

Griffith has one of the largest cohorts of First Peoples students of any Australian university. We will provide an environment that is inclusive, and where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are valued and respected. We aim to ensure every Indigenous student succeeds in their studies and moves into a successful career.

High-achieving students will be attracted to our future-focussed degrees, access to a wide range of employability experiences and opportunities to gain leadership skills.

Meeting the objectives of this Plan will require the ongoing engagement and commitment of academic and professional staff across the university. Our staff will be supported to develop their leadership in learning and teaching, embracing a range of evidence-based approaches, technologies, tools and perspectives to ensure all students, irrespective of their background, have an outstanding experience and graduate prepared to enter successful careers.

Despite the challenges we face as we approach our 50th anniversary in 2025, the principles upon which Griffith was founded are still relevant today and will stand us in good stead as we prepare our students to become **Graduates: Confident to face the future.**

Griffith's response to the pandemic

Griffith's expertise and 3D printers were used to manufacture essential protective equipment for frontline health workers across Australia during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff from Griffith's Advanced Design and Prototyping Technologies Institute (ADaPT) and Queensland College of Art (QCA) design studio were among those who swung into action. ADaPT Manager Derek Smith said it was perfectly placed to respond. "We already work closely with the Gold Coast University Hospital on a range of projects, and we were able to move fast to make PPE parts," he said. "It was fantastic to see our community rise to the challenge."



Our students

Attracting diverse student cohorts to Griffith

Griffith's students have always come from a variety of backgrounds. In 2019, about half were non-school leavers, 59% were women, 18% came from a low socio-economic status (SES) background, while 2.7% were Indigenous Australians. Approximately 6% of students declared a disability. International students made up 18% of our student population.

In recent years we have established a number of pathways for students who would not have ordinarily been accepted to university. The Graduate Personal Statement and First Peoples' Student Survey have used evidence-based approaches to assess potential students' preparedness for and capacity to succeed at university and have enabled us to confidently offer places to non-traditional students, many of whom also have low SES backgrounds. We have also successfully established pathways for VET-qualified students.

Griffith also has a long standing and successful program that attracts Pasifika students to university. These and other pathways will be expanded to ensure students from diverse backgrounds have the opportunity to study at Griffith.

In addition, we also attract academically gifted students who enter highly competitive programs with exceptional reputations. Our medical and musical theatre programs for example are amongst the most competitive in the country.

Gifted students choose to come to Griffith not only for the academic experience, but for the opportunity to join the Honours College, take part in international study tours, exchanges and competitions, engage with industry and professional partners and gain leadership experiences as a peer tutor or mentor.

We will continue to work with schools to provide targeted support for students, and their teachers, in preparation for university, as well as growing the proportion of our students who have an ATAR score of 80 or better.

The growth of the Digital campus, and our capacity in digital marketing and outreach, has allowed us to recruit students from outside of South East Queensland, including students living in rural or remote areas, and international students studying in country. Our high quality online programs ensure offshore and remote students have equal access to learning.

While the COVID-19 pandemic will constrain international student numbers for some time, we will continue to promote Griffith to prospective students in a wide range of countries, and ensure those who join us have an outstanding experience. Detailed approaches are outlined in the Internationalisation Plan.

We will also aim to attract larger numbers of postgraduate fee paying students to full degree programs and to shorter courses (micro-credentials), directed at those already in the workforce who wish to upskill.

Student success

A key imperative for Griffith is to support the diverse cohorts of students we attract to succeed at university and go on to fulfilling careers. Achieving our goal of exceeding the national average for student retention by 2025, will require a whole of university approach, based on best practice and available evidence and informed by students as partners. The approach will be coordinated through academic programs and support services, across the student life cycle.

For those less well prepared for university we will offer a range of bridging and academic support programs to give students the foundation to begin their studies with confidence. Streamlined and coordinated orientation programs will provide every student with the information and learning skills they need to successfully transition to university. Support as students transition through their degrees will be integral to program delivery and will address key crunch points that students experience as part of their learning journeys.

Program design, directed to student success, will ensure students are engaged, capable and resilient. Improving access to learning for students with a disability is also a priority of this plan. Our inclusive approach to the design and delivery of the curriculum, including assessment, will be underpinned by Universal Design principles, giving all groups equal access to the curriculum, and reducing differential learning outcomes for students from different backgrounds.

