



**Australian Government**

---

**Department of Industry, Innovation, Climate Change,  
Science, Research and Tertiary Education**

---

## **2014-16 Mission-based Compact**

Between:

The Commonwealth of Australia

and

Southern Cross University

## CONTENTS

Context	4
A. Policy Setting	4
B. The Purpose and Effect of this Compact	4
C. Establishment of the Compact	4
D. The Principles of Commonwealth Funding Support	4
E. The Structure of this Compact	5
Part One: Focus & Mission	6
Part Two: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Access and Outcomes	11
Part Three: Innovation and Engagement	15
Part Four: Teaching and Learning	23
Part Five: Research and Research Training	33
Part Six: General Provisions	39

This compact is between

The Commonwealth of Australia (**Commonwealth**) represented by and acting through:

The Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Science and Research

Assisted by the Department of Industry, Innovation, Climate Change, Science, Research and Tertiary Education (DIICCSRTE)

ABN 77 599 608 295

Of

Industry House

10 Binara Street

Canberra ACT 2601

And

Southern Cross University

ABN: 41 995 651 524

A body corporate under the Southern Cross University Act 1993

Of

Military Road, East Lismore, NSW, 2480

**(University)**

## CONTEXT

### A. Policy Setting

The Australian Government believes all Australians are entitled to a productive, fair and prosperous life and our higher education system is crucial to achieving this. Universities impart the skills and knowledge Australians need to realise their personal and professional aspirations and contribute to the broad economic and knowledge base of our society including the cultural, health and civic wellbeing of the community.

Over the term of this mission-based compact (compact), Australian universities will confront a range of opportunities and challenges in fulfilling their social and economic remit. These opportunities and challenges include, but are not limited to, changing national and international educational markets, dynamic global financial arrangements including the rise of the Asian Century, new approaches to teaching and learning, rapidly changing information technologies and evolving priorities for research and innovation.

Australia's universities are well equipped to harness the opportunities and meet these challenges that lie ahead. The 2014-16 compact supports this process by articulating the major policy objectives and the diverse approaches and commitments universities will adopt to achieve these strategic goals over the term of the agreement.

### B. The Purpose and Effect of this Compact

This compact is an agreement between the Commonwealth and the University. Entering into a compact is one of the quality and accountability requirements which a higher education provider must meet under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA) as a condition of receiving a grant. Specifically, subsection 19-110(1) of HESA requires Table A and Table B providers must, in respect of each year for which a grant is paid to the provider under HESA, enter into a mission based compact with the Commonwealth for a period which includes that year.

The compact demonstrates the Commonwealth and the University have a shared and mutual commitment to provide students with high quality educational experiences and outcomes and to building research and innovation capabilities and international competitiveness.

The compact recognises the University is an autonomous institution with a distinctive mission, operating within a state or territory, national and international higher education environment.

The purpose of this compact is to provide a strategic framework for the relationship between the Commonwealth and the University. It sets out how the University's mission aligns with the Commonwealth's goals for higher education, research, innovation, skills development, engagement and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander access and outcomes.

The Commonwealth and the University agree this compact will be published on Commonwealth websites and may be published on the University website.

### C. Establishment of the Compact

The Commonwealth and the University agree the Term of this compact is from 1 January 2014 until 31 December 2016.

### D. The Principles of Commonwealth Funding Support

The Commonwealth articulates its vision for the higher education sector, through *Transforming Australia's Higher Education System* (available at the [DIICCSRTE website](#)), and the role of universities in driving our national innovation system, through *Powering Ideas* (available at the [DIICCSRTE website](#)).

In supporting Australia's universities, the Commonwealth seeks to promote:

- academic freedom and institutional autonomy;
- a diverse and sustainable higher-education sector;
- opportunity for all;
- access to university based on merit;
- world-class teaching and learning that advances the international standing of Australian education;
- world-class research and research training that advances knowledge, critical thinking and Australia's international standing; and
- responsiveness to the economic, social and environmental needs of the community, region, state, nation and the international community through collaborative engagement.

To ensure Australia's higher education system remains robust and of high quality in a globally connected and competitive world, the Australian Government has adopted and implemented a number of system-wide quality measures including establishing the Higher Education Standards Framework, and the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA).

#### **E. The Structure of this Compact**

Part One provides for the Commonwealth's focus for the compact and a description of the University's Mission Statement and Strategic Priorities.

Part Two provides for matters related to improving access and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It contains Commonwealth objectives, university strategies and performance indicators and targets.

Part Three provides for matters related to innovation, industry and skills and engagement. It also contains Commonwealth objectives, university strategies and performance indicators and targets.

Part Four provides for matters related to teaching and learning including student enrolments, quality, equity and infrastructure. It contains Commonwealth objectives, university strategies and equity targets.

Part Five provides for matters related to research and research training including research performance and research capability. It contains Commonwealth objectives, university strategies, performance indicators and targets.

Part Six provides for general provisions of the compact including compact review, privacy, confidentiality and information sharing, changing the compact and notices.

## PART ONE: FOCUS & MISSION

### The Commonwealth's Focus for this Compact

The Commonwealth's ambitions for higher education include:

- providing opportunities for people from all backgrounds to participate to their full potential and be supported to do so. This includes supporting the aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through improved access and support arrangements. The Commonwealth is committed to ensuring the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people participating in undergraduate and higher degrees by research (HDR), as well as staffing and academic representation, reaches population parity;
- providing students with a stimulating and rewarding higher education experience;
- producing graduates with the knowledge, skills and understanding for full participation in society and the economy;
- better aligning higher education and research with the needs of the economy, and building capacity to respond to future changes in skills needs;
- increasing universities' engagement with all parties and linkages between universities and Australian businesses in particular;
- playing a pivotal role in the national research and innovation system through the generation and dissemination of new knowledge and through the education, training and development of world class researchers across a wide range of intellectual disciplines;
- improving knowledge transfer and commercialisation outcomes;
- consistent with the Asian Century policy framework, ensuring education is at the forefront of Australia's engagement with Asia; and
- being amongst the leading Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries in terms of participation and performance.

In support of these objectives, the Commonwealth encourages universities to consider the following important measures in their planning and delivery:

- developing partnerships with schools and other organisations to improve the participation of people from disadvantaged backgrounds in higher education;
- working with business, industry and Vocational Education and Training (VET) providers to provide the Australian economy with the graduates it needs;
- the suite of performance measurement tools being developed through the Advancing Quality in Higher Education initiative, work on quality in research training, and a feasibility study on research impact assessment (including the possible implementation of a mechanism, separate from *Excellence in Research for Australia*, to evaluate the wider benefits of publicly funded research);
- applying the principles and procedures required to support a continuous improvement model for intellectual property; and
- the National Research Investment Plan, including the need for a strategic outlook to address Australian Government priorities and principles at a national level.

## 1 THE UNIVERSITY'S MISSION AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

---

### 1.1 The purpose of the University's Mission

The University's Mission sets out its values and aspirations, what it does and how it can best serve the interests of its students, staff and key stakeholders. The Commonwealth and the University recognise the University's Mission may evolve.

The University and the Commonwealth recognise the University is an autonomous institution which is responsible for the determination of its Mission and for its aspirations and strategies for their achievement.

### 1.2 The University's Mission and Strategic Priorities

Southern Cross University's (SCU) current Strategic Plan 2011 -2015 covers the first two years of the term of this Compact. The Plan was finalised after consultation with staff, students and other stakeholders, and approved by University Council. It is available at <http://www.scu.edu.au/pqr/index.php/8/>.

The University, through its Vision Statement, states that: "Southern Cross University will be recognised for enriching our communities through the excellence of our scholarship and the achievements of our graduates." The University's Mission is as follows: "We equip our students to live a life they value and to be effective global citizens. We do this by creating inspirational and engaged learning experiences by staff who actively practise scholarship. We extend internationally recognised educational opportunities for our diverse student body, including those from rural and regional communities. We create and apply knowledge in partnership with our communities in fields that are regionally relevant and globally significant."

The University's Vision and Mission statements are explicitly grounded in its status as a regionally head-quartered university, with campuses in Lismore and Coffs Harbour, coupled with a growing presence in the metropolitan Gold Coast. SCU is co-located with North Coast TAFE and Coffs Harbour Senior College on the Coffs Harbour Education Campus. Subject to future government policy and funding decisions, SCU will continue to provide opportunities for people of diverse backgrounds through its campus locations, external education delivery and via SCU College sites in northern New South Wales and the Gold Coast. In so doing, SCU will continue to exceed national access and participation rates for regional, low socio-economic (low SES) and indigenous students. Reflecting this responsibility to regional higher education and research, SCU remains committed to promoting the objectives of the Regional Universities Network (RUN).

A new strategic plan will be developed for the period 2016 and beyond. In addition, the University will be part of the TEQSA audit cycle in 2015; consequently, pre-review work aligning activity with the TEQSA standards and post-review reflection will be a major focus during 2014 - 2016. Learning from the audit and implementing its recommendations will be a priority and feed into future strategic planning processes, including the new strategic plan.

The term of this Compact will be characterised by a continued focus on strategies to support growth in domestic undergraduate and postgraduate enrolments, and strengthening of our research expertise, subject to government funding and policy frameworks. A number of substantial initiatives are underway.

The Strategic Plan sets out four goals, twelve targets and key performance indicators (KPIs) that identify the institutional priorities over the medium to long term. It remains integral to the University's planning process. In addition, Vice Chancellor's priorities are set following the annual University Review process, reflecting issues needing to be addressed over the short to medium term.

**Goal 1** of the Strategic Plan states: "We will provide inspirational learning experiences for our students through high quality teaching engaged with scholarship".

A continued focus during this Compact to support teaching and learning, particularly for non-traditional students, is the suite of IT-based initiatives known as the "Personal Learning

Environment" (PLE) strategy, the first tranche of which is supported by SCU's Structural Adjustment Fund project, "Partners for the Future". The PLE is being rolled out across all campuses and is also designed to support students studying externally. Another component of this project supports the establishment of SCU College, reflecting the strategy under this Goal to "enhance and enrich student transition to and engagement with university learning and studying". SCU College will play an important role in ensuring SCU continues to make a substantial contribution to the achievement of the national participation targets for low SES and Indigenous students. SCU College provides a supportive learning environment for less academically-well prepared students as they transition into higher education learning, with programs delivered in partnership with North Coast TAFE and Gold Coast Institute of TAFE. This is critical, given the high proportion of 'first-in-family' students at SCU and the demands on academics to support these students, particularly in the early stages of their transition into university study. Three new associate degrees are being delivered (Allied Health, Business and Arts) and new associate degrees are being developed. However, SCU remains concerned about the current funding regime that disadvantages sub-bachelor students when compared to their counterparts studying bachelor-level qualifications. Fostering greater community recognition of the advantages SCU College as an alternative pathway to full bachelor-level studies will be a priority over the term of the Compact.

The University will continue to focus on academic renewal to ensure courses meet future demand for graduate skills, in the region and nationally. Its profile in Science, Engineering and Technology (STEM) courses is being expanded, by introducing Civil Engineering (from 2013) and new Science and Engineering courses over the period of this Compact.

Further initiatives addressing this Goal are included in Part Four.

**Goal 2** states: "We will generate and disseminate research and undertake research training in key areas that have global and regional impact."

SCU's determination in building its research profile through the strategic recognition and support of its research and emerging research strengths was highlighted by the 2012 Excellence in Research Australia (ERA) results. The increase in the number of research outputs occurred in conjunction with exceptional improvements in the quality of these outputs. The University also recognises that an important component of improving overall research performance is the ongoing, high quality relationships being developed through the Collaborative Research Networks (CRN) project.

