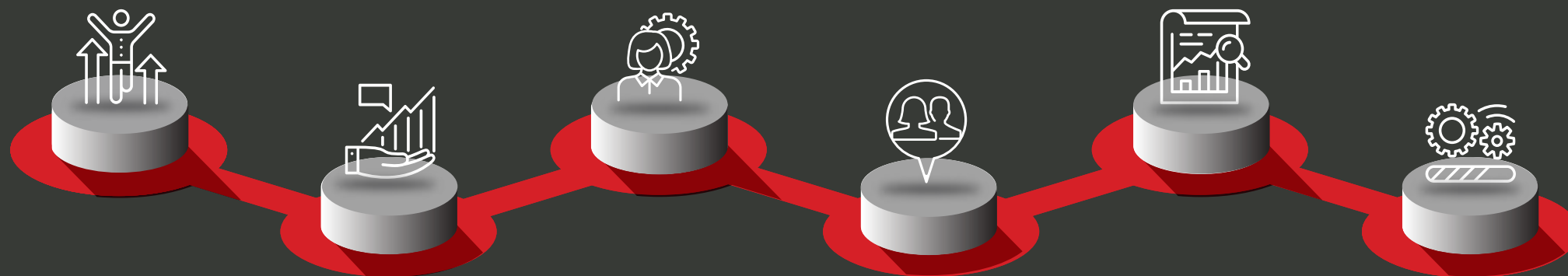# University Operating Plan

2020–2024

This plan fits within the overarching strategic framework *Our University: A Framing of Futures* and has been developed through engagement with the Macquarie University community.

MACQUARIE
University
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Macquarie is a university of service and engagement. We serve and engage our students and staff through transformative learning and life experiences; and we serve and engage the world through discovery, dissemination of knowledge and ideas, innovation and deep partnerships.

WE ASPIRE TO BE:

- a destination of choice for students and staff who share our values

- deeply connected with our stakeholders and partners, and known for this globally

- ranked among the highest-performing research universities of Australia and, for key disciplines, to be recognised globally for our pre-eminence

- known across Australia and beyond as custodians of a remarkable university campus that blends the vibrancy of a cosmopolitan university village with a setting of Australian natural bushland.

As custodians of the University, we value **scholarship, integrity and empowerment.** We believe learning, enquiry and discovery improve lives; we conduct ourselves ethically, equitably and for mutual benefit; and we work to make our community a source of strength and creativity.

Through our actions, as staff and students, we live these values, and it is against them that we hold ourselves accountable.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land upon which this University is situated, the Wattamattagal people of the Darug nation, whose cultures and customs have nurtured, and continue to nurture, this land since the Dreamtime. We pay our respects to the Darug people and the Wattamattagal clan.

We also wish to acknowledge the Elders of the Darug nation, past, present and future, and pay our respects to them. We further wish to honour and pay our respects to the ancestors and spirits of this land, and humbly ask that all members of the Macquarie University community are granted with the capacity to wingara – to think, to learn and to walk safely upon this pemul – this land. The University continues to develop respectful and reciprocal relationships with all Indigenous people in Australia and with other Indigenous people throughout the world.

Contents

Introduction from the Vice-Chancellor

2020 BEGINS A DECADE OF NEW OPPORTUNITY

As we commence a new decade, the environment in which Macquarie University operates is shifting significantly. We enter the years ahead with both opportunity and challenge before us. Opportunity – to renew our University community, to accelerate progress towards realising our potential and to commit to new ways of working together to achieve great things. Challenge – to come together as a diverse community, to achieve more and better with constrained resources in an increasingly uncertain world, and to have the humility to recognise areas where we must be open to change and commit to it.

Some 56 years since our founding, Macquarie is a strong and resilient community. We serve and engage the world through our dual mission of providing transformative learning and teaching for our students, and of advancing discovery and dissemination of new knowledge through our research. For some time, we have been engaged in important, challenging and expensive long-term shifts – as we renew our areas of focus in education and research; adapt our approach to learning and teaching; and revitalise our campus, technology and ways of working. Our resources in the next half decade and beyond will be constrained by global events and trends, with the potential for low or no growth in our traditional sources of income and significant disruption to global mobility. These constraints will require us to continue to adapt and change – rekindling that pioneering spirit of innovation that founded this University and seeking new ways to work with increased agility, greater efficiency and a sharper focus on purpose.