We will promote students' self-regulatory skills, and through careful induction into the requirements of their disciplines, their sense of belonging to communities within, across, and beyond the University through our Griffith Graduate of the Future initiative. Learning support, including that offered by the Library, careers advice and study skills development will be incorporated into academic programs.

Over the life of this plan the capacity for academic and professional staff to recognise and provide appropriate, timely, evidence-based interventions to support student success and retention will be enhanced by improved data and analytics. The extension of the virtual learning environment (VLE) will enable the deployment of artificial intelligence and machine learning to inform effective approaches. These will be particularly important in first year, where attrition rates are typically highest.

To support this work, we will develop a whole of organisation retention data framework to ensure that all data are collected and analysed across the student lifecycle. This data is central to identifying successful retention strategies for diverse cohorts.

Nuanced approaches will be required for both students at risk and those high achieving students who may wish to leave Griffith for other universities. Evidence-based initiatives such as Peer Assisted Study Support (PASS), Back on Academic Track, Smart Thinking and peer mentoring will complement program-based interventions. Importantly, peer mentors will be drawn from diverse student groups, including First Peoples, International students, and those with a disability.

The Honours and Sports Colleges, and the many opportunities for students to engage in mentoring, competitions, exchanges and student leadership, as well as clubs and societies will be instrumental in retaining high achieving students.

It will be important to direct whole of university resources to support students from diverse backgrounds. International student retention will require more focus on classroom experiences and ensuring international students feel valued and can contribute positively to university life and the broader Australian community. Improving First Peoples' student retention rates, which are typically lower than rates for non-Indigenous students, will require additional interventions. Student Life, our Indigenous student success unit GUMURRII, Griffith International and the Library, will all have a role to play, alongside academic and professional staff in the Groups.

We will ensure our campuses are safe and welcoming for all students, including those who are culturally and linguistically diverse, differently able, LGBTQI+, First Peoples, and female. We will deliver inclusive services and experiences that promote mental health and Wellbeing, and provide ongoing support for Student Mental Health and Wellbeing initiatives including within curriculum delivery. We will maintain a zero tolerance approach to sexual assault and sexual harassment, and will actively promote Safe Campuses and our leading edge MATE bystander intervention program.

We will also seek to engage those students who have taken a leave of absence to support them in transitioning successfully back to university when they are ready to return.

Midwife of the Year 2020

Ngunnawal woman, Griffith University alumnus and First Peoples midwifery lecturer Cassandra Nest says being a midwife was her destiny. Cassandra was recognised for her work providing quality maternity care to First Peoples on the Gold Coast with the HESTA Midwife of the Year 2020 award. Griffith's first Aboriginal Bachelor of Midwifery graduate, Cassandra was instrumental in setting up Gold Coast University Hospital's Waijungbah Jarjums Service alongside the First Peoples community, providing support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their families from pregnancy, and through their baby's first 1,000 days.



Strategic Plan goals	Academic Plan actions
Increase our intake of students from low SES backgrounds to 19%.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase recruitment of low SES students through evidence-based alternative pathways, including Griffith's Personal Statement and VET pathways. • Improve coordination of outreach activities to low SES schools through Student Success and Office of Marketing and Communications to optimise resources and recruitment. Evaluate success of initiatives to inform ongoing approaches. • Optimise the Digital campus, and promote Griffith's flexible and blended programs to adult learners from low SES backgrounds, including in rural, regional and remote areas.
Increase the participation rate of First Peoples students to 3%.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In collaboration with the Office of the Pro Vice Chancellor (Indigenous) and GUMURRII, support outreach activities to schools with high proportions of Indigenous students. • Provide a more coherent framework for teaching Indigenous content and cultural competency in our degrees, including appropriate cultural training for staff and students.
Increase the proportion of international student load (EFTSL) to 25%.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the Vice President (Global) in achieving objectives set out in the Internationalisation Plan to recruit international students. • Regularly review the program suite to ensure it is optimised, efficient and attractive to international students.
Increase levels of high quality domestic student demand for CGS places to achieve 20% of market share of students with ATAR of 80 or above.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure school outreach activities include high achieving students. • Regularly review the program suite to ensure it is optimised, efficient and attractive to high achieving students. • Promote the Griffith Honours College, and opportunities for high achieving students to participate in leadership activities, exchanges, competitions and mentorship. • Ensure our scholarship programs are working effectively to attract and retain high achieving students.

