

Unit Submission results



KEY FINDINGS

- In Unit Submissions prepared as part of the Green Paper consultation process, UQ Staff (Organisational Units) were most likely to indicate support for the following five strategies: *Assessment Frameworks*; *WIL Partnerships*; *Multi-Functional Spaces*; *New Staff Capabilities*; and *Blended Learning*. There was, however, substantial diversity in unit viewpoints.
- Although *Assessment Frameworks* was prioritised as a focus area for the UQ Student Strategy, UQ Staff have mixed feelings about the viability of this strategy as set out in the Green Paper. UQ Staff see that enabling technologies present opportunities for improving assessment practices but require significant investment, and program-level assessment frameworks are not universally applicable to all disciplines.
- UQ Staff are consistent in valuing *WIL Partnerships* but see there are insufficient WIL placements available for UQ students and higher education students more broadly. Building partnerships with industry and government will require centrally coordinated engagement by the University.
- UQ Staff see that *Multi-Functional Spaces* will optimise the student learning experience. They generally view current UQ facilities favourably and suggest that additional funding and central oversight will be required to maintain and enhance UQ campuses.
- UQ Staff recommend investing in *New Staffing Capabilities* in order to maintain UQ's position as a leading Australian university. In implementing the *New Staffing Capabilities Strategy*, consideration should be given to providing staff with the time to innovate and improving opportunities for teaching training at UQ.
- *Blended Learning* is viewed by UQ Staff as an essential characteristic of modern universities. It reflects best practice, but it may be characterised differently across disciplines and university-wide implementation will require new skills and increased capacity across UQ staff.
- *Learning Analytics*, and *Vibrant Ecosystems* are valued but seen as lower order priorities by UQ organisational units.
- Unit Submissions communicated some opposition to implementation of the *Year-Round Calendar* and *Signature Learning* strategies in the Green Paper.
- Most submissions were prepared by units with a teaching focus, i.e. within UQ Schools and Faculties (n=38 of 54 submissions) and the key findings are shaped by their viewpoints. Where feedback from central units differed from the overall results was in relation to *Vibrant Ecosystems* as a strategy. This is a priority area from the perspective of central units yet it emerges as less important in the collective UQ Staff Voice across all Unit Submissions.

This chapter sets out the key findings from written submissions on the Green Paper as prepared by 54 UQ organisational units between 22 October and 11 December 2015. Responses are from a broad range of organisational units including schools, central units, and specific portfolios, projects and sections within units (see Appendix II for list of participating units). Taken as a whole, the submissions are intended to provide the indicative voice of UQ Staff (Organisational Units).

UQ organisational units were invited to complete a template feedback form prompting them to respond to the 19 strategies set out in the Green Paper. In the context of the Unit Submission consultation process, most respondents (n=38):

- prioritised their Top 5 Strategies; and
- identified their Lowest 3 Strategies.

As in the Open Online Forum consultation process, there are similar inconsistencies in the Unit Submission data. Not all respondents identified a total of five priority strategies or three lower priority strategies. Some respondents did not identify any priorities at all, preferring to provide general feedback on the Green Paper, and other respondents did not provide reasons for their choices. Some respondents provided feedback and prioritised the Green Paper's nine Challenges instead. The resulting analysis is broadly indicative of total respondent feedback, noting variability in respondent engagement with all aspects of the Unit Submission template.

Respondents to the Unit Submission consultation were asked to nominate their priority strategies from the 19 outlined in the Green Paper. The strategies were not ranked in order of priority. The total nominations for each strategy have been collated to demonstrate the amount of relative support for implementation, and this feedback is intended to help inform the most desirable focus areas for future activity by UQ.

Respondents also nominated their three least important strategies, indicating areas that hold lesser value for the key stakeholder groups. These strategies were variously seen as non-essential or lower order priorities by respondents.

This chapter:

1. Identifies those strategies most commonly identified as Top 5 Strategies and Lowest 3 Strategies by Unit respondents (Strategies), and considers why they have been selected, where relevant data is available (including unstructured responses where applicable)
2. Summarises feedback from Unit Submissions that identified priority challenges, rather than Strategies (Challenges)
3. Summarises the vision for the UQ student experience as conceptualised by Unit participants in their general comments submitted online (Future Vision).

UQ Staff (Organisational Units): What are their top priority strategies and why?

There were a total of 54 UQ organisational units that engaged through the Unit Submission consultation:

- 38 units selected top priority strategies
- 10 units selected top priority challenges
- 5 units provided open comments only.

This section focuses on the top priority strategies as nominated by 38 UQ units.

Every strategy received at least one nomination as a top priority (161 total nominations from 38 respondent units). This suggests that all of the Green Paper strategies have some relevance in enhancing the UQ student experience.

Figure 1 Priority strategies for enhancing the UQ student experience - UQ Units – total nominations