An independent Review of the University's Research Strategy was undertaken in the first half of 2013. This process will feed into the development of the University's future strategic directions across its research portfolio for 2014 and beyond. This review of SCU's overall 'big picture' research strategy will examine a wide range of strategic issues such as research, governance, research entities such as Special Research Centres (currently Southern Cross Plant Sciences and Southern Cross GeoScience) and Centres (currently in the areas of Children and Young People; Coastal Biogeochemistry; Gambling, Education and Research; Marine Ecology; Tourism, Leisure and Work; and Forests), research funding, research performance, national and international collaborations, and ERA strategy. The review findings form the basis of SCU's strategic directions in research over the term of this Compact. A priority is to achieve a balance between the University's existing research strengths and in developing capacity and some breadth across other research areas

The University will continue to invest in developing the supervisory skills for early career staff, through the development of a new module on Higher Degree Research (HDR) Supervision within SCU's Graduate Certificate in Academic Educational Practice. From 2013, this unit will be convened by the Deputy PVC (Research) so as to ensure high-level mentorship to participants.

HDR training will continue to be focussed on on-time completion of high quality theses. In addition, over the term of the Compact the University will continue to target HDR recruitment into areas of demonstrable research excellence (as indicated by ERA rankings of 3 and above).



This will be supported through a priority allocation of APA and IPRS funding to students applying to be supervised by researchers who are members of recognised University research entities.

Further initiatives addressing this Goal are included in Part Five.

**Goal 3** provides that: "We will develop a high performance culture in an environment which encourages collaboration and the free exchange of ideas." From a human resources perspective, SCU's priorities to 2016 will include:

- (i) Implementation of the Indigenous Employment Strategy (see Part Two for more details)
- (ii) Improving the University's performance management, development and review (PMDR) processes for all staff. This has been nominated as a VC priority.
- (iii) Continuing with specific initiatives to improve SCU's research performance, including a new approach to defining and supporting 'research active' academic staff.
- (iv) Development and implementation of a Leadership Capability Framework.
- (v) Ongoing pursuit of the recommendations of an independent review in July 2012 into the "Arrangements for Delivery of Administrative Services in School". The change processes emerging from this Review will be rolled-out during 2013 and will affect the key support services of Human Resources, Financial and Business Services and Student Services over the term of the Compact. The Report recognised the tight funding environment facing the University, and the need to have efficient and cost-effective administrative services, while ensuring that senior academic staff receive high quality support services without being burdened by unnecessary administrative duties. Substantial changes to the management and reporting lines for the University's Student Services unit and School-based Student Liaison Officers is underway, with full effect over the life of the Compact.
- (vi) Negotiation of a new enterprise agreement (the current agreement expires June 2013).

Another theme in Goal 3 is community engagement. The University's Mission incorporates a strong commitment to regional Australia and the central role it plays in contributing to the sustainable development of the regions within SCU's footprint. A prime example is the University's STAR Entry Scheme, which is designed to assist regional Year 12 students in SCU's feeder region gain direct admission to SCU on the basis of their school Principal's recommendation. The STAR Entry Scheme has been recently revised, with a key outcome being a more simplified electronic process for Principals wishing to nominate students under the Scheme.

Two new examples that will be rolled out over the life of the Compact include: (a) the development of a program to strengthen relationships with 69 priority schools across the regional footprint in both NSW and southern Queensland; and (b) through the Coffs Harbour campus, working with the NSW government to explore ways to better support an educationally and economically disadvantaged community through a series of targeted strategies aimed at the community's particular needs.

The Vice Chancellor will be Chair of RUN during 2014 and SCU will continue to participate in joint projects with our RUN colleagues (such as joint funding submissions) to foster a broader coverage of regional issues. SCU has a Roadmap that articulates a suite of strategic initiatives that deliver against the Strategic Plan. A key element is the development of academic staff capability to deliver engaged learning and research activities that align with regional partners and priorities. This is explored further in the response to Part Three.

**Goal 4** of the Strategic Plan provides that "We will enhance our performance in a sustainable and responsible manner". Increasing student load is integral to this Goal. SCU's ability to realise its enrolment growth aspirations is closely connected to the growth and sustainability of the Gold Coast campus and increasing off and on-shore international enrolments. The University is actively exploring options to expand its links with quality international providers and to build on its presence in metropolitan areas.

Lismore will continue to house the heavy infrastructure needed across many of the University's research endeavours, with Coffs Harbour continuing to play an integral role as delivering as wide a range of higher education needs for communities across the mid-north coast as is viable (academically and financially).

By 2016, SCU's activities across the Gold Coast and Tweed regions will be consolidated onto the Gold Coast campus (the foundation building opened in 2010), with the construction of the third major building on campus, Building C/D (partially funded by both the Teaching and Learning (HE) and Structural Adjustment funds) with an estimated 3500 students onsite. An important priority for the Gold Coast campus will be to foster a positive student experience, including the non-academic facilities and amenities available to students, such as access to parking, sport and recreation, food, etc.

Over the term of the Compact, the Lismore campus will undergo the first stage of a significant infrastructure re-development, due to the construction of a new Learning Centre in the centre of the campus, and the re-purposing of facilities for engineering and science courses in the Science Precinct development, guided by the Master Development Plan. This redevelopment is partially funded through Regional EIF (\$28 million) and is expected to be fully completed by 2015.

New developments at the Coffs Harbour campus will be influenced by a Master planning process currently underway. Health programs (undergraduate, CPD and in research) will be a growth area in the terms of new courses and for strengthening research activities; this is further reinforced by the demographics and demand of the area.

The University's major capital infrastructure priorities are:

- A. Supporting future campus developments in line with the respective Master Development planning processes (completed for Lismore and the Gold Coast; underway for Coffs Harbour). This involves: (i) Stage 2 of the Science Precinct development at Lismore, with a focus on upgrading ageing research and other infrastructure to support the University's research activities; and (ii) upgrading of the library at Coffs Harbour. The objective would be to create a cutting-edge centre that forms the centre-piece servicing the needs of all users, including the university learners.
- B. Consolidating the Gold Coast campus as a fully-serviced campus, that meets the academic and non-academic needs of the anticipated 3500 students enrolled by 2016.
- C. Information Technology - to continue the reinvigoration of the University's IT services, building on the roll-out of the PLE, and to strengthen the capacity to meet the IT needs for research activity.

SCU has self-funded the construction of the largest building at the Gold Coast campus (Building B) and is making substantial contributions to the construction of Buildings C/D at the Gold Coast, and the Regional EIF infrastructure developments at Lismore. Accordingly, SCU is constrained in its ability to support any of these major infrastructure priorities without substantial government funding assistance.

## PART TWO: ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER ACCESS AND OUTCOMES

### 2 ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER ACCESS AND OUTCOMES

Part Two recognises the important role universities play in supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's personal and professional aspirations through the provision of accessible and supportive higher education programs. Increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander higher education participation and success is important given the direct benefits for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and communities and broader economic and social benefits for all Australians.

Universities are asked to detail their strategies and targets to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander access and outcomes over the compact period in this section. Principal Performance Indicators are compulsory and institutions may voluntarily nominate Optional Performance Indicators and targets considered reflective of individual institutional goals.

The Commonwealth recognises that universities have diverse missions and, consequently, targets and performance will vary between institutions. Each university should develop performance indicators and targets to reflect its individual performance and strategic direction.

#### 2.1 Commonwealth Objectives

The Commonwealth is committed to enhancing the participation and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in higher education consistent with the Closing the Gap initiative addressing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage.

In realising this objective, the Commonwealth has set an aspirational national parity target for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff in higher education. The parity target equates to the proportion of the population aged between 15 and 64 years which is currently 2.3%.

To help achieve this aspirational national target, the Commonwealth has introduced a new focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander reporting in the compact as recommended by the *Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People*. Universities should report high level Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student and staffing plans and strategies in this part of the compact including performance targets for student enrolments, completions and numbers of general and academic staff. Universities may also report on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander initiatives under the Innovation and Engagement, Teaching and Learning and Research and Research Training parts of the compact.

#### 2.2 University Strategies

SCU is performing above National aspirational parity targets for Indigenous students (discussed further below). However, there are some areas that need improving (in particular, student outcomes). As a university strongly embedded in local regional communities of the Northern Rivers and the Mid-North Coast, and increasingly in the Gold Coast, ensuring a strong engagement with Indigenous students and staff is critical to our mission. Accordingly, a whole-of-university approach to improving the presence and success of Indigenous students and staff will be developed during 2013, with the recommendations of the Behrendt Review providing an integral input into this process. There will be a priority to ensure that the University Executive and other senior managers recognise their responsibility in progressing Indigenous issues across their portfolio.

##### ACCESS AND OUTCOMES FOR INDIGENOUS STUDENTS

SCU's participation rate for students identifying as Indigenous is 2.86%, higher than the aspirational national parity target of 2.3%, and one that has consistently grown since 2007 (2% in 2007; based on 2012 Institutional Performance Portfolio (IPP) data). In order to maintain and increase this level of participation, SCU provides a diverse range of alternative entry pathways and access arrangements. However, the outcomes for Indigenous students (as measured by

retention and success rates) are less positive. The retention rate for Indigenous students is similar to that across the sector (64.64% compared with 65.50% in 2010), and with a success rate lower than the sector (67.47% compared with 71.50%).

The University has observed a shift of enrolments of Indigenous students away from courses in SCU's Gnibi College of Australian Aboriginal Peoples (Gnibi) to other programs, and understand this to reflect the greater range of courses accessible and of interest to Indigenous students. Accordingly, structural changes have been made to Gnibi so that from 2013, it is a centrally-funded unit without the fiscal pressures arising from relatively low enrolments (and the low funding band that typifies Indigenous FOE codes). The University's strategy is aimed at giving the academic Schools a direct incentive to use Gnibi-taught units and to continue to integrate Gnibi units (and therefore Aboriginal perspectives) into their courses. It is anticipated that these developments will have important flow-on effects over the term of this Compact, by continued integration of Indigenous students as well as Indigenous perspectives into academic School programming.

A new Indigenous-identified senior position, the Director of Gnibi, has been created. This position will have administrative responsibilities for Gnibi College and the Indigenous knowledge-related units and courses taught out of Gnibi and a wider brief to support the dissemination of Gnibi-led units across SCU. As the senior administrative officer at Gnibi, the position will contribute to Indigenous initiatives across the University, brief the relevant Heads of School and Executive members on matters related to Indigenous issues, and take a leading role in promoting community engagement. The successful applicant will commence in the second half of 2013.

Gnibi itself will take on a facilitating role for teaching and research in the Indigenous space. By supporting other Schools (including the School of Environment, Science and Engineering and its STEM courses), and providing a base for a cohort of Indigenous and other staff from across SCU to develop collaborations with each other, Gnibi will become a focal point in the wider strategy in this space. Gnibi's main goal is to support the development of an inclusive, university-wide and varied array of opportunities for students and attracting students by presenting a relevant suite of opportunities to Indigenous communities, researchers and students. . Specific initiatives include the integration of indigenously-related material into modules across several health units delivered by the School of Health and Human Sciences. Other initiatives to improve vocational outcomes for Indigenous students (eg in allied health) are in the initial planning phases for further development over the life of the Compact.