Strategic Plan goals	Academic Plan actions
Improve the retention and completion of Griffith students to above the national average.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and implement changes to the program suite to ensure fit for purpose, contemporary programs which are designed to promote student success, including employment outcomes. • Ensure programs adhere to Universal Design principles, to improve learning outcomes for students with disabilities. • Support evidence-based interventions (e.g. PASS, Smart Thinking) informed by a holistic retention data framework and supported by extended usage of the CRM in Academic Groups. • Coordinate personal, financial and learning support across Academic Groups, Student Services and the Library to support student success. • Continue roll out of Student Mental Health and Wellbeing framework and supporting initiatives, including Safe Campuses. • Through the Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP), evaluate initiatives to support low SES student success to ensure effectiveness.
Achieve 77% retention for Indigenous students by 2025.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With Pro Vice Chancellor (Indigenous) and GUMURRII, ensure alignment and optimisation of recruitment, retention, academic and cultural support to maximise Indigenous student success. • Through HEPPP, evaluate initiatives designed to support Indigenous student success to ensure effectiveness.
Achieve 93% retention for international students by 2025.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In collaboration with Griffith International, ensure international students have access to student services to support their success. • Effectively promote academic support programs such as PASS and those offered by the Library to international students. • Promote inclusive practices within the classroom that value international student contributions.

Our academic programs

Griffith Graduates of the Future program

The World Economic Forum (2020) estimates that in five years, 35% of the skills deemed essential today will change. The 4th industrial revolution and post-COVID context will increase demand for workers with adaptability and flexibility, creativity and innovation, critical thinking, data literacy, digital and coding skills, leadership, emotional intelligence and relational skills, and importantly a commitment to a lifetime of learning. At Griffith we will provide new opportunities for students to develop and practice these skills, working within and across disciplines. This approach will be taken for both our high demand professional as well as generalist degrees. Our goal is to exceed the national average for graduate employment by 2025.

The 21st century was already characterised by disruption of the workplace—automation, artificial intelligence and machine learning and an increasingly digital approach that the response to COVID-19 will only accelerate. It is more important than ever that Griffith graduates are able to adapt and thrive in this new environment, particularly as opportunities for employment will be significantly reduced in the early years of the 2020's.

Through the Griffith Graduates of the Future program we aim to graduate students who are distinctive in four important ways:

1. They are future-capable, and well prepared for work and life now and in the future.
2. They are ethically sophisticated, and contribute to work and society through values-based behaviour.
3. They have highly developed self-regulatory capacities—aware of the most appropriate strategies to use in any situation and able to deploy such strategies effectively.
4. They are technologically savvy, networked, and connected.

Degree programs to support Griffith Graduates of the Future

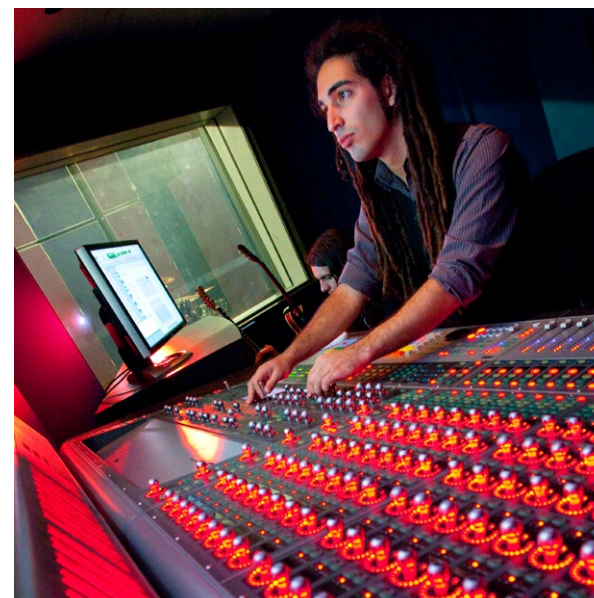
To achieve the objectives of the Griffith Graduates of the Future program will require an ambitious rethink of our degree program suite. In 2020, we offered more than 500 programs, many of which had small numbers of students. Such a large portfolio is difficult to market, for prospective students to navigate and creates a significant administrative workload for academic and professional staff.