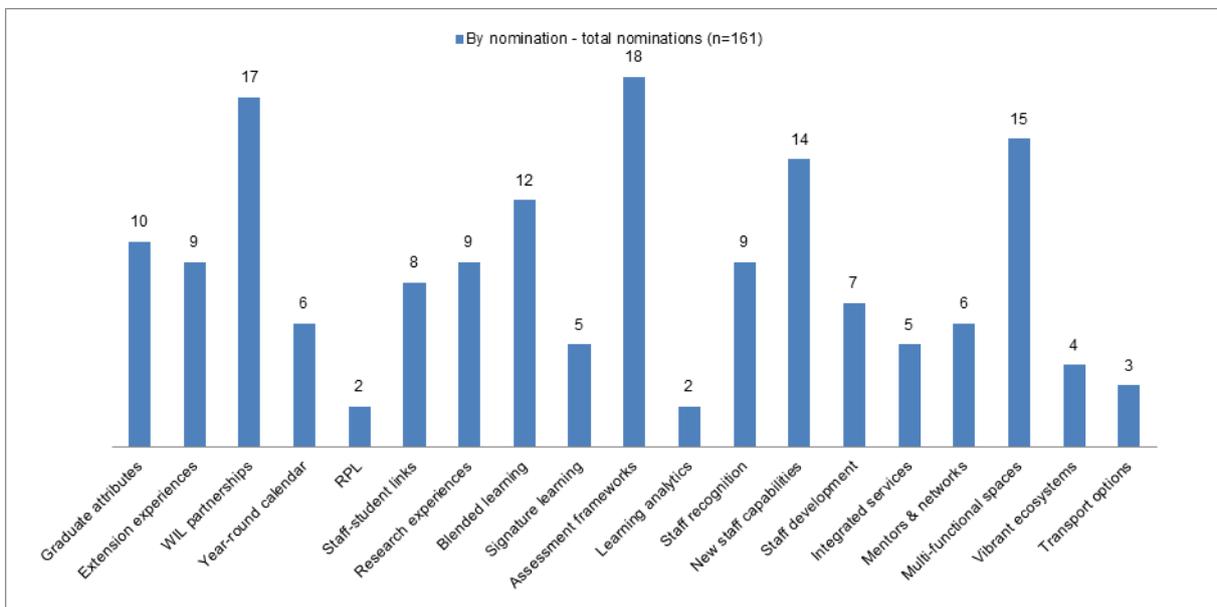
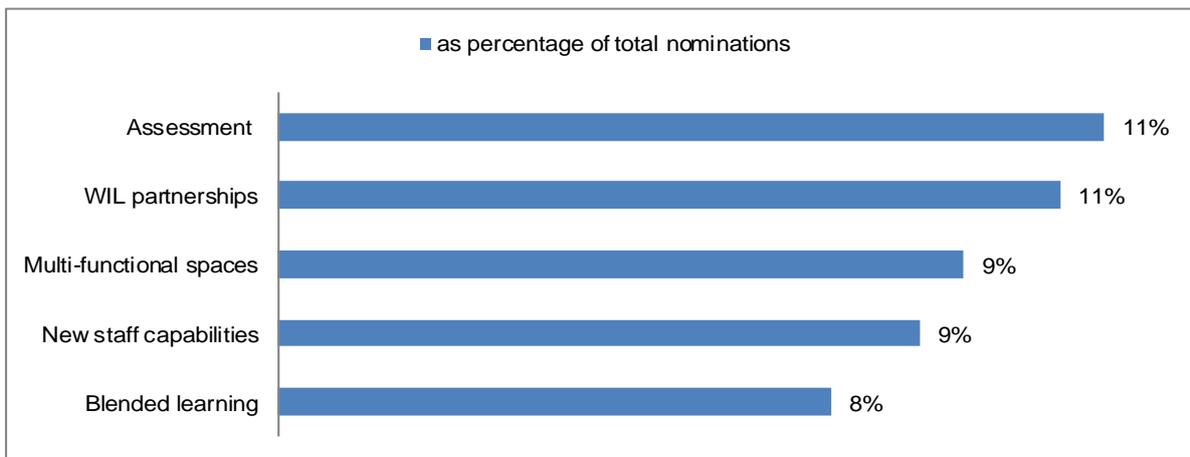


Figure 2 Priority strategies for enhancing the UQ student experience - UQ Units – percentage of total nominations



The five strategies that received the most nominations from UQ Unit respondents were:

1. *Assessment Frameworks* (18 nominations, 11.2%)
2. *WIL Partnerships* (17 nominations, 10.6%)
3. *Multi-Functional Spaces* (15 nominations, 9.3%)
4. *New Staff Capabilities* (14 nominations, 8.7%)
5. *Blended Learning* (12 nominations, 7.5%)

Thirty-one of the 38 units that responded to this consultation phase with their top priority strategies were schools or faculties (82%), making the overall findings broadly indicative of their collective viewpoints. Summary analysis of the Unit Submissions from the other seven central units shows some differences in their perspectives.

Their top priority strategy is *Vibrant Ecosystems* (4 nominations). This seems to reflect the importance these units place on centrally supporting the broader student experience beyond teaching alone. By contrast, *Vibrant Ecosystems* is a less important strategy across all Unit Submissions.

Central units did not provide sufficient nominations on their lowest priority strategies to enable meaningful analysis.

1. ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORKS: Create program-level assessment frameworks that stipulate meaningful, authentic tasks that include quality and timely two-way feedback mechanisms that are supported by enabling technologies

Eighteen out of 38 organisational units value *Assessment Frameworks* as an area of focus in developing the UQ Student Strategy. This strategy from the Green Paper received 11% of nominations as a top priority.

Assessment is integral to student learning and engagement

UQ Staff (Organisational Units) agree that assessment is important in enhancing the UQ student experience for a range of reasons relating to engagement and future employability:

- Assessment “drives learning” and motivates students, and is therefore integral to a fulfilling and outcome-focused student experience

*“Exciting assessment not only encourages learning (and particularly employment-ready learning opportunities) but may also redress attrition and reduce plagiarism”
(Unit Submission)*

- A lack of meaningful feedback may be a reason for student disengagement and disenfranchisement with higher education
- “Authentic” assessment aligns theory and practice by exposing students to real world issues and problems within their courses, embedding learning and helping make students more employable.

“Assessment enables the students to demonstrate knowledge and understanding relevant to their practice disciplines. As students are practicing in diverse and challenging environments, assessment is required that enables them to develop skills to be safe and effective practitioners on completion of their degree. Students develop knowledge and skills incrementally across the course and so require opportunities for formative feedback both within and across courses” (School of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Work, Unit Submission)

“Assessment is used to drive learning, but the learning MUST be relevant and applicable to the career and not just as a stimulus to memorise. Students need to interact with employers and understand what makes a successful employee and these features must be incorporated into assessment tasks” (Unit Submission)

With regard to authentic assessment, some respondents encouraged consideration of the following points in the development and delivery of authentic tasks:

- “Pseudo-authenticity” can turn students off
- Students need to have learned the necessary background before engaging in authentic experiences to avoid “shallow” experiences
- Feedback can be much slower with more authentic tasks, which are likely more complex.

UQ Staff (Organisational Units) also indicate that assessment should not be seen as a standalone priority but should be discussed alongside curriculum and pedagogy.

