



THE UNIVERSITY
OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

CREATE CHANGE

Student Life Plan

2018-2021





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Fast facts

53,600+
students

18,000+
international students

16,600+
postgraduate students

13,600+
PhD graduates

6,600
staff (full-time equivalent)

264,000+
alumni

\$1.9 billion+
operating revenue

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Message from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)



UQ has served students well for over a century. We will continue to do so into the 21st century because we take seriously our responsibility to prepare students for an unknown future.

Preparing game-changing graduates defines teaching and learning at UQ. Graduates who thrive from UQ's rich disciplinary knowledge go on to translate their knowledge and skills across boundaries, contexts and careers. Graduates who embody curiosity, passion and a hunger for learning throughout their lives.

A key to success for our students is for us to foster wellbeing and a sense of belonging with UQ. We recognise that everyone in the UQ community is different and human – so we must bring a variety of activities, experiences, services, and learning opportunities within our student experience.

We must also examine the extent and level of interest we should have in student life. This is not easy to define, because each student has a different life, needs, and expectations. Our approach is to view learning as the ongoing core mission of all concerned, and to see aspects of life as helping or hindering students to engage with UQ learning.

This document sets out what we think are aspects of student life that have the highest impact for large numbers of students. It naturally highlights areas

for development and improvement, but also captures tremendous efforts already made by UQ staff and students.

Our *Student Life Plan 2018–2021* is the place of record that signals our goals, approaches, and actions guiding our collective commitment to helping our students with life during their studies with us. It goes hand-in-hand with our *Teaching and Learning Plan 2018–2021*. Together, these two plans guide enhancement of the UQ student experience.

There is a lot already happening in student life at UQ, some of which has brought us into challenging and exciting uncharted waters. Yet, UQ staff embrace the possibilities and uncertainties as we work together to maintain our international reputation for excellence. This document draws all the activities into five coherent goals that signal for the next few years our commitment to our students.

Professor Joanne Wright
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

Students recognise UQ's educational experience



National surveys in 2018 compared the experiences of undergraduate students across Australia.

UQ was top-ranked in the Group of Eight universities for:

- overall educational experience
- overall teaching quality satisfaction
- sense of belonging
- learning resources
- skills development.

We recognise, however, that there is still much work to be done in supporting students during their time with us, and enhancing the UQ experience generally.

Student life showcase

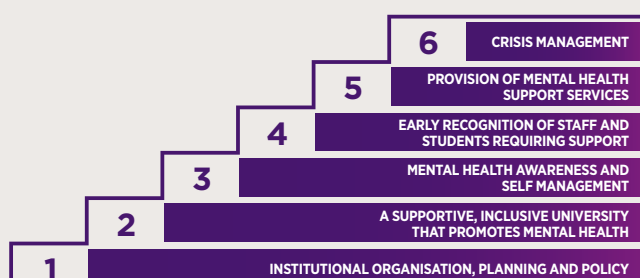
Therapy dog visit at St Lucia campus



Student mental health

The *Mental Health Strategy 2018-2020* steers our university-wide approach, and ensures that mental health is a key priority in our decision-making.

Views of staff and students, and international best practice helped develop the Strategy, which uses a stepped-care model to change culture, build on the strengths of our community, and tailor support to individual requirements.



'Inspire You' Youth Camp, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit



Employability

UQ has taken an institutional approach to student employability, focusing on developing the capacity of our students to capitalise on lifelong and life-wide experiential learning. Through the application of the employability framework and our signature self-reflective process, all students develop the holistic personal skills and

attributes that guide positive workplace performance.

This experiential learning process augments the key competencies and knowledge that our students develop through their studies, ensuring that our graduates are sought after, not only for their discipline knowledge and expertise, but also for their ability to continuously learn from their experiences.



Lantern Festival Parade

Long Table Dinner, Bloom Festival



Campus activation

We understand the fast pace and demands of life, and have activated our campuses to be places that attract our students, regardless of whether they have an academic need to be there. A home away from home, where friendships, connections, learning,

support, and celebration collide and combine to foster exploration, excitement and creativity within a nurturing and reassuring context.

Moving beyond bricks and mortar, our campus activation curates experiences throughout the academic year, with daily events across four themes aligning with student mindsets during the day, week, and semester.