During 2020/2021 we will review all programs and significantly reduce the number. This will be achieved by:

- Eliminating duplicate programs that run across more than one campus (including online), where it makes sense to do so.
- Consolidating multiple undergraduate degrees into one, with a common foundation year and multiple majors.
- Simplifying and streamlining postgraduate degrees, including Masters, Graduate Diplomas and Graduate Certificates.
- Withdrawing unsustainable programs that are not aligned with our strategic priorities.
- Withdrawing programs that are poor quality, out of date, that do not lead to positive employment outcomes for students.

As part of R2S, we will also withdraw courses (subjects) with low enrolments, rationalise majors within programs and review the necessity to teach low enrolment courses across multiple campuses and in more than one trimester.

Such a significant rationalisation will allow us to redirect our efforts to ensuring a much smaller, high quality program suite that meets the objectives of the Griffith Graduates of the Future program, including the development of new programs that are better suited to the 2020s.



Program design

Our rationalised program suite will encompass a number of key features to support the Griffith Graduates of the Future program and enhance graduate success. In addition to acquiring deep discipline knowledge, students will have the opportunity to learn outside their core disciplines through interdisciplinary degrees that support the acquisition of high level, 21st century skillsets.

Degree programs will promote interdisciplinarity as appropriate to fully meet the learning outcomes of a program, supporting the acquisition of high level skills. Students will be able to undertake double degrees, majors or minors within a degree, or courses that are discipline-spanning. Griffith graduates will evidence their capabilities in employment-related skills and activities through digital badges.

A suite of options will be designed to introduce students to areas such as: data science; business skills; innovation and entrepreneurship; behavioural science; communications; Asian culture and languages; environment and sustainability; Indigenous cultures and knowledge; justice, ethics and human rights.

Emphasis will be placed on maximising authentic learning experiences that will promote students' employability through co-design with industry/professional/business partners. Authentic experiences will include inquiry, problem or project-based learning, simulations, capstone experiences, research projects, industry placements and community internships, both local and where possible, international. Students will also develop innovation and entrepreneurship skills through curricular and co-curricular activities. We will engage with industry, professional and business partners and future employers to ensure our degree programs meet their expectations.

To support the holistic development of our students, curriculum design will also emphasise integration of Indigenous perspectives and cultural competency, mental health and wellbeing and awareness and understanding of sustainability including the Sustainable Development Goals.

Engaging students early in the latest research within their discipline will ensure students have well-developed research skills, with effective pathways for those who wish to subsequently undertake higher degree research programs. Students will have opportunities to engage in research projects through capstone experiences in research centres and institutes, with industry, and as part of projects and assignments. Importantly, Griffith's Research Beacons will provide opportunities for students to participate in a range of research and learning activities with researchers and their teams.

Learning will be supported through equitable, agentic and transparent assessment approaches that include working with students to develop assessment criteria and design, engaging students in assessing their own work and that of others and training students in how to use and give feedback. A whole of program streamlined approach will reduce unnecessary assessment, while timely and focused formative assessment tasks will provide students with clear feedback on what they need to do to make progress. Assessment practices will promote high standards of academic integrity.

The COVID-19 pandemic necessitated a move away from proctored, face-to-face examinations. This will be sustained.

We will promote a team-based approach to learning and teaching involving close collaboration of academic and professional staff and students at all stages of curriculum design and delivery. This will include staff in the Academic Groups as well as the Library, and central divisions.

Careers advice is offered through Careers and Employment Services, but increasingly as part of program design, through initiatives such as the Professional Learning for Undergraduate Students (PLUS) programs. Careers and Employment Services will also continue to provide important opportunities for students to find employment while they are studying.



Micro-credentials

Micro-credentials are non-award programs that ‘certify assessed learning that is additional, alternative, complementary to or a component of a formal qualification’ (Oliver, 2019). On the other hand, digital badges certify the achievement of the learning outcomes of a micro-credential. Micro-credentials are an increasingly important addition to the range of traditional credentials, including undergraduate, postgraduate and research higher degrees. Since the launch of Griffith Credentials in 2018, the University has developed over 120 micro-credentials and issued over 20,000 digital badges.