UQ has significant scope to improve its assessment practices

There was broad agreement amongst respondents that assessment and feedback are areas where UQ is “weak”.

“Consistency and quality of assessment has been identified by the school student consultative committee and by staff as an issue for the school” (Unit Submission)

In Unit Submissions, however, UQ Staff also identified some barriers to improving student assessment through the implementation of the Assessment Frameworks strategy:

- Effective assessment and feedback is challenging in large classes and needs to be approached differently, particularly during the first year, as poor feedback can lead to student disengagement

“Increasing class sizes have made traditional methods for feedback logistically difficult. Academics have struggled adapting emerging digital technologies to providing meaningful feedback to students” (Unit Submission)

- Assessment is a challenging area for academic staff and they are not appropriately supported or trained to deliver or innovate for effective assessment methodologies. Innovation in this area is time-consuming and resource-intensive.

Enabling technologies present opportunities but require significant investment

In particular, UQ Staff (Organisational Units) consider there are prerequisite capabilities to UQ better using enabling technologies as recommended in the Green Paper to improve assessment practice:

- Assessment and feedback are resource intensive and its quality and approach are constrained by staffing levels. The use of e-feedback is unlikely to provide students with task-specific feedback, one respondent noted

“Without a significant increase in the time invested to provide feedback during semester, students will remain dissatisfied with their courses and programs. This means written feedback on individual student work” (Unit Submission)

- Schools cannot implement technology enabled program level assessment developments and changes in the absence of a University-wide framework.

“A University-wide framework is required as the School does not have the technological expertise to develop technology enabled feedback on its own” (Unit Submission)

In Unit Submissions, some UQ Staff identified the challenge of implementing appropriate probity checks to ensure that students are undertaking their own assessments if enabling technologies are used more extensively. To this end, there was support for continuing mid-semester examinations.

“We need to ensure that there is a sufficient amount of identity-verified assessment in each course, so that we are confident in assigning grades” (Unit Submission)

By contrast, one unit noted that identity-verified assessments can limit the ability of staff to embrace new and innovative approaches to assessment.

Respondents also see that systems need to be put in place for technological support of assessment feedback, including two-way feedback, and this might involve proprietary systems or in-house custom systems depending on needs and resource constraints.

“With UQ’s large class sizes driving academic workloads ever upwards, investing in technologies that assist academics with marking and delivering feedback to students may be an option” (Unit Submission)

Program-level assessment frameworks have mixed value

There was some variation in opinion regarding program level frameworks.

Some respondents see program-level frameworks for assessment and outcomes as “critical” to identifying areas for improving assessment and ensuring students reach UQ’s standards and attributes on graduation.

"It is a travesty that programs do not have outcomes/assessment frameworks. This is a fundamental step in the curriculum development process. Assessment should be authentic and relevant and should attempt to bridge the gap between the learning context and the context in which the learning is applied"
(Unit Submission)

Other respondents feel that assessment and feedback need to be specific to the task and program-level frameworks are not necessary. One respondent articulated concern about the drive towards mandating Identity Verified Assessment Hurdles (IVAH) tasks, "which have the potential to restrict the kinds of assessment open to academics" (Unit Submission). Others advocate greater flexibility and authority for schools to shape their own assessment, feedback and other priorities according to what best works for their student cohort and best enhances teaching.

Implementation requires additional funding, staff and development support

UQ Staff (Organisational Units) acknowledge the significant resource requirements associated with developing assessment frameworks across the University. They encourage engagement by relevant faculties and institutes with academic and teaching staff as well as independent assessment and pedagogical experts who can offer advice on best practice, and they suggest piloting a framework to deliver feedback using enabling technologies.

The most commonly cited implementation requirements for the *Assessment Frameworks Strategy* are:

- Additional funding for the development of quality assessment methods including authentic assessments and effective online systems

"In general, authentic assessment tasks are more expensive to run and mark than others such as [Multiple Choice Question] exams - especially in the face of growing student numbers"
(Unit Submission)

- Additional staff to meet the workload associated with enhanced assessment practices, including the time required to reflect, review and innovate, to provide more comprehensive feedback, and to deliver web-based support

"Finding opportunities where students can practice and demonstrate skills is becoming more difficult with increasing student numbers. In order to undertake audits and then to develop any new learning strategies will require additional resources in the form of casual or contract staff. We offer more than 90 courses across 3 semesters and to review all, allowing 4 hrs per course would be 360 hours of support in addition to current staff time" (Unit Submission)

- Staff training and development activities to enable staff to deliver best practice in assessment for their discipline and student cohort, such as:
 - Workshops to share best practice amongst UQ staff
 - Workshops run by experts on assessment and feedback, including in e-assessment
 - Tailored staff development sessions, focusing on assessment design at the program level and at the individual level to reduce plagiarism risks
 - Peer feedback on the appropriateness of assessment and the evaluation of tasks, including enhanced engagement with ITaLI as a university-wide resource.

Other general suggestions to support implementation

- Recognise the importance of assessment and feedback tasks and innovation and the assignment of appropriate time to this area facilitating a culture change in UQ
- Promote both summative and formative forms of assessment, which can be more quickly marked while still assessing the learning outcomes
- Mandate that electronic course profiles contain the feedback regime applicable to the course
- Increase the role of continuous assessments
- Develop online test banks with detailed explanations of why the answer is correct, and the others are wrong
- Change tutorials and Peer-Assisted Study Sessions (PASS) to focus on active learning
- Task the Teaching and Learning Committee and other interested staff with overseeing the implementation of this strategy
- Develop a mechanism for incorporating constructive student feedback on assessment
- Facilitate effective engagement with employers and alumni about what they require from a UQ graduate.

"If UQ wishes its graduates to be highly sought after, then it needs to consider what employers are looking for and also to incorporate an assessment of competence from an employer, either following an industry placement or using potential employers and alumni to both mentor and assess students in realistic scenarios" (Unit Submission)

2. WIL PARTNERSHIPS: Build significant industry and government partnerships that strengthen and expand opportunities for authentic WIL experiences across all programs

Building partnerships with industry and partnerships to strengthen WIL experiences received 17 nominations as a top priority strategy, based on a range of reasons.