In the opening months of 2020, I, along with Executive colleagues, have been focusing my attention on engaging with the University community towards the development of a structured operating plan for the University. This plan will be the blueprint that prioritises our endeavours in the near to mid-term. I have also been reflecting on our shared ways of working, and on our structures and approaches to ensure we meet our collective responsibility for a strong and sustainable future for the University. I thank all members of our community who took the time to engage in the development of this plan and for your inputs that have brought us to its publication.

While the COVID-19 pandemic has challenged the globe, including our own local world at a time when we were finalising our four-year Operating Plan, it has shown us all very powerfully that our University community is indeed capable of remarkable and quick innovation. The plan takes into account the heightened need for focus on core areas as we chart our future together, including how we must adapt in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This is important work for us all, and I look forward to working with the University community as we build for our future.

Macquarie University in a new decade

OUR SHARED AMBITION

Macquarie is a university of service and engagement.

We prepare our students for successful futures in a demanding, dynamic, uncertain yet exciting world.

We prepare our graduates to:
- excel in demanding jobs
- face the dynamic world with confidence
- tackle uncertainty with optimism
- seize opportunity to be innovators.

They do this through:
- knowing the power of connection
- experiencing the rigour of deep thinking
- seeing the power of community and collaboration in solving problems
- engaging in a contemporary educational experience.

Our research deepens knowledge and delivers impact for communities small and large, near and far, in a complex and ever-changing world.

Our focus is on:
- deepening understanding and creation of new knowledge
- maximising impact to benefit society
- collaborating with partners to harness the power of connection
- preparing research graduates for productive, diverse and exciting careers.

OUR COMMITMENT FOR THE FUTURE
We aspire to be:

- renowned for graduate employability, putting students and their success first by leveraging our deep industry connections to deliver an outstanding student experience combined with innovative learning and teaching, and a coursework suite design centred on employability

- sustainably ranked in the top 200 and on a trajectory to be among the top 150 universities in the world through a continued focus on multidisciplinary research, investment in defined research areas and training, and an acceleration of growth and diversification in sources of external income

- an employer of choice that recruits, retains and develops the highest-performing academic and professional staff who, through our collaborative and collegial culture, are nurtured to seize opportunities. We have a heightened emphasis on performance, professional development and adaptability to meet the ever-changing requirements of the communities we serve

- known globally for our deep connections between students, academics, industry, society and global partners that defy the traditional boundaries of academia to effect change.

1. Students first
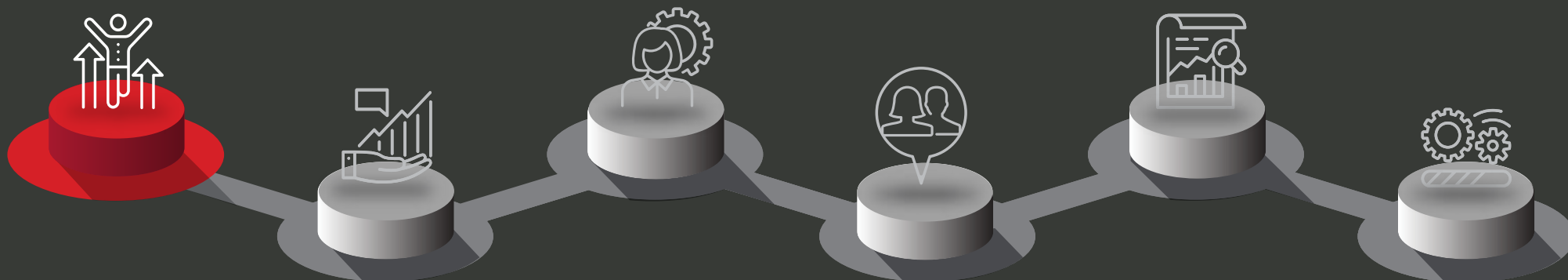
1. Students first

We will strengthen our commitment to explicitly focus on our current and future students – their education and their success. Achieving this goal means we will use recently developed frameworks and plans[1] to drive an excellent experience and outcomes in every dimension of students' interactions with the University.