Strategies to improve retention and success for all students are anticipated to assist in improving outcomes for Indigenous students in the longer term. All Equity programs are inclusive, with Indigenous students forming a key focus in these projects. (See Part 4.3.2 for more details about Equity strategies, including those directed at raising aspirations and widening access among school communities with high cohorts of Indigenous students.) Specific strategies for Indigenous students include:

- Initiatives to maintain ongoing contact and communication with Indigenous students, such as the establishment of an Indigenous Australian Student Services (IASS) MySCU Workgroup; introduction of SKYPE facilities; and IASS website resources.
- Additional financial assistance through scholarships; Indigenous art prize; and specific recognition of Indigenous students in the SCU Unilife Awards (recognising outstanding achievements and contributions by SCU students in sport and student life).
- Strengthening of projects to support mentoring and leadership, including the introduction of an Indigenous Alumni chapter.
- Australian Indigenous Mentor Experience (AIME): SCU partners with AIME across all campuses.

#### **ACCESS AND OUTCOMES FOR INDIGENOUS STAFF**

Based on the 2012 IPP data, 2.79% of all SCU staff identify themselves as Indigenous, a level that has remained reasonably constant over the last 3 years, with the total number of Indigenous staff plateauing around 26. In terms of the proportion of Indigenous academic staff, SCU remains

significantly above the sector (2.13% compared with 0.67%); this proportion has dropped in recent years, albeit in the context of a small cohort (7 academic staff in 2011).

Employment Strategies aimed at improving access and outcomes for Indigenous staff include:

- In accordance with the SCU Equity and Diversity Plan 2011 – 2015, the Indigenous Employment Strategy 2012 - 2015 incorporates a number of proactive initiatives covering recruitment, retention and development of Indigenous employees as well as the development and implementation of Indigenous Cultural Competency training for all staff. The aim is to increase the number of Indigenous employees at SCU through enhanced recruitment and retention practices and to increase their participation in training and development programs. The appointment of mentors for new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees is an initiative of the Indigenous Employment Strategy.
- Joint appointments: A joint-appointment strategy has been developed, to increase the number of Indigenous scholars and associated units by Gnibi seeking to share appointments with interested Schools. Over time, the intention is to increase the number of Indigenous academic staff, thereby providing a more varied and robust pool of Indigenous scholars across the University.
- Professional Learning and Cultural Competency: The content of SCU's Professional Learning Calendar is informed by learning needs identified from the SCU performance management process and other Strategic Plan priorities. An eLearning Strategy to support the Calendar has been completed. This will drive the delivery of future professional learning during 2013-2015 allowing all staff greater flexibility in how and when learning is undertaken.

A trial Cultural Competency Program was successfully conducted in 2012 and will be implemented incrementally with all staff commencing in 2013. The initial target audience is all supervisors, particularly those who supervise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, followed by staff new to SCU and by 2016 all staff. The Program includes two online components: (i) an Indigenous Cultural Competency component; and (ii) the Cultural Diversity and Inclusive Toolkit. These components are complemented by a face to face session, "Courageous Conversations About Race".

Financial and other study assistance is available for all SCU staff. Indigenous employees are also entitled to a Language Allowance where an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language is used in the course of their employment.

**Mentoring and Leadership Initiatives:** A Leadership Capability Framework is the foundation of all leadership development programs at SCU and is currently under development. This includes talent identification and SCU succession management strategies (including for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees).

## 2.3 Performance Indicators and Targets

The purpose of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performance indicators and targets is to assist the University and the Commonwealth in monitoring the University's progress against the Commonwealth's objectives particularly its contribution to reaching national parity.

The University will aim to meet the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander targets set out in the following tables.

Note: All calendar year references below refer to the previous year's data collection.

Principal Performance Indicators	Baseline 2012	Progressive Target 2013	Progressive Target 2014	Progressive Target 2015	Target 2016
Number of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student enrolments <sup>1</sup>	306	310	315	325	330
Number of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student completions <sup>2</sup>	29	30	32	36	40
Number of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander professional/general staff <sup>3</sup>	19	19	20	22	24
Number of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic staff <sup>4</sup>	7	8	9	10	11

Optional Performance Indicators	Baseline 2012	Progressive Target 2013	Progressive Target 2014	Progressive Target 2015	Target 2016
Number of joint staff appointments	0	0	1	3	4

<sup>1</sup> Refers to total undergraduate, postgraduate and HDR students by headcount

<sup>2</sup> See footnote 1 for definition

<sup>3</sup> Refers to number by headcount

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 3 for definition

### 3 INNOVATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Part Three recognises the important role of universities in our national innovation system, in boosting economic productivity contributions to improved social and environmental outcomes and growth, and in engaging, advancing and inspiring their communities. It also recognises that universities make an important contribution to building connections and partnerships that broaden and deepen Australia's understanding of Asia.

Under three themes: Innovation; Industry and Skills; and Engagement; universities are asked to detail their strategies and targets over the term of this compact. Principal Performance Indicators are compulsory and institutions may voluntarily nominate Optional Performance Indicators and targets considered reflective of individual institutional goals.

The Commonwealth recognises that universities have diverse missions and, consequently, targets and performance will vary between institutions. Each university should develop performance indicators and targets to reflect its individual performance and strategic direction.

#### 3.1 Innovation

##### 3.1.1 Commonwealth objectives

The Commonwealth seeks to build an innovation system that ensures Australia can meet the challenges and grasp the opportunities of the twenty-first century. The Commonwealth encourages innovation by supporting industry-led research, promoting knowledge-transfer activities and the commercialisation of research.

##### 3.1.2 University strategies

Research income at SCU has been strongest in categories 3 and 4. As a relatively new research institution, SCU has focussed on industry relationships and leveraged CRC funding as a way of building research capacity. Indeed, SCU has consistently maintained a CRC research income in the top 5 of Australian Universities, relative to its size. Strategically the University wants to fundamentally improve the basis and scope of research within the institution that will in turn increase the innovativeness and quantum of research outputs and outcomes. However, due to changes in the CRC programs (including increased competitiveness), SCU is expecting a decrease in CRC income. While SCU will continue to pursue CRC funding opportunities, the strategic decision to increase funding in categories 1 - 3 referred to in section 5.1.2 should not be overlooked.

As the University's research capacity develops, Australian Competitive Grant funding has become a high priority. Australian Competitive Grant schemes such as the ARC Linkage enable SCU to maintain strong connections to industry. As a regional university SCU is uniquely placed amongst its peers in that it is relatively close to major population centres that are growing and evolving. With campuses in Lismore, Coffs Harbour and the Gold Coast the opportunities to engage with traditional agricultural industries as well as health, tourism, business, regional development and the social sciences are many. As a result the University can already demonstrate a strong performance with respect to ARC Linkage Grants.

The SCU strategy for commercialisation of research outcomes leverages the partnerships established through industry engagement in research activity. SCU's industry research partners are key to providing commercialisation pathways for outcomes while ensuring publication, further research access and potentially royalties are returned to SCU.

The University has a particular emphasis on the CRC program and participates strongly in these highly innovative and collaborative ventures that leverage the access and resources of industry and other research institutions. The plan is to extend expertise in partner engagement outside of the CRC program so as to leverage the capability of industry partnerships and collaborations. The aim is to provide the paths to market and a commercial return on involvement in research

projects. Partnerships and collaborative opportunities from CRCs, contract research clients and ARC Linkage partners will continue to provide potential for the adoption of innovative research outcomes.

The focus on collaboration with industry and other research institutions has been further enhanced with the federally funded CRN (Collaborative Research Networks) Program. SCU has established key collaborations with partner Universities through this program enhancing the research capability and engagements with industry. SCU is targeting its emerging research strength areas (Health, Policy, Business) through this program to further build on the existing world class research areas in the Environmental and Earth sciences.

SCU is also targeting multidisciplinary research and collaborations bringing together the science, social and policy disciplines in holistic research outcomes. These provide greater opportunities for impact and take up of outcomes not only through the industry partnerships but also through the community and government.

The University continues to develop relationships and partnerships in Asia and the Pacific and has been successful in a number of federally supported grant schemes such as ACIAR and the International Science Linkage programs as well as direct partnerships with Research organisations and industry.

Over the life of the Compact, it is not a priority to develop independent commercialisation capacity. The University will continue to leverage partnering arrangements as the key commercialisation pathway while building research capacity and research performance. SCU's size and the demands on its income to fund capital works means that the cost associated with venture capital-type activities are prohibitive. The CRN collaboration will also provide access to well established commercialisation units within the University of Queensland, The University of NSW and The University of Sydney. SCU will explore the possibility of formalising the linkage for commercialisation with one or more of these university partners.



### 3.1.3 Performance indicators and targets

The purpose of the innovation performance indicators and targets is to assist the University and the Commonwealth in monitoring the University's progress against the Commonwealth's objectives and the University's strategies for innovation.

The University will report principal performance information and aim to meet the innovation performance indicators and targets set out in the following tables.

*Note: All calendar year references below refer to the previous year's data collection.*

Principal Performance Information <sup>5</sup>	2012		
Number of patent and plant breeder's rights families filed, issued and held	Filed 0	Issued 0	Held 1
Number of all active licences, options or assignments (LOAs) <sup>6</sup> executed and income derived	No. 12	Value(\$) 0	
Number and value of research contracts and consultancies executed <sup>7</sup>	No. 112	Value(\$) \$14.712M	
Investment in spin-out companies during the reporting year and nominal value of equity in spin-outs based on last external funding/liquidity event or entry cost	Investment (\$) 0	Value(\$) 0	

*Note: All calendar year references below refer to the previous year's data collection.*

Principal Performance Indicator	Baseline 2012	Progressive Target 2013	Progressive Target 2014	Progressive Target 2015	Target 2016
Category 4 Income	\$1.784M	\$2.01M	\$2.0M	\$1.5M	\$1.0M

## 3.2 Industry and Skills

### 3.2.1 Commonwealth objectives

The Commonwealth encourages universities and employers to work together so that courses meet the needs of employers, where relevant. This may include integrating work and learning, meeting professional accreditation requirements and involving employers in course development and delivery.

### 3.2.2 University strategies

The University's participation in CRC programs involves education programs directly supporting PhDs in industry, with SCU hosting and supervising several PhDs in multiple CRCs. SCU is involved in the current CRC round (for a Regional Resilience CRC), where it is proposed to target 60 plus PhDs embedded in industry. Other examples pursued from a Research perspective include effectively utilising the federally-funded JRE Engineering cadetship, combining plant science research (through Southern Cross Plant Sciences) and Ecofibre for researchers in business.

<sup>5</sup> This set of performance information does not require targets. Universities will be asked to advise their baseline performance and will report on their future performance in the context of the Institutional Performance Portfolio Information Collection commencing in 2013. Patent and plant breeder right family refers to a group of patent or plant breeder rights applications or grants emanating from a single filing. Note: this question only concerns patent and plant breeder rights families, and is not in reference to families of other forms of registered IP (i.e. trade marks).

<sup>6</sup> A LICENCE agreement formalises the transfer of technology between two parties, where the owner of the technology (licensor) grants rights to the other parties (licensee). An OPTION agreement grants the potential licensee a time period during which it may evaluate the technology and negotiate the terms of a licence agreement. An option agreement is not constituted by an Option clause in a research agreement that grants rights to future inventions, until an actual invention has occurred that is subject to that Option. An ASSIGNMENT agreement conveys all right, title and interest in and to the licensed subject matter to the named assignee.