Support and Services Showcase event



Service improvement

We have embarked upon a digital transformation program so that we can improve service quality, and provide more time adding face-to-face value for our students. UQ is a large organisation, sometimes

leading to a fragmented presence across our many digital platforms.

Our digital users expect us to behave in a coherent, comprehensible and coordinated way across our many webpages and digital channels – we are seeking to provide our online information in this way.

Overview

Preparing graduates to thrive in an unknown future

Our students and staff face a rapidly changing world. To be game-changing, our graduates will need to possess rich disciplinary knowledge and a diverse set of skills. Their career path will not be linear or singular. As a result, they will need to translate their capabilities across a wide range of contexts in an increasingly connected world.

The *Teaching and Learning Plan 2018–2021* evolves our approaches to teaching and learning to ensure that we prepare our students for this future. They will need to be agile enough to navigate the constantly changing demands of work. They will need to be knowledgeable and skilled enough to critically understand and tackle the complex issues facing humanity.

It is also important that we guide our students to do well in life generally. Many students are entering early adulthood and are experiencing new life events. At the same time, they are expected to take responsibility for managing their own lives and an academic study load.

UQ will seek to remove unnecessary hurdles within the student experience, and assist where we can to reduce the burden of some challenges within student life more broadly. In doing so, we will model the responsible approaches we would value in our students and graduates.

A better world embraces difference

The UQ community is enriched by diversity among our students and staff. When students learn in an environment that is cross-cultural and interdisciplinary they are exposed to a wider range of perspectives. They can then build the capacity to understand and evaluate different opinions and ways of approaching problems. This is an enabler for social good.

Student life is central to achieving our UQ mission

UQ continues to strive for an educational experience that is situated at the intersection of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values, where learners translate specialised disciplinary knowledge into action; action that creates change for a better world. It is important that students can easily access that experience and feel they belong there: research has shown that students with a sense of belonging to their institution tend to engage with, and succeed in, their studies. We must ensure that students can seamlessly access campuses and virtual environments, make good friends, feel highly supported, and thoroughly enjoy their time at university. Our aim is to see our students eager to be on campus, regardless of study timetable.

The *Student Life Plan 2018–2021* provides a pathway to realising the *UQ Strategic Plan 2018–2021*, through the goals articulated in the *Student Strategy*

2016–2020 and working alongside the *Teaching and Learning Plan 2018–2021*.

Within this context, the *Student Life Plan* looks at life beyond the curriculum. It continues with the principle of enablement, and guides the enhancement of students' sense of belonging, engagement, and success. The Plan does so using five goals:

Goal 1	Easy access to the UQ student experience
Goal 2	A strong sense of belonging to UQ
Goal 3	Good health and wellbeing
Goal 4	Effective services for students
Goal 5	Personalised employability enhancement opportunities

The *Student Life Plan 2018–2021* arguably moves beyond the thinking of some traditional universities. UQ has an impressive track record in research, teaching, learning resources, campus infrastructure, and the pursuit of excellence.

The *Student Life Plan* asks us to welcome, accept, understand, motivate, support, and excite individuals beyond the classroom. This is a significant undertaking. We look forward to the next four years with excitement, as well as a little healthy trepidation.

Gatton campus community garden





Guinness World Record for World's Largest Mindfulness Lesson
(Single Venue) held in July 2019 at St Lucia campus

Principles and Goals

The scope of the *Student Life Plan 2018–2021* is broad and its goals significant. Our commitment to delivering on these goals is firm. This is a significant undertaking, and we look forward to the next four years with excitement.

Principles

These principles signal what matters about student life at UQ; they have helped focus and shape this document. Into 2021, these principles will continue to be an important touchstone to guide implementation of the *Student Life Plan*.

PRINCIPLE	APPLICATION
1 Co-create	Students and staff will work together to implement, refine, evaluate, and optimise the Plan to ensure benefits flow to students (and related UQ strategic aims)
2 Reach into student life	Aspects of life can help or hinder students accessing the academic learning experience. While the core mission of the University remains one of academic endeavour, the Plan will assist with some common aspects of life that are associated with being a university student
3 Value diversity and inclusion	Student life is different for each individual. UQ may not always be able to meet the exact needs of each individual, but will seek to redesign key parts of its non-academic experience to be more student-focused and flexible for individuals
4 Engage in partnerships	A range of partners – including students, industry, community, and alumni – will enrich the student experience
5 Improve continually	The Plan will be a living document and amended throughout its implementation phase to refine and improve its impact

Goals

The *Student Life Plan* is part of an ongoing conversation about enhancing student life.