Griffith University offers three different types of micro-credentials:

1. As a *pathway into university*, micro-credentials may be awarded to prospective students who do not meet standard entry requirements, but who can evidence achievements that indicate a high likelihood that they will succeed at university; for example, completion of bridging programs or Griffith’s Early Start to Tertiary Studies (GUESTS), or demonstration of personal and professional competencies via the Griffith Personal Statement.
2. As a formal recognition of achievements *during a program of study*, for example, academic achievement or development of employability skills.
3. As a recognition of completion of professional development short courses, directed at *people already in the workforce*, who wish to upskill. These micro-credentials will often be co-developed with industry partners and may be recognised for credit into a full degree.

Over the life of this plan we will expand our offerings:

- We will extend existing admission pathway micro-credentials and explore potential pathway opportunities.
- We will create enhanced opportunities for students to engage with Griffith Credentials whilst studying through specific co-curricular activities or modularised learning that counts for credit.
- We will grow our suite of professional learning micro-credentials, offered through the Professional Learning Hub to meet the needs of those individuals in the workforce to upskill, and in many cases meet professional accreditation requirements. Through the introduction of a multi-disciplinary Graduate Certificate in Professional Studies, students will be able to build their qualification from a wide range of courses offered online or in blended mode. Importantly we will engage with industry stakeholders to identify, develop and deliver professional development opportunities in key workplaces.
- In collaboration with the Vice President (Industry and External Engagement), we will ensure the Professional Learning Hub is part of a highly visible ‘front door’ for external partners looking to engage with Griffith in developing and delivering professional learning for worker-learners.
- Enhancing the quality of online delivery and focused marketing approaches will enable us to access a more geographically dispersed market for our micro-credentials.

Micro-credentials address post-COVID skills gap

Griffith has met the challenge of preparing professionals for new employment opportunities in a post-pandemic world by introducing an extensive suite of micro-credentials. These courses are specifically designed to allow people who are in the workforce to upskill or retrain to take advantage of new career opportunities in the wake of COVID disruption. Offerings have been carefully selected to match the skills that will be required to drive the economy in the near future.



Strategic Plan goals	Academic Plan actions
<p>To exceed the national average for graduate employment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimise the program portfolio, including substantially reducing the number of programs and courses, to focus on a smaller number of high quality, contemporary programs designed in collaboration with industry partners, to prepare graduates for employment. • Ensure courses promote active, authentic and collaborative learning approaches that reflect the contemporary workplace. • Increase uptake of work-integrated learning courses, particularly in programs without placement requirements. • Increase opportunities for students to undertake research projects, including as part of Griffith's Research Beacons. • Expand opportunities for students to find employment while they study through Careers and Employment Services.
<p>Implement the Griffith Graduates of the Future program.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create opportunities for as many undergraduates as possible to learn outside their core discipline, through interdisciplinary electives, majors and double degrees and through learning experiences that bring together teachers, students and partners from a range of disciplines and backgrounds. • Embed employability skills and career planning within programs to ensure students are equipped with relevant 21st Century skills.
<p>To increase income from fee paying postgraduate and other emerging fee income course offerings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a review of the postgraduate program suite and optimise offerings to ensure attractiveness to postgraduate students as well as future and current employers. • Through the Professional Learning Hub, establish a sustainable suite of micro-credentials, including stackable micro-credentials that lead to qualifications, suitable for worker learners. • Enhance visibility and accessibility of the Professional Learning Hub, in collaboration with the Vice President (Industry and External Engagement). • Implement a framework and strategy for professional and executive education.

The student experience

Teaching quality

Griffith students rate their experience at university very highly. In the 2019 Student Experience Survey, Griffith was ranked 7th in Australia for overall experience (4th amongst large public universities) and was the top public university in Queensland. The University was ranked 6th for teaching quality in the same survey.

Maintaining (or improving on) this impressive record will be a priority for this plan. We will achieve this through the adoption of a systematic approach to curriculum development that promotes learner engagement in authentic and collaborative learning as part of enhanced program design, as highlighted in our Learning and Teaching Framework principles. Importantly we will work with our Students as Partners to ensure our approach to learning, teaching and assessment challenges our students to realise their goals both in the short and longer terms.

By 2025, we will be ranked in the top quartile of universities for overall satisfaction as measured by the QILT Student Experience Survey for domestic students, and the International Student Barometer for international students.

Curriculum development will be underpinned by a research-informed inclusive approach that promotes student active engagement. Students will experience fewer didactic, passive lectures, but will be more actively engaged in their learning through workshops, simulations, studios, projects and work placements.