<sup>7</sup> Please use the definition of contracts and consultancies utilised in the National Survey of Research Commercialisation (NSRC). A copy of the survey is available at this URL: <http://www.innovation.gov.au/Section/Innovation/Pages/TheNationalSurveyofResearchCommercialisation.aspx>

The courses on offer reflect SCU's commitment to fulfil employers' demand for graduate employees, particularly at a regional and national level. For example, the Associate Degree in Law is promoted to meet the high demand for Paralegals in law firms, government, banking and insurance industries. The course structure provides a clear pathway for students from Associate Degree into a Bachelor of Laws. A feature of SCU's delivery with The Hotel School Sydney (THSS) is the employer-reserved places, which mandates an internship with industry for all placements. Initial work is underway to enhance the University's participation in THSS, including at the post-graduate level and to facilitate greater access to external modes of delivery.

As set out in Part 4, the University is growing its suite of science and engineering programs in response to the growing regional and national demand for graduates in these disciplines. Current labour market data at a state and national level indicate an existing deficiency in the supply of engineers and this is likely to continue for the foreseeable future. The study of Mathematics has been added to the secondary education offerings to meet the national shortfall in mathematical disciplines. The University will bring greater focus to science education, working with the relevant state authorities in New South Wales and Queensland, high schools and vocational education providers in the region to improve the number and preparation of students interested in undertaking higher education in STEM disciplines. New developments in Allied Health are underway to meet the anticipated needs of an aging population.

Ongoing collaboration with employer representative bodies and government advisory bodies provides information on employment trends to inform future direction for development across the institution. Course development at SCU is undertaken in consultation with relevant professional bodies as well as assessing workforce needs at a regional and national level. For example, the engineering degree was developed in consultation with Engineers Australia. Local and regional engineering companies have been engaged to deliver industry relevant content into the course as well as provide work placements for students.

Courses are developed to include key work place skills such as communication, technology, and teamwork. Investment in new technologies found within the workplace is identified as an ongoing need, to ensure graduate skills match industry expectations.

Ongoing review and renewal of programs includes relevant industry and employer representation. Professional accreditation of courses by industry bodies ensures content is current and relevant. Collaborations with Industry bodies provide opportunity for industry representatives to deliver content directly into SCU programs. Collaborations are encouraged to bring new trends and contemporary thinking into the learning process. Staff are encouraged to maintain affiliation with industry bodies and associations. SCU has a strategy to employ staff where possible with a strong industry connection to ensure academic content is current.

MOUs have been established with all local health districts providing strategic information on the health sector, employment within the sector and ready access to student placements.

Participation by senior staff in workforce planning at State and Federal levels (in particular, in health) occurs and is encouraged.

Work Integrated Learning (WIL) programs are well established at SCU, such as the employer-reserved places which are a feature of SCU's delivery of the Bachelor of Business in Hotel Management with The Hotel School Sydney.. The programs include an evaluation on completion by both employer and student ensuring the program is rewarding for both parties and identifies possible improvements. The intention is to extend WIL programs into courses where relevant and to expand the WIL placements into additional careers. For example, a new program in creative arts has been developed with strong input from local creative industry providers across the Northern Rivers and Gold Coast, and includes the provision of professional placements. Students will be expected to accumulate examples of work in an e-portfolio as part of their studies. This e-portfolio, aligned with workplace-focused units, is aimed at providing an essential tool for students' transition into relevant workplaces and vocations. Improving the employability of graduates was established as a VC priority in 2012/13.

Another example of the expansion of WIL programs is the access by students in new allied health courses (such as occupational therapy and podiatry) to clinical placements at the SCU Health Clinics, which are located in both Lismore and the Gold Coast campuses. These clinics provide health care services to University students and staff as well as the general public, while also providing students with a professional and supportive environment of practice, research and to develop their knowledge in specialised areas. In addition, students from the School of Health and Human Sciences will continue to access the University's Simulation Truck (Sim Truck), a mobile teaching, learning and health facility, acquired as part of a successful grant allocated by the Health Workforce Australia (HWA), for the purposes of on-the-spot training across many of the health disciplines offered by SCU.

The University's strong commitment to Community Engaged Learning is described by academic policy, teaching and learning strategy documents and the Sustainability Partnerships and Community Engagement (SPaCE) Roadmap 2013-2015. The University will continue to build on this strength, by undertaking an audit of all curricula to identify and promote student learning opportunities that are partnership-based and situated in community settings. Accompanying this work will be an audit of the nature and extent of external relationships across academic programs and central university activity to improve the visibility of the linkages to industry and community that exist in each discipline. These activities will comprise elements of a community engaged learning strategy, which will be developed to guide growth in this area over the term of the Compact.

A comprehensive stakeholder analysis will be undertaken to identify the strategic priorities, needs, opportunities for strategic alignment and potential areas of synergy across all major touch points relating to curriculum delivery and student experience. This will explore the involvement of employers in course advisory functions.

### **3.3 Engagement**

#### **3.3.1 Commonwealth objectives**

As part of its social and economic remit and as an important precursor to innovation, the Commonwealth encourages universities to engage with all levels of government, other universities, businesses, schools, the vocational education and training sector, employers, the professions, research institutions and the wider community including international partners particularly those in the Asian region.

#### **3.3.2 University strategies**

Community engagement is one of the themes of Goal 3 of the Strategic Plan, and the University's Mission incorporates a strong commitment to regional Australia and the central role it plays in contributing to sustainability within the footprint. Generating and disseminating research that has regional (as well as global) impact is integral to Goal 2. The University's participation in a bid on Regional Resilience highlights this commitment.

New and building collaborations across the Research portfolio include:

- Continued use of the CRC Program as a key element to engage industry and will continue to provide a major pathway for research and commercialisation. Provides multidisciplinary and impact coverage.
- Participation in the CRN program incorporates research collaborations, industry engagement, expertise and multidisciplinary engagements with Group of 8 universities and their partners.

Examples of strategies in the Research portfolio aimed at improving the quality of engagement include:

- The University's Research Centres (particularly those in Plant Science, Geoscience, forestry, zoology and marine science) engage at all levels, including internationally. Examples include Science linkage programs; and participation in AusAid and ACIAR programs. There are international research collaborations in Asia (China, Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia and Brunei), the Pacific, the Americas and Europe.

- Where possible, SCU utilises those schemes that are available to engage with industry locally and regionally, such as the Tech Voucher Scheme supported by the NSW Government and the Enterprise Connect program, embedding researchers in business.
- Examples of national engagement activity occur through CRCs, CRN and Centres of Excellence, such as secondments of senior researchers from CRN partner universities and joint student supervision through CRCs and CRN.

Across the Teaching and Learning portfolio, part of the University's Internationalisation strategy is to build outbound mobility options for students, by developing this in a more structured, 'global leadership' concept, and integrate the outbound program within a credit-earning component of a unit or course. This concept will be developed over the term of the Compact.

SCU is the convenor of the Regional Universities Network (RUN) Engagement Group. The University's organisational unit, 'Sustainability, Partnerships and Community Engagement' (SPaCE) leads the strategic engagement function, with a particular emphasis on partnership and collaboration. SPaCE manages the SCU Partnership Network which comprises regionally significant partnership activities within the SCU regional footprint including with all local councils, peak arts, commerce and social organisations, Regional Development Australia committees, and community organisations with a regional development focus. New partnerships will be formed and existing partnerships will continue to be strengthened and aligned with SCU's strategic development, research and teaching strengths. In 2014 an annual partnership feedback survey will be implemented to gauge satisfaction, mutual benefit and to inform continual improvement strategies. During the life of this Compact, the annual partnership feedback survey will form a critical mechanism to inform SCU's strategic engagement activities, including with employer groups across all academic Schools.

Specifically, the University will further expand its indigenous engagement through a collaborative partnership with the Northern United Rugby League Football Club, and in turn, their players' family networks. The further growth of the partnership will provide a focal point to expand Aboriginal health and wellbeing initiatives through the SCU Health Clinics located at the Lismore and Gold Coast campuses and enable further curriculum innovation in Aboriginal Health in the School of Health and Human Sciences.

Increasing the number of partnership projects in community engaged learning and research is a priority. In 2013, SCU will implement a new online system that will enable community organisations to propose partnership projects that can then be brokered and developed into student and staff driven collaborative projects. Over the duration of the Compact, SCU will develop and promote the new system as a fundamental element of our regional engagement to identify priority projects that align with the University's teaching and research strengths. This new electronic storefront will become a focal point for regional collaborations and significantly enhance connectivity and innovation in research and teaching endeavours.

SCU has introduced a capstone service learning opportunity to strengthen the student experience of the University's values and Graduate Attributes. From 2014, the 'Community Partnerships for Social Change' units will be extended to all Academic Schools, providing students with an opportunity to collaborate on high priority regional projects in a group-based multidisciplinary environment. By 2016, SCU will position this unit as a flagship learning opportunity of relevance to all students in order to develop a range of skill sets critical for optimal participation in work and society.

The University will continue to develop the suite of professional learning activities critical for the development of staff capacity to deliver community engagement through their teaching and research. Participation of academic staff in Graduate Certificate in Academic Practice will be expanded, specifically the elective unit 'Community Engagement: Scholarship and Practice'. In 2014, information resources for staff will be developed to provide concise descriptions and guidance on key processes in community engagement, particularly partnership and collaboration.

Over the life of the Compact, there will be a focus on strengthening the recognition of partners across all university activities, particularly through the Excellence in Community Engagement Awards. We will promote awarded staff and partners through print and social media channels to develop awareness, interest and incentive to engage in community relevant work.

The University will launch the SCU International Changemakers program to connect Australian students to leaders and their organisations in the Asia Pacific through a range of collaborative activities. This program will strengthen existing international partnerships and align collaborative projects to SCU research strengths with an emphasis on supporting the sustainable development of the Asia Pacific region.

Engagement activities with local schools are integral to the University's Equity strategies (see 4.3.2). In particular, 'SCU Head-Start' gives academically capable Year 11 and 12 students the opportunity to complete a unit of university level study in science, engineering or the humanities. By 2015 it is estimated that 150 secondary school students from North Coast NSW and South East Queensland will have successfully completed the program. Based on Head-Start, a new program targeting capable but currently disengaged students will be trialled in Tweed Heads and the Southern Gold Coast, enabling those who successfully complete the program to access a range of course options offered through SCU College.

SCU's Alumni network has more than 47,000 members in many different fields of work, throughout Australia and the world. The University will focus on further building the number of active Alumni in the broader member network through greater integration into their experience as current students. In 2013 a continued emphasis on linking Alumni activation with Graduation processes will further build the total number of activated Alumni.

### 3.3.3 Performance indicators and targets

The purpose of the engagement performance indicators and targets is to assist the University and the Commonwealth in monitoring the University's progress against the Commonwealth's objectives and the University's strategies for engagement.

The University will aim to meet the engagement performance indicators and targets set out in the following table.

*Note: All calendar year references below refer to the previous year's data collection.*

Principal Performance Indicators	Baseline 2012	Progressive Target 2013	Progressive Target 2014	Progressive Target 2015	Target 2016
Number of active collaborations <sup>8</sup> with industry and other partners in Australia	202	160	175	190	200
Number of active collaborations <sup>9</sup> with industry and other partners overseas	15	16	17	18	20
Category 3 Income	\$4,895,538	\$1,940,000	\$2,200,000	\$2,700,000	\$3,000,000

<sup>8</sup> Collaboration involves active joint participation with other organisations, by contributing resources such as intellectual property, knowledge, money, personnel or equipment, with the aim of obtaining a shared goal or objective. Straight fee-for-service arrangements, such as contracts and consultancies, are deemed not to be collaborative and are therefore excluded. Collaboration with Cooperative Research Centres (CRCs) is also to be excluded. This definition is in line with the ABS and OECD definitions of collaboration.

