

Student retention

Following the rearticulation of its student retention initiatives in 2019, UQ continued its focus on the learning data analytics-based Early Recognition System to help students at risk of attrition. Retention rates improved from 82.88 per cent in 2015 to 83.83 per cent in 2019. Student withdrawal rates in 2020 were generally higher than in 2019. Withdrawals increased in Semester 2, 2020 with 2.59 per cent of students withdrawing without academic penalty from all courses, compared to 1.01 per cent in Semester 2, 2019. It is likely that at least a portion of this increase can be attributed to the challenges faced by students as a result of the pandemic, coupled with an extended due date to withdraw without academic penalty in recognition of this.

Student Success Program

In July 2020, immediately before Semester 2, UQ ran a 3-week Student Success Program to retain and support international students directly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. New and returning international UQ students were provided with a suite of activities to prepare them for academic and employability success in 2020 and beyond. The program was split into 2 streams, with commencing students engaged in the Academic stream, and returning students in the Employability stream. The program saw a total of 521 student registrations across both streams with 113 (33 per cent) attending 80 per cent or more of all academic sessions, and 73 (41 per cent) completing 80 per cent or more of the employability activities.

Regional Medical Pathway

In 2020, UQ partnered with CQUniversity Australia, Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service, and Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service to instigate the delivery of a Regional Medical Pathway program. Talks continued throughout the year to launch the program that will see students complete a 3-year Bachelor of Medical Science (Pathway to Medicine) course with CQUniversity, before moving into UQ's 4-year MD program. Planned to commence from Semester 1, 2022, students will complete both education programs locally in Bundaberg or Rockhampton, meaning aspiring doctors will no longer have to leave the regions to complete their studies.

- ▶ Related initiative for 4.5
- 4.1 Indigenous engagement** pg 29

4.6 Attract and develop a high-achieving cohort of students through enriched learning and personal development experiences.

UQ attracted 40.3 per cent of OPI-5 first preferences in 2020 and was first in the state for OPI-12s. In 2019, UQ also retained 83.8 per cent of commencing domestic bachelors, the highest rate in Queensland.

Mobility and leadership opportunities

Despite the impacts of the pandemic, many mobility and leadership opportunities were provided to students, including:

- Student-Staff Partnerships Representation and Voice
- Mentoring programs such as Get Set, Virtual Village – UQ Mates and UQ Chats
- Peer writing mentor program
- Volunteering
- Student-Staff Partnership projects
- Summer in Queensland program leaders and volunteers
- Student Success Program
- Employability award
- Summer and Winter Research programs
- Careers workshops
- Virtual and domestic internship programs
- Student advisory groups (for programs – e.g. health promotion, international students, Student-Staff Partnerships, student employability)
- Student casual employment (safety stewards, student concierge, UQLife student casuals – event staff, student engagement student casuals – marketing and communication, student relations network, couch crew for UQ Life's *From the couch*).

Ventures

At UQ, Ventures reflects the entrepreneurial spirit of our community, providing a suite of entrepreneurial programs, networking opportunities, 24/7 secure space, and mentoring to enable students to think and act like entrepreneurs – from idea generation through to market validation, and from launching a startup or social enterprise to scaling it up.

A key objective of the UQ Entrepreneurship Strategy is to embed entrepreneurial learning across all disciplines, and to continue deepening engagement with local and global partners.

Highlights for the year included the launch of the inaugural Ventures Industry Challenge, Virtual Hackathon and remote global Startup Adventures, as well as the ilab Accelerator program, which provides intensive support for entrepreneurs to grow

a startup or social enterprise. To enhance student success, Ventures delivered all programs online, enabling participation of students and guest speakers located locally and globally. UQ's Chief Student Entrepreneur, Ventures' Entrepreneurs-in-Residences and the Ventures team were also available to provide support and inspiration.

Indigenous Student Leadership program

This project focuses on a number of existing and new activities for a leadership program for Indigenous students at UQ. The program's centrepiece was planned to include a 2-day leadership conference, but this was postponed in 2020 due to COVID-19. Despite the pandemic, Indigenous Summer and Winter research program intakes were delivered, and work continued on additional elements such as financial support for students to attend leadership and professional development events, internship and mentoring opportunities, and career planning services.

