



UNIVERSITY
OF DIVINITY

Strategic Plan 2025

Growing in Partnership

Version 6.0 approved by Council on 7 October 2020

University Vision

Together we empower our learning community to address the issues of the contemporary world through critical engagement with Christian theological traditions.

University Mission

We fulfil our vision through:

- excellence in learning, teaching, and research
- growth of our resources and capacity
- engagement with the churches and community in Australia and internationally

Strategic Aims 2025

In 2025 the University of Divinity, a collegiate University, will be:

1. An ecumenical community of scholars with a shared commitment to the University's Vision and Mission.
2. Delivering research and other evidence-based resources for agencies, church, community, government, academy and media.
3. Formed of partnerships, structures, and scholars that can communicate, challenge, and transform twenty-first century societies.
4. Flexible, agile and visionary in its activities, producing sustainable programs.
5. Engaged with the Strategic Plan and able to demonstrate that its goals are being achieved.

Graduate Attributes

Learn

Graduates are equipped for critical study, especially of Christian texts and traditions

Articulate

Graduates articulate theological insight and reflection

Communicate

Graduates communicate informed views through structured argument

Engage

Graduates engage with diverse views, contexts and traditions

Serve

Graduates are prepared for the service of others



Growing in Partnership: Introduction

This is an extraordinary moment in human history. The world is connected as never before, with technological advances and international cooperation in research and education creating the capacity for a better future for all people. Yet we continue to face challenges to life and livelihood, to harmonious relationships both locally and globally, as we search for truth and fulfilment.

Theology and ministry are full participants in this epoch of change. Christianity is growing in many parts of the world, but declining in western nations. Old divisions between Catholic and Protestant, or East and West, are increasingly superseded by newer ones. The mission of the churches and religious orders, and the needs of the communities they serve, remain, but the ways that mission is exercised and those needs are met have been transformed.

The University of Divinity is at a pivotal time in its history. It was established in 1910 by a group of churches, in partnership with the Victorian Government, to provide Australian theology degrees for Australian ministers. Its educational mission was transformed half a century ago in the 1970s in the wake of Vatican II and the flourishing of ecumenical cooperation and the expansion of access to higher education in Australia and elsewhere.

Today the University prepares students for the service of others in diverse endeavours, including ordination, and roles in education, health, community welfare, counselling, ethics, international development and more. The University's education and research programs have diversified well beyond what could have been imagined in 1910, and are at last beginning to support the recognition and growth of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander theologies.

Like all institutions, the University must continue to adapt to this pivotal moment, handing on the tradition of critical theological enquiry, and developing new ways of delivering its mission.

The University's Strategic Plan is designed to address this challenge. The Plan begins with the University's Vision, Mission and Graduate Attributes, and articulates five aims for 2025. These encourage us to address the issues of the contemporary world together, by drawing on the wisdom and know-how of ancient traditions.

The Plan sets out ten Principles to guide our activities. The Principles reflect our tradition of collaboration and partnership, and require us to be informed and imaginative. They equip us to meet the changing needs of our partners and students, to work with government and NGOs, to contribute to a vibrant and cohesive multicultural society, and to ensure integrity in religious leadership.

The plan covers the four domains of our core activities – Education, Research, Governance and Relationships, People and Resources – and identifies a series of University-wide activities which traverse across them all.

Leadership of this strategic plan rests with the University Executive, which includes the Principals of each College of the University. The Executive is responsible for its leadership to the University Council, itself appointed by the University's partners in the churches and accountable to government.

Through the education and research delivered through this Plan, the University aims to grow the University's contribution and impact, to hand on what we have received to new generations, to nourish and grow the gifts of discernment, justice and hope as we serve others.

Whether you are a student, graduate, staff member or partner of the University, I invite you to join with me in supporting this Plan.

Professor Peter Sherlock
Vice-Chancellor



Overview

The strategic plan articulates 21 goals, grouped into 4 domains of activity and whole-of-University initiatives. Some implement change towards a new business-as-usual; others are focussed on continuous improvement and growth. Goals will be prioritised by the University Executive. Each goal will have a champion and a group to lead it, supported by a detailed project plan, accountable to the University Executive for delivery.