Every decision regarding education and student experience will first consider the perspective of students and their success. This means that to foster our students' academic achievement and success, we will prioritise and balance the size and composition of our student body, our coursework suite, our support of students' learning and overall experience, our research capabilities, our higher degree research (HDR) program[2] and our resources.

KEY THEMES FROM UNIVERSITY ENGAGEMENT

STUDENT EXPERIENCE
Renewal of the student experience with good design principles across education and services, and modernised approaches that blend digital and on campus – focus on employability and outcomes

SIMPLIFICATION
Simplify organisational structures to significantly improve staff development, align workforce profile and uplift capabilities

STUDY PLANS AND SUPPORT
Simple study plans for students, named progression support

HDR STUDENTS
Improve the HDR program, services and administration – improve external income to support more scholarships

INNOVATIVE LEARNING AND TEACHING
Innovative, digitally enabled learning and teaching, and modernised assessment

RENEW AND MODERNISE
Renewal and modernisation of services and systems to support the student experience

COURSEWORK SUITE DESIGN
Simpler coursework suite with course- and major-level design, centred on employability and student needs

CONNECTEDNESS TO A WORLD OUTSIDE MACQUARIE
Engage with alumni, industry and partners to support employability, student experience and course design

[1] A renewed curriculum architecture, the *Learning and Teaching Strategic Framework* and the *Student Success Framework*
[2] Aligned with work to be undertaken within key areas of focus in research

1. Students first

2020 PROGRAM ELEMENTS

1.1 Learning and teaching renewal, incorporating innovative models for onshore and offshore delivery

1.2 Defined and empowered role of course directors, aligned with faculties' shared governance and leadership

1.3 Student success through local and global engagement, partnership with students, and enhanced wellbeing and support

1.4 Employability strategy

POST COVID-19 CAPABILITIES

• Digital learning, teaching, assessment and feedback – transition from remote learning crisis response to sustainable quality provision, and implement learning analytics

• Digital support for success, engagement, wellbeing and support services – transition from remote support crisis response to sustainable quality provision under appropriate tiers

• Onboarding, retention and satisfaction for students

• Post COVID-19 employability strategy – plan in place for every student

2024 RESULTS	KPI/MEASURES	SCORECARD KPIS
• Achieved above to well above national average outcomes for measures of student experience, retention, success and employment outcomes at both the University and discipline level, and established a pattern of improvement each year • Delivered University-wide infrastructure to support a culture of service through student communications, engagement, service delivery and advice • Developed a comprehensive employability strategy with demonstrated effectiveness for graduates • Attracted >75% of companies/organisations within the MPID as formal partners of the University, which host students on formal work-integrated learning placements • Achieved high levels of engagement with tools and services designed to promote wellbeing and resilience	• QILT • ISB • Internal lead indicators • Student satisfaction • Progression, retention and completion **QILT** • At University level and study-area level • Student experience • Graduate employment • Graduate satisfaction • Employer satisfaction **ISB** • Our rank against other Australian universities within ISB	**Student satisfaction** • Skills development score • Learner engagement score • % student satisfaction (LEU survey) **Graduate employment** • % of full-time employment **Participation and success** • % success rate • % retention rate