The following pages outline the five goals with strategies and actions.

Welcome Festival, Natural Amphitheatre, St Lucia campus





Field of Dreams Event, Art Museum Lawn, St Lucia campus

Goal 1: Easy access to the UQ student experience

STRATEGY	ACTION
1.1 Enhance our digital interaction platform, and move to smart, online, student administration	1.1.1 Replace key paper processes with a digitised, automated experience
	1.1.2 Renew my.UQ to be a single, instinctive online portal and point of reference
	1.1.3 Introduce a 24/7 mobile virtual assistant
1.2 Improve transport to and from campus	1.2.1 Pursue better, more sustainable public transport for St Lucia campus
	1.2.2 Install a walking / bicycle path to connect Gatton campus with Gatton township
	1.2.3 Operate a mini-bus to connect Gatton campus with Gatton and Toowoomba
1.3 Freshen our on-campus retail	1.3.1 Offer a wider range of food and drink options, price points and experiences
	1.3.2 Set out our retail offering in a manner that is convenient for students
1.4 Expand home / commuter facilities on campus	1.4.1 Pursue a St Lucia campus student hub with 'home' and recreation facilities
	1.4.2 Introduce 'spokes' around campus with informal learning spaces
1.5 Ensure inclusivity	1.5.1 Review UQ student-facing policies to foster an inclusive approach and culture
1.6 Seek for the UQ student experience to be affordable	1.6.1 Implement an online platform to assist with causes of financial pressure
	1.6.2 Design a scholarship strategy that is multi-functional and strategic
	1.6.3 Channel benefaction to fund loans and grants
	1.6.4 Introduce a job shop for part-time employment opportunities on or near campus
	1.6.5 Broaden the UQ Temps pool to include students
	1.6.6 Implement an online platform for part-time employment external to UQ
	1.6.7 Introduce student discounts at on-campus food trucks at key periods
	1.6.8 Broaden the scope of student discounts in the business community
1.7 Help students with accommodation	1.7.1 Publish a UQ student accommodation strategy
	1.7.2 Provide a limited number of UQ-owned or managed residential places
	1.7.3 Collaborate with external providers to supply safe, well-managed housing
	1.7.4 Provide guaranteed accommodation for non-South East Queensland students
	1.7.5 Articulate UQ's relationship with St Lucia-based Colleges

Goal 2: A strong sense of belonging to UQ

STRATEGY	ACTION
2.1 Foster a positive student community	2.1.1 Agree with our student union to prioritise activities that engender a supportive, dynamic, and self-reflective student community
	2.1.2 Help students make good UQ friends by supporting student clubs and societies, and delivering specific events within campus activation
2.2 Activate our campuses	2.2.1 Deliver on-campus experiences, events, and activities, using four themes to ensure value and meaning for as many students as possible
	2.2.2 Work with our student union to co-create on-campus experiences



Sideshow Alley Event food trucks, Campbell Place, St Lucia campus

The Great Picnic in Connect Week, Great Court, St Lucia campus



Goal 3: Good health and wellbeing

STRATEGY	ACTION
3.1 Enhance on-campus medical services	3.1.1 Move to a single provider of on-campus medical practices
	3.1.2 Improve sustainability of service
	3.1.3 Increase service levels
3.2 Encourage good mental health	3.2.1 Implement a UQ mental health strategy and student plan
	3.2.2 Establish a Mental Health Champions Network to promote a culture of wellbeing
	3.2.3 Deliver mental health initiatives appropriate for our diverse student population
	3.2.4 Develop markers to help identify and engage with those who may need support
	3.2.5 Provide training for staff to assist students requiring support
	3.2.6 Ensure UQ mental health services are accessible, and of a high standard
3.3 Optimise safety within the student community	3.3.1 Provide 24/7 on-campus security, safety response, and counselling services
	3.3.2 Engender a culture of respect, ethical by-standing, support and reporting (including for sexual misconduct)