WIL makes students more employable and bridges the gap between theory and practice

Making sure UQ students are job ready was the most frequently mentioned reason why building partnerships is a top priority strategy. UQ Staff (Organisational Units) consider that:

- Work integrated learning helps students gain professional skills and experience at tackling real world problems effectively and safely and makes them more attractive to employers
- Employability is the key reason for students undertaking study and they increasingly select their study programs based on this, particularly in view of the rising costs of study

"Students will increasingly have to adopt a value for money perspective, where anticipated costs of university education are weighed against anticipated returns in the labour market. This is confirmed by survey data that suggests that programs perceived to lack work relevance, and perceived mismatches between what a program appears to deliver and the careers that students envisage are among the leading reasons that UQ students leave the university" (Unit Submission)

- The exposure to the world outside the University builds students' confidence and alleviates any anxiety they may have about what to expect from their future profession.

"Students undertaking food science majors need to understand how to translate their theory to practice. Companies want experience and work integrated learning provides that and also provides industry linkages to teaching staff to enable industry priorities to feed into curriculum"
(Unit Submission)

WIL will help maintain UQ's position as a leading university and it enhances student engagement

Overall, UQ Staff (Organisational Units) see it as "imperative" to address this strategy if UQ is to remain competitive and continue to attract and retain talented students.

"Being able to implement WIL and to advertise that all students will get the opportunity to undertake industry experience which will assist them in being more employable would offset some of the rhetoric espoused by our closest competitor. WIL would increase the attractiveness of the programs to prospective students, their parents and their career teachers who increasingly view employability as a high priority when choosing university programs" (Unit Submission)

"In an increasingly competitive environment, it is imperative to address this concern. The University might not aspire to QUT's claim of being a university for the real world, but if we emphasise, in a narrow way, a focus on theory and research at the expense of application or practice, we risk falling behind as the ivory tower" (Unit Submission)

Some units referred to how engaging with real life problems helped students more thoroughly engage with the theory. WIL also helps embed knowledge.

"What is needed is learning integrated into real-world experiences, either through formal or informal professional practice opportunities or having guest/conjoint staff from industry able to provide learning through work. We think that genuine learning centred around real life work issues and problems enhance the overall learning experience" (Unit Submission)

There are insufficient WIL placements available for students

Several units believe there are currently not sufficient numbers of work-based placements on offer for UQ students, and for university students more broadly. One respondent said it would be a challenge to increase placements given competition locally with two other universities, and others suggested UQ looks to international partners or pay for placements like some other institutions.

"Most [students] undertake the professionally required work experience outside of any course and students must source the work experience themselves. The quality of the experience can be highly variable" (Unit Submission)

"To enable the School to meet the challenge of ensuring graduates are not only ready for work but highly sought after employees, there is a need to develop a range of placement opportunities that meet the challenges of health care in the 21st century ... This means we need to access more community based

placements that offer interdisciplinary student experience, equipping students to work collaboratively across disciplines prior to registration” (Unit Submission)

Implementation requires centrally coordinated engagement with industry and government

There was some discussion amongst organisational units about how they currently aim to deliver WIL, with some units seeing this as a compulsory component of student learning.

UQ Staff (Organisational Units) broadly identified more funding and additional staff as essential to strategy implementation. Of note was that a number of organisational units consider that UQ “as an entity” should centrally lead, coordinate, and develop a formalised, systematic approach to partnership development and management and finding student work placements.

- This could include the development of centralised software to facilitate the search and allocation of placements University-wide, which would help ensure multiple UQ units do not contact the same employers
- It might require the provision of WIL opportunities in every program of study
- UQ could work across programs to engage with industry and other employers for the purpose of:
 - Developing programs, courses, and assessment
 - Delivering courses
 - Providing real work contexts for course delivery and work experience opportunities
 - Developing virtual internships through the provision of case studies involving real challenges.

“Implement a coordinated approach and relationship management procedure to international industry engagement to provide experiences for international and domestic students. Support this with an effective careers staff to student ratio - currently UQ has the lowest careers staff to student ration in the G8, by a long way” (Unit Submission)

Other general suggestions to support implementation

- Consider a pilot of funding for faculties to manage the process of developing partnerships governments in the context of centrally developed and evolving performance targets
- Set up and maintain a centrally coordinated network of faculty/discipline representatives working to develop industry partnerships to exchange experiences
- Explicitly include the non-government organisation and community sector
- Invest in high fidelity equipment in one location “to enable students to undertake more complex clinical scenarios and improve student experience by creating a sense of belonging to UQ” (Unit Submission)
- Harness the potential of UQ Alumni to help find and offer work placements
- Assign and invest in a staff member within faculties to manage partnerships or employ industry placements officers
- Review Grade Point Average prerequisites for WIL

- Reward research partnerships with industry
- Provide students with opportunities to showcase their placements and their learning through workshops and course presentations
- Deliver leadership development skills workshops for students to prepare and support them through their placements
- Implement quality controls to monitor these partnerships.

3. MULTI-FUNCTIONAL SPACES: Develop open and engaging, multifunctional spaces and places across campus for formal and informal learning, relaxation and rest, and socialising

Multi-functional Spaces received 15 nominations (9.3%) from the 38 organisational units who prioritised strategies. The ideas discussed by UQ Staff (Organisational Units) in relation to this strategy had notable crossover with those mentioned in the *Vibrant Ecosystems* Strategy.

