# The Queensland Commitment Roadmap

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# Message from the Vice-Chancellor and President

**I am delighted to present The Queensland Commitment Roadmap on behalf of The University of Queensland (UQ).**

This Roadmap details the approach UQ will take over the next decade as we strive to transform lives through accessible higher education. Each action – or commitment – is informed by expert insights, research and thorough consultation with communities across Queensland, including students, alumni, staff and partners.

With the help of over 1,600 donors and UQ matched funds, we have already secured $22 million which has helped to create more than 65 new endowed scholarships in less than a year.

The recent release of the Australian Universities Accord Report outlined a well-aligned, bold, long-term vision for Australia's tertiary education system. The report's clear-eyed focus on better financial support for students, a sustainable funding model to support the educational mission of our universities, and the need to directly address educational inequality are very welcome themes.

It is my sincere hope that the Accord's recommendations will not only accelerate the delivery of this Roadmap but also directly support positive transformation across the education sector more broadly.

But addressing educational equity is just the beginning. As our efforts to do this progress, we will carry with us the spirit of The Queensland Commitment – a pledge aligned to the UQ Act which established our University – to contribute to the prosperity of Queensland through education and research innovation in order to have local, national and global impact.

I am so proud of what we have achieved together already and remain confident that, with your continued support, we will be able to launch a new era of greater opportunity for future generations of Queenslanders.

**Professor Deborah Terry AC**
Vice-Chancellor and President

# Message from the Vice-President

**As a University, we have laid firm foundations and fostered collaborative relationships that will underpin the future of The Queensland Commitment.**

We began this journey with a vision for a philanthropic initiative to increase need-based scholarship support. It has since developed into a comprehensive, multifaceted effort – unlike any other at our University.

We have expanded the focus with a view to not only address the need for student support, but also to enact research-backed, sustained change that can be enabled through philanthropy and engagement – change that will be built in partnership with our alumni, schools, Queensland communities and all levels of government.

While we are beginning with a focus on educational equity and engagement, The Queensland Commitment is becoming something far greater in scope. For many, it is now a living embodiment of The University of Queensland Act – the parliamentary legislation that established a University for the advancement of the people of this state in 1909 – and a daily reminder of our public service mission.

UQ colleagues have embraced this effort, embedding it in nearly everything we do as a University. External partners have provided invaluable guidance and insights to strengthen and validate our steps forward.

I would like to thank every person who has generously contributed to this effort to date. Your dedication, expertise and passion have – and will continue to – drive this important work forward in the years ahead.

**Jennifer Karlson**

Vice-President (Advancement and Community Engagement)

# Acknowledgement of Country

The University of Queensland (UQ) acknowledges the Traditional Owners and their custodianship of the lands on which UQ operates. We pay our respects to their Ancestors and their descendants, who continue cultural and spiritual connections to Country. We recognise their valuable contributions to Australian and global society.
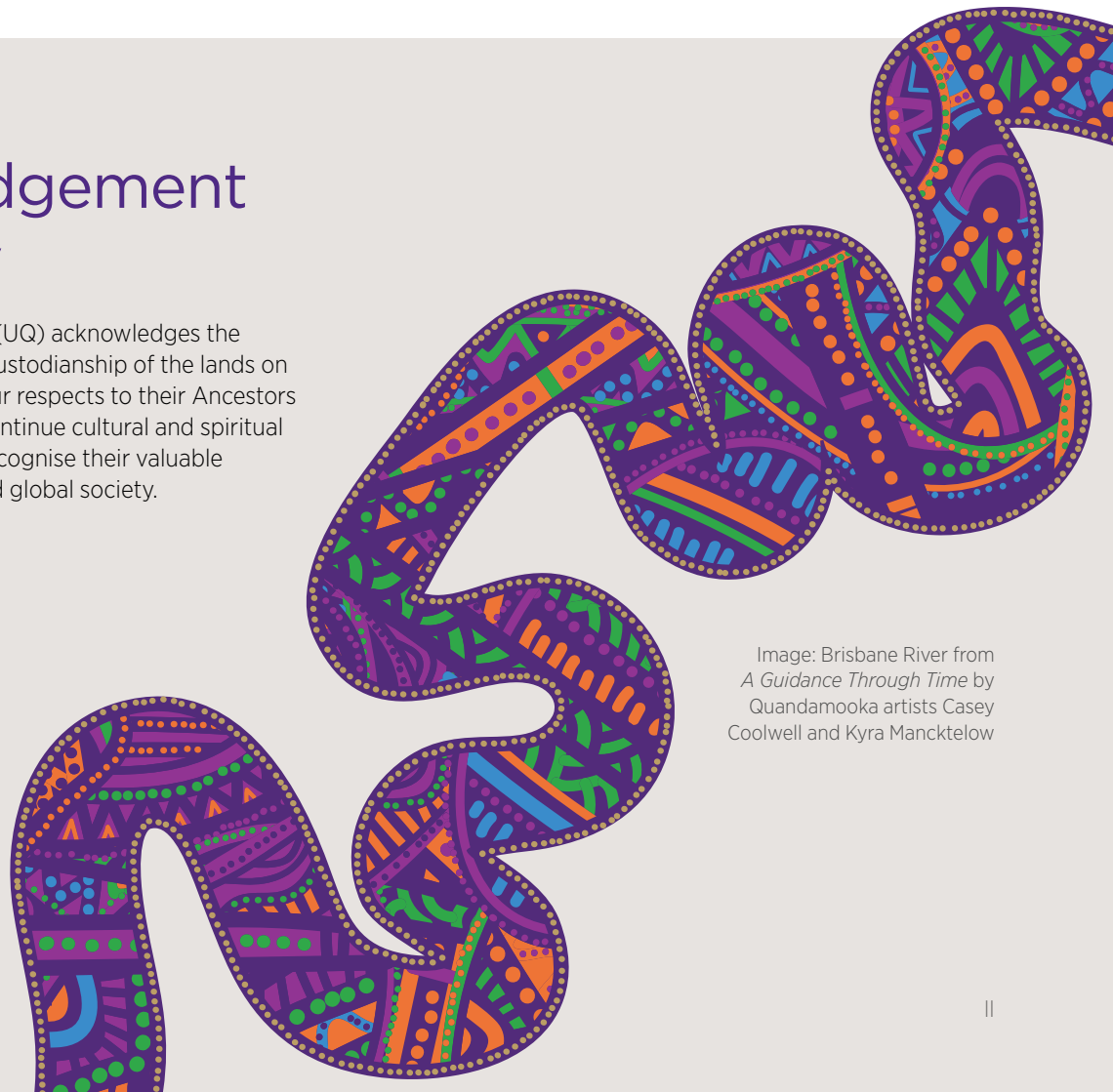
Image: Brisbane River from *A Guidance Through Time* by Quandamooka artists Casey Coolwell and Kyra Mancktelow