<sup>9</sup> See footnote 8 for a definition of collaboration.

*Note: All calendar year references below refer to the previous year's data collection.*

<b>Optional Performance Indicators</b>	<b>Baseline 2012</b>	<b>Progressive Target 2013</b>	<b>Progressive Target 2014</b>	<b>Progressive Target 2015</b>	<b>Target 2016</b>
Number of organisations participating in annual partnership feedback survey	N/A	20	25	35	40
Number of partners registered in the SCU Electronic Shopfront	N/A	5	15	20	30
Number of organisations actively participating in the SCU Partnership Network	18	30	35	40	50
Mobility participation in undergraduate students	3.3%	3.3%	3.5%	4.0%	5.0%

### 4 TEACHING AND LEARNING

#### 4.1 Student enrolments

##### 4.1.1 Commonwealth objectives

The Commonwealth is committed to expanding higher education to provide high quality opportunities for people of all backgrounds to participate to their full potential. An expanded higher education system will educate the graduates needed for Australia's future economy, which will be based on knowledge, skills and innovation.

The main objectives of the Commonwealth are to ensure that:

- by 2025, 40 per cent of all 25 to 34 year olds will hold a qualification at bachelor level or above;
- by 2020, 20 per cent of undergraduate enrolments should be students from low socio-economic backgrounds;
- national parity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff is achieved over time; and
- universities are producing graduates that meet the nation's skills needs.

These objectives are supported through the Commonwealth Grant Scheme and, in particular, the demand driven funding of students in bachelor level courses.

##### 4.1.2 University strategies

###### University student enrolment planning

The University's enrolment planning is focused on providing an academic course profile that aims to result in educated graduates suited to employment in an economy based on knowledge, skills and innovation. The Strategic Plan 2011 – 2015 has a target to grow student load; this target will continue into the next iteration of the strategic plan.

SCU's load aspirations are broad but with a focus on the growth and sustainability of the Gold Coast campus and the development of new pathways into SCU's awards. These two initiatives will contribute to the Government's ambition to significantly lift higher education attainment. Investigations are also underway to pursue an expanded metropolitan footprint to better leverage access to a larger pool of potential students and to more effectively capitalise on the University's external offerings.

SCU's load profile continues to focus on professional degree programs. Notably, the expansion of offerings in allied health will continue, and a number of STEM courses will be added. These growth areas will add to a continuing focus on professional programs such as education, business, law and social welfare, and disciplines such as environmental and marine science, visual arts and contemporary music.

A significant challenge of the regional footprint is the high proportion of the population from low SES backgrounds and the consequential lower participation rates in higher education. The establishment of SCU College, as well as the development of more seamless articulation processes for TAFE graduates will deliver a sustainable increase in student load. SCU College is headquartered at the Gold Coast campus where participation rates in Higher Education, particularly in the feeder regions of Tweed are well below the national targets. College enrolments are linked to Pathways through the Gold Coast Institute of TAFE (GCIT) and the North Coast TAFE (NCT).

SCU is collaborating with other universities to jointly provide expanded offerings, particularly in the arts and humanities.

Major fee generating courses such as the MBA and DBA have undergone complete revision and are now poised to deliver strong growth over the term of the Compact.

A downturn in international student load in 2011 has been partly a result of a review and rationalisation of SCU's international collaborators. The University is working to diversify its number of source countries and introducing a range of strategies aimed at increasing its on-shore international student load, including initiatives to attract international students through a presence in metropolitan NSW. In addition, following a research and data-driven strategy to identify the top transitional education destinations, the University is investigating further opportunities for transnational delivery

The University continues to closely monitor student load at an institutional and individual student level. A range of interventions are in place or under development that are aimed at identifying students at risk and to alert such students to the need to seek help with their studies

### **Sub bachelor planning**

The University is working in close partnership with GCIT and NCT to deliver a range of associate degree courses through the SCU College. Associate degrees in Business, Allied Health and Arts are being delivered; and new associate degrees are planned for development during 2014. The projected growth in sub-degree places, supported by SCU's Partners for the Future SAF project, is in line with the government's commitment to increasing participation of low SES and Indigenous students, many of whom experience educational disadvantage and who may initially struggle in undertaking a full bachelor's degree. It is this cohort of potential students to which the sub-bachelor places and the more supportive learning environment of the SCU College is aimed.

The University is continuing to support the expansion of its enabling course, Preparing for Success, which targets potential students from non-traditional pathways of secondary education or TAFE.

The University has aspirational growth plans, particularly through the opportunities of the Gold Coast campus and will continue to apply for additional sub-bachelor places as they arise. These places are integral to the SCU College development and, consequentially, the effectiveness of the initiative as part of SCU's Partners for the Future SAF project.

### **Bachelor degree planning**

The Gold Coast campus has been a centre of activity for strategic developments in allied health education delivery given high population growth rates in the area and the increasing state and national demand for professionally qualified health workers. Nursing, Midwifery and Occupational Therapy are now well established in the area; Speech Therapy, Podiatry and Pedorthics and more allied health specialisations are being added to the suite of courses for delivery.

The University's allied health courses are developed in line with requirements of National Health Practitioner Boards and the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency. SCU also works closely with state and commonwealth government bodies and other universities to ensure the availability of appropriate clinical placements for its health students, and to develop a workforce with skills to meet the health needs of the community. Concerns about the cost of placements for allied health students will exacerbate financial pressure on these programs.

The establishment of a science and engineering precinct at the University's Lismore campus will see the introduction of a number of courses, including a range of science, engineering and planning programs. The strong demand by government for increased tertiary STEM enrolments and by industry for professional engineers has motivated SCU to expand its offerings in these disciplines and enable the output of engineering and physical sciences graduates who will contribute to the growth and development in the community.

The introduction in a Bachelor of Social Welfare is part of the University strengthening delivery in this discipline.

Structural changes have been made in the ways that the University's Gnibi College of Australian Aboriginal People aligns with the teaching/research nexus and improve professional outcomes for Australian and Torres Strait Islander students and students of Indigenous studies. These developments support Academic Schools across the University to integrate both Aboriginal



students and knowledge into their programming in the full range of discipline offerings. SCU is seeking to improve both retention and graduate outcomes in its specialised indigenous undergraduate programs by focusing content to enable accreditation for community welfare and indigenous health workers, from TAFE pathways through to post graduate programs in social work and health. These initiatives are part of a university-wide approach, to increasing the presence and success of the Aboriginal members of our community.

In relation to teacher education, SCU is considering strategies to accommodate both the policy pronouncements of the New South Wales government in "Great Teaching Inspired Learning blueprint" and of the federal government including a more generalist course.

#### **Postgraduate planning**

SCU, whose proportion of CGS load for postgraduate coursework is very low relative to other universities, is projecting growth in response to university sector and industry sector changes.

Review of the AQF has led to a focus on post graduate courses and in particular the offerings in professional disciplines. This has resulted in the University's rationalisation of post graduate coursework programs and the introduction of a number of postgraduate coursework options which provide the direct pathway for qualification for entry into a profession. The MBA and DBA have been recently reviewed, and it is anticipated these revitalised programs will be attractive to fee-paying domestic and international students.

Changes in the health sector with the introduction of National Registration in Nursing and Midwifery have resulted in a review of the suite of postgraduate offerings in clinical science. Over the term of the Compact, there will be an expansion of offerings across the allied health portfolio.

The cap on places at Post Graduate level will restrict the opportunity for SCU to offer a comprehensive suite of courses. The expansion in Allied Health will likely result in enrolments exceeding the current allocation of Commonwealth supported postgraduate CGS places.

## **4.2 Quality**

### **4.2.1 Commonwealth objectives**

A focus on teaching and learning quality underpins the Commonwealth's vision for Australia to be one of the most highly educated and skilled nations in the world.

The Commonwealth has made a commitment to provide more autonomy to universities through the removal of funding caps on Commonwealth supported bachelor level places. In turn, the Commonwealth requires the University to participate in the higher education quality arrangements which are overseen by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency. The arrangements are designed to support academic autonomy while ensuring that the achievement of standards can be demonstrated and that there is a strong focus on enhancing the quality of teaching and learning while expansion of the higher education system meets national participation ambitions.

The Commonwealth's commitment to quality is demonstrated through initiatives such as the Office for Learning and Teaching, which provides a suite of grants, awards and fellowships to recognise quality and promote innovations in learning and teaching.

The University also has obligations under the quality and accountability requirements in Division 19 of HESA. This compact does not change those obligations.

### **4.2.2 University strategies**

A Learning and Teaching Plan, developed with significant university wide discussion using a Green Paper/White Paper process, has refined the University's directions in teaching and learning in line with Goal 4 of the Strategic Plan for the 2013-2015 period. Strategies relating to the Plan's third Goal (relating to high performance culture) also impact on the University's commitment to the quality of its teaching and learning.

During the term of the Compact, SCU will implement the following initiatives related to overall quality of SCU courses and units:

- Review all courses to ensure that they are AQF compliant using Academic Board processes.
- Continue developing new policies (with accompanying procedures and guidelines) to embrace Graduate Attributes, Assessment, English Language Proficiency and course and unit review processes.
- Implement the Unit and Course Management System (UCMS) to ensure that all units and courses have documented learning outcomes and aligned graduate attributes, teaching approaches and assessment. Information is accessible to all students prior to enrolment and allow course mapping to ensure a whole of course quality approach to teaching and learning.
- Review the instrument and processes used to gather and use student feedback on teaching and units to enhance response rates and ensure feedback is useful to students and to improve teaching and learning.

SCU will continue to implement and monitor the professional learning framework. This framework incorporates elements of formal professional learning opportunities, informal learning opportunities and leading and dissemination of learning and teaching. Practices associated with the framework include:

- Graduate Certificate for Academic Practice (GCAP), which includes units on teaching and learning, research and community engagement. The GCAP is mandatory for new continuing academic staff (Level A and B).
- Provision of online modules on teaching practice including embedding of technology-enhanced learning which will be expanded and upgraded from 2013.
- Provision of 14 hours of face to face and online learning opportunities for all new academic staff focused on getting started in teaching at SCU.
- Dissemination of OLT projects is fostered through the annual Festival of Teaching, incorporation of findings from OLT projects into scoping and shaping University-funded and externally funded teaching and learning projects, and through resources provided on the Teaching and Learning website.
- Use of an academic portfolio to record and reflect on teaching (and other) practices for performance management and promotion purposes. This portfolio incorporates Boyer's concept of Scholarship of Teaching.
- University based awards and grants for contributions to student learning, which lead to national competitive awards (OLT).
- Dissemination of scholarship of teaching is fostered through the annual Festival of Teaching.
- SCU offers a Special Studies Program to academic staff to take leave to undertake various scholarship projects which would include projects around improving the quality of teaching and learning. In addition, the completion, annually, of an Academic Staff Portfolio provides academic staff with a tool to outline their teaching and learning activities and achievements, and reflect on how they can improve the quality and effectiveness of their performance in this area.

SCU will continue to apply processes to ensure Learning Spaces meet student learning needs and contemporary teaching approaches:

- University wide audits of space and utilization have been undertaken and underpin space planning
- Organisationally, a Learning Space Advisory Committee (chaired by the Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic)) has been established to advise on the design and redevelopment of learning and teaching spaces to ensure that developments are informed by the latest pedagogical developments and is best suited to the needs and strategies of the University.

Strategies to improve student engagement, success and retention include:

- Introduction of ePortfolio in 2012 in two Schools which will be expanded across all Schools over the duration of the Compact.