2. Coursework suite and delivery
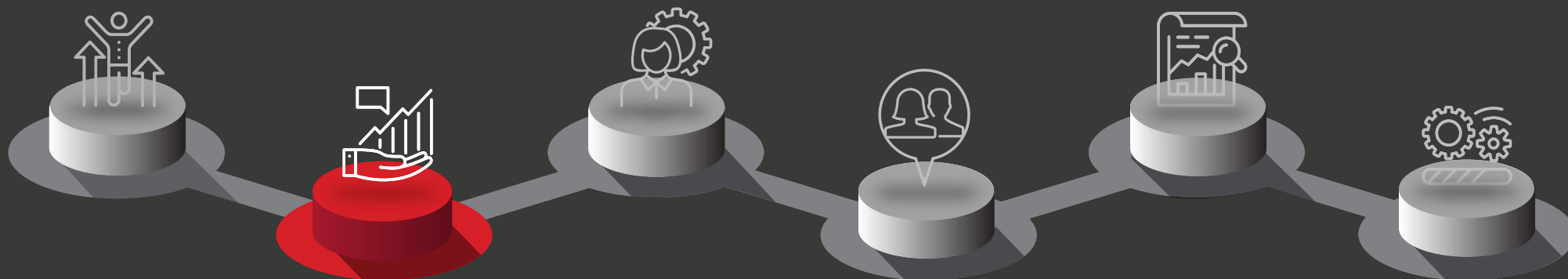
2. Coursework suite and delivery

We will extend our work on the renewed curriculum architecture to enhance the attractiveness and sustainability of our coursework suite and its delivery. Macquarie needs a more efficient, focused and sustainable, and better targeted suite of courses for the future. Our focus will be on achieving student success and on providing exceptional quality in our courses, teaching and student engagement. To support this, we will match our modes of engagement with the needs and expectations of contemporary students.

KEY THEMES FROM UNIVERSITY ENGAGEMENT

STUDY PLANS AND SUPPORT
Simple study plans for students, named progression support

SIMPLIFICATION AND FOCUS ON COURSES
Simpler coursework suite with course- and major-level design, centred on employability and student needs

INNOVATION AND DIGITAL INTEGRATION
Innovative, digitally enabled learning and teaching, and modernised assessment

2. Coursework suite and delivery

2020 PROGRAM ELEMENTS

2.1 Coursework simplification informed by employer and market insights

2.2 Digital learning and teaching strategy (under Section 1.1 Students first) – including learning analytics

2.3 Clear plans and pathways to support each and every student for success[3]

POST COVID-19 CAPABILITIES

• Smaller, higher-quality suite designed for digital and blended delivery

• Quality assurance capabilities for digital and partnership-based delivery

• Focus on student outcomes at whole-of-student and whole-of-course level

• Post COVID-19 employability outcomes in every course

2024 RESULTS	KPI/MEASURES	SCORECARD KPIS
• A rationalised and streamlined suite of courses and units made up of a set of offerings that respond to clear demand from students and employers, which are viable and sustainable both financially and organisationally • A coursework suite that creatively meets the needs of modern students by way of pedagogy, and flexible modes of delivery and timetabling • An enhanced capability to address and realise new future-focused opportunities, and adaptation of our existing coursework suite to respond to new needs and opportunities • A consistent emphasis on courses, not on units	• Load • Revenue • Margin • Demand (applications, preferences, YoY change – benchmarked to competitors) • Student satisfaction and success • Load, revenue and margin – domestic, international, pathway	**Load and revenue** • # total load • $ teaching revenue • % of units available online • % of online enrolments • Teaching quality score (LEU survey) • % of courses with a work-integrated learning (WIL) component • # of new short courses offered