# Executive summary

**The University of Queensland was founded in 1909 by – *and* for – the people of Queensland. More than a century later, we've become a leading global institution for teaching, learning and research.**

The Queensland Commitment is a core enabling strategy within **UQ's 2022-2025 Strategic Plan** *(UQ's Strategic Plan)*, reaffirming UQ's position as The University *for* Queensland. This commitment aims to uplift educational attainment for the most underrepresented groups, with an immediate focus on students from low socio-economic backgrounds, regional or remote areas, and those identifying as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

By 2032:

- 30% of UQ's domestic undergraduate students will come from a regional, remote, or low socio-economic background.

- The proportion of domestic students identifying as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander will reflect the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland.

UQ's existing commitment to educational equity is evident in its portfolio of initiatives including flagship programs such as the Young Achievers Program (YAP), InspireU, and a broad range of initiatives focusing on diversity, accessibility, and inclusion.

UQ also has a long history of engaging positively with the broader community, delivering a range of activities and initiatives aimed at fostering mutually beneficial relationships and knowledge exchange.

To enhance these existing efforts across the University and reach our 2032 targets, a set of goals and commitments have been developed as a result of extensive research, literature review and consultations with UQ staff, students, alumni, donors and the broader Queensland community. A set of equity, engagement and Indigenous principles, aligning with UQ's Strategic Plan, have also been established to guide the development and implementation of the Roadmap initiatives.

The goals, aligned to student life stages, have a focus on expanding awareness and opportunities to students from underrepresented backgrounds, ensuring equitable access to UQ, promoting an inclusive university culture, supporting transitions into employment or further studies, and embedding robust enabling capabilities to support The Queensland Commitment.

Underpinning these 5 goals are 23 commitments and 58 actions that provide a pathway to transform UQ from within. Key commitments and supporting actions outline the ways that the institution will increase its community presence and partnerships, widen opportunities for entry, enhance scholarships, embed equity in teaching and learning, and provide appropriate support to foster success for all students.

The Roadmap will be delivered across 5 phases, with an initial focus on the next 4 years, from Phase 1 to Phase 3. This phased approach emphasises our focus on delivering immediate improvements, whilst allowing for the capacity to evolve The Queensland Commitment and adapt to a changing educational landscape.

The Queensland Commitment Roadmap provides a clear and actionable plan to achieve our 2032 targets. Philanthropy, through the generosity of our donors and partners, will serve as a critical enabler to achieving these bold ambitions. Equally important will be the ongoing engagement, debate, feedback, and discussion with the wider UQ community. This includes our alumni whose ongoing involvement, expertise, and advocacy will be key to delivering upon our commitments.

We invite you to contribute by sharing your thoughts with us via email at **thequeenslandcommitment@uq.edu.au**. As we collectively strive for a more equitable future for all students, we look forward to your invaluable input and collaboration with The Queensland Commitment.

# Goals and commitments on a page

## PRE-ACCESS

**Increase understanding and awareness among potential students, families, and communities, of the transformative opportunities offered through higher education.**

Expand UQ outreach and engagement to a broader range of communities to enhance educational opportunities for students from underrepresented groups.

Leverage the strengths of the UQ community from underrepresented groups to act as ambassadors in community engagement activities.

Foster stronger partnerships with local businesses, community groups, and councils to identify collaborative opportunities that deliver for the public good.

## ACCESS

**Expand pathway programs and provide more equitable opportunities for students to access UQ.**

Develop processes to support potential students from underrepresented groups with equitable entry to UQ.