1 Education

- 1.1 Ensure UD's educational offering is responsive to contemporary needs, challenges and trends in church, faith-based agencies, and society
- 1.2 Build the UD ecumenical community of scholars to improve collaboration and quality
- 1.3 Embed engagement with students and key stakeholders (including employers and accrediting bodies) in reviewing and improving educational offerings
- 1.4 Build digital learning capability and educational innovation

2 Research

- 2.1 Research Performance Framework lifts research output and performance
- 2.2 Research Themes inform University's research activity and foster collaboration;
- 2.3 The School of Graduate Research provides an internationally-recognised training program for HDRs, ECRs and supervisors
- 2.4 Improve the University's performance on ERA (2023) and EI (2024) through better reporting and evaluation
- 2.5 Position the University in the international & public arena of debate and engagement

3 Governance and Relationships

- 3.1 Utilise relationships and networks to improve education and research outcomes
- 3.2 Governance and business framework to enable and drive collaborative activity
- 3.3 Ensure University Committees are fit for strategic purpose

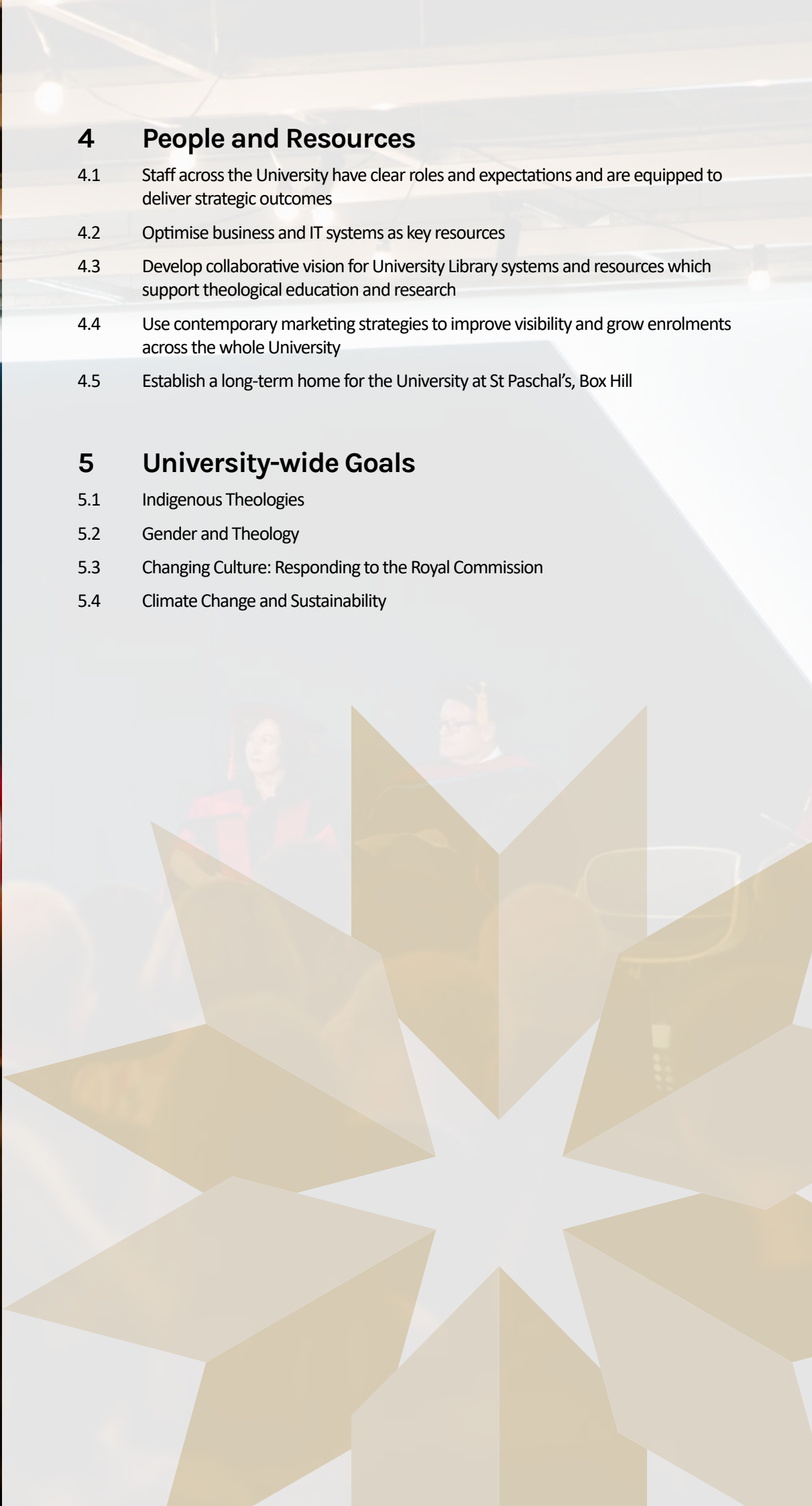


4 People and Resources

- 4.1 Staff across the University have clear roles and expectations and are equipped to deliver strategic outcomes
- 4.2 Optimise business and IT systems as key resources
- 4.3 Develop collaborative vision for University Library systems and resources which support theological education and research
- 4.4 Use contemporary marketing strategies to improve visibility and grow enrolments across the whole University
- 4.5 Establish a long-term home for the University at St Paschal's, Box Hill

5 University-wide Goals

- 5.1 Indigenous Theologies
- 5.2 Gender and Theology
- 5.3 Changing Culture: Responding to the Royal Commission
- 5.4 Climate Change and Sustainability



Principles

The principles inform and guide how the University community makes decisions and takes actions. They are derived from and aim to realise the University's Vision, Mission and Strategic Aims. The use of the principles should be transparent when planning, delivering and assessing decisions and actions within the Strategic Plan.