Multi-functional spaces optimise student learning experience

UQ Staff (Organisational Units) feel this strategy will optimise the learning experience for UQ students in a number of ways:

- It draws students to spend time at UQ campuses, thereby encouraging them to attend classes and lectures

“Students are less and less attending classes, and having an engaging campus where there is opportunity to meet and study may encourage more engagement in the education process by students. Interviewing our students has shown that those that attend the campus for lectures do better in all assessment tasks”
(Unit Submission)

“It is essential that we give students a real reason to come onto campus. While they are on campus, they need go have good and meaningful experiences. There should be well resourced common rooms for students that allow them to function in teams or individuals (e.g. Engineering First Year Learning Centre)”
(Unit Submission)

“Providing a space for students to create a sense of community/shared identity is essential for learning. Also, more needs to be done to attract students to campus and to keep them here. One of the core issues confronting teaching staff is finding ways to address the dwindling lack of attendance at lectures and tutorials without relying on external incentives (i.e. marks). Providing multiple reasons for students to be on campus aside from class attendance is pivotal to this” (Unit Submission)

- The experience of international students at UQ would be improved. Overseas students frequently come from cities open 24/7 and by attracting them to a hub, which meets their personal and individual needs, their sense of belonging and community would be developed
- It makes better use of under-utilised campus space and facilities
- It facilitates the building of both internal and external partnerships and networks.
- It helps attract students who rarely have to attend campus or have unsocial hours (e.g. nursing students) and would make them feel more connected to the UQ community.

“The establishment of new multi-functional environments on campus creates the possibility of engaging and retaining the wide range of students enrolled at UQ since students are more likely to feel a sense of belonging and connection in a university when there are a range of spaces and places in which to work and learn” (Unit Submission)

One unit felt that students need more learning spaces, not social spaces, with the former often being used socially anyway. They felt these spaces can be multi-functional, but that they need to be a home for a defined cohort of students and not general use.

Multi-functional spaces may have added value for some disciplines and student cohorts specifically, including improving language acquisition for language students:

“Language learning is about communication and it requires people to get together, to talk, communicate, share ideas, learn from each other. Whilst much can be done in the online environment, it is widely accepted in the literature in the field that classroom and face to face interactions are vital for success in language acquisition. Language students realise this, come to class more than in many other areas of the University and, as a result, form stronger learning cohorts” (Unit Submission)

On-site engagement with the University – encouraged by multi-functional spaces - also facilitates a peer-peer learning environment.

“Change requires a change in student attitude to learning, away from assessment focused learning and a generally low level of time on task, to a critical thinking approach focused on problem solving at course level and within disciplines. Learning space is critical to this because this enables continuous study, long term project work, and a peer-learning environment that demonstrates the commitment needed to achieve at the top level” (Unit Submission)

Implementation requires additional funding and central oversight

Consistent with the comments on strategy implementation more broadly, UQ Staff (Organisational Units) see a need for additional funding to support *Multi-Functional Spaces* to:

- Redevelop and fit-out multi-functional spaces, including the installation of appropriate technologies and equipment within those spaces
- Fund dedicated teams responsible for transforming teaching and learning spaces
- Support staff reward structures for staff to implement this strategy and transform these spaces.

They also advocate central coordination and oversight of this strategy to:

- Ensure a holistic UQ approach to sufficient, consistent and flexible learning spaces
- Oversee minimum standards
- Lead and coordinate a master plan exercise (GPEM's planning program could work with Architecture and undertake student-led design and planning). This could be a course, a design competition or a research project in planning or architecture to redesign the space
- Review and prioritise the use of university space. This may mean changes to spaces currently assigned for other uses or being able to use space for multiple functions
- Implement UQ-wide goals or set a strategic priority on space allocated to informal learning spaces.

Other general suggestions to support implementation

UQ Staff (Organisational Unit) respondents also mentioned the following suggestions to implement and support the strategy of Multi-Functional Spaces. These suggestions have significant overlap with the Vibrant Ecosystems strategy, sharing the goal of attracting students to campus and encouraging them to remain there longer:

- Increase student housing on campus
- Redevelop the student union complex
- Attract students to campus through supporting more opportunities for students to work part-time there
- Build a supermarket on campus
- Work with the Student Council to organise events that promote a UQ identity and facilitate a whole school approach to orientation and graduation events
- Consider how to bring students to St Lucia from clinical sites for learning opportunities
- Provide a stronger security presence for student safety after hours
- Provide more and more economical parking options.

4. INVEST IN STAFFING: Invest in new staffing capacity and capabilities – including innovative educational technologies and learning design – to complement and support existing expertise

Invest in Staffing was selected by 14 of the 38 organisational units to be a top priority challenge. Most discussion about this strategy centred on how to address and implement it, rather than why it was considered important. However, the reasons for its importance provided by units were directly linked to the solutions they identified.

Investing in staffing capabilities maintains UQ's position as a leading institution

Broadly speaking, UQ Staff (Organisational Units) see investing in new staffing capacity and capabilities as essential to maintaining a progressive, innovative, and professional approach to teaching in the 21st century. Students are changing the way they learn and UQ must engage with students and accommodate these changes. The implementation of this strategy is seen as underpinning efforts to meet the other challenges set out in the Green Paper.

Increased staff capacity provides staff with the time to innovate

UQ Staff (Organisational Units) see that limited existing staff capacity and growing student numbers mean staff do not have the time to innovate and acquire new skills. Some units cited previous attempts to invest in new staffing capacity and capabilities as falling short. For example, one respondent noted a lack of administrative and technical support for Teaching Focused staff, which prevents them from creating, implementing and evaluating the impacts of interventions on student learning outcomes.

"Innovative T&L practice requires champions and good supporting staff. The pressure of publishing, getting industrial and community engagement and raising research grants etc. inevitably dilute the time and energy of Teaching & Research (T&R) staff on such matters" (School of Economics, Unit Submission)

"There is a widening divide between full time academic staff, who are responsible for courses, and casual academic tutors who are responsible for much of the face-to-face contact in teaching. Both sides feel overworked and overextended which would suggest there needs to be a new staffing position developed that sits between tutors and course coordinators" (Unit Submission)

Across disciplines, UQ Staff see a need for increased professional and specialist staff capacity in a range of roles, and this might involve developing new roles with discipline, pedagogical and/or educational technology expertise. The roles cited in Unit Submissions include:

- Dedicated teaching and learning support staff, i.e. to assist tutors, evaluate teaching
- Specialist teaching staff
- Consistent course teachers and/or coordinators
- Digital specialists
- Research technicians
- Educational and curriculum designers
- Tutorial fellows – reintroduced role
- Indigenous education specialists.