Develop and improve programs that facilitate access to UQ for potential students from underrepresented groups.

## PARTICIPATION

**Provide the resources and opportunities to create an inclusive, accessible, and engaging university experience that enables all students to realise their academic potential.**

Improve the availability and affordability of accommodation.

Tailor support services to better meet diverse student needs.

Enhance scholarships and supporting processes to better assist students from underrepresented groups.

Create a sense of belonging and a student experience that is truly welcoming, inclusive, and accessible for all.

Embed equitable and inclusive practices into the teaching and learning process.

## ATTAINMENT

**Support students in transitioning into employment or further studies, empowering them to make meaningful contributions to society as skilled, informed and engaged citizens.**

Provide ongoing educational and training opportunities to build skills and knowledge for career advancement in a dynamic job market.

Provide comprehensive support and pathways to equip students from underrepresented groups to transition into employment or further studies.

Provide alumni with avenues to make meaningful contributions to their communities.

## ENABLERS

**Embed robust foundational capabilities that enable and support The Queensland Commitment.**

Align UQ's operations with The Queensland Commitment.

Align UQ's fundraising approach to deliver The Queensland Commitment.

Maintain appropriate and necessary governance structures to deliver The Queensland Commitment.

Ensure UQ's identity embodies The Queensland Commitment vision, purpose and principles.

Develop a comprehensive framework to harness data-informed insights and diverse voices in institutional decision making.

Develop and implement The University of Queensland Equity System.

Ensure that the UQ community better reflects the diversity of Queensland.

Provide safe and inclusive physical and digital environments that uphold diversity and foster a welcoming atmosphere for all community members.

Integrate an understanding of the importance of educational equity and community engagement into staff and student development.

Prioritise research that provides better outcomes for the state.

*"There is this difference between the youngest university in the empire and the oldest: Oxford was established by a King; The University of Queensland was established by the people."*

**William Kidston, Premier of Queensland, 1909**

# Understanding The Queensland Commitment

**The University of Queensland was founded in 1909 by—** *and* **for—the people of Queensland.**

More than a century later, we've become a leading global institution for teaching, learning and research. But that founding commitment to Queensland remains at the heart of who we are and all that we do.

The Queensland Commitment is a core enabling strategy within **UQ's 2022-2025 Strategic Plan,** reaffirming UQ's position as The University *for* Queensland. It is more than a philanthropic campaign. It is a bold declaration of our identity as an institution and commitment to delivering better outcomes for the state.

We know that education transforms the lives of individuals and builds cultural, social and economic capital in communities. However, there are still too many socio-

economic and geographic barriers to accessing and succeeding in higher education.

Our society expects responsible leadership from institutions like UQ in breaking down these obstacles.

To do this, we need to lift educational attainment for cohorts of students who are the most underrepresented within higher education. This means an initial focus on students with a low socio-economic status (SES), from a regional or remote background and those who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

As we eliminate obstacles and improve structures to enhance outcomes for these groups, we will in turn enrich the educational opportunities afforded to all students, and contribute to building a better future for Queensland.

## Our profile of underrepresented students

In 2023*, UQ had:

**21.3%**
Low SES[1] and/or Regional or Remote[2] domestic undergraduate students

**1.5%**
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander domestic students

## Benchmarking across cohorts

Low SES[1] students as a proportion of all domestic undergraduate students in 2021

| UQ | QLD universities | Go8 universities | AUS universities |
|---|---|---|---|
| **10.5%** | **18.7%** | **10.0%** | **17.0%** |
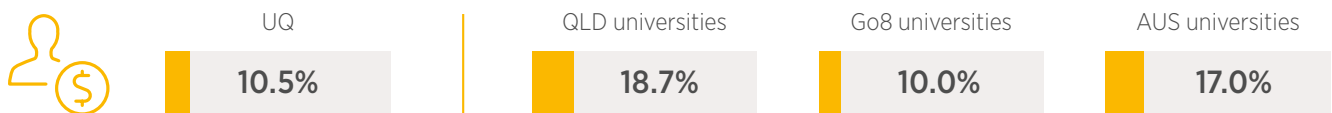
Regional and/or remote[2] students as a proportion of all domestic undergraduate students in 2021

| UQ | QLD universities | Go8 universities | AUS universities |
|---|---|---|---|
| **16.2%** | **28.3%** | **10.5%** | **20.4%** |
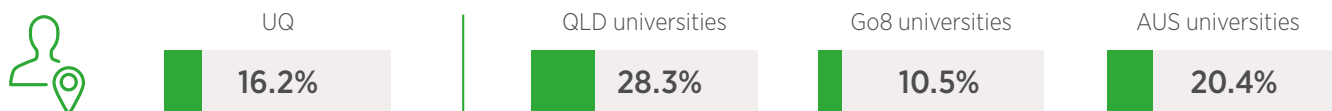
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students as a proportion of all domestic students in 2021
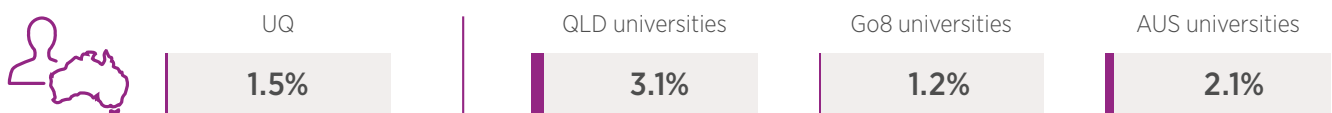
| UQ | QLD universities | Go8 universities | AUS universities |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1.5%** | **3.1%** | **1.2%** | **2.1%** |

# Our guiding principles

Our principles are a reflection of UQ's values and are designed to guide both UQ and The Queensland Commitment as we seek to promote inclusivity, fairness and equal opportunity. They will help to shape what we strive for; inform how we go about delivering initiatives, services and programs to ensure that all students who aspire to study at UQ are fully supported; and allow us to continue to deliver for the public good through excellence in education, research and engagement.

