The Macquarie Student Success Strategic Framework

GREEN PAPER

1 This document is a synthesis of research findings, staff and student workshops, surveys and external reviews conducted over the past five years.
As the community at Macquarie University gains momentum in delivering on the strategic framework, A Framing of Futures, it is time to focus on students. Developing a deep understanding of the aspirations, needs and challenges facing our students is fundamental to success – obviously to the success of our students in their higher education journey; but also to our own institutional success as we strive to educate and grow the world’s future leaders.

This document, the Student Success Framework, outlines the holistic and coordinated approach that is necessary to support successful students in all aspects of their university experience. It goes far beyond academic success and highlights that Macquarie is uniquely placed to support students in realising their individual potential through professional networks, authentic experiences and our nurturing community.

Whilst taking a student-centred approach to drafting this framework, it would be a mistake not to also recognise the critical roles we play as academics, teachers, researchers and professional staff. As the African proverb says, it takes a village to raise a child. At Macquarie we already have a track record of achievement but in re-framing our approach, we will empower students and staff alike to pursue their personal and professional goals in a caring and stimulating environment.

I commend this document to you and hope that you will take the opportunity to be involved in this consultation phase. Please read it carefully, discuss it with your colleagues and importantly, suggest ways it can be strengthened.

Once approved, the Student Success Framework will be a reference point for all of us, as co-creators of student success. It will guide us in decision-making, both strategic and tactical, and will be the yardstick by which we measure our impact.

PROFESSOR S BRUCE DOWTON
Vice-Chancellor and President
CONTEXT

A Framing of Futures sets out an institutional identity for Macquarie University which emphasises service and engagement as the basis for:

- shared community values,
- meaningful partnerships,
- achievements in learning and research, and
- a unique campus environment.

These elements are also reflected in the University’s new brand, (YOU)™: When your potential is multiplied by a university built for collaboration, anything can be achieved.

Described as a human equation for success, the brand succinctly captures the same fundamental elements of community, collaboration, achievement and campus.

Whilst the strategic vision and brand are so clearly aligned, the challenge that now faces Macquarie University is to ensure that the experiences of students and staff align with these values and goals. In other words, how do we ensure that the actual student experience at Macquarie University reflects the vision?

Curriculum transformation initiatives are already underway as part of the Learning and Teaching Strategic Framework 2015-2020 with the aim of enhancing the quality of the educational experience at Macquarie University. As the expectations and aspirations of students increase, however, a holistic approach is essential. As such, this document presents a framework in which Macquarie University will invest in the MACQUARIE student experience to ensure that all key elements are aligned to positively impact student potential and success. In doing so, Macquarie University will have a distinctive, cohesive and future-focused roadmap that harnesses energy, talent and resources to become a destination of first choice in the highly competitive and fast-changing higher education sector.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

An extensive consultation process was undertaken with the Macquarie University community, from which a range of guiding principles emerged. These principles have shaped the approach and thinking around the Macquarie Student Success Framework and also reflect the values and commitment of the Macquarie community as a whole.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Education transforms lives through knowledge, skills, experience and opportunity.

A growth mindset fosters motivation, creative thinking, willingness to take on challenges and personal resilience and is therefore essential to realising potential.

Strong communities are built upon belonging and connectedness, inclusion and respect for diversity, positive relationships, collaboration, and shared experiences and benefits.

Co-creation is an active partnership and collaboration between students, staff and industry partners that enhances the experiential learning community, generates creative and dynamic solutions, and promotes a positive institutional, future-oriented culture.

Student-centred design thinking drives the development of our programs and plans for engagement, impact and investment that is based on a deep understanding of challenges and needs as well as responsiveness to feedback.

PEOPLE, CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION

In addition to the guiding principles, this student success framework relies on the diverse expertise and contributions of talented people who are part of the Macquarie community.

Students, staff and institutional partners will be guided by the our common values of scholarship, integrity and empowerment to discuss, question and promote an holistic view of student success; that results in academic achievement as well as personal and professional growth and independence. That, in turn, equips and empowers students to become engaged citizens who are confident in their own capabilities as they navigate towards a meaningful and successful life and career beyond the University.

The culture of service will be enhanced by promoting seamless connections and communication between students and staff, and also between organisational units throughout the University. Effective communication – taking into account the characteristics of the sender and receiver as well as content and channel – is the basis for productive and meaningful relationships. A proactive approach to understanding and addressing issues affecting student success will also promote a stronger sense of belonging and agency for all members of the Macquarie community.
Delivering Student Success at Macquarie University will be guided by the following statements:

- Macquarie University is a connected network in which the fundamental elements of curriculum, community, campus and industry are aligned to nurture, grow and accelerate the academic, personal and professional development of all students.