"New staff with both educational technology skills and discipline expertise would be a valuable addition to our teaching staff. In addition to improving our use of technology in education, such staff could play a much needed role interacting with both academic staff and students, by offering a more comprehensive tutorial program and assisting with the provision of detailed and authentic feedback to students"
(Unit Submission)

"Ensure each Faculty has an appropriate professional staff support team, dedicated to teaching and learning. While ITaLI provides excellent support, and this centralised support should continue, there are issues of capacity. The University could extend ITaLI's capacity or assist further with provision of local support" (Unit Submission)

There is not currently enough teaching training at UQ

UQ Staff (Organisational Units) observed that not enough teaching training is offered at UQ to equip UQ academic staff to communicate their knowledge and empower students through learning.

"Academic staff are limited in their ability to transform curricula and require appropriate training and access to learning 'specialists' to translate ideas into reality" (Unit Submission)

"Most academic staff at UQ have no formal teaching qualification and the excellent results we achieve are often through sheer hard work and dedication rather than a foundation in pedagogical know how"
(Unit Submission)

UQ Staff (Organisational Units) see that all teaching staff need to be supported to better utilise innovative education approaches and technologies. They suggest:

- Timely and continuous training delivery, to keep up-to-date with changing methods and UQ workforce changes
- Provision of a formal teaching qualification or a new improved Graduate Diploma that targets both technologically innovative teaching platforms and strengthens face-to-face learning opportunities, for completion before teaching duties commence or as soon as possible for existing staff
- Developing staff cultural competency in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander matters.

Implementation needs to be centrally coordinated

UQ Staff (Organisational Units) suggest reinstating central funding for the development of local programs to build new staffing capabilities.

"Perhaps a central program, or resources, to develop a set of local programs even at the faculty level or mix of both might be a useful step forward" (Unit Submission)

The strategy should be delivered by a central support service such as ITaLI, and be appropriately resourced to assist units to deliver a more unified approach. It was noted that targeted capability development areas (e.g. Indigenous cultural competency) need to be progressed across the University and not just within key portfolios.

UQ Staff (Organisational Units) also acknowledge the need to incentivise and recognise teaching development and excellence in order to increase staff capabilities, and this feedback is consistent with the Staff Recognition strategy.

5. BLENDED LEARNING: Incorporate best-practice blended pedagogies across every program

Twelve organisational units prioritise incorporating Blended Learning across every program (7.5% of total nominations).

"[...] digital literacies are central to best-practice blended learning pedagogies both for teaching staff in the development and delivery of high quality learning programs and for students as self-directed, active learners. UQ must maximise its investment in high quality academic resources, in diverse media, by ensuring smooth integration within the eLearning platforms and ensuring that eResources become part of the learning ecosystem. UQ must ensure staff have the interest, motivation and opportunities to develop their digital literacy skills (Unit Submission).

Blended learning is an essential characteristic of modern universities

UQ Staff (Organisational Units) indicate that UQ has existing strengths in this area, and that Blended Learning better engages students and accommodates their diverse and evolving needs and expectations in the digital age.

"Providing best-practice, discipline-specific pedagogy that caters to the whole student cohort, of varying expectations and abilities, is challenging but vital in order to produce high quality graduates, improve student satisfaction and maintain our international reputation"
(Unit Submission)

"If UQ is going to continue to be primarily a face-to-face (f2f) provider of education, it cannot continue with the pedagogies of old. Technology and online learning has expanded across the education sector and there is now an expectation from students that there is at least some level of technology incorporated within courses (Unit Submission)

Broader implementation requires new skills and increased capacity

Consistent with New Staff Capabilities as a strategy, extending blended learning at UQ will require that University teaching staff have relevant skills and capacity. Respondents say staff need time and professional development support to familiarise themselves with new blended learning techniques, and to introduce them into their own courses.

"Staff would need blended learning experts embedded within the School to support this strategy, with expert advice and services supplemented by staff training and professional development in blended learning. Staff need the time to complete this professional development and implementation of these technologies, such that workloads are shifted rather than this strategy adding to workload"
(Unit Submission)

UQ Staff (Organisational Units) suggest:

- Engaging and employing expert staff to develop resources from local ideas and provide expert knowledge
- Appointing additional Faculty-based professional staff to support teaching staff in the incorporation of blended learning pedagogies and encourage uptake across UQ
- Appointing additional teaching assistants to help with additional workload for planning, design and implementation.

Blended learning reflects best practice, but may be different across disciplines

UQ Staff (Organisational Units) also suggest investing in a university-wide effort to determine the best practice pedagogies in each program in UQ. Best practice varies across disciplines but there are opportunities to learn from other areas of the university, through collaborative projects and shared ideas.

"We need to identify best-practice pedagogy within each discipline, recognising that discipline norms vary. These best-practice ideas need to be applied in teaching the key content of each discipline, ensuring that student achievement is assessed properly and that academic standards are maintained. In acknowledgment of the fact that a significant number of students do not attend class, we must re-engage these students by offering face-to-face teaching that is more valued than the traditional lecture. Such an approach can be supported with modern on-line technologies that add value to the in-class learning experience"
(Unit Submission)

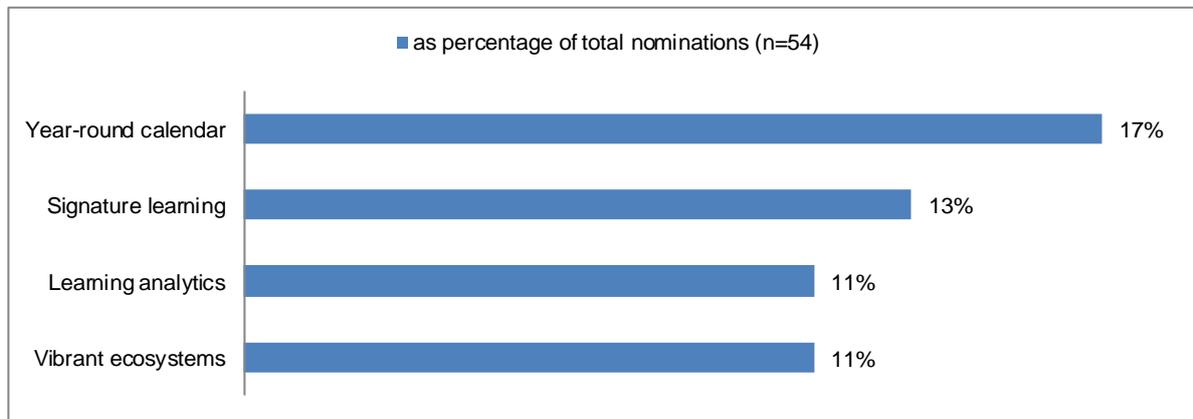
Depending on the nature of best practice, the investment required for implementation may vary.