## Equity principles

### Equity and excellence go hand-in-hand

Excellence and equity are complementary, reinforcing goals. We cannot have one without the other.

### Students are at the centre

Delivering student outcomes and enhancing student wellbeing are the drivers of everything we do.

### Equity benefits everyone

Equity benefits students, families, communities, Australia, and the global society.

### Find systemic solutions

Effective equity solutions tackle causes and effects at all levels across the student pathway.

### Genuine partnership

Planning, designing and implementing with partners is essential to realising The Queensland Commitment.

### Nothing without evidence

Research, evaluation and monitoring are crucial to realising The Queensland Commitment.

## Engagement principles

### A united mission

Together we share a commitment to transform lives through education and create a prosperous future for Queensland.

### Mutuality and reciprocity

We believe in two-way partnerships built on the Carnegie Classification definition of mutuality and reciprocity.

### For the public good

Enriching communities is core to our mission. Our engagement is values-led and deeply committed to delivering for the public good.

### Listen and learn

By listening we will gain an improved understanding of the community's needs, values and aspirations.

### Co-created

We believe in co-creating with community, particularly with First Nations peoples, and having a consistent presence in the region.

### Give voice

Leverage UQ's network to elevate key local and regional issues.

## Indigenous principles

### Country

Country needs to be acknowledged as a living entity with which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a relationship.

### Relationships

Relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous people must centre on mutual care and meaningful engagement as a shared practice.

### Respect

Respecting and valuing Indigenous knowledges, peoples and perspectives is foundational to The Queensland Commitment and contributes to de-colonisation.

### Cultural capability

Being aware of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols and engaging respectfully with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, knowledges and perspectives is essential.

### Reciprocity

Through connections and partnerships, we build and expand the body of knowledge for creating change to advance ideas that benefit the world.

### Truth

We challenge misinformation and misrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lived realities through an informed understanding.

### Benefits

Enhanced understandings of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing enriches the educational experience.

# Equity initiatives at UQ

Diversifying our student population and embedding inclusive practices is the responsibility of the whole institution. UQ has an extensive portfolio of initiatives that support students throughout every phase of study, from pre-access to attainment, as outlined in the **Student Equity in Higher Education Evaluation Framework (SEHEEF)**.

To highlight a few of UQ's initiatives:

- The Young Achievers Program (YAP) helps students to see university as an option for them through a range of activities such as residential camps, mentoring and financial assistance.

- InspireU provides enriching experiences for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander high school students through residential camps and on-campus visits.

- The UQ Link Scholarship provides assistance to students who have experienced educational disadvantage as a result of financial hardship.

- The Diversity, Disability and Inclusion team provides services for students with disability to help improve their accessibility.

- The Women in Economics initiative cultivates students with the skills, capabilities and preparedness to thrive as industry professionals beyond graduation.

To strengthen this effort, find further opportunities for strategic alignment within UQ, and reach the goals of The Queensland Commitment, we have developed an Equity Initiatives Register. This Register provides greater visibility, assists in the coordination of our efforts and amplifies the synergies between divisions, faculties and units.

## A spotlight on the Young Achievers Program



### Gemma, Bachelor of Advanced Science (Honours) student from Pittsworth

*Past Young Achievers Program participant*

*"After I was accepted [into YAP], the relief that I experienced was indescribable.*

*It really gives you that encouragement that other people believe in you."*

### What YAP achieved in 2023

**540**
students supported

**46%**
of students who participated in the program were from regional and remote areas

**53**
schools represented

**51**
resident mentors

# Community engagement initiatives at UQ

UQ's Community Engagement team was established alongside a university-wide community engagement plan to ensure the University acts as an accessible, active and respectful partner for local and regional communities by:

- systematically embedding community engagement as part of our core mission as an institution;

- reinforcing the purpose and value of community engagement by gaining an improved understanding of the community's needs, values and aspirations to enhance the experience of community members as they connect with the University;

- engaging community in the University's decision-making to increase community access to UQ campuses and expand offerings available to them;

- inviting, empowering and celebrating volunteerism, providing comprehensive engagement support for partners across our campuses and sites;

- and contributing to the social, cultural, economic and environmental needs of regional communities.

With these values underpinning our work, we have made excellent progress towards realising the community engagement ambitions that are embedded within The Queensland Commitment in the past 12 months.

In 2023, we visited 21 local communities across the state as part of UQ's Regional Roadshow program, to discover more ways we can help to foster growth, health and prosperity for every Queenslander.