- At Macquarie University the opportunities, courses, programs, experiences, services, information and facilities are purposefully designed and delivered to realise student potential and success.

- At Macquarie University, there is a shared commitment to connect, collaborate, communicate and innovate to realise student potential and success.

- Students are empowered and valued throughout their higher education journey to realise their own potential and success. Students will be equipped with skills to move forward and lead productive and meaningful professional and civic lives.

- Staff are enabled and developed across the whole student lifecycle to guide and encourage student potential and success. Innovation, collaboration and good practice in promoting students success is harnessed and supported throughout the organisation.

Achieving Student Success at Macquarie

Macquarie University’s own lighthouse is both a beacon that represents the ambitions and bright future at Macquarie as well as a powerful symbol of the support, nurture and guidance offered to students throughout their higher education journey. The lighthouse provides the framework in which to conceptualise and align the elements that contribute to student success.

In the Macquarie equation for student success, the foundational elements are represented by the lighthouse’s layered structure. The elements outlined in the diagram will enable staff from various areas to develop strategies that will support the University’s commitment to value and empower students to leap towards realising their potential and purpose.

The representation of the light connects directly to the University’s brand and most importantly, shows students at the centre of institution’s own path to success. The radiating light beam helps to define the functional stages of the student lifecycle and also serve to reinforce the holistic approach to student experience and support.

Personalisation will be a defining feature of the Macquarie student experience and formula for success. It will be achieved by:

- recognising students’ individual learning goals and the diversity of pathways to success,
- adopting a coaching model to promote resilience, independence and responsibility as students transition in, through and out of the university,
- using co-creation and human-centred design principles to connect and personalise touchpoints, services and solutions throughout the University,
- promoting an holistic understanding of factors affecting success and their complex interactions for particular student cohorts, and
- analysing student feedback and behaviours to establish a more proactive cycle of communication and engagement.
THE MACQUARIE STUDENT SUCCESS STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

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TRANSITION BEYOND
TRANSITION THROUGH
TRANSITION IN

PATHWAYS ACCESS ORIENTATION
CURRICULUM PROGRESSION RETENTION
EMPLOYABILITY GRADUATION ALUMNI

STUDENT

PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH
Personal and Physical Wellbeing + Professional Identity

SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT
Skills Development, Lifelong Learning + Belonging

CONNECTED SERVICES AND INFORMATION
Consistent, Accurate, Personalised + Timely

COMMUNITY AND INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS
Discovery + Collaboration

CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT
Physical + Digital

LEARNING, TEACHING AND RESEARCH
Curriculum + Pedagogy Innovation

EMPOWERED AND VALUED

ENABLED AND DEVELOPED

Consistent, Accurate, Personalised + Timely

Skills Development, Lifelong Learning + Belonging

Discovery + Collaboration

Curriculum + Pedagogy Innovation
The foundational elements of the student success equation are described in the section that follows. The elements are supported by some examples that demonstrate the good practice that currently exists.

**LEARNING, TEACHING AND RESEARCH**

- **Curriculum Transformation** – will deliver to students a renewed curriculum and course offering that allows them to realise their ambitions and become future-ready.

- **Pedagogical practices** that emerge in Faculties demonstrate that our teaching staff are continuously working on improving student experience and maximising their academic success, developing practices to help students learn, gain independence, overcome challenges and achieve success.

- For example, Core Econ Project in Faculty of Business prompts students to apply theoretical knowledge to solve real world problems that students are encouraged to identified themselves.

- In Faculty of Arts, lecturers are working towards building students’ independence and engagement by making challenging concepts relevant to their lives in 200-level English units (ENGL203: Contemporary Literature, ENGL207: World Literature in English, and ENGL208).

- In Faculty of Medicine & Health Sciences through “Building Bridges” initiative in Doctor of Physiotherapy (DPT) program, a physiological approach is used to help students understand the integrated nature of body systems to develop outstanding physiotherapy practice and research.

- **The Macquarie University Vice-Chancellor’s Learning and Teaching Awards** recognise, reward and celebrate individual teachers, teams of teachers and professional staff who increase student engagement and student learning outcomes.
CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT

- A campus in a beautiful, natural setting with modern, sustainable facilities creates a nourishing, safe, accessible and engaging environment for students and staff.

- A physical campus supported by technological solutions that promote innovative approaches to learning and teaching, an integrated student experience and development of digital literacy in student and staff.

- Natural campus beauty and a tranquil environment is complemented by well-designed spaces aiming to connect students and multiply their potential: The Library, MUSE, MAZE, Sport and Aquatic Centre, MQ incubator, Finance Decision Lab and Campus Commons.

- Further developments proposed for Central Courtyard and Arts Precinct are aiming to develop the hub where students live, learn, collaborate, develop and belong.