Liveris Academy for Innovation and Leadership

In 2020, this newly created academy appointed its inaugural Director, **Professor Peta Ashworth OAM**; welcomed its second cohort of Liveris Academy Scholars; and held inaugural Winter and Summer intensive programs – welcoming a number of distinguished speakers including business leaders from IBM, Mastercard, Unilever, McKinsey, the International Trade Union Confederation, as well as the Academy's Founding Donor, **Andrew N Liveris AO**. Scholars undertook training to develop skills in leadership, cognitive agility, innovation, emotional intelligence, and entrepreneurship. 2021 will see rapid expansion in the growth and impact of the Academy, and the opening of the Academy's new home in the Andrew N. Liveris Building.

New major in Western Civilisation funded by the Ramsay Centre

Following the signing of an Agreement with the Ramsay Centre for Western Civilisation in 2019, an extended major in Western Civilisation was introduced in the Bachelor of Advanced Humanities (Honours) and the Bachelor of Humanities/Bachelor of Laws (Honours) programs in 2020. Seven specialist teaching staff and 2 professional staff were appointed to the University's Centre for Western Civilisation, directed by **Professor Alastair Blanchard** (who holds the Paul Eliadis Chair of Classics). The Agreement provides generous funding for 30 Ramsay Scholars a year and for at least the next 5 years.

- ▶ Related initiatives for 4.6
- 1.5 Student Complex** pg 20
- 3.3 Rankings strategy** pg 28
- 3.4 CX program** pg 28

Review of activities

5. Building an agile, responsive and efficient university operation

UQ is committed to ensuring that our operations and professional services are responsive to the needs of the University, built on a One UQ approach that drives service improvements and creates efficiencies – particularly in the student administration area. Streamlining and automating business processes, and building professional, advisory and technical skills in our workforce are key priorities.

5.1 Proactively build the capacity and capability of our workforce to achieve our strategic goals.

Enhancing business processes and systems

During 2020, undergraduate program rules were extensively reviewed and realigned to the new Program Design policy, a key component of the Program Architecture 2 initiative.

Operationally, a pilot for the centralisation of assessment of postgraduate coursework applications was implemented, further recommendations relating to student disciplinary proceedings were implemented, and the Library adopted evidence-based methodologies to review processes and deliver improved services for students and greater strategic value from Library special collections.

A social experiment with a service robot was also trialled in conjunction with a Business, Economics and Law Doctor of Philosophy candidate.

Enhancing UQ policies and procedures

UQ continued the review of its policies and procedures in 2020 to ensure clarity of objectives, roles, responsibilities and accountabilities. Processes were also implemented to ensure both new policies and procedures, and amendments to existing policies and procedures, have adequate regard to the principles for the protection of freedom of speech and academic freedom, and are compatible with human rights.

The major review of internal research policies and procedures continued in 2020, resulting in new and revised university documents in the domains of intellectual property, research management, human and animal ethics, and clinical trials. Work also began on a review of policies and procedures relating to open access, research data management, which will be finalised in 2021.

Disclosure and management of interests

In line with changing public expectations around the need for transparency and good governance, UQ developed a suite of new policies and tools to manage and align the interests of individual staff members to the good of the University as a whole.

For managers to have line of sight over the activities of UQ staff, the University released new policies, procedures, and disclosure tools in 2020 covering the following: Conflicts of interest; Secondary employment; Sensitive research; and Foreign influence. Consistent with UQ policy and State and Commonwealth legislative obligations, eligible staff are required to complete one or more of the 4 online tools. A high-level working group, chaired by the Provost, was also formed to manage the responses flowing through from the disclosure processes. Feedback from other universities in Australia indicates that UQ's approach to these complex issues is now sector-leading.

Clinical trials management

This project involved a review of resources and improvement of clinical trials management. This includes the provision of proper training (Good Clinical Practice) to those UQ researchers/clinicians conducting clinical trials, and aims to ensure that UQ can account accurately for all clinical trials in its purview and can monitor accordingly in order to meet all legislative requirements.