- Expansion of SCU's Preparing for Success program, which provides an alternative entry pathway into SCU and helps students develop the academic skills needed to succeed at university.
- Creation of the SCU College to provide pathways and success for students to university through a suite of associate degrees.
- Embed community engaged learning across curricula. This will equip students to be effective global citizens while contributing SCU's mission of enriching its communities. It will also foster greater interactivity and connectivity between students and a range of community and government agencies to provide additional learning experiences conducive to their future roles in work and the community. The implementation of Community Engaged Learning will model quality teaching and learning practices to generate student outcomes that are reflective of the University's vision, mission and values.

Promotion arrangements and the role of teaching performance in promotion criteria:

- The "Scholarship of Teaching" is one of three performance components of the promotion process, together with Research Scholarship and Service. SCU's Academic Promotion Policy outlines the range of activities and the levels of achievement under the Scholarship of Teaching required in order to be promoted. The Policy also provides for Teaching Scholars to be promoted to all levels including Level E, based on performance in Scholarship of Teaching and Service.

Ensuring teaching is informed by research, with staff keeping up with the knowledge base in their disciplines and update curricula, resources and services:

- The teaching-research nexus is embedded with the Learning and Teaching Plan derived from the White Paper on Teaching and Learning for action 2013-15. Within an emerging workload model, preparation time and allocations for revisions are specifically identified. Staff are supported to maintain professional accreditation in their disciplines.

Student outcomes (attainment, provision of undergraduate research training, graduate employment outcomes and the development of generic attributes and skills):

- Policy around Graduate Attributes to be developed in 2013 and embedded through the UCMS.
- Two new projects around inclusive teaching/curricula and transnational education will commence in 2013 to enhance the student learning experience of students from diverse backgrounds
- Establish the Student Retention and Success Program which audits and disseminates best practice into an institutional Retention Plan. During the term of this Compact, this program will include development and delivery of an early alert warning system for identifying students at risk. The system will inform the development of targeted intervention strategies specific to the risk indicators. Strategies will include emulating identified successful student behaviours. It will enable timely intervention of support activities by utilising automatic dissemination of information ensuring optimum results. The system will enhance the capability of assessing chosen intervention strategies enabling review and improvement to be embedded in the Retention Plan.

The retention program will be aligned to the Teaching and Learning Plan. It will direct support towards student outcomes including generic skills and English language proficiency.

*Note: All calendar year references below relate to projects and awards in that calendar year.*

<b>Principal Performance Indicators</b>	<b>Baseline 2012</b>	<b>Progressive Target 2013</b>	<b>Progressive Target 2014</b>	<b>Progressive Target 2015</b>	<b>Target 2016</b>
Number of active learning and teaching projects supported by the PELTHE10 program where the University is the lead institution	1	1	1	2	2
Number of active learning and teaching projects supported by the PELTHE11 where the University is a partner institution	1	1	2	2	2
Number of citations for outstanding contributions to student learning	3	4	5	6	6
Number of awards for teaching excellence	0	0	0	0	1
Number of awards for programs that enhance excellence	0	0	0	0	1

*Note: All calendar year references below relate to projects and awards in that calendar year.*

<b>Optional Performance Indicators</b>	<b>Baseline 2012</b>	<b>Progressive Target 2013</b>	<b>Progressive Target 2014</b>	<b>Progressive Target 2015</b>	<b>Target 2016</b>
Completions - Graduate Certificate in Academic Practice	n/a	6	8	10	10

## **4.3 Equity**

### **4.3.1 Commonwealth objectives**

The Commonwealth is committed to a fair and equitable higher education system that provides equal opportunity for people of all backgrounds to participate to their full potential and the support to do so.

In particular, the Commonwealth has an ambition that by 2020, 20 per cent of higher education enrolments at the undergraduate level will be people from low socio-economic status (SES) backgrounds.

The Commonwealth expects all universities to play a part in meeting the Commonwealth's higher education participation ambitions, consistent with the objectives and regulatory requirements of Commonwealth funding.

The Commonwealth funds a range of programs to encourage and support access to and participation in higher education by people from low SES backgrounds and other under-represented groups, including the Higher Education Loan Program and Student Income Support.

<sup>10</sup> Promotion of Learning and Teaching in Higher Education - the program provides learning and teaching grants, awards and fellowships and is administered by the Office for Learning and Teaching.

<sup>11</sup> See footnote 10 for definition.

The Commonwealth will monitor the University's equity performance through the reporting requirements and evaluations of programs and initiatives. The University's performance in meeting equity objectives will also be linked with teaching and learning Performance Funding targets.

Universities have obligations under the fairness requirements in Division 19 of HESA. This compact does not change those obligations.

#### **4.3.2 University strategies**

SCU currently exceeds the sector average for the participation rates of students from low SES, regional, rural, remote and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds. The University has around 60% of its student cohort from a regional or remote area and 25% from a low socio-economic background. Over 60% of SCU's students are first in their family to come to university.

The University's Equity and Diversity Plan 2011-2015 contains specific goals and objectives which outline strategies for increasing the access, participation, retention and success of students from low SES backgrounds: "We will improve the access, participation and success rates of students from all equity groups through a whole of University approach to outreach and engagement activities, alternative entry pathways and a supportive student learning environment."

Linking to this goal is SCU's Strengthening Participation Action Framework which includes goals, strategies, accountabilities and measures in the following areas:

1. Raising Aspiration and Widening Access
2. Creating Pathways and Access
3. Support and Success
4. An Inclusive University

During the term of the Compact, initiatives focused on improving access will include:

- (i) Expanding the UNI-BOUND High School Outreach Program to include more on-campus and school visits, including a program of activities and information for parents/carers and families. The program currently partners with students in years 7, 8 and 9 at 15 high schools across the region (NSW and Queensland). In NSW, the program partners with schools identified under the State Priority Schools Program as serving high concentrations of low socio-economic status communities. The program partners with schools in Queensland which serve (comparatively) high concentrations of low socio-economic status communities. In both states the program also prioritises schools participating in the Federal Government's Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities National Partnership Program. Other factors include the proportion of Indigenous students and the transition rate to tertiary studies. It works closely with Gnibi.
- (ii) SCU College (including the Preparing for Success Program)
- (iii) Additional Pathways Programs, including Head-Start (a pathways program for year 11 and 12 students across the region which provides the opportunity to study one unit of an undergraduate degree while they complete their senior schooling) and a pilot program targeting capable OP/ATAR ineligible and disengaged senior secondary school students. This pilot program will engage these students prior to completing Year 12 to give them the opportunity access the SCU College pathways to a university level qualification.
- (iv) Reviewing and improving the process for collecting and maintaining appropriate statistical information for monitoring the success of the UNI-BOUND High School Outreach Program.
- (v) Providing TAFE articulation pathways and alternative pathway programs for students.
- (vi) Develop mentoring programs and other initiatives in high schools to sustain interactions between high school students and SCU student role models throughout secondary school.

In addition to SCU College (already discussed), Initiatives focused on improving participation and outcomes at SCU will include:

- (i) Expanding and improving SCU's Student Mentoring Program (UniMentor) for first year students. In 2012, 594 first year students from all campuses and studying externally were matched with a student mentor. First year students in 2011 who had a mentor continued

onto their second year of study at a higher rate (77%) than the general student population, continuing a trend that has been apparent since 2009. This program was awarded an Office of Learning and Teaching (OLT) citation in 2012 for outstanding contribution to student learning.

- (ii) Expanding the Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS) Program.
- (iii) Additional Scholarships targeted at students from low socio-economic backgrounds.
- (iv) Providing additional participation and learning opportunities (forums, workshops and presentations) for students lead by the Equity and Diversity Office.
- (v) Monitoring student progress, tracking the retention and success of students from low socio-economic, regional and remote and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds.
- (vi) Developing further Academic Support Programs focussed at addressing the needs of students from low socio economic backgrounds, students who are first in family and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.
- (vii) Undertaking research to explore and monitor the impact and effectiveness of activities aimed at improving the participation of current and prospective domestic undergraduate students from low SES backgrounds in higher education.

A number of major current and proposed infrastructure projects are directly linked to improving access and participation across the regional footprint. The ongoing development of the Gold Coast campus is providing opportunities for people to access a range of university courses in an area that had long been under-served by university providers, as reflected in historically poorer access and participation rates. The roll-out of the PLE across all campuses and the Gold Coast campus have the potential to be important regional contributions to assisting Government reach its national participation and attainment targets. The Regional EIF supported developments at Lismore (involving a new Learning Centre and expanded opportunities for studies in STEM programs) will provide improved learning facilities for Lismore-based students.

As reflected in SCU's 2012 HEPPP Progress Report, HEPPP funds will continue to be fully expended on the delivery of high quality programs and services to build aspiration to tertiary study and to facilitate access and success for students from low SES backgrounds. This expenditure establishes strong foundations to sustain programs into the future. However, given the growing demand for such programs by high schools, community groups, and by both current and prospective SCU students, the importance of continued funding to support aspiration-building, access and support initiatives at SCU is critical.

#### 4.3.3 Participation and Social Inclusion Targets

##### Proportion of domestic undergraduates who are from a low SES background

Baseline for improvement target: **To be determined**

Principal Performance Indicators	2014 Reward Payment (target for 2013 students)	2015 Reward Payment (target for 2014 students)	2016 Progress target (target for 2015 students)
Excellence Target	To be determined	To be determined	To be determined
Improvement Target	To be determined	To be determined	To be determined
Outcome	-	-	-

##### Proportion of domestic undergraduates who are from another underrepresented group

Baseline for improvement target: x% (Either 2009 or average of 2008 and 2009 data)

Principal Performance Indicators	2014 Reward Payment (target for 2013 students)	2015 Reward Payment (target for 2014 students)	2016 Progress target (target for 2015 students)
Improvement Target	To be determined	To be determined	To be determined
Outcome	-	-	-

## 4.4 Teaching and Learning Infrastructure

### 4.4.1 Commonwealth objectives

The Commonwealth is committed to the development of world class higher education infrastructure. A contemporary, technology rich, well designed and equipped campus environment has a positive influence on staff and student performance and satisfaction.

While the responsibility for capital infrastructure development and maintenance rests with the University, the Commonwealth's commitment is demonstrated through programs such as the Education Investment Fund. Universities also utilise Commonwealth Grant Scheme funding for capital works and maintenance.

The Commonwealth will monitor the University's infrastructure performance, through the Institutional Performance Portfolio/CAMS.

### 4.4.2 University strategies

Southern Cross University's capital infrastructure priorities for the term of the Compact are:

A. Supporting future campus developments in line with the respective Master Development planning processes (completed for Lismore and the Gold Coast; underway for Coffs Harbour). This involves:

- Stage 2 of the Science Precinct development at Lismore, with a focus on upgrading ageing research infrastructure to support the University's research activities.
- Upgrading of the library at Coffs Harbour (in partnership with the other entities on the Coffs Harbour Education Campus (CHEC) site). The objective would be to create a cutting-edge centre that forms the centre-piece servicing the needs of all users, including the university learners.

B. Consolidating the Gold Coast campus as a fully-serviced campus, that meets the academic and non-academic needs of the anticipated 3500 students enrolled by 2016.

C. Information Technology - to continue the reinvigoration of the University's IT services, building on the roll-out of the PLE, and to strengthen the capacity to meet the IT needs for research activity.

The University will be unable to pursue any of these major capital infrastructure priorities over the term of the Compact without government support.

