



# **STRATEGIC PLAN**

## **2011-2015**

## Vice Chancellor's Message

*Southern Cross University is growing: more students, more world-leading research and deepening connections with our communities. However, we must properly plan for this growth. This is why the Strategic Plan 2011 – 2015 is important. It guides our internal planning processes, the decisions we need to make and the priorities we need to identify.*

Professor Peter Lee FTSE  
Vice Chancellor



## Southern Cross University

Southern Cross University originated from the Lismore Teachers College (1970), later the Northern Rivers College of Advanced Education (1973) and was formally established as an independent university on 1 January, 1994.

Today, Southern Cross University has grown considerably, with students studying on-campus, off-campus, or with one of our educational collaborators in Australia or overseas. We welcome students from more than 80 countries around the world.

We offer a comprehensive range of undergraduate and postgraduate courses across the arts and sciences, and business and law faculties. We focus on delivering professional and contemporary courses supported by high quality, responsive and personalised learning experiences. Many of our students enjoy the flexibility of external study options in a range of courses.

We undertake research in specialised areas, leading the way in plant science, geoscience, tourism, leisure and work, children and young people, gambling education, marine ecology, environmental innovations, coastal biogeochemistry and regional futures.

The University continues to be an active participant in our regions, engaging with our communities for mutual benefit and contributing to a more sustainable future.

## Our campuses

Lismore – comprehensive course offerings and specialist facilities for visual arts and contemporary music, and world-leading research expertise in the environmental sciences.

Gold Coast Tweed – newly consolidated campus (opened in 2010) with expanding offerings across a range of disciplines, including tourism, education, business, law and allied health courses.

Coffs Harbour – part of the Coffs Harbour Education Campus (CHEC), with growing strengths in psychology research and a strong focus on programs leading to professional qualifications of regional relevance. World-class marine science teaching and research facilities are located at the National Marine Science Centre.

The University also operates The Hotel School Sydney.

[www.scu.edu.au/strategicplan](http://www.scu.edu.au/strategicplan)

## Graduate Attributes

Intellectual rigour – a commitment to excellence in all scholarly and intellectual activities, including critical judgement

Creativity – a commitment to achieving imaginative and creative responses to intellectual, professional and social challenges

Ethical understanding and a commitment to the highest ethical standards and sensitivity to moral issues and conflicts

Command of an area of knowledge to enable a smooth transition to professional or other scholarly settings

Lifelong learning – the ability to be responsive to change, to be reflective in practice and to be information literate in order to update one's knowledge through independent and self-directed learning

Effective communication and social skills – the ability to communicate and collaborate in ways that are appropriate in scholarly, professional and social settings

Cultural awareness – a global world view encompassing a cosmopolitan outlook as well as local perspective on social and cultural issues, together with an informed respect for cultural and Indigenous identity



# Vision

Southern Cross University will be recognised for enriching our communities through the excellence of our scholarship and the achievements of our graduates.

# Mission

We equip our students to live a life they value and to be effective global citizens. We do this by creating inspirational and engaged learning experiences by staff who actively practise scholarship.

We extend internationally recognised educational opportunities for our diverse student body, including those from rural and regional communities.

We create and apply knowledge in partnership with our communities in fields that are regionally relevant and globally significant.

# Values

## *Scholarship*

We practise scholarship across our teaching and research activities with intellectual and professional rigour.

## *Innovation*

We draw on the creative talents of our staff, students and stakeholders and their commitment and passion to address the needs of communities.

## *Social Justice*

We advance human rights and are committed to providing opportunities for students and staff in an inclusive, culturally safe environment.

## *Ethical Behaviour*

We act with integrity in an honest, fair, equitable and accountable manner in all our dealings.

## *Sustainable Practice*

We actively pursue practices that develop the social, economic, cultural and environmental sustainability of our communities.

## *Engagement*

We encourage a collaborative, open and transparent culture and engage with our communities through scholarship.