"We undertake constant review of pedagogies now, so it may be that any changes could be relatively cost neutral. However, if there was a large move toward on-line (although our students report they want more contact) then resources would be required"
(Unit Submission)

UQ Staff (Organisational Units): What are their lowest priority strategies and why?

A total of 25 Unit Submissions specified less important strategies for implementation.

Figure 3 Less important strategies for enhancing the UQ student experience – UQ Students - percentage of total nominations



Some units were strongly opposed to a year-round calendar

- Some programs cannot be delivered in intensive or ad hoc blocks (e.g. School of Music)
- It is seen as potentially lead to staff burn-out, with some courses having only one staff expert (e.g. School of Human Movement and Nutrition Sciences)
- It will prevent improvements and upgrading of specialised rooms, which is typically undertaken between semesters
- Summer community engagement activities will be detrimentally affected
- Vacation periods are used by professional schools as periods to undertake work placements, professional experience and international programs (e.g. School of Veterinary Science)
- It would be incongruent with existing patterns of Queensland school holidays, seasonal challenges, grant applications, and the timetabling of examinations

“At this stage resources are better spent in other areas. As the new program comes on line this strategy may be able to be re-examined” (Unit Submission)

- A pilot of a year-round academic calendar has been trialed within a University school, with summer semesters ultimately removed as a result of student feedback that found negative impacts on learning and consolidation due to very short breaks, and barriers to international students going home.

Signature Learning curbs bespoke and innovative teaching

UQ Staff (Organisational Units) provided feedback that a signature learning model cannot appropriately accommodate the needs of every program, course and student cohort.

*“Given the diversity of disciplines across all programs, it is not clear how a single signature UQ learning model can be developed and, more importantly, to be effective across all programs”
(Unit Submission)*

There is concern that the *Signature Learning* Strategy may impede academic innovation, the application of best practice, and autonomous decision-making.

“This statement would seem to be largely empty of meaning except for its potential to impose a de-contextualised model of teaching and learning across the university at the expense of academic autonomy” (Unit Submission)

Learning Analytics and Vibrant Ecosystems are relatively less important

Learning Analytics are valued but overall UQ Staff (Organisational Units) view this strategy as relatively less important, with the current system seen as effective and opportunities existing for enhanced application without a significant commitment of resources and activity in this area.

Implementing *Vibrant Ecosystems* is seen as cost-prohibitive and best undertaken after other strategies have been implemented.

*“In the next five years, UQ should focus on improving and adapting the academic T&L aspect of the student experience. The way students interact with the university is fundamentally changing: this needs to be fully understood before the university attempts to influence the behaviour of students on campus”
(Unit Submission)*

Challenges: What are the top priority and lowest priority strategies for enhancing the UQ student experience, as communicated in Unit Submissions?

While the consultation process invited units to submit written feedback on the strategies in the Green Paper, some units provided comments in relation to Challenges instead (n=10). Six of these Unit Submissions came from faculties or schools, with the remaining four from central units or colleges.

The Unit Submissions that focused on Green Paper challenges made most mention of:

1. *Staffing Profile* (n=7, 19% of nominations)
2. *Innovative Education* (n=6, 17%).
3. *Sticky Campuses* (n=6, 17%).

Consistent with feedback generated through other consultation activities, *Staff-Student Links* was cited in relation to UQ's *Staffing Profile* as a means to alleviate demands on UQ teaching personnel as well as enhance the UQ student experience.

“Fostering a culture of active learning may include blurring the boundaries between students and teachers. This could occur by encouraging and rewarding teachers to enrol in courses outside of their area of expertise either as professional development or for interest, learning side by side with students, experiencing and understanding life from the student perspective. Reciprocally, students could be encouraged to teach and take leadership in developing experiences for other students” (Unit Submission).

In relation to the challenge of *Innovative Education*, stakeholders refer to a range of contemporary teaching strategies that might better equip UQ students for an ever-changing world with a particular focus on e-learning, which is also characteristic of a Blended Learning approach. Unit Submission comments confirm there is not consensus across disciplines as to the value of particular teaching and learning innovations; for example, stakeholders communicate contrasting views in relation to the merits of the flipped classroom.

Some Unit Submissions made mention of space at UQ as a challenge and a motivation with regard to addressing the challenge of *Sticky Campuses* at UQ, with issues raised in relation to library facilities and centrally-controlled collaborative teaching spaces specifically.

Future Vision: General comments on the Green Paper

UQ Staff (Organisational Units) were invited to provide additional comments that they considered relevant to enhancing the UQ student experience. There was great depth and diversity in the Unit Submissions, as reflected in the summary feedback below. The relative strength of support for key comments or ideas across UQ units is indicated, where possible. These comments are not exhaustive.

The Green Paper is broadly supported

A few units welcomed the Green Paper and the opportunity to provide feedback, expressing broad support for its direction and strategies subject to appropriate resourcing of the UQ Student Strategy.

Feedback indicates that respondents see importance in better incentivising, recognising and rewarding teaching and learning at UQ as a fundamental point of engagement between the University and its students, but also recognise the value-add of allied student services.

However, one unit stated that although the Green Paper was “well-intentioned”, a “back-to-basics” approach was more appropriate, where UQ focused on the delivery of high quality and good practice across the board rather than focusing narrowly on specific areas. Other units cautioned against “trend-led adoption” of new teaching practices and advocated for “evidence-based” decision-making in the subsequent development of the UQ Student Strategy.