This touring program featured meetings with local community leaders to understand how UQ can support the needs of regional and remote Queensland; school visits to showcase the breadth of opportunities available to students including YAP, InspireU and Rural Medical Pathway Programs; and a wide range of alumni and community events designed to inform, connect and inspire.

New and renewed partnerships with Inspiring Australia Queensland, Business Chamber Queensland and Opera Queensland have also enabled us to continue to build visibility and aspiration in the regions in 2023.

A Community Engagement Community of Practice was established in 2023 in partnership with the Office of the Deputy-Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Engagement) to foster leadership, development and connection across UQ's initiatives. This internal network plays a key role in defining and shaping the University's approach to community engagement, which has been guided by the Carnegie Classification.

The Classification drives universities to show reciprocity in our partnerships with communities – where both the university and community are transformed by the partnership. We ultimately aim to obtain the Carnegie Classification, the gold standard for the assessment and recognition of community engagement in higher education globally.

# Consultation and findings

In 2023, The Queensland Commitment Program Office worked with colleagues across campus to conduct a Discovery Phase that was pivotal in shaping our understanding of the challenges and opportunities for higher education at UQ and within the broader Queensland context. It was imperative that we understood where we were, where we needed to be, the limits of our capabilities, what opportunities we could leverage, and what gaps we needed to address to reach our goals.

This comprehensive discovery process adopted a thorough methodological approach, encompassing in-depth reviews of academic literature and UQ's internal documentation, consultations with the wider Queensland community, stakeholder interviews, surveys, and desktop research.

## Research and literature

Commissioned for The Queensland Commitment, UQ's Institute for Social Science Research (ISSR) developed the research paper **Drivers of underrepresentation in Australian higher education** to review the factors contributing to underrepresentation in higher education participation and attainment, and to recommend effective approaches for reducing such underrepresentation in the context of The Queensland Commitment.

The review highlights how socio-economic and cultural factors in communities, schools and families affect individuals' skills, attitudes and behaviours, which can lead to underrepresentation in higher education. At the same time, the paper argues that higher education institutions unintentionally reinforce certain dispositions and behaviours through their operational processes and priorities.

Of particular note, the report outlines research that indicates that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are more likely to have multiple, intersecting factors of underrepresentation such as being from regional or remote areas and/or low SES backgrounds. This means they face considerably more barriers throughout the *SEHEEF* student life stages, such as a higher likelihood to experience racism and discrimination, a lack of role models in their social environment, having difficulties forming and retaining a sense of belonging, and unfamiliarity with the academic requirements to enter higher education.

The paper notes that existing research indicates that universities can most effectively enhance educational equity by embedding equity goals in strategic plans, securing long-term funding commitments and enhancing expertise and partnerships to address barriers. Universities can further advance equity by engaging with communities, schools and individuals, as well as by improving their internal processes and advocating for equity-oriented policies and practices.

## Community engagement

Community engagement is one of the core pillars of The Queensland Commitment and is key to its successful implementation. UQ's established alumni network, and the meaningful partnerships that continue to be developed across the state through the Regional Roadshow initiative, have informed the commitments of this report.

Through strategic roundtable discussions, workshops, surveys and events as part of our Regional Roadshows, our community has provided invaluable input into how UQ can best achieve its educational equity goals and provide better outcomes for the state **(Appendix B)**. These findings emphasised the importance of genuine collaboration; utilising locally-led engagement, particularly with First Nations peoples; facilitating aspiration building and pathways to higher education; and the importance of contributing to and enriching the regions by creating opportunities and retaining local talent.

## Internal UQ Consultation

Our internal consultation process included a comprehensive investigation of both internal university strategies and those of peer institutions. Additionally, insights were gathered through a staff survey and active engagement through consultations, alongside awareness events.

Key outcomes emerging from our internal consultations included developing a deeper understanding of the current state and desired future state of educational equity and community engagement within UQ, the establishment of an Equity Initiatives Register, and enhanced staff awareness and endorsement of The Queensland Commitment.

# Goals and commitments

Our findings strongly indicate the need to change UQ from within. It is not enough for us to just reduce barriers externally or provide entry pathways for students from underrepresented groups, we must also adapt how we operate as an institution.

Five goals have been formulated to support the University to reach this ambition. Shaped by our guiding principles, we have developed a set of commitments that take UQ's existing efforts such as the Disability Action Plan 2023-2025 and the Reconciliation Action Plan 2019-2022 into consideration. This will ensure strategic coordination, mitigate duplicate efforts and maximise institutional synergy.

The commitments are split into phases; our initial focus will be on the next 4 years, from phases 1 to 3.

## Phases

| Phase 1 | Phase 2 | Phase 3 | Phase 4 | Phase 5 |
|---------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 2024 | 2025 | 2026–2027 | 2028–2029 | 2030–2032 |

## Goals

The first 4 goals align with the student life stages outlined in SEHEEF, while the fifth goal focuses on enabling actions to enhance UQ's organisational capabilities.

**PRE-ACCESS** — Increase understanding and awareness among potential students, families, and communities, of the transformative opportunities offered through higher education.

**ACCESS** — Expand pathway programs and provide more equitable opportunities for students to access UQ.

**PARTICIPATION** — Provide the resources and opportunities to create an inclusive, accessible, and engaging university experience that enables all students to realise their academic potential.