# Strategic Plan Implementation

The Strategic Plan 2011 – 2015 is at the apex of the University's planning cycle, driving the University-wide functional plans and the other operational plans. The Strategic Plan will be implemented by:

- The University-wide plans for Learning and Teaching, and Research and Research Training and the other functional Plans supporting these core priorities.
- The University's commitment to continuous improvement.
- Setting of annual targets to measure progress against the performance indicators.
- The annual formal University review.

Operational plans are developed on a rolling three-year basis and are informed by the Strategic and functional plans.

## Reporting on progress

The Vice Chancellor reports to the University Council yearly on progress against the University-wide key performance indicators (KPIs) and targets.

There is an annual formal review of University performance against the KPIs and targets. This ensures that University Executive and senior managers analyse performance at a work-unit level to maintain a focus on priority areas and to identify areas needing improvement.

The University continues to participate in a range of external benchmarking processes. Examples include the Association of Commonwealth Universities benchmarking program; the Tertiary Education Facilities Management Association (TEFMA) and Sustainability Advantage.

# Goal 1: We will provide inspirational learning experiences for our students through high quality teaching engaged with scholarship.

Objectives	Strategies
<p><b>1</b></p> <p>Provide engaging and distinctive learning experiences to our diverse student body.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement globally relevant and inclusive teaching strategies that value students' diverse ways of knowing and learning.</li> <li>• Provide education experiences that equip students for their roles in work and the community.</li> <li>• Enhance physical and virtual learning spaces to meet the needs of contemporary teaching and learning.</li> <li>• Deliver all courses using converged learning practices that are pedagogically sound and able to accommodate modern lifestyles.</li> <li>• Enhance and enrich student transition to and engagement with university learning and studying.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2</b></p> <p>Deliver contemporary learning centred curricula that promote career and life opportunities for our graduates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement a framework for course and unit curricula design that ensures a better practice approach reflective of SCU's vision, mission and values.</li> <li>• Ensure that the minimum academic standard of all University courses meets or exceeds that required by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency in all aspects.</li> <li>• Ensure curricula are informed by advice from relevant stakeholders and experts.</li> <li>• Assure quality and currency of courses and units through systematic review and renewal processes that embed educational integrity and evidence based practice.</li> </ul>



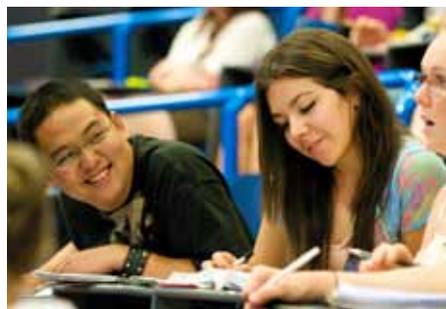
Objectives	Strategies
<p><b>3</b></p> <p>Foster high quality teaching informed by scholarship across all University curricula.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement a Professional Learning Framework for teaching and learning for all academic staff.</li> <li>• Encourage team teaching and peer review as an integral part of teaching and curricula design and delivery.</li> <li>• Guarantee the quality of core learning experiences through agreed University standards.</li> <li>• Focus support services to enhance student learning and effective teaching.</li> </ul>

### Targets

1. Continue to exceed national averages for participation for students from a low socio-economic background.
2. Achieve rates of overall student satisfaction with teaching and learning beyond national average each year.
3. Increase student success.

### Key Performance Indicators

1. Participation rates for students from low SES backgrounds: SCU compared with sector.
2. Rate of student satisfaction with teaching (Good Teaching Scale and Overall Satisfaction items).
3. Success rate of students: equivalent full-time student load (EFTSL) passed.



## Goal 2: We will generate and disseminate research and undertake research training in key areas that have global and regional impact.