During 2020, a website was established that provided resources for researchers, a Clinical Trials Risk Register was established, a register of approvals for human research studies (including clinical trials) was established to support insurance coverage, and a new Clinical Trials Procedure was drafted in consultation with a range of stakeholders and then published in December 2020.

Key performance indicators			
Agile operations			
Improved internal collaboration			
Proportion of staff who agree there is good communication across all sections of UQ ¹			
	2011	2015	2019
Per cent	32.0	30.0	32.0
Proportion of staff who agree there is cooperation between different sections of UQ ¹			
	2011	2015	2019
Per cent	39.0	37.0	40.0

¹ Source: *The Voice* survey – the latest figures available.

- ▶ Related initiatives for 5.1
- 1.2 Student Strategy** pg 19
- 1.6 Program Architecture 2** pg 22
- 1.7 UQ2U blended learning** pg 22
- 2.1 Research infrastructure** pg 23
- 6.5 Sustainable budgeting** pg 38
- Human Resources** pg 39

5.2 Enhance IT governance to ensure that UQ’s information technology aligns with the University’s strategy and priorities, appropriately considers risk and provides maximum value.

IT governance

The University has an IT Governance Framework that ensures that the IT function is optimised for both risk and resources, and is aligned to support the University’s priorities. During 2020, the University’s IT governance was further matured by:

- developing change management ‘heat maps’ that look at the level of change being placed on the University through IT initiatives
- improving the capture and oversight of benefits realisation for IT investments
- developing a roadmap for software compliance improvements
- strengthening disaster recovery and business continuity for key systems
- developing a design authority framework and technical leadership framework that will guide how the University will design and implement new systems
- drafting the IT procurement framework that will enable efficient and effective procurement of a key procurement category for the University
- releasing a new enterprise IT strategy for the University that underwent significant consultation to provide a sound approach for the University’s virtual environment over the next 3 years
- drafting a cyber security strategy that will guide how UQ will invest to protect itself against cyber security risks
- releasing new IT standards that target effective operations and risk reduction.

IT Capital Investment Plan

During 2020, work was undertaken to identify a suite of projects to maintain and enhance the University’s information and communication technology infrastructure. Priority was given to projects that support the Student Strategy, research and cyber security, with delivery scheduled for 2021. This initiative will also cover network upgrades (including 100Gbps network to Gatton) and continued business process digitisation.

▶ Related initiatives for 5.2	
3.4 CX program	pg 28
Information systems and recordkeeping	pg 49

5.3 Simplify, streamline, standardise and automate administrative process and work flows across the University.

Accounts payable and accounts receivable automation (APARA)

The APARA project’s primary objective is to centralise, standardise, streamline and automate Accounts Payable and Accounts Receivable processes at UQ. During 2020, work on this project focused on completing the automation of the invoice processing within accounts payable, with an end-of-year target for at least 75 per cent of UQ supplier invoices auto-validated and paid.

Contract and grants financial management

During 2020, UQ Finance focused its attention on automating and streamlining existing processes, including investigating supply chains, producing regular financial reports, and enhancing management reporting to aid decision-making.

HR transformation

Human Resources is currently redesigning how it supports UQ, with the aim of making it easier to find HR information online, and to find the right person to talk to at the right time. During 2020, Workday was selected as the new Human Capital Management Solution. Analysis of business processes, system functionality and integration with other systems commenced, but implementation of the system was delayed due to the pandemic. This system will replace manual or paper-based activities with simplified and automated workflows for quicker and more consistent service delivery. Other expected benefits include:

- simplified business processing and authorisations; reduced manual processes with minimal duplication; an easily accessible, improved user interface; and a comprehensive, single and accurate view of employees
- high-quality, trusted data supplied in real time
- support for a high-performance culture and future growth, promoting a diverse culture and enabling employees to take control of their career pathways through consistency of recruitment, onboarding and staff development, and direct access for individuals and leaders to the right information to perform in their role.

Research Management Business Transformation program

The Research Management Business Transformation (RMBT) Program encompasses a broad range of targeted projects designed to streamline, enhance and support research, researchers and research training through the provision of new digital solutions.