We will progressively increase the delivery of content in hybrid modes to ensure the best of face-to-face and online learning with students having flexibility to choose the mode of delivery with which they engage. We will introduce baseline virtual learning environment standards to ensure consistency in the quality of the online experience for all students, informed by our Learning and Teaching Framework principles.

Supporting student success

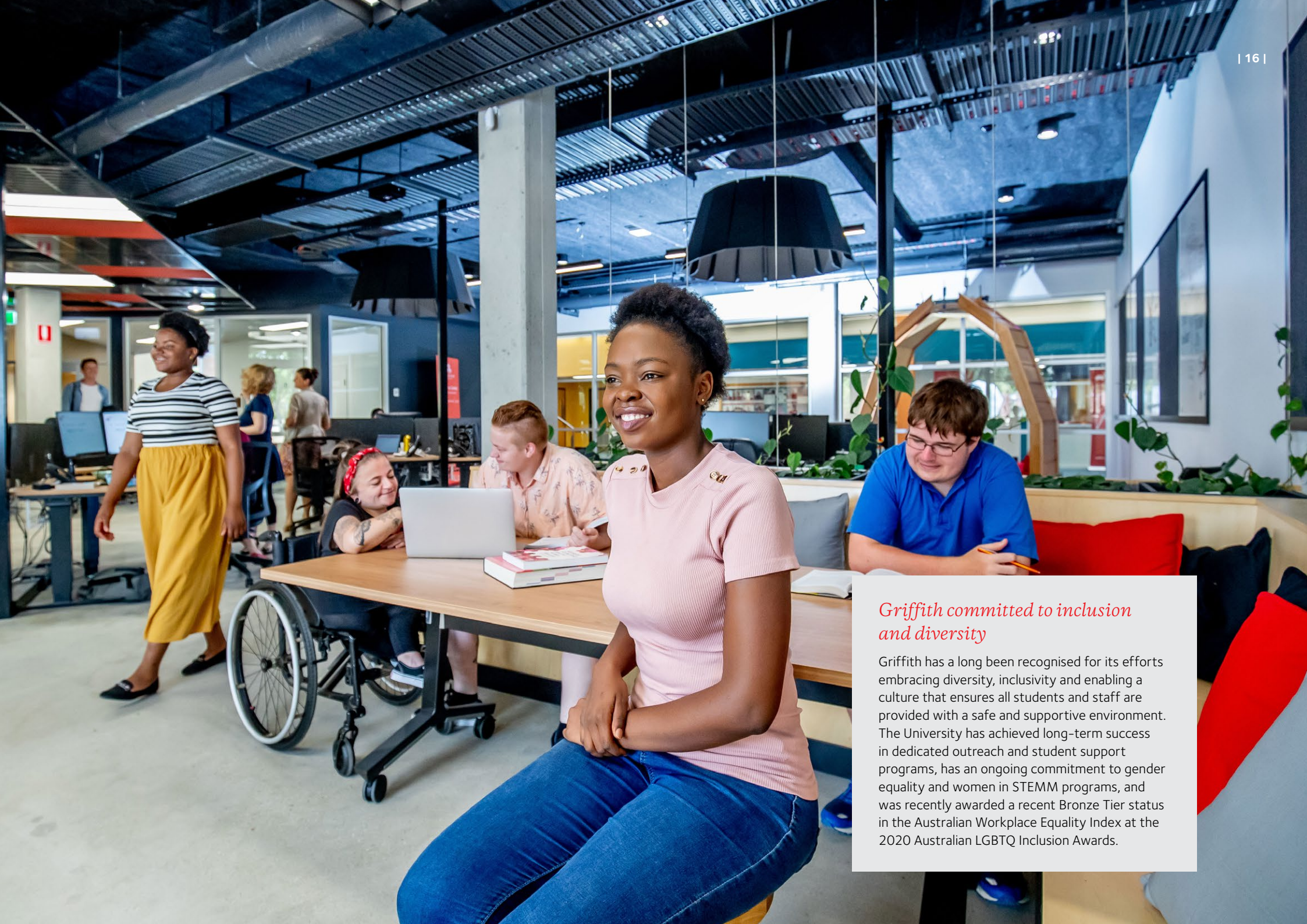
In addition to providing a high quality learning environment, we will take a coordinated approach to broadly supporting student success. Our philosophy is based on the centrality of the program, with resources embedded in curriculum, where students are, as well as through outstanding central services.