Objectives	Strategies
<p><b>1</b></p> <p>Grow research income through the development of collaborative research enterprises with international, national and regional bodies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on improving the University's performance in winning national competitive grants, including joint applications.</li> <li>• Target industry funding by further leveraging this investment through Co-operative Research Centre (CRC) bids, Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage project grants and industry-specific funding.</li> <li>• Grow the size of externally funded research grants, with a focus on positioning a major national research entity at the University.</li> <li>• Take advantage of emerging Commonwealth funding opportunities as they arise.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2</b></p> <p>Improve the quality of research by increasing the number and quality of publications.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide opportunities for professional development and resources to facilitate publication in Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) ranked journals.</li> <li>• Provide assistance for academic staff, early career researchers, doctoral candidates and graduates to develop quality publications.</li> <li>• Establish and maintain an annual program of Professional Development activities aimed at directly increasing National Competitive Grants (NCG) applications, including joint applications.</li> <li>• Improve the alignment of Special Studies Leave with research development goals.</li> <li>• Improve the capture of publications data for reporting purposes.</li> </ul>



<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Strategies</b>
<p><b>3</b></p> <p>Improve Higher Degree Research programs and processes, and increase on-time completion rates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruit quality Higher Degree Research (HDR) students into identified research strengths of the University.</li> <li>• Enhance the quality and range of doctoral degree programs.</li> <li>• Improve retention and completion times for HDR students and continue to improve the quality of final theses.</li> <li>• Enhance the intellectual climate for HDR students and improve student satisfaction with the HDR program.</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for skills and knowledge enhancement of HDR students.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4</b></p> <p>Increase our research capacity and productivity in areas of developing and existing research strengths.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement a human capital development plan for research.</li> <li>• Recruit excellent research staff at all levels of appointment.</li> <li>• Appoint postdoctoral research fellows across the University.</li> <li>• Through leadership, build research capacity in our areas of research expertise.</li> <li>• Encourage and reward research and research training performance by introducing incentives.</li> <li>• Develop and implement quality driven research management processes.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Targets</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase the University's share of National Competitive Grant funding.</li> <li>2. Improve the quality of University publications.</li> <li>3. Increase in the number of Higher Degree completions.</li> </ol>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Key Performance Indicators</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Share of National Competitive Grant funding.</li> <li>2. Number of ERA classified publications (A*, A and B journal publications) per academic full-time equivalent.</li> <li>3. Number of Higher Degree Research Course Completions.</li> </ol>

## Goal 3: We will develop a high performance culture in an environment which encourages collaboration and the free exchange of ideas.

Objectives	Strategies
<p><b>1</b></p> <p>Attract, develop and retain a workforce with the capacity to achieve our strategic goals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create and implement recruitment, development and retention strategies to meet the priorities identified through the annual workforce planning process.</li> <li>• Provide lifelong learning and professional development opportunities for academic and professional staff, irrespective of location.</li> <li>• Grow leadership capacity by providing access to and encouraging participation in targeted programs.</li> <li>• Develop a staff profile that reflects the diversity of the University's students and the general community, including its Indigenous communities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2</b></p> <p>Recognise and reward excellence in teaching, research and service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand the SCU rewards program to further recognise excellence in teaching, research, engagement and service.</li> <li>• Develop and implement a recognition process for excellence in research.</li> <li>• Showcase excellence within the University and promote the achievements of staff, students and alumni to the broader community.</li> <li>• Build the capacity of supervisors to recognise and reward excellence in performance, utilising formal and informal recognition strategies</li> </ul>
<p><b>3</b></p> <p>Engage with our geographic communities and communities of interest for mutual benefit.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define and maintain a set of strategic partnerships with professions, industry and education providers.</li> <li>• Foster positive relationships with government.</li> <li>• Encourage and support participation by staff in activities associated with their professions.</li> <li>• Strengthen and leverage links with industry through advisory boards and consultancy panels.</li> <li>• Expand secondary school outreach and TAFE/VET pathways to improve articulation.</li> <li>• Develop closer working relationships with colleagues in the TAFE/ VET sector and optimise the transition of TAFE/VET students to the University.</li> <li>• Grow industry and community-based philanthropy in support of the University's strategic priorities.</li> </ul>

## Objectives

## Strategies

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Foster an environment of collaboration, connectivity and informed enquiry, across and beyond the University.