A 2-phase review of the program was completed during 2020. The Higher Degrees by Research Enhancement project saw a staged rollout of features commencing in late 2020, while the Research Infrastructure Management System was also implemented in the first round of facilities. Research Data Manager is now fully embedded, and incorporates the Digital Research Notebooks functionality.

▶ Related initiatives for 5.3	
2.1 Research infrastructure	pg 23
6.5 Capital reporting	pg 38

5.4 Review our delivery model for student services and administration to maximise effectiveness and efficiency and enhance the student experience.

Student administration – digitisation and automation

The student administration digitisation and automation stream of work continued to make progress in enhancing business processes for students. By December 2020, the Business Enhancement team had delivered 19 digitised UniTask forms (some with multiple versions) and 16 significant system enhancements. More than 140,000 student requests have been successfully processed to date, with 77,000 in 2020.

The team also led the development of multiple Robotics Process Automation (RPA) solutions which have achieved estimated savings of 70 person-days in 2020 alone. These included multiple activities in response to COVID-19, such as mass enrolment and grade changes, as well as bulk change updates to student system configuration, and an integration which allows for full automation of the majority of transcript requests from past and current students. The team is working towards an automation solution to facilitate the tracking and administration around the Academic Integrity Module completion from 2021. Automation work associated with the student system, including the implementation of Digital Badges and Completion Certificates for shorter-form credential students, was also carried out.

Space management policy

Following the finalisation of the Location Analytics project in 2019, the Space Optimisation Working Group continued developing and implementing best practice office space policy in 2020. This included a range of projects connected with COVID-19, a teaching space requirement prediction tool, a new Archibus module to manage laboratory space, testing of people-counter technologies and the development of an Agile workplace prototype.

Outdoor event space

The University also operated an outdoor event space to provide a flexible and COVID-safe environment for faculty and unit staff and student groups to host events.

UQ Spaces and new UQMaps

The 2019 UQ Spaces proof-of-concept aimed to identify how UQ might deliver natural-language interfaces to the UQ community, such as using conversational inquiries to find suitable study spots. Based on feedback that students prefer traditional app user interfaces (e.g. tap, scroll, swipe, type), UQ worked to develop a replacement for both UQNav and UQMaps, where availability insights as well as granular navigation capabilities could be provided. A new UQMaps will replace the existing UQNav and UQMap apps in Semester 1, 2021, providing directions to any room on campus as well as live insights into library, parking and open-access computer availability. Further enhancements are also scheduled for the new year.

ModWest

A \$17.6 million temporary modular teaching facility opened in August 2020 near the UQ Art Museum at St Lucia in response to the request from schools and faculties for more large-scale, interactive learning areas. The collaborative learning spaces comprise 2 x 78-capacity rooms, 3 x 120-capacity rooms and 2 x 150-capacity rooms that can be combined to form larger rooms, and incorporate the most advanced audiovisual platform in Australia. Co-developed by UQ to meet the modern demands of availability and supportability, the platform builds on the advantages of cloud technologies, and significantly reduces the technology required in lecterns, placing UQ at the forefront of innovation to meet the current and future demands of teaching. The facility will be in place for 6 years while plans for more permanent teaching and learning facilities are developed.

Supporting students facing hardship

With lockdowns applied across the state because of the pandemic, many students – particularly international – lost both social contact and part-time employment, and found themselves facing severe economic and personal hardship. In an effort to alleviate this, UQ students and staff made more than 24,000 ‘care calls’ to affected students; and UQ staff, students and volunteers distributed 28,000 meals. The UQ and State Government Emergency Support Fund paid out more than \$1 million in grants to more than 600 students.

▶ Related initiatives for 5.4	
1.1 Entrepreneurship Strategy	pg 18
1.2 Learning spaces	pg 19
1.5 Student Complex, Vibrant campuses	pg 20, 21
1.6 Program Architecture 2	pg 22
2.5 HDR industry placements	pg 25
3.4 CX program	pg 28
4.5 Create Change Scholarship Match	pg 31