**ATTAINMENT** — Support students in transitioning into employment or further studies, empowering them to make meaningful contributions to society as skilled, informed and engaged citizens.

**ENABLERS** — Embed robust foundational capabilities that enable and support The Queensland Commitment.

GOAL

# Increase understanding and awareness among potential students, families, and communities, of the transformative opportunities offered through higher education.

COMMITMENTS

**Expand UQ outreach and engagement to a broader range of communities to enhance educational opportunities for students from underrepresented groups.**

Expand educational outreach and community engagement to more Queensland communities, schools, and community organisations to build aspirations, opportunities and capacities to enable and inspire more students from underrepresented groups to pursue higher education.

**Leverage the strengths of the UQ community from underrepresented groups to act as ambassadors in community engagement activities.**

Celebrate and showcase UQ staff, students, and alumni from underrepresented groups, and provide incentives and opportunities so that they may choose to actively participate in their communities, share their personal stories, advocate for the significance of education, and serve as inspirational role models for prospective students and their families.

**Foster stronger partnerships with local businesses, community groups, and councils to identify collaborative opportunities that deliver for the public good.**

Develop strategies and processes to build genuine partnerships with diverse communities to better help address local challenges, tap into both local and UQ expertise, and foster sustainable solutions.

ACTIONS & PHASES

To do this, we will:

Expand community engagement to a greater number of regional communities.

( Phase 1 – 4 )

Develop a Schools Engagement Framework to align and track all UQ interactions with schools.

( Phase 1 – 2 )

Strengthen existing relationships with Widening Participation partner schools while also expanding outreach initiatives to include a greater number of partner schools.

( Phase 1 – 5 )

Increase the annual intake of InspireU camp participants.

( Phase 1 – 5 )

Reframe and repackage the equity stream of the Enhanced Studies Program as a 'secondary school pathway program' so that it aligns more closely with UQ's commitment to widening participation.

( Phase 1 – 2 )

To do this, we will:

Increase representation of staff, students, and alumni from underrepresented groups in community engagement activities.

( Phase 1 – 3 )

To do this, we will:

Create and implement mechanisms to develop and manage partner and community relationships that centre on mutuality and reciprocity.

( Phase 1 – 3 )

Build strategic partnerships with established organisations addressing educational equity barriers.

( Phase 1 – 3 )

Develop and implement a Neighbourhood Engagement Strategy across UQ campuses.

( Phase 1 – 2 )

GOAL

COMMITMENTS

ACTIONS & PHASES



# Expand pathway programs and provide more equitable opportunities for students to access UQ.

**Develop processes to support potential students from underrepresented groups with equitable entry to UQ.**

Review and enhance entry and admissions policies, procedures, processes, entry requirements and associated systems to reduce barriers to entry, ensuring students have equitable and accessible pathways to enter UQ.

**Develop and improve programs that facilitate access to UQ for potential students from underrepresented groups.**

Programs such as the Young Achievers Program (YAP), a more comprehensive version of InspireU, and other Widening Participation initiatives need to be expanded to create a system that provides opportunities to access university for potential students from a wider range of backgrounds and experiences.

**To do this, we will:**

Review and enhance the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Admissions Pathway Program to address systemic barriers.

( Phase 1 – 3 )

Investigate the feasibility of adopting non-traditional admissions criteria to widen opportunities for entry.

( Phase 2 – 3 )

Provide personalised and timely information to applicants about guaranteed entry and ATAR adjustments, and application support tailored to individual students' circumstances, to increase certainty of admission into UQ.

( Phase 1 – 5 )

Optimise adjustment factors to ensure they are applied fairly and contribute to equitable access to UQ.

( Phase 1 – 3 )

**To do this, we will:**

Expand InspireU into a comprehensive program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students that extends across the student lifecycle and includes scholarship and accommodation support.

( Phase 1 – 3 )

Grow and strengthen YAP to ensure that the program is able to contribute as a flagship program for underrepresented student recruitment and success at UQ.

( Phase 1 – 5 )

Investigate the feasibility of expanding pathways into UQ through enabling courses.

( Phase 1 – 2 )

GOAL

**Provide the resources and opportunities to create an inclusive, accessible, and engaging university experience that enables all students to realise their academic potential.**

COMMITMENTS

### Improve the availability and affordability of accommodation.

Implement strategies that ensure the availability and affordability of accommodation, catering to the diverse needs of students requiring housing support.

### Tailor support services to better meet diverse student needs.

Provide services flexible enough to address the wide range and combinations of student needs to allow all students the opportunity to fully engage in university life.

### Enhance scholarships and supporting processes to better assist students from underrepresented groups.

Ensure scholarship rules are inclusive and free from bias, policies and processes fully support applicants and recipients, and financial support provides an adequate level of assistance to recipients.

ACTIONS & PHASES

**To do this, we will:**

Implement a comprehensive strategy to enhance student housing accessibility.

( Phase 1 – 2 )

**To do this, we will:**

Establish a 10-year plan for end-to-end support to help students from underrepresented groups.

( Phase 1 )

Implement a system that utilises student data to connect students with the support services they need.