Sideshow Alley Event, Campbell Place, St Lucia campus



Making smoothies by pedal power, Great Court, St Lucia campus



Goal 4: Effective services for students

STRATEGY	ACTION
4.1 Reduce service need	4.1.1 Simplify academic program architecture, rules, policies and administration
4.2 Implement a student-centred service strategy	4.2.1 Review services against student expectations, needs, and emerging models
	4.2.2 Implement an updated service model, including appropriate technology
4.3 Enhance student mentoring	4.3.1 Help visibility of existing mentor programs
	4.3.2 Provide an online platform to connect mentors and mentees
	4.3.3 Implement processes to assure quality across mentoring programs
	4.3.4 Introduce new mentor programs, where demand is not being met

Queensland Alliance for Agriculture and Food Innovation, Gatton campus



Students in the Oral Health and Medical School building, Herston campus



Goal 5: Personalised employability enhancement opportunities

STRATEGY	ACTION
5.1 Guide students to reflect on their employability	5.1.1 Implement a student employability strategy and framework to increase awareness, experiences, learning (reflection), and transfer to workplace
5.2 Update our service model to assist student needs	5.2.1 Adopt a model of our employability teams sharing resources and outputs
	5.2.2 Facilitate work integrated learning experiences that are multi-semester and representative of workforce habits, by using UQ/Faculty-wide course codes
	5.2.3 Expand opportunities for our Higher Degree by Research students
5.3 Offer more employability experiences	5.3.1 Provide more opportunities for industry placements, internships and other practical work-based experiences
	5.3.2 Provide more short-term global opportunities
	5.3.3 Increase entrepreneurship, enterprise, and innovation opportunities

Engineering student



Global Experiences – Lake Louise, Banff, Alberta, Canada



First cohort of new UQ Master of Data Science program



Glossary of terms

Employability

Employability is a set of achievements – skills, understandings and personal attributes that make graduates more likely to attain lifelong employment success, have impact in organisations, create enterprising opportunities for themselves and others, and effect positive change throughout all stages of their careers to the benefit of themselves, the workforce, the community, and the economy.

Extra-curricular extension opportunities

Opportunities for students to extend and enhance their learning through activities both within and outside of their curriculum. These activities provide enrichment above and beyond traditional credit bearing on-campus academic courses, and often link to industry, other universities, or the community. Such activities may be centrally managed or embedded within schools and faculties. Examples include, but are not limited to: short term study, exchange, volunteering, debating, and engagement with clubs and societies.

Partnership and co-creation

Faculties, schools, institutes, and central divisions working together, and adopting a student lens to create a 'one UQ' approach

to enhancing the student experience. That lens is reinforced by co-creating through UQ student-staff partnerships – a process of student engagement whereby students and staff collaborate to shape meaningful aspects of the student experience.

Based on the principles of mutual respect, reciprocity and shared responsibility, students as partners is a mindset that permeates the UQ community, building a culture of engaged students and staff.

Eliciting and valuing the student voice through committees or focus groups also provides a valuable foundation for authentic partnerships (students as change agents).

Student experience

Everything that takes place to enhance the lives of people studying at the University. This includes academic progression of a student as well as interactions, engagements and touch points that students have as members of the wider UQ community, both within and beyond the 'assessed' curriculum. The UQ student experience embraces both the academic (e.g. learning, teaching and research experience) and the non-academic (e.g. personal and extra-curricular) aspects of being a UQ student as an integral part of the UQ community.

Work integrated learning (WIL)

Learning experiences that explicitly integrate theory with practice within a purposefully designed curriculum to foreground employability. At UQ, many professional preparation programs have extensive WIL components which may come in the form of: clinical placements for medical and health science-related studies; consultancy projects such as business or environmental science to provide solutions for industry, and projects which engage students in their local communities by making a social or educational contribution; internships with the placement of students in a work environment to undertake authentic study-related work tasks; exposure to work practices through fieldwork, study tours and work shadowing, and activities in simulated workplace settings such as mock clinical wards or courts of law.

Welcome Week Event, Natural Amphitheatre, St Lucia campus



UQ 3x3 SLAM Basketball Tournament



'Get your Geek on' event, e-Sports Room, Connect Week



Connect Week Dance Event, Campbell Place, St Lucia campus





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