Principle	Supporting Statements
Receptive	Celebrates and draws upon the theological traditions which constitute the University
Collaborative	Starts by asking how can we do this together, to make the most of expertise and resources to achieve better outcomes.
Trustworthy	Promotes trust through impartial, consistent, open and transparent communication.
Informed	Creates and tests evidence to plan and assess actions through research, peer review, and benchmarking.
Empowered	Enables staff (especially early career academics) to deliver strategic outcomes.
Networked	Builds key national and international relationships that add strategic value to the University's education and research capability.
Visible	Positions the University as a strong, relevant voice to contemporary society, making visible the outcomes of education and research.
Agile	Adapts, as appropriate, to economic, societal and religious change, and trends in education and research.
Sustainable	Creates sustainable practices which demonstrate a commitment to justice and stewardship of people and resources.
Visionary	Promulgates the theological vision of the University, the Colleges and the churches and religious orders that support them.



Education

By 2025

Ensure UD's educational offering is responsive to contemporary needs, challenges and trends in church, faith-based agencies, and society

Four new awards are established attracting new student cohorts and serving employer and stakeholder needs:

- Counselling
- Professional Supervision
- School-leaver award
- New award

Build the UD's ecumenical community of scholars to improve collaboration and quality

Disciplines and awards are supported by UD-wide groups which are informed by benchmarking and promote excellence, collaboration and innovation

Embed engagement with students and key stakeholders (including employers and accrediting bodies) in reviewing and improving educational offerings

UD wide engagement system with internal and external accountability that ensures offerings are student and industry focussed and tested

Build digital learning capability and educational innovation

UD educational delivery is agile and flexible, adapted to contemporary needs and opportunities



Research

By 2025

Research Performance Framework lifts research output and performance

Quality and quantity of research output increases, aligned to the University's unique Vision and Mission

Research Themes inform University's research activity and foster collaboration

There are clearly articulated research strengths which generate quality outcomes, advance knowledge, transform practice, and deliver the Vision and Mission

School of Graduate Research

The SGR provides internationally recognised research training opportunities to Higher Degree by Research Students and Early Career Researchers

Improve the University's performance on ERA (2023) and EI (2024) through better reporting and evaluation

ERA and EI outcomes are improved and reporting, and evaluation processes serve the University's needs

Position the University in the international and public arena of debate and engagement

The University is internationally recognised, attracting high quality researchers, contributing to public debate, and receiving increased investment from industry and philanthropy



Governance and Relationships

By 2025

Utilise relationships and networks to improve education and research outcomes

The University has a pivotal role in faith-based networks which supports excellence in research and education and improves sustainability

Governance and business framework to enable and drive collaborative activity

The collegiate governance framework provides continuous quality assurance, enables synchronised strategic planning across all Colleges, and enables shared services tailored to different needs

Ensure University Committees are fit for strategic purpose

University committees deliver strategic outcomes and facilitate contributions from all parts of the University



People and Resources

By 2025

Staff across the University have clear roles and expectations and are equipped to deliver strategic outcomes

All staff have a well-defined place that maximises and celebrates their expertise (teaching, research, professional) and diversity

Optimise business and IT systems as key resources

Business and IT systems are agile, sustainable, flexible and release staff time for education and research delivery

Develop collaborative vision for University Library systems and resources which support theological education and research

The University's library resources and activities deliver innovative support for the University's members and partners

Use contemporary marketing strategies to improve visibility and grow enrolments across the whole University

The University has an effective marketing strategy which improves visibility and sustains growth

Establish a long-term home for the University at St Paschal's

The University has increased visibility and capacity to resource collaborative activity through development and use of St Paschal's site



University-wide goals

By 2025

Indigenous Theologies

The University is a centre of excellence for Indigenous theologies and is an active contributor to justice and reconciliation for Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders

Gender and Theology

The University is a centre of excellence for feminist theological scholarship and a leader in gender justice in the theological sector

Changing Culture: Responding to the Royal Commission

There has been significant change in culture and practice in the churches towards health and integrity

Climate Change and Sustainability

The University is an active contributor to preventing climate change and improving sustainability of life