( Phase 1 – 3 )

Resource UQ's support services appropriately to accommodate for the needs presented by an increasingly diverse student population.

( Phase 1 – 3 )

Ensure all staff are equipped to provide appropriate support to students from underrepresented groups.

( Phase 1 )

**To do this, we will:**

Implement the Scholarships Lifecycle Review Implementation Plan to increase overall operational efficiency.

( Phase 1 – 3 )

Revise scholarship rules as they relate to eligibility, selection criteria and selection processes to remove bias and ensure inclusivity - ensuring alignment with any associated gift agreements.

( Phase 1 – 3 )

Enhance the systems and support around scholarship administration to increase accessibility and visibility for applicants and recipients.

( Phase 1 – 2 )

Implement automatic awarding of scholarships for qualifying students from underrepresented groups.

( Phase 1 – 2 )

Review, and adjust where necessary, the value and duration of relevant scholarships and financial support programs to ensure they provide sufficient funds necessary to provide access and enhance participation.

( Phase 1 – 3 )

# Provide the resources and opportunities to create an inclusive, accessible, and engaging university experience that enables all students to realise their academic potential.

## Create a sense of belonging and a student experience that is truly welcoming, inclusive, and accessible for all.

All students should feel welcomed and able to engage with UQ's entire educational experience, including co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, events, clubs and societies.

## Embed equitable and inclusive practices into the teaching and learning process.

Ensure an inclusive, equitable, and accessible educational experience that benefits all students.

### To do this, we will:

Strengthen and promote policies, programs and reporting mechanisms that create an inclusive and safe campus, free from racism, sexual assault and harassment, and any form of bullying or exclusion.

( Phase 1 – 3 )

Support students' transition and ongoing engagement with university life that enhance the sense of belonging for all students.

( Phase 1 – 2 )

Ensure all students have access to mentoring programs that contribute to a sense of belonging, academic success and career development.

( Phase 1 – 2 )

### To do this, we will:

More widely adopt Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles across the University to improve the learning and assessment experience for all students.

( Phase 1 – 5 )

Expand flexible teaching and learning opportunities, adapting to the diverse needs and schedules of students.

( Phase 1 – 3 )

Partner with Regional University Study Hubs to provide alternatives to geographic relocation.

( Phase 1 – 3 )

Enhance access to placements for all students by:
  i.  Offering appropriate financial support to qualifying participants.
  ii. Partnering with regional communities and businesses to support students participating in placements in the regions.

( Phase 1 – 5 )

Develop a framework to embed, track and recognise student community engagement into curricular and co-curricular activities.

( Phase 1 – 2 )

GOAL

**Support students in transitioning into employment or further studies, empowering them to make meaningful contributions to society as skilled, informed and engaged citizens.**

COMMITMENTS

Provide ongoing educational and training opportunities to build skills and knowledge for career advancement in a dynamic job market.

Developing a range of programs to enable lifelong learning, tailored to the needs of the future workforce, will enable UQ to better help the state grow and prosper.

Provide comprehensive support and pathways to equip students from underrepresented groups to transition into employment or further studies.

Students from underrepresented groups may have limited access to professional networks and exposure to career pathways. Tailored support and strong networks are vital to help students identify the right opportunities, make well-informed decisions, and feel confident in their chosen path.

Provide alumni with avenues to make meaningful contributions to their communities.

By providing UQ alumni with essential tools, resources, and guidance, we empower them to actively engage with, advocate for, and support aspiration building within their respective communities. Through these initiatives, we will foster lifelong opportunities for alumni, enabling them to play a crucial role in effecting positive change and creating a lasting social impact.

ACTIONS & PHASES

To do this, we will:

Develop a suite of short-course and award programs that respond to the skilled workforce demands in Queensland.

( Phase 1 – 3 )

To do this, we will:

Partner with stakeholders to strengthen employment pathways for students from underrepresented groups.

( Phase 1 – 3 )

Create specialised career services tailored to students from underrepresented groups, offering personalised advice, mentorship, and networking opportunities.

( Phase 1 – 4 )

To do this, we will:

Expand engagement programs across Queensland to create more opportunities for alumni to contribute to their communities.

( Phase 1 – 3 )

# Embed robust foundational capabilities that enable and support The Queensland Commitment.

### Align UQ's operations with The Queensland Commitment.

The Queensland Commitment is an expression of the University's vision, mission and values. To realise The Queensland Commitment, the University needs to align its operations, from its overarching purpose and strategic planning to its internal capabilities, resources and systems, with the purpose of The Queensland Commitment.

### Align UQ's fundraising approach to deliver The Queensland Commitment.

Undertake a comprehensive review of UQ's current fundraising strategies, making necessary adjustments to align with and achieve the interim and final objectives of The Queensland Commitment up to 2032 and beyond.

### Maintain appropriate and necessary governance structures to deliver The Queensland Commitment.

The Queensland Commitment's governance structures need to continually evolve and take new perspectives into account to ensure both the program and the University achieve sustained success in perpetuity.

**To do this, we will:**

Review UQ's strategy, operational planning, organisational capabilities, organisational architecture, and management systems to align with the purpose of The Queensland Commitment.

