UQ Student Strategy

Towards a UQ Student Strategy...

Consultation Activity Summary

www.uq.edu.au/teaching-learning/student-strategy
Why does UQ need a Student Strategy

• Global trends indicate fundamental changes to the dominant university model in Australia.

• UQ’s competitors are prioritising student learning and educational experience.

• Student expectations and priorities have shifted towards flexibility, quality and employability.

• UQ staff and students are passionate about identifying and supporting innovative change.

• Increasingly competitive higher education sector.
Consultation was broad & invited a diverse range of stakeholder voices to comment on the Challenges & Strategies of the Green Paper.

• **Online student survey**: 18% response rate; n=7,005
• **Leadership meeting discussions**: n = 18
• **Unit submissions**: n = 54
  
  Schools, divisions, faculties
• **Roundtable Event**: n =75
  
  Employers, alumni, staff, students
• **Open online forum**: n = 100 individual responses
What resonates with our students?

Enhanced employability development

- Employment is a key concern for students. Over 90% believe it’s important they have opportunities to interact with industry & employers.
- 96% think the UQ experience should provide lifelong skills and knowledge to support them through their careers.
- 59-69% of UGs/PGs think entrepreneurial skills development is important.

Personalised learning: flexible delivery, structures & schedule

- Clear appetite for alternative online, intensive & credit options – but mix of online lectures & on-campus interactive classes most preferred (69%)
- Over half (58%) would use trimesters to accelerate, lighten or create flexibility for their study loads – 40% indicated they would take advantage of weekday classes after 6pm or weekend classes.
What resonates with our students?

Teaching & research engagement

• 62% would like to assist staff in improving teaching quality.
• Access to research projects is important to around 2/3 of students.
• 65% consider an active research profile the most important & desirable characteristic of a UQ teacher.

Support services & facilities

• 2/3 would like a UQ staff or UQ alumni mentor & half a student mentor.
• Improved campus based study facilities: more high quality individual & group study spaces, 24 hour facilities access, cheaper & more diverse food options, more personal & self service facilities.
• A comprehensive set of support services: 40 - 65% would likely use UQ’s personal, medical, living, & academic learning support services in time of future need.
What impedes our students?

Workplace experience & exposure
• Only just over half agree UQ offers good work experience/industry interaction opportunities.
• Only 58% agree they are being prepared for a changing employment market.

Flexibility
• 64% of all students engage in some form of paid employment - 39% find it difficult to balance study & paid work.
• 42% enrol in courses that are not their first preference to get a timetable that works for them. 48% miss classes because of timetable clashes.
What impedes our students?

Assessment
- Low satisfaction with feedback detail (47%) & timely return of assessments (38%).
- Only 57% agree they can talk with teaching staff on received feedback.

Support awareness & information inconsistency
- Awareness of UQ’s support services varies. More than 40% unaware that wellbeing programs, housing support and financial/budgeting advice are available.
- Over half consider that they receive contradictory information – UGs 57%.

Campus travel & transport options
- Better commuting options would increase campus time for 63% of students.
1. Flexible Learning 2. Innovative Education 3. Staffing Profile were the top priority Green Paper challenges:

- Flexibility requires a wide range of strategies – can’t be a one-size-fits-all.
- See value in year-round calendar but difficult to implement.
- Embed workplace & entrepreneurship skills with knowledge application.
- Build, balance & better utilise UQ’s staff capabilities.
- Better rewarded & recognised teaching excellence.

General comment:
UQ should be clear on the purpose of the Student Strategy & how it is to be implemented - staff are integral to its success.
UQ staff will be at the frontline of implementation. Top priority Green Paper strategies were:

1. Assessment Frameworks
2. WIL Partnerships
3. Multifunctional Spaces
4. Invest in New Staffing Capabilities
5. Blended Learning

Key views

- Central coordination is needed but hesitant re universal implementation approaches.
- Will require significant investment, staff training & development support.
- Increased staff capacity can provide time for staff driven innovation.
- Blended learning essential to modern universities but may differ across disciplines.
The roundtable was a microcosm of the UQ community. The top three Green Paper challenges were:

Key views
• **Connected communities** should be **built early**.
• **Lifelong connections** can be facilitated through an **engaged alumni**.
• Innovation can occur through **interdisciplinary learning**.
• **Embedding workplace skills & knowledge application** is critical.
• **Best practice pedagogies** vary by discipline & student cohort.
• Best practice teaching relies on **rewarding teaching excellence**.
Top priority strategies of young alumni were:

1. WIL partnerships  2. Staff recognition  3. Mentors & networks  
4. Research experiences  5. Student-staff links  6. Assessment

Key views

• Employers prioritise graduates’ practical experience & application skills above a university’s reputation.

• **Insufficient collaborative research opportunities** offered at UQ.

• Promote opportunities for **learning/working in multidisciplinary teams**.

• **Recognition & reward motivates staff** to excel in teaching – attracts high quality teachers.

• **Peer support/mentors** – alumni important resource/partner.
1. Developing students’ employability is of the highest priority: Expand & improve student opportunities for industry interaction & work integrated learning.

2. Flexibility is key to meeting student needs, personalising learning & facilitating engagement.

3. Blended learning is essential to modern tertiary studies: Students prefer a mix of online lectures with interactive on-campus classes.


5. Campus is central to the learning experience: Spaces, services & facilities must maximise on-campus time capacity & value.

6. Innovation & enhancement will require appropriate resourcing & staff capability investment.
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