- The physical spaces are complemented by an online environment supported by Learning Management System (LMS), that fosters online learning, teaching, communication and collaboration.

- The university has further strengthened its online presence through Coursera MOOCs such as: Big History, Excel and Online Global MBA.
COMMUNITY AND INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

- Initiatives and programs that promote collaboration and enrich the learning environment through PACE (Professional and Community Engagement) GLP (Global Leadership Program) and the Macquarie Incubator, along with internship and employment opportunities supported by the Career and Employment Service.

- Opportunities for students and staff to enhance their skills by engaging in meaningful partnerships with industry and broader community, where the relationships are based on reciprocity, ethical behaviour and commitment to realising shared goals.

PACE is Macquarie’s award-winning program that engages students in real-world learning activities with organisations across Australia and around the globe. PACE students make an active contribution to their host organisation’s goals while enhancing their own personal and professional development.

- More than 30,000 undergraduate students have made an active contribution while engaging in experiential learning activities.

- The Optus Engineering Cadetship program was established in 2014, and enables up to 10 first-year Macquarie Engineering students the opportunity to gain real-life experience. Cadets become Optus employees from day one of the program, and Optus supports the students’ fees throughout their studies.

- Macquarie Incubator was built to harness innovation and prompt students to realise their entrepreneurial ideas, receive guidance from industry professionals and build their networks.
CONNECTED SERVICES AND INFORMATION

- A seamless student experience that is based on a network of services, information and advice that is personalised, accurate, consistent and timely.

Integrated Service Delivery Model represented below will empower the delivery of a seamless and connected experience for Macquarie University students.
Recent launch of Project Beacon aims at selection and implementation of a new Curriculum Management System and Student Management System to replace our existing systems. These systems will enable the University administration, adding efficiency and allowing personalisation.

The Vice-Chancellor’s Excellence Awards for professional staff recognise the exceptional performance of professional staff members who have performed above and beyond the normal requirements of their position and demonstrated a commitment to service and engagement.

The Converged Services Team’s objective is to enhance the student experience by improving communication and collaboration between student-facing services. The team contributed to the development of tiered service delivery model. Furthermore the team developed and delivered training sessions and events to harness and share good practice and improve service quality and collaboration.
SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

- A vibrant and diverse range of activities, events and opportunities through which students develop life-long skills, establish networks, build relationships, contribute to University decision-making and add to the richness of their higher education journey.

- A strong sense of belonging that encourages students to be active members of the local and global community during their studies but to also remain connected as an alumnus, commit to lifelong learning and share in the achievements of Macquarie community as a whole.

- The Macquarie Buddies program is run by students for students, providing all students with opportunities to ease into University life, supported by peers. The aim of the program is to form friendships and broaden their experience of Sydney and Macquarie University.

- Macquarie University is home to more than 130 active student groups, with interests that span cultural, sports and social elements. Run by students and alumni, the Student Groups of Macquarie University promote like-minded people getting together to fundraise, discuss and debate, as well as celebrate the achievements of their groups.

- The Global Leadership Program (GLP) nurtures budding global citizens by providing a comprehensive academic and professional workshop series and by advertising and acknowledging completion of varied experiential activities.

- In 2017, the GLP facilitated or ran 203 activities for more than 3772 domestic and international students.
PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

- Programs, services and strategies that foster the personal and physical well-being of students throughout the student lifecycle.
- A commitment to motivate and coach students towards independence, resilience and agency as they seek to fulfil their individual goals and potential.
- An integrated model where curricular and extra-curricular learning activities purposefully combine to prepare students for meaningful and productive professional and civic lives.
- Peer to peer support programs that exist throughout the University (Macquarie Mentors, First Step mentoring and Lucy Mentoring in FBE, Macquarie Mates in FHS, HDR Mentors) promote successful transition to university life and sense of belonging to Macquarie community.
- Future STEMM Leaders is a new student-led researcher development program aiming to provide a more tailored critical skill development platform for selected PhD candidates who have a passion for building skills that are vital for successful careers in STEMM fields.
- Services and programs provided by Careers and Employment Services, Campus Wellbeing, Learning Skills and Library are designed to equip students with skills that promote academic independence, personal wellbeing and resilience and equip students with future-ready skill set.
NEXT STEPS

STEP 1:
Establish a **Student Success Leadership Committee** that will be responsible for the provision of advice and recommendations on the development, implementation and review of strategies, policies and initiatives to address the needs of students and enhance the overall student experience at Macquarie University.

STEP 2:
Develop a **Student Success Implementation Plan** that enables application of student-centred design thinking and collaboration to connect curriculum, pedagogical practices, campus and digital spaces, services, policies, social engagement and any other student related activities.

STEP 3:
Student Success Committee will also establish organisational performance measures indicators to monitor the success of implemented initiatives to improve overall student experience and success.