[3]Building on recent work in curriculum architecture and curriculum renewal

3. Focused investment in research
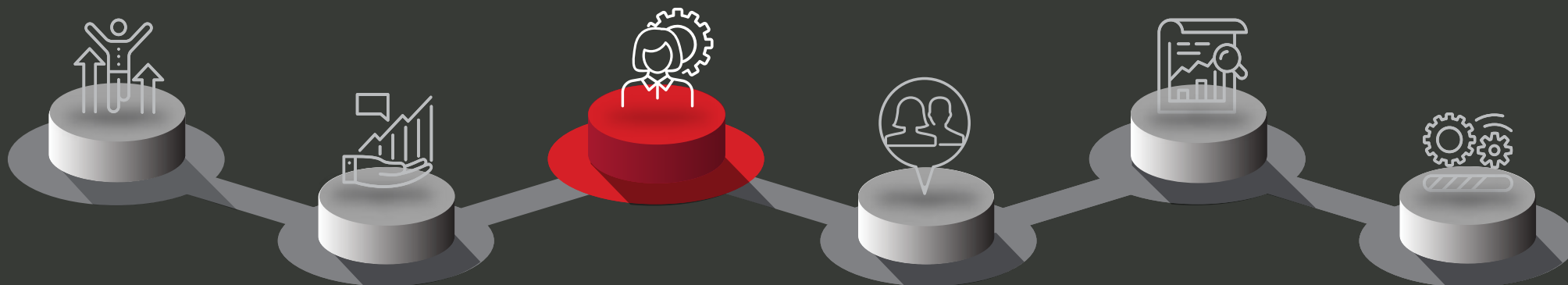
3. Focused investment in research

We will focus investment in defined areas of strategic research and research training – based on excellence (existing or emerging), performance and growth – aligned with our 10-year Strategic Research Framework. We will accelerate growth and diversification in sources of external income to support our research mission.

Reputation and renown for the University, as measured through the University's rankings strategy, will be significantly drawn from a focus on quality, excellence and impact of our research.

KEY THEMES FROM UNIVERSITY ENGAGEMENT

DIVERSIFY AND GROW INCOME AND PARTNERSHIP
Strategic approach to growth and diversification of income and partnership

EVOLVE THE HDR PROGRAM
Continue to evolve and improve the HDR program, services and administration – improve external income to support more scholarships

STRATEGIC INVESTMENT FOR OUTPUTS
Tough strategic decisions on University investment in areas of research, with strong accountability for quality, productivity and outcomes

MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH
Strategic approach to multidisciplinary research, building on potential of research activity across disciplinary and organisational boundaries

RESEARCH OUTPUTS – PROMOTION AND PUBLICATIONS
Enhanced publication and greater promotion of our research outputs

SHARED RESEARCH FACILITIES
Improve research facilities through economies of scale at the whole-of-institution level

3. Focused investment in research

2020 PROGRAM ELEMENTS

3.1 Identify areas for prioritised research investment of University resources

3.2 HDR – renewal of administration and student life cycle, along with improved training and support for students and their future success[4]

3.3 Refinement of criteria for HDR scholarship allocation from University resources

3.4 Diversification and growth of income for research[5]

3.5 Refinement of Bachelor of Philosophy and Master of Research offerings with emphasis on quality and suitability for digital and blended delivery

POST COVID-19 CAPABILITIES

• Smaller, higher-quality suite for Master of Research designed for digital and blended delivery

2024 RESULTS	KPI/MEASURES	SCORECARD KPIS
• Delivered the refreshed Strategic Research Framework • Improved upon the results of ERA and EI 2018 • Achieved a rating of world class or above for all fields of research (FoR) • Achieved a sustainable ranking in the top 200 universities in the world and be on a trajectory to be ranked among the top 150 • Achieved a step change in the diversification of sources of research income, including from external partnerships • Supported large-scale, cross-faculty multidisciplinary research focused on strategically important areas and funding opportunities • Improved access to, and quality of, shared research facilities and infrastructure with a focus on providing institution-level facilities • Increased external support for HDR program	• External research income 　– HERDC (Categories 1–4) 　– Other (eg RBG, NCRIS) • HDR completions • % of academic staff type (eg research only, teaching and research, teaching and leadership, technical/industry/ commercial) across and between disciplines • University rankings (institutional and in key disciplines): 　– ARWU, THE, QS, USNews • Selected discipline ranking: 　– ARWU, THE, QS, USNews • Strategic hires • Number and scale of external partnerships supporting research	**External research income** • HERDC (Categories 1–4) • Other (eg RBG, NCRIS) **Ranking – University ranking (QS/THE/ARWU)** • Discipline ranking (QS/THE/ARWU) (TBC) • # of strategic hires **Research publication quality** • % of Macquarie publications in top 10% of highly cited papers in the world • Average Research Citation Index **Higher degree research education** • # of HDR completion

[4]Aligned wherever possible with Section 1. Students first
[5]Aligned with our broader work on partnerships and commercial focus to be addressed in Section 6. Ways of working