( Phase 1 – 3 )

Strategically elevate community engagement across all UQ activities, through dedicated resourcing and investment, aligning with the principles of The Queensland Commitment.

( Phase 1 – 3 )

**To do this, we will:**

Set short and long-term targets for philanthropic and fundraising efforts to raise income in support of The Queensland Commitment mission, including flagship equity programs.

( Phase 1 – 5 )

Establish a philanthropic advisory board to enable the ambitions of The Queensland Commitment.

( Phase 1 – 2 )

**To do this, we will:**

Regularly and continuously evaluate The Queensland Commitment governance structures and committee memberships for improvements.

( Phase 1 – 5 )

GOAL

# Embed robust foundational capabilities that enable and support The Queensland Commitment.

COMMITMENTS

**Ensure UQ's identity embodies The Queensland Commitment vision, purpose and principles.**

By aligning UQ's internal and external messaging, imagery, practices and ways of working with the vision, purpose and principles of The Queensland Commitment, we will emphasise that we are a university that welcomes all students whilst advancing the well-being and progress of Queensland.

**Develop a comprehensive framework to harness data-informed insights and diverse voices in institutional decision making.**

The Queensland Commitment aims to make informed decisions that are evidence-based, community-centric, and measurable. To achieve this, UQ will put in place effective mechanisms for utilising data-informed insights and gathering community input to monitor progress, evaluate effectiveness, and shape strategies and interventions.

**Develop and implement The University of Queensland Equity System.**

The University of Queensland Equity System will consolidate UQ's diverse equity-enhancing initiatives into a cohesive and integrated system, combining targeted, broad, and universal programs to ensure cost-effective and scalable support for realising The Queensland Commitment.

ACTIONS & PHASES

**To do this, we will:**

Effectively market UQ in line with institutional changes towards becoming more inclusive and representative of Queensland's population.

( Phase 1 – 5 )

**To do this, we will:**

Enhance and further develop UQ's data assets and reporting capabilities to support The Queensland Commitment.

( Phase 1 – 5 )

Leverage the Voice of Community (VoC) Framework to capture the student voice and effectively incorporate it into the University's decision-making process.

( Phase 1 – 3 )

Leverage the Voice of Community (VoC) Framework to capture community sentiment towards UQ as a values-based organisation, and establish a method to integrate these insights into the planning for UQ decision making.

( Phase 1 – 3 )

Deliver economic and social impact reporting to demonstrate the value of UQ and its community in enhancing Queensland.

( Phase 1 – 2 )

**To do this, we will:**

Consolidate UQ's diverse equity initiatives into a cohesive system, combining targeted, broad, and universal programs to effectively support and scale The Queensland Commitment.

( Phase 1 – 3 )

Develop an evidence base via a Research Roadmap to inform The University of Queensland Equity System.

( Phase 1 )

Develop a sustainable operating and funding model for The University of Queensland Equity System to ensure the long-term viability and scalability of its equity-focused programs and initiatives.

( Phase 1 – 4 )

# Embed robust foundational capabilities that enable and support The Queensland Commitment.

## Ensure that the UQ community better reflects the diversity of Queensland.

You cannot be what you cannot see. UQ must cultivate a leadership and staff population that is as diverse as its student body, positioning itself as a leader of inclusivity and representation.

## Provide safe and inclusive physical and digital environments that uphold diversity and foster a welcoming atmosphere for all community members.

UQ is dedicated to maintaining spaces that are not only safe and accessible but also rich in diversity, ensuring that every individual feels a sense of belonging. This commitment is fundamental to fostering an atmosphere where inclusivity is celebrated, and everyone feels truly welcome.

## Integrate an understanding of the importance of educational equity and community engagement into staff and student development.

Provide opportunities for UQ staff and students to enhance their knowledge of student equity in education and the importance of community engagement, empowering them to become more active, ethical and effective contributors to the University and the broader community.

### To do this, we will:

Achieve targets for recruitment and retention of academic and professional staff from underrepresented groups as established via UQ's Enterprise Agreement, Senate Committee for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, and Reconciliation Action Plan.

( Phase 1 – 5 )

### To do this, we will:

Achieve targets for safe and inclusive physical and digital environments as established via UQ's Disability Action Plan, UQ Technology Master Plan and UQ Indigenous Design Principles.

( Phase 1 – 5 )

### To do this, we will:

Develop policies and systems that support and reward staff and student contributions to The Queensland Commitment.

( Phase 1 – 3 )

Build staff capability in community engagement through training, networks and development opportunities built on Carnegie Classification best practice.

( Phase 1 – 2 )

Develop literacy and awareness opportunities for the UQ community to increase understanding of educational equity and community priorities.

( Phase 1 – 5 )

# Embed robust foundational capabilities that enable and support The Queensland Commitment.

## Prioritise research that provides better outcomes for the state.

Deliver research that aligns with the needs and priorities of Queensland, delivering impactful contributions to the state's growth and prosperity.

### To do this, we will:

Partner with community, government and industry, to understand their needs and priorities, and consider research in critical areas to address and fulfil these requirements.

( Phase 1 – 3 )

Inform and guide government, industry and community stakeholder decision making processes by effectively communicating UQ research outcomes.

( Phase 1 – 3 )

GOAL

COMMITMENT

ACTIONS & PHASES