Major capital construction projects that will be completed during the term of the Compact include:

- Construction of Building C/D at the Gold Coast campus.
- -Construction of the new Learning Centre and repurposing of existing facilities to create Stage 1 of the Science Precinct at the Lismore campus.
- IT upgrades to support the PLE partially funded by SAF.

Technology continues to transform the way in which universities deliver education and undertake research. As student and technology choices expand, increasing numbers of students are expected to participate using a mixture of on-campus and external delivery models. Accordingly, the University's teaching spaces need to be sufficiently flexible and technologically capable to support these new ways of participating in education.

This accelerating convergence between on-campus and off-campus delivery will drive courses or units being structured around a use of technology that is independent of the student's mode of attendance. Learning spaces will need to become technologically rich with flexible designs that allow for multiple uses and the inclusion of student owned devices and technology.

Over the term of the Compact, SCU will be transforming many of our existing classroom designs to spaces that support these technologically rich and collaborative learning approaches through a mix of new construction and the wholesale renovation of existing rooms. They will be designed to accommodate a variety of teaching methods ranging from the traditional 'front centric' lecture

through to project-based and collaborative learning. Some of these IT and capital upgrades are supported by the PLE component of the SAF funding. A Learning Space Advisory Committee chaired by the PVC (Academic) and reporting directly to the Vice Chancellor's Executive Committee has been established to advise on the design and redevelopment of learning and teaching spaces.

The use of lecture capture, video conferencing and support for Bring Your Own Device (BYOD), will be supported through wireless network access and underpinning system infrastructure for the capture, edit, processing and publication of lecture events.

It is anticipated that increasing the flexibility of teaching spaces will lead to more efficient space utilisation. Improved utilisation will allow SCU to drive other efficiencies such as reduced energy consumption and lower ongoing maintenance costs. Monitoring greenhouse gas emissions is a key performance indicator of the Strategic Plan.

Increasing reliance on the Internet, large data and high performance computing will transform how and where some research is done. Use of simulations, external research infrastructure and cross organisational collaborations will increase the reliance on our computer networks to deliver high levels of reliability and performance.

Over the term of the Compact, the University's Internet and on-campus networks will be progressively upgraded to accommodate increasing demand from all students and staff.

Master planning processes continued at the Lismore campus and Gold Coast and have commenced at the Coffs Harbour campus. The master planning process at Lismore includes precinct planning (Science and Engineering, Health and Human Sciences, Education, Arts/Social Science/Business/Law) and planning for spaces in between and around buildings. The process is also designed to promote more efficient space utilisation across the campus.

In addition to creating discipline "precincts" the above will enable SCU to create administrative precincts at each campus. An increasing trend in the adoption of open plan workspaces and hot-desking, particularly in new or substantially renewed facilities, will ensure that as the workforce becomes increasingly mobile, staff spaces can continue to be used efficiently.

SCU is in the process of re-establishing baseline data on the relative condition of buildings, infrastructure and the natural environment at Lismore. Work such as a building condition audit, external and internal Disability Discrimination Act audits, fire system audits, fall arrest system audits, infrastructure condition audit, vegetation survey, etc. are underway or completed.

This data, combined with a significant upgrade to the University's Facilities Management System (Archibus) will drive an objective, evidence based approach to ongoing and backlog maintenance prioritisation.

With the presence of two newly-established buildings at the Gold Coast campus, SCU aims to improve its monitoring of space utilisation across the two main campuses at Lismore and the Gold Coast (Coffs Harbour, as a shared campus, makes this process more difficult on a comparable basis) and aims to report data through CAMS, provided it is sufficiently robust.

Both capital and IT infrastructure are strategic and operational business enablers integral to the University's core business of Teaching and Learning, and Research. Accordingly, infrastructure impacts on progress and success across a range of KPIs for Goal 1 (Teaching and Learning); Goal 2 (Research and Research Training) and Goal 3 (High Performance Culture).



### 5 RESEARCH AND RESEARCH TRAINING

A range of research and research training performance indicators and targets are proposed in this section. Principal Performance Indicators are compulsory and institutions may voluntarily nominate optional performance indicators and targets considered reflective of individual institutional goals.

The Commonwealth recognises universities have diverse missions and, consequently, targets and performance will vary between institutions. Each university should develop performance indicators and targets to reflect its individual performance and strategic direction.

#### 5.1 Research performance and research capability

##### 5.1.1 Commonwealth objectives

The Commonwealth encourages excellence in research performance and the strengthening of research capability. Particular objectives are to:

- progressively increase the number of research groups performing at world class levels, as measured by international performance benchmarks; and
- promote collaboration, amongst universities, across sectors, between researchers and industry Australia and internationally.

The Commonwealth, through the Australian Research Council (ARC), conducts the Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) which evaluates the quality of research undertaken at Australian universities by discipline against international benchmarks. ERA is used to assist in determining funding in the Sustainable Research Excellence in Universities program administered by the Commonwealth.

##### 5.1.2 University strategies

SCU has met or exceeded all of its performance indicators and targets in Research outlined in its 2011 Compact. The improvement in SCU's ERA performance provides one indicator of the success of the University's research strategies. In particular, the University has focussed attention on improving the quality of its research outputs with respect to publications and category 1 research funding. The important components of this success has been the recruitment of new staff, the development of ECR and mid-career researchers, focussing research activity into more concentrated areas and providing clearer career paths for academic staff who have preferred to specialise in teaching or research.

There has been a redefining of the way the University allocates its total resources, such that research is supported in more focussed areas. The independent review of the University's Research strategy undertaken in the first half of 2013 will feed into future strategic directions for 2014 and beyond.

The areas in which the University has achieved an ERA rating of 5 (4 digit FOR codes) remains in the sciences: Geochemistry, Zoology, Crop and Pasture Production, and Forestry. However, an ERA rating of 4 in Nursing, and 3 in Tourism, provides the University with some insight into areas in which it possible to achieve the highest level of research excellence awarded through the ERA ranking system.

The areas rated 3 and above, will typify the future ongoing investment strategy of the University with respect to maintaining and expanding research excellence. The two digit ERA ranking of 3 in Studies in Creative Arts and Writing provides a basis for being optimistic about the capacity of the University to take advantage of its regional positioning with respect to this broad discipline, and develop some specific 4 digit areas which would be developed with the aim to beat world standard. The areas which achieved a four digit ERA rating of 2, will receive particular attention during the period of this Compact so as to ensure the University has a balanced portfolio of high quality research outputs.

An important component of improving overall research performance at SCU is the ongoing, high quality relationships being developed through the Collaborative Research Networks (CRN) funded project. For SCU, genuine research relationships have developed, and the promise is that these relationships will assist the University achieve higher quality research outputs with respect to National Competitive Grants (NCG), publications, quality research training and research career development. This program provides an enormous benefit with respect to achieving economies of scale across the university sector. The results of this funding are only just beginning to be realised at SCU, but the scheme provides the University with access to research infrastructure, resources and schemes which are not possible to recreate at each Australian university. For example, SCU is now benefiting from access to Sydney University's well-developed ECR program and has regular assistance from Policy and Administration (ERA rated 5) academics from UNSW, with respect to research career development.

SCU is still in the process of rationalising the number of its research centres. ERA results have assisted in providing a clearer external assessment on the way in which this restructuring of research centres should evolve. These changes are occurring, not only with respect to disciplinary research focusses, but also specialisation across SCU's large geographic footprint. The University requires that central funding used to support postdoctoral fellowship is directed to areas which are recognised as Special Research Centres or Research Centres. In addition, University support for DECRA applications remains consistently focussed on areas which have achieved high ERA rankings.

Historically, SCU has focussed considerable attention on its engagement with CRCs as a means of developing research capacity. As the University has been limited by the number of researchers with the track record required to win NCGs, it has chosen to build research capacity and industry engagement through its participation in CRCs. Over the period of the last Compact, SCU moved its attention to other forms of industry funding and NCGs as the quality of the researchers improved, as a consequence of the maturing of the University. For the duration of this Compact, SCU's focus will be on NCGs, however, the importance of industry collaborations is likely to be manifest in other forms, such as Linkage Grants, Centres of Excellence or other major national research institutes.

SCU will continue to pursue opportunities with respect to participation in CRCs, but the cost of participating in CRC bids and the need to provide ongoing cash support has become limiting for a young regional university where the need for ongoing expansion is very demanding on the capital program of the University, including research infrastructure.

Participation in the CRC program will be more selective over the period of this Compact, and the University will focus its attention on alternative programs such as Centres of Excellence and Industrial Transformations Research Hubs. ERA has demonstrated that SCU is capable of engaging in, or leading national research entities such as Centres of Excellence, particularly in the sciences. In addition, the very low success rate of CRC bids has created some dissatisfaction with industry partners, so Industrial Transformation Research Hubs, and ARC Linkage Grants are preferable options. As the quality of its researchers has improved demonstrably over the past 3 years, the priority will be to continue the development of research capacity in areas of strategic importance, with reference to current teaching and/or research activity

### 5.1.3 Performance indicators and targets

The purpose of the research performance and the research capability performance indicators and targets is to assist the University and the Commonwealth in monitoring the University's progress against the Commonwealth's objectives and the University's strategies for research performance and research capability.

The University will aim to meet the research performance and research capability performance indicators and targets set out in the following table.

Principal Performance Indicators	ERA 2010	ERA 2012	ERA 2015 Target
Number of disciplines, as defined by two-digit Fields of Research (FoR), performing at world standard or above (3, 4 or 5)	2	4	6
Number of disciplines, as defined by four-digit FoR, performing at world standards or above (3, 4 or 5)	3	6	9

*Note: All calendar year references below refer to the previous year's data collection.*

Principal Performance Indicators	Baseline 2012	Progressive Target 2013	Progressive Target 2014	Progressive Target 2015	Target 2016
Category 1 income	\$3,681,171	\$3,780,000	\$4,100,000	\$5,000,000	\$5,800,000
Category 2 Income	\$3,001,118	\$1,670,000	\$2,800,000	\$3,600,000	\$4,400,000
Number of joint research grants in Australia	73	60	75	88	90
Number of joint research grants overseas	15	17	18	20	20
Number of jointly supervised PhD students in Australia <sup>12</sup>	19	21	23	25	27
Number of jointly supervised PhD students overseas <sup>13</sup>	6	6	7	7	8

*Note: All calendar year references below refer to the previous year's data collection.*

Optional Performance Indicators	Baseline 2012	Progressive Target 2013	Progressive Target 2014	Progressive Target 2015	Target 2016
Weighted publications (excluding conference papers) per academic FTE	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.85	0.90

<sup>12</sup> Please provide the number by headcount of jointly supervised HDR students enrolled in your institution who have a supervisor from an external organisation in Australia (examples include someone from a government organisation, hospital or another university).

<sup>13</sup> Please provide the number by headcount of jointly supervised HDR students enrolled in your institution who have a supervisor from an external overseas organisation (examples include someone from a government organisation, hospital or another university).

## 5.2 Research training

### 5.2.1 Commonwealth objectives

The Commonwealth encourages excellence in the provision of research training. Particular objectives are to:

- support research excellence and develop an internationally competitive research workforce in Australia through high quality research training;
- develop an internationally competitive research workforce in Australia through high quality research training; and
- significantly increase the number of students completing higher degrees by research over the next decade.

### 5.2.2 University strategies

The University is committed to improving Higher Degree Research programs, processes, and on-time completion rates. Higher Degree Research is managed by the Research Training Unit (RTU) in liaison with the Higher Degree Research Committee (HDRC) (a sub-committee of Academic Board) and with the Schools and Centres in which HDR supervisors are employed.