4. Our people
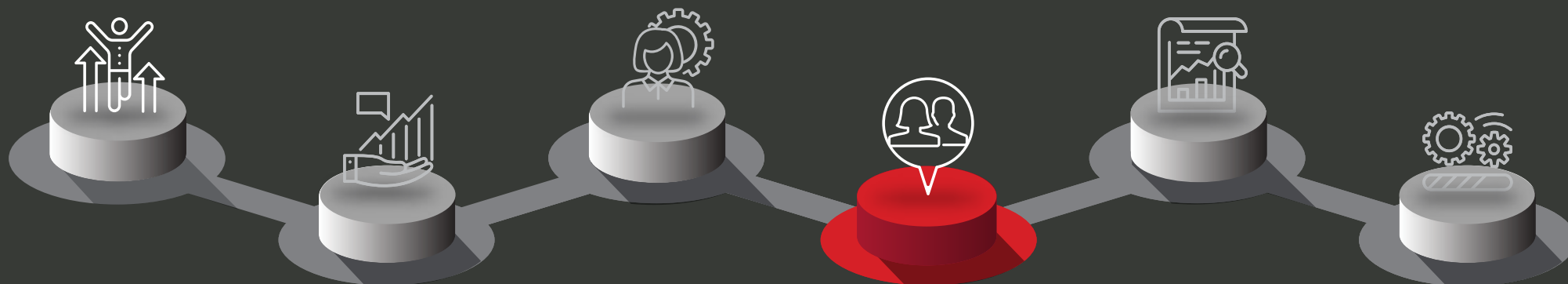
4. Our people

Our people are key to the University's success. We will recruit, retain and develop the highest-performing academic and professional staff, and nurture them to seize opportunities and meet the challenges of our changing world. We will define the optimum academic profile for disciplines across the University to ensure that we excel in our dual mission of learning and teaching, and research. In achieving these goals, we will align our staff profile with our strategic priorities and aspirations, and evolve our work culture with a heightened emphasis on performance, professional development and adaptability – as we serve and engage all our stakeholders.

KEY THEMES FROM UNIVERSITY ENGAGEMENT

SIMPLIFY STRUCTURE AND DEVELOP PEOPLE
Simplify organisational structures to significantly improve staff development, align workforce profile and uplift capabilities

PEOPLE, CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION
People and culture program with improvement to internal communications

DEVELOP THE CRITICAL ROLE OF COURSE DIRECTOR
Simpler coursework suite with course- and major-level design, centred on employability and student needs

4. Our people

2020 PROGRAM ELEMENTS

4.1   Academic workforce strategy, implemented through simplified structures, workforce profile and job families

4.2   Academic leadership model, including course directors

4.3   People and culture program

4.4   Staff development program, including potential retraining initiative (PST, academic staff development)

POST COVID-19 CAPABILITIES

- Building on success of adaptation to COVID-19 and engagement in the Operating Plan to introduce a narrative of an adaptable, resilient organisation

- Significant uplift in digital skills, and an openness to a new organisational and operating model

2024 RESULTS	KPI/MEASURES	SCORECARD KPIS
• A mature model of academic workforce development, to support academics at Macquarie to achieve our aspirations in education and student success • A better career pathway for professional staff, with clearer and more standardised roles, and increased opportunity for mobility • A more balanced representation of staff across academic disciplines and job families, aligned with our learning and teaching, research and engagement strategies	• Progress of actual workforce profile against target workforce profile • Promotion and retention figures • Staff/student ratios • Rankings • Staff survey results • Professional staff mobility rates	**Diversity and sustainability** • % of female leadership • % of Indigenous staff • % of internal new hires • % of voluntary attrition • % of new starter voluntary attrition • % of staff satisfaction