Another unit suggested that UQ should not be looking to “copy” other university strategies and ensure that it reflects on metrics and benchmarking carefully.

One unit felt that the document was very broad and “trying to achieve too much”.

Other respondents stated that it could not be implemented without significant investment, which could lead to cynicism within the UQ stakeholder groups if not forthcoming.

"Unless there is a diversion of resources to teaching, students (and staff) will regard rhetorical exercises like this with a high degree of cynicism" (Unit Submission)

A few units felt that the Green Paper was let down by the language used, for being "jargon" and "vague", and it should be reviewed to make it in line with normal word usage.

UQ might also look at relevant existing best practice across the university, and share and implement those ideas where appropriate. This includes consideration of overlap with strategies and improvements currently being explored through the University's Enhancing Systems and Services (ESS) initiative.

There is interconnectedness in the Green Paper challenges and strategies

Many units referred to the interconnectedness of the challenges and strategies. Some units saw this as requiring them to be implemented as a whole to be effective.

"The ideas and strategies in the Green Paper are presented as separate and individual themes rather than cohesive elements of a clearly integrated and coherent educational model with clearly articulated outcomes. A number of strategies are interdependent... For instance, incorporating best-practice blended learning strategies cannot be achieved without professional development of staff and investing in staff with expertise in educational technologies and learning design" (Unit Submission)

Balancing consistency and multiplicity will be a challenge for the UQ Student Strategy

In Unit Submission, UQ Staff reiterate that a uniform approach to teaching and learning may not be appropriate, and that wholly standardised approaches will undermine the UQ student experience. This is consistent with UQ Staff feedback obtained across all consultation activities and in relation to several challenges and strategies in the Green Paper.

"There are multiple aspects to creating greater flexibility and some are not readily able to be 'scaled' to the extent that they would be practicable to implement in an institution the size of UQ. However, with some creative thinking and good will on all sides, changes could be made to increase flexibility, providing sufficient lead time and resource and devoted to planning and changeover. Year-round academic calendar presents more cons than pros, re-conceptualising how credit might be awarded for small parcels of learning such as MOOCs will be required, and it needs to be kept in mind that a lot of the rigidity in UQ's administration is driven by compliance obligations with the many pieces of legislation we are required to adhere to. Also, many of our students are constrained through dependence on Centrelink benefits, and this impacts to some extent on how we design our programs of study" (Unit Submission)

Student employability is a priority recurring theme in UQ Unit Submissions

Employability was mentioned by several units in their open comments, with related feedback including:

- UQ needs to develop students who are job-ready with skills such as “agility, adaptability, collaboration; critical thinking, disruption and unexpected change”
- An interdisciplinary approach in learning and assessment is important given there is no “neat compartmentalisation of knowledge” in the workplace. One unit respondent felt that a liberal arts component in all degree programs would enhance student engagement
- One respondent felt there was a tension within the Green Paper:

“There is a fundamental inconsistency between the idea that students and employers want students with job-ready skills when they graduate, and the idea that the university has a role to prepare students to change careers during their working life. For the second purpose specific job skills are not useful, and generic skills like thinking, arguing, communicating and self-education are important. There doesn't seem to be any attention to how the second purpose might be achieved” (Unit Submission)

One respondent provided significant feedback on the value of research to employability, with points including:

- Research is integral to the reputation of academia and UQ's leading reputation in this area has positive spill-over effects for all of the university's “dimensions”. This is UQ's differentiator, which will stand the test of time
- The research experience at UQ should begin on Day One of the undergraduate program and UQ should aim to provide all of its students with an integrated research experience. This experience will help students effectively transition into employment (UQ Business School – Research, Unit Submission).

Student diversity is seen as important and potentially under-recognised in the Green Paper

There were many comments relating to accommodating the needs of diverse students. One theme was that attracting diverse students should be a UQ-wide priority and UQ should review its selection processes, entry pathways and scholarships to that end. Other related feedback was that diverse staff are needed to attract diverse students.

One unit felt that the Green paper did not sufficiently address this issue, and had centred on acceleration approaches affecting a select group rather a genuine engagement with the needs of diverse groups of students.

Some units suggested that international and Indigenous students be more appropriately supported. One unit was disappointed that there was no reference in the document to supporting Indigenous students and issues in Indigenous education UQ wide.

“There is little support for international students with poor English writing and comprehension skills, and Indigenous students often feel very alone and other on this campus” (Unit Submission)

Some units said that students expect and prefer personal approaches and for UQ to be interested in them as individuals.

"From go to [whoa] our students need to feel that we want them, that we relate to them and that we value them. This means recognizing the diversity of our students and ensuring that we tailor learning experiences and support systems to their different needs. We need to embark on an active campaign on customer service that reminds all employees of the importance of students" (Unit Submission)

A number of units felt that students who work to support their studies require different learning approaches and additional resources and support to allow them to succeed while balancing other external commitments.

Sticky campuses are supported with suggestions for improvement

There were a few mentions of how to improve UQ's campuses and their facilities to attract students to spend time there and to build a sense of belonging:

- Inter-faculty sporting events and cultural competitions
- A live performance space at St Lucia campus to hold events and concerts
- Smaller bars on campus operating after hours
- More secure bike boxes and more bike parking
- Laptop/tablet device chargers at key places where students study
- More microwaves and hot water access for students around campus
- Increased influence from colleges, UQ-wide and beyond their residents.

Enhanced staff engagement in development of the UQ Student Strategy is essential

Some respondents suggested that staff feel they are not being sufficiently valued or engaged with in this process and staff buy-in is required if strategies are to be successfully implemented. Respondents strongly recommend evidence-based decision-making across the next phase of strategy development.

UQ Students come first in the development of the UQ Student Strategy

In the development of the UQ Student Strategy, the needs of the students – present and future – are paramount.

"The strategy runs the risk of becoming a number of well-meaning ideas based on practice elsewhere and/or a number of views that may or may not match with true collective need. It is important that the Student Strategy makes a difference first and foremost for students, rather than seeing this as an add-on to higher priority corporate drivers. Indeed, if the University is genuinely student-focused and true to its first strategic foundation, then these will be one and the same" (Unit Submission)