The Academic Groups, Student Life, the Library, GUMURRII and Griffith International, all play a role in providing joined-up, seamless services to support student wellbeing, academic success and ultimately employment. We will continue to improve student communications through upgrades to the student portal, MyGriffith, and initiatives such as the Program and Course Advisor tool that allows students to track their progress through their degree. Our services will be offered flexibly, allowing student to choose whether they interact in person or remotely, and we will effectively signpost to students where to go for help.

All areas of the University are involved in orientation, ensuring commencing students are welcomed into Griffith's community and quickly acquire the skills and information needed to succeed in their studies. The development of academic writing, research and study skills will be supported through academic programs, the Library and student services. Opportunities for peer engagement and collaboration including peer mentoring and support will be offered at all stages in the student life cycle.

We will continue to collaborate with and support our student bodies, who play an invaluable role in enriching the social, cultural and sporting life of the University.

We will also undertake a comprehensive review of our student-related policies and procedures with the aim to make them simple, streamlined and student-centric, reinforcing the high standards we expect of our students and staff.



Griffith committed to inclusion and diversity

Griffith has long been recognised for its efforts embracing diversity, inclusivity and enabling a culture that ensures all students and staff are provided with a safe and supportive environment. The University has achieved long-term success in dedicated outreach and student support programs, has an ongoing commitment to gender equality and women in STEMM programs, and was recently awarded a recent Bronze Tier status in the Australian Workplace Equality Index at the 2020 Australian LGBTQ Inclusion Awards.

Virtual and physical campuses and learning

Griffith has a long history of teaching online, and in 2018 established its Digital campus. This campus is currently our third largest, and fastest growing. Around 20% of all students study a fully online degree, while another 20% who are enrolled in on campus programs undertake at least one course online. The growing demand for a high quality, flexible education continues to blur the lines between physical and virtual learning and teaching. Students (and staff) live in a world without a hard line between the physical and digital. Our physical and virtual campuses will reflect this.

Like our physical campuses, the Digital campus is not just a learning space, but a community space that includes opportunities for student and staff connection, and access to the Library, Student Support Services, and student-led activities such as clubs and societies.

During the life of this plan, we will extend the virtual learning environment (VLE), ensuring that all students have access to high quality learning and library resources, online classes, services, engagement and support. The VLE will include a Learning Management System, a platform for online assessment and a suite of productivity tools that intersect with data/analytics, and increasingly with AI and machine learning. Increasingly, students will choose whether to study a course fully online, or in blended mode, and will be able to move seamlessly between physical and virtual campuses.

As we grow our digital footprint, we will ensure vibrant physical campuses with teaching spaces that promote collaborative, active learning, social spaces that encourage students to come to and remain on campus, and face-to-face services and facilities for those who need them.

In designing new buildings and campuses, we will consider how best to intersect the digital and physical—for example, do we need more large lecture theatres, which remained empty during the COVID-19 crisis? It is likely that future teaching spaces will be smaller, more interactive and well supported by technology.

Both our digital and physical campuses will ensure equity of access and experience for students with disabilities.

One of the consequences of the COVID-19 disruption has been the rapid uptake of communication and collaboration tools, virtual meetings and Town Hall gatherings with levels of engagement far exceeding any ever seen in physical Town Halls. The move to put workshops for staff training and development online has seen a significant increase in the number of staff accessing these workshops. Our experience will undoubtedly mean that we will continue to use these tools, reducing the need for staff across multiple campuses to travel, while still being able to connect, collaborate and learn.

Importantly, the Digital campus and increasing uptake of digital communication and collaboration tools will allow the University to reduce its carbon footprint.

Strategic Plan goals

For domestic students, to be ranked in the top quartile of universities for teaching quality, as measured by the Student Experience Survey.

For international students, to be ranked in the top quartile of universities for overall satisfaction, as measured by the International Student Barometer.

Academic Plan actions

- Implement a Learning and Teaching Framework that will enhance the student experience through active, authentic and collaborative learning focused on developing discipline knowledge and employability skills.
- Successfully transition to the new VLE and support faculty to use this environment in a way that transforms the student experience.
- Introduce baseline VLE standards, informed by the Learning and Teaching Framework principles.
- Ensure seamless, flexible and integrated student services that are efficient and effective.
- Continue to grow offering through the Digital campus that are high quality and offer students flexibility in how they learn.
- Continue to improve the campus physical environment, particularly teaching spaces that support our approach to learning.