5. Ways of working
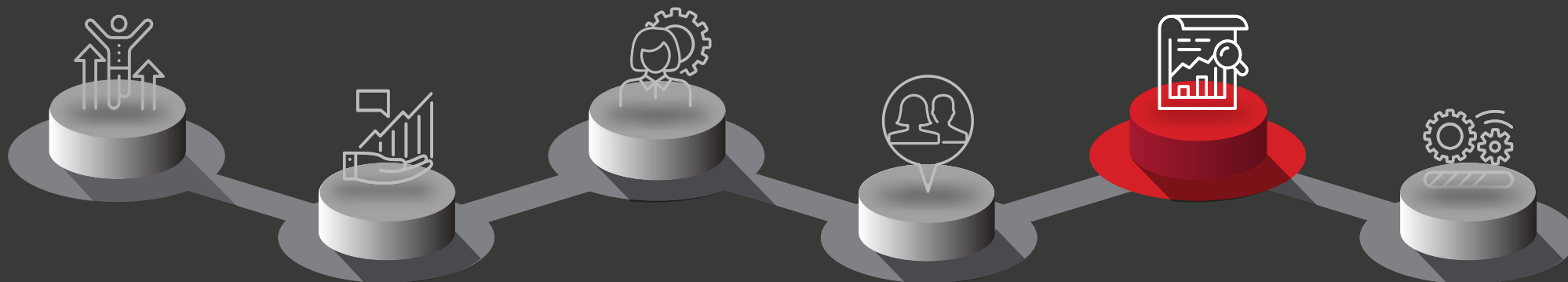
5. Ways of working

We accept our responsibility to ensure the University's academic, organisational and financial sustainability for generations to come. To achieve this, we will adjust our operating models on multiple fronts to better respond to the needs of our students, staff and stakeholders. We acknowledge the crucial partnership between academic and professional staff in achieving our strategic goals and ambitions, and the importance of effective and efficient professional services in enabling the mission of the University.

KEY THEMES FROM UNIVERSITY ENGAGEMENT

TECHNOLOGY, SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES
Technology replacement (including technology infrastructure and major systems work), consolidation and integration of systems and data, business process improvement, efficiency and simplification

STAFF DEVELOPMENT, WORKFORCE PROFILE AND CAPABILITY BUILDING
Significant uplift in staff development, workforce profile, capability and performance

SIMPLIFY STRUCTURES
Simplify organisational structures to significantly improve staff development, align workforce profile and uplift capabilities

FLEXIBLE WORK PROCESSES, CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT, EMPOWERED PEOPLE
Engaging and empowering staff in improving ways of working and driving continuous improvement

PEOPLE, CULTURE AND COMMUNICATIONS
People and culture program with improvement to internal communications

GROW AND DIVERSIFY OUR INCOME AND PARTNERSHIPS
Strategic approach to growth and diversification of income and partnerships

5. Ways of working

2020 PROGRAM ELEMENTS

5.1   Business model and operating model renewal

5.2   Professional services transformation informed by user experience

5.3   Digital transformation and post COVID-19 whole-of-enterprise operations, including technology replacement and renewal, and business process transformation

POST COVID-19 CAPABILITIES

- Renewed business model, operating model and market strategy
- Improved business continuity and resilience
- Technology, systems and processes to support a digitally enabled organisation
- Macquarie approach to move quickly to novel opportunities

2024 RESULTS	KPI/MEASURES	SCORECARD KPIS
• A sustainable and mature model and method for measuring the quality of our service delivery to students and staff • More consistent and standard processes across key professional services • A more efficient professional staff support structure, allowing reinvestment in the academic mission of the University • Effective use of technology to support process and service delivery, allowing our staff to focus their time and effort on areas of greater interest and value add • Effective and adaptable operating models that enable the University to effectively and efficiently deliver on our shared ambition and commitments	• UniForum benchmarking • Staff engagement and retention, specifically in career development • Service quality measures (when methodology is established) • QILT/ISB • Financial results/operating surplus • Academic/professional staff ratios	**Workforce** • # of staff headcount • # of staff FTE • % of employees >40 days annual leave • $ employment cost • Cost-to-income ratio • # of student-to-staff ratio • % of managers <3 direct reports • % of academic staff (eg research only, teaching and research, teaching and leadership, technical/industry/ commercial academic)