The overall objective is addressed by key strategies which form the basis for central administrative and School/Centre initiatives as follows:

#### **RECRUITMENT OF QUALITY HDR STUDENTS AND RECRUITMENT INTO IDENTIFIED AREAS OF RESEARCH STRENGTH**

SCU remains committed to improving HDR student recruitment, with this being prioritised in a number of ways, particularly by a scholarship policy for Masters (Research) and PhD applicants. From January 2010, APAs and IPRSs have been applied for and awarded in a two stage process. The initial round is only available to students applying to be supervised by researchers based in recognised university research entities; any outstanding awards will be subsequently distributed among highly ranked applicants into other disciplinary areas. In addition, scholarships are made available to high performing staff in areas of recognised research excellence to enable staff with prestigious national competitive awards (such as Future Fellowships) to attract Masters (Research) and PhD students associated with their projects. CRCs will also continue to provide an important attraction for and facilitation of high quality students in priority research areas.

Applications for admission to study in areas with low ERA ratings are considered with regard to the quality of individual supervisors. There are individuals and small teams of scholars in some disciplines who produce research of a demonstrable high quality that is insufficient to meet thresholds set by ERA. The HDRC recognises this and accepts applications for these supervisory staff. Conversely, when high quality supervision is not available internally, applicants are advised to direct their inquiries to other institutions with relevant specialisms.

In addition, the University will continue with its practice of increased scrutiny of applicants to guarantee that students with inadequate experience and/or commitment are not accepted for admission.

#### **ENHANCE THE QUALITY AND RANGE OF DOCTORAL DEGREE PROGRAMS**

SCU currently offers Master of Arts, Master of Science and PhD programs and three professional research doctorates (Business Administration, Education and Indigenous Philosophies).

Masters (Research) and PhD supervision is undertaken at School and Centre level and (mandatory) supervisor professional development sessions were introduced in 2010 that focused on quality assurance and on-time completion. SCU has also invested in the development of supervisory skills for early career staff through the design and introduction of a new module on Higher Degree Research Supervision within the University's Graduate Certificate in Academic Practice. This provides a fast-tracking to eligibility for principal supervisor status for research-active staff who have not served a more traditional apprenticeship as junior members of supervisory teams (with actual appointment as principal supervisor being subject to stringent

assessment by HDRC as per established practice). Following feedback from students undertaking the first offering in mid-2012, the unit design was reconsidered in late 2012 and the unit will be convened by the Deputy PVC (Research) in 2013 so as to provide high-level mentorship for aspirant principal supervisors. In addition to this new unit, the University has continued to run its compulsory induction sessions for new appointments with prior supervisory experience (and/or staff who have otherwise missed these sessions since their introduction in 2010). 99% of staff eligible to supervise HDRs have now attended the sessions (and staff who have not are deemed ineligible for appointment as members of supervisory teams). The overall aim of these initiatives is to enhance the quality of HDR supervision through supervisory staff development and by familiarisation with the University's strategic research goals.

During 2012 SCU continued its role in the quality assurance of the thesis stage and examination of professional doctorates and conducted site visits to offshore delivery centres in Auckland, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur. Information gleaned from site visits and attendance at DBA colloquia has informed HDRC policy on consideration of applications and appointments of supervisors. With the co-operation of the Business School, DBA applications were suspended for three months in 2012 until suitable supervisory resources and processes could be established.

### **IMPROVE RETENTION AND COMPLETION TIMES FOR HDR STUDENTS AND CONTINUE TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF FINAL THESES**

Retention is being addressed through two main initiatives that are ongoing: firstly, ensuring that greater attention is paid to the quality and commitment of students applying for entry into HDR programs (discussed above) and, secondly, through ensuring greater compliance with annual reporting and early problem detection processes and through introducing supervisory team arrangements that allow adequate cover for supervisors to ensure that students' candidatures remain focused. The University will continue to give considerable emphasis on increasing on-time completions through both professional development of supervisors and through the lapsing process for all over-time HDR students that provides a clear target date for completion for both supervisors and candidates. The First year confirmation processes and biannual progress reports allow the Schools, Centres and the RTU to identify when students may be experiencing difficulties in their study and then appropriate support initiatives for each individual are developed.

The introduction of compulsory supervision teams for Masters (Research) and PhD students (as opposed to individual supervisors) has allowed for multiple scrutiny of and feedback on final thesis drafts in order to ensure high-quality submissions for examination. The previous practice of allowing single supervisors has been phased out has been replaced with team supervision led by a continuing member of SCU staff being compulsory for all new applicants, thereby allowing for greater supervisory scrutiny over thesis progress and quality.

### **ENHANCE THE INTELLECTUAL CLIMATE FOR HDR STUDENTS AND IMPROVE STUDENT SATISFACTION WITH THE HDR PROGRAM**

SCU has promoted a greater focus on HDR climate and support in cyclic School Reviews; the instigation of workshops on cross-disciplinary HDR research; and the organisation of university-wide supervisory discussion groups and events. The University has also developed a Graduate Certificate in Academic Practice, introduced in 2012, that includes a core module on research planning and development. This module will enable supervisors to develop an integrated approach to research and its relation to HDR supervision in Centres and Schools. SCU through RTU and the Library run specialist workshops on topics such as co-authoring, scientific writing skills, use of EndNote and also networking events for specific cohorts such as international students. Established collaborative projects and teams supported through CRCs, the Collaborative Research Network and the Special Research Centres offer events tailored for specific disciplinary needs.

Initiatives to promote greater communication between HDR students and the RTU will continue; such as the '3 minute thesis' competition via inter-campus video link. SCU acknowledges that there is still progress to be made in this area and the Division of Research will be liaising with

Schools and Centres to review the effectiveness of current initiatives and to explore further opportunities to enhance the intellectual climate at all campuses.

**PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE ENHANCEMENT OF HDR STUDENTS**

Over the life of the Compact increased emphasis will be placed on professional development workshops for staff and students e.g. joint student staff seminars on topics such as co-publication with supervisors. Generic skills in statistical methodologies are supported through the Division of Research’s statistician and by additional statistical research workshops held at Centre and School levels. The Division of Research will also continue to liaise with the University’s Communications and Publications office to secure opportunities for HDRs to communicate their research to wider audiences through both SCU generated material and media interviews and appearances.

**5.3 Performance indicators and targets**

The purpose of the research training performance indicators and targets is to assist the University and the Commonwealth in monitoring the University's progress against the Commonwealth's objectives and the University's strategies for research training.

The University will aim to meet the research training performance indicators and targets set out in the following table.

*Note: All calendar year references below refer to the previous year’s data collection.*

<b>Principal Performance Indicators</b>	<b>Baseline 2012</b>	<b>Progressive Target 2013</b>	<b>Progressive Target 2014</b>	<b>Progressive Target 2015</b>	<b>Target 2016</b>
HDR student load	252	225	225	230	250
HDR student completions by masters	3	3	3	3	3
HDR student completions by doctorates	39	44	40	40	45

*Note: All calendar year references below refer to the previous year’s data collection.*

<b>Optional Performance Indicators</b>	<b>Baseline 2012</b>	<b>Progressive Target 2013</b>	<b>Progressive Target 2014</b>	<b>Progressive Target 2015</b>	<b>Target 2016</b>
Increase on-time Higher Degree completions	74%	78%	80%	80%	85%

## PART SIX: GENERAL PROVISIONS

### 6 GENERAL PROVISIONS

---

#### 6.1 Compact Review

**6.1.1** The Commonwealth and the University will review the compact annually. This review will be a mechanism for considering progress made towards agreed goals outlined in this compact. Compact review will aim to ensure that the Commonwealth and the University will continue to focus on key objectives and strategies and will be an opportunity to consider developments that may impact on the compact or trigger a need to change the compact.

**6.1.2** To facilitate this review the Commonwealth will produce an annual Institutional Performance Portfolio and the University agrees to contribute to the annual Institutional Performance Portfolio Information Collection (IPPIC). The Commonwealth will consult with the higher education sector on the information collection requirements and any issues arising from the IPPIC process.

#### 6.2 Privacy and information sharing

**6.2.1** Subject to clause 6.2.2 below, the University acknowledges and agrees that any information it provides to the Department for the purposes of this compact, may be accessible under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* and may also be:

- published by the Commonwealth in any manner in accordance with any legislative requirement;
- used by the Department for any purpose of the Commonwealth, including dealings with other Commonwealth or State or territory agencies;
- used in reporting to or answering questions from a Minister of State of the Commonwealth or a House or Committee of the Parliament of the Commonwealth; or
- disclosed where the Commonwealth is required or permitted by law to do so.

**6.2.2** The Commonwealth and the University agree to carry out their roles under this compact in accordance with any obligations they have under the *Privacy Act 1988* or any state or territory law relating to the protection of personal information.

#### 6.3 Changing the Compact

**6.3.1** Either party may propose changes to this compact at any time. Any variation to this compact is to be in writing and signed by the University's, and the Commonwealth's Representatives.

#### 6.4 Notices

**6.4.1** A party wishing to give notice under a provision of this compact:

- a. must do so by sending it to the other Representative set out in clause 6.4.2; and
- b. must, if a response is required to the notice, set out the time in which the response is to be given;

**6.4.2** The Representatives are:

- a. Professor William MacGillivray PhD FAIP  
Deputy Vice Chancellor  
PO Box 157  
Lismore NSW 2480  
E: [dvc@scu.edu.au](mailto:dvc@scu.edu.au)  
T: 61 2 6620 3423

b. DIICCSRTE Representative  
Division Head  
Higher Education Group  
Department of Industry, Innovation, Climate Change, Science, Research and Tertiary Education  
GPO Box 9839  
Canberra ACT 2601

OR

[compacts@innovation.gov.au](mailto:compacts@innovation.gov.au)

## 6.5 Dictionary

In this compact, unless the contrary intention appears:

‘Department’ means the Commonwealth Department of Industry, Innovation, Climate Change, Science, Research and Tertiary Education or any successor.

‘HESA’ means *the Higher Education Support Act 2003* and includes any subordinate legislation or Ministerial determination made under that Act.

‘Institutional Performance Portfolio’ (IPP) is a report which provides an historical record of a university's performance based on information provided by the University and an analysis of the Higher Education Data Collections. An IPP will be prepared by the Commonwealth for the University annually using the latest available data.

‘Institutional Performance Portfolio Information Collection’ (IPPIC) is a set of Commonwealth instructions requesting that universities provide a submission to the Commonwealth, endorsed by the University's chief executive, that includes student, staff, financial and research information needed for the preparation of an Institutional Performance Portfolio for that university.

‘Minister’ means the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Science and Research.

‘Mission’ means the University's Mission set out at Part One of this compact as amended in accordance with the variation provisions in this compact from time to time.

‘TEQSA’ means the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency.

‘Term of this compact’ means the period set out in Part B of the Context of this compact.

‘University’ means Southern Cross University, ABN: 41 995 651 524



Signed for and on behalf of the University of Southern Cross University

by

.....  
Signature Date

Professor Peter Lee  
the Vice Chancellor  
In the Presence of:

.....

WITNESS

.....

Full name and occupation or profession of witness (Please print)

SIGNED for and on behalf of  
THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

by

.....  
Signature Date

David de Carvalho  
the Head of Division  
of Higher Education Division

of the Department of Industry, Innovation, Climate Change, Science, Research and Tertiary Education  
a Delegate of the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Science and Research

In the Presence of:

.....

WITNESS

.....

Full name and occupation or profession of witness (Please print)