Our staff

This Academic Plan critically depends upon the talents and skills of our academic and professional staff. The disruptions that have been accelerated by COVID-19 will impact not only on our students, but also our staff. Academic staff, assisted by Learning and Teaching Professional staff, responded to COVID-19 by rapidly moving teaching online, conducting classes and assessment remotely, and continuing to engage students through digital platforms. Professional staff moved to providing even more support online, without compromising their commitment to students and their wellbeing. Our students responded very positively, with minimal impact on their performance or progression, and frequently expressed their appreciation for the extraordinary lengths our community went to, to support them in continuing their learning.

In a post-COVID environment, we will use the lessons learned to provide a more flexible, student centric experience. To support this priority, Griffith's educators, already nationally recognised for their excellence, will have opportunities to develop their professional skills and capabilities in digital learning, use of learning analytics, and research-informed, transformed pedagogy to better prepare the graduates of the future. As Academics of the Future, they will work with our students to develop and apply 21st century skills to both teaching and research.

The Griffith Academic of the Future program will incorporate process alignment and improvement to provide a bridge between the Academic Plan, Research and Innovation Plan and People Plan, and between Schools/ Departments and Research Centres and Institutes.

We will implement an integrated and holistic professional development program to support staff engaged in learning, teaching and student success. A range of programs will be offered that will include micro-credentials with accompanying digital badges. A key focus will be those in middle leadership roles such as program directors and those new to Griffith or transitioning to new roles of responsibility. This will be part of overarching University approach to supporting career enhancement and professional development across multiple domains, not just learning and teaching.

We will review the efficiency of systems and processes to include agile policy development to support colleagues' learning, effective delivery of the curriculum and recognition of workload associated with teaching in blended modes. Our student-facing policies will promote their shared responsibilities, and will be simple, transparent and fair.

Communities of practice will be established that align to strategic priorities (e.g. Students as Partners, Griffith Graduates of the Future, technology-enhanced learning, assessment and research-informed pedagogy) as part of a distributed leadership approach that is sustainable in promoting opportunities for staff to lead learning and teaching initiatives.

Staff achievements in learning and teaching will be recognised through promotion, awards and fellowships. We will support staff to apply for national recognition schemes including the Australian Awards for University Teaching, and the associated citations. There will continue to be clear pathways for promotion on the basis of outstanding performance in teaching, as well as for those staff whose performance is balanced across teaching, research and service and engagement.

Excellence in Teaching

Griffith is nationally renowned for its high teaching quality. In 2019, inspirational maths teacher Dr Kevin Larkin was named Australian University Teacher of the Year. With more than 35 years of teaching experience he motivates pre-service teachers and has transformed how mathematics education is taught. His goal is to inspire the next generation of creative, driven and knowledgeable teachers who recognise the importance of developing numerate citizens. Dr Larkin is one of four Griffith teachers awarded the top prize in recent years.



Strategic Plan goals	Academic Plan actions
Refocus our processes and culture to encourage a more student-focused approach to our learning and teaching activities and support structures, to remove barriers to creative and innovative teaching.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide accessible professional development opportunities for both academic and professional staff involved in teaching, to promote innovative and creative teaching. • Ensure staff performance reviews and promotion standards recognise and reward outstanding approaches to teaching. • Continue to provide support to staff to apply for national teaching awards and fellowships.
Support staff to embrace the opportunity provided by digital disruption.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successfully transition to the new VLE and support faculty to use this environment in a way that transforms the student experience. • Ensure the positive lessons learned from COVID-19 with respect to the enhanced role of technology in learning, assessment and engagement are promoted and sustained. • Support dissemination of best practice through communities of practice, staff professional development and reward and recognition processes.
Refocus our policies, processes and systems with a major focus on reducing administrative burdens and minimising ‘pain points’ for staff and students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the Teaching Allocation Tool and implement changes required to ensure it accounts for workload associated with blended learning. • Review, simplify and streamline learning and teaching and student related policies to remove unnecessary policies and bureaucracy, and ensure administrative processes are student and staff friendly. • Continue to improve self-help resources to support students, including upgrades to MyGriffith and the Course Advisor tool.

The implementation of this ambitious plan over the next five years will ensure Griffith can create a future for all, and particularly our students who will graduate confident to lead the future.



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