6. Digital transformation
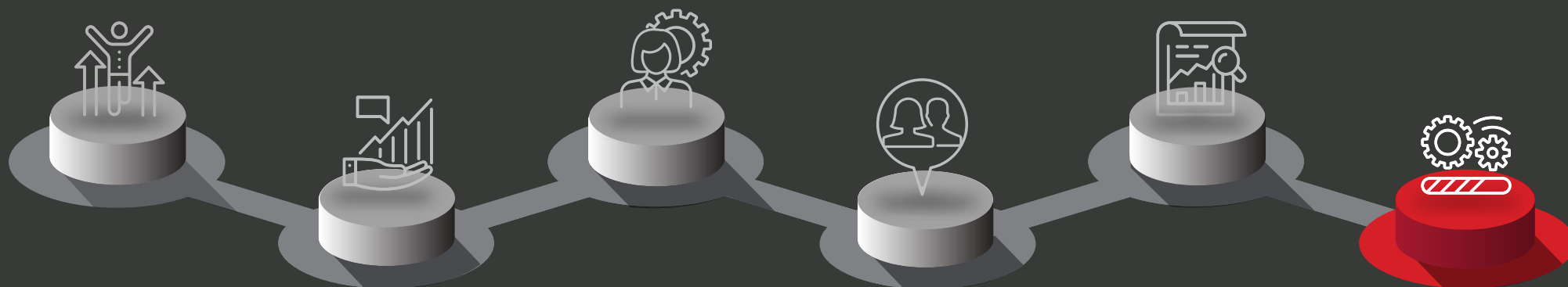
6. Digital transformation

This Operating Plan sets out challenges for us as a university community to do new and different things, and to rethink and reimagine our approach to the dual mission of education and research. Every aspect of this plan must be grounded in academic excellence, rigour and governance – balanced with innovation, contemporary approaches and digital enablement. In engaging with the University community, a range of ideas and suggestions surfaced that were linked to improving our ability to embrace emerging technologies to better connect, engage and collaborate. In response to that input and the operating environment, digital transformation has been added to the five fundamental commitments on which the initial Operating Plan engagement took place.

KEY THEMES FROM UNIVERSITY ENGAGEMENT

INNOVATIVE, DIGITALLY ENABLED EDUCATION
Innovation and digital enablers for learning, teaching, assessment and feedback, which meet the needs of 21st-century students

COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT
Digital tools and platforms to allow improvements in communication and engagement with staff, students and partners

DIGITAL SERVICES
Digital services to meet students' needs for support, study planning, information and advice

EMBRACE THE POWER OF EMERGING TECHNOLOGY
Harness innovation through the development and use of emerging technologies for machine learning, automation and analytics

STRATEGIC APPROACH TO SYSTEMS AND DATA
Simplify the systems, processes and behaviours to enable better integration across the University

EXPERIENCE DESIGN ACROSS ALL DIGITALLY ENABLED ACTIVITIES
Well-designed interactions with contemporary digitally enabled processes, allowing students, staff and partners to focus on important and relevant activities

6. Digital transformation

2020 PROGRAM ELEMENTS

6.1 Scope and commencing development of a digital road map including core ERP and systems architecture as a platform for innovation

6.2 Digitally enabled, scalable innovation in education and research across all aspects of the Operating Plan

6.3 Tools and platforms for digitally enabled ways of working, communication and engagement

6.4 Effective data governance, analytic capabilities and insight to support evidence-based practice and decisions

6.5 Alignment with work on staff development, people and culture to enable a digital workplace and build capability to deliver in a digital-first world

POST COVID-19 CAPABILITIES

• Digitally enabled ways of working, and business continuity and capability

2024 RESULTS	KPI/MEASURES	SCORECARD KPIS
• Sustainable renewal of University strategy, operations and services to harness and embrace digital capabilities • Comprehensive suite of digital tools and capabilities to support new agile ways of working, communicating and community building • Improved integration of systems processes, services, data and analytic capabilities • Emergent technologies are assessed and deployed where they add value to education, research, students and engagement • Digital skills and capabilities of education and research staff drive the successful transition to digital platforms	• Road map progress • Financial results • Staff survey results • UniForum benchmarking • Increase in education content delivered digitally • Adoption of new technology and ways of working	• $ operating budget • $ capex budget • $ employment cost • Digital delivery income • % of utilisation of digital technology • # of student and staff satisfaction scores with digital services and solutions

1. Students first

2. Coursework suite and delivery

3. Focused investment in research

4. Our people

5. Ways of working

6. Digital transformation

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