- Encourage the free exchange of ideas and the University's role as a catalyst for innovation and new thinking.
- Support individuals, schools and research centres to achieve connectivity with internal and external collaborators.
- Develop a rich program of engagement with our alumni.

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Improve our performance as a learning organisation, committed to quality assurance.

- Refine and embed the annual operational unit planning process as the means of aligning strategic planning and budget.
- Align staff performance planning, management, development and review with strategic and operational goals.
- Successfully manage significant change, through appropriate strategies and communication.
- Ensure major strategic projects achieve stated outcomes, are implemented to agreed timelines and undergo post implementation review.
- Share learning across the University, promoting excellence in practice.
- Ensure analysis and planning is evidence-based.

### Targets

1. Increase organisational performance.
2. Enhance the esteem of the University as an employer.

### Key Performance Indicators

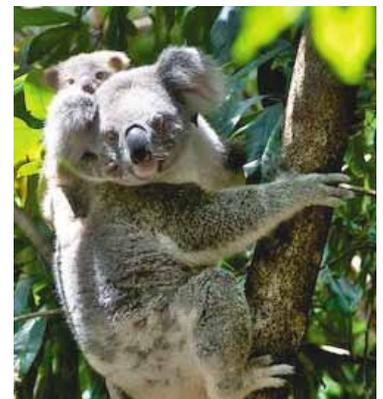
1. Level of staff engagement.
2. Level of staff progress.
3. Applicant interest per vacancy compared to sector benchmark.



Photo: Photocall Image Management

## Goal 4: We will enhance our performance in a sustainable and responsible manner.

<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Strategies</i>
<p><b>1</b></p> <p>Increase student load while maintaining course quality, student engagement and sustainability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Actively pursue sustainable growth.</li><li>• Embed a commitment to the triple-bottom line to enhance the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the University.</li><li>• Deliver high quality and relevant courses in demand by students and the professions.</li><li>• Minimise the duplication of unit offerings across the University.</li><li>• Develop a coordinated and cohesive institutional approach to addressing student retention.</li><li>• Enhance social inclusion practices to support the University's diverse student profile.</li></ul>
<p><b>2</b></p> <p>Strengthen the planning and management of the University's resources and infrastructure in supporting the core activities of teaching and research.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improve productivity and efficiency in relation to financial activities.</li><li>• Ensure more effective and transparent utilisation of land and infrastructure.</li><li>• Integrate sustainable development practices in the planning and construction of new buildings and major refurbishments.</li><li>• Investigate and analyse financial options for major new investments.</li><li>• Diversify income generation activities.</li></ul>



<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Strategies</i>
<p><b>3</b></p> <p>Optimise a positive student experience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure equitable access for students to meaningful support services, IT and infrastructure regardless of location and mode of delivery.</li> <li>• Provide appropriate mechanisms for student feedback and input on matters affecting them.</li> <li>• Embed a student careers strategy in University practice and learning.</li> <li>• Foster a responsive and personalised service culture across the University.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4</b></p> <p>Strengthen the commitment to environmental sustainability principles across University functions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate environmental sustainability into plans, process and reviews.</li> <li>• Enhance energy efficiency usage and supply from renewable sources.</li> <li>• Encourage more sustainable transport use, including improved fuel efficiency of the University vehicle fleet.</li> <li>• Ensure the natural habitat across the University campuses is maintained and improved.</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Targets</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Grow student load.</li> <li>2. Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions.</li> <li>3. Maintain balanced budget result.</li> </ol>	<p><b><i>Key Performance Indicators</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Enrolments over (under) annual CGS target.</li> <li>2. Amount of greenhouse gas emissions per equivalent full-time student load (EFTSL).</li> <li>3. Balanced budget (net of capital and extraordinary items).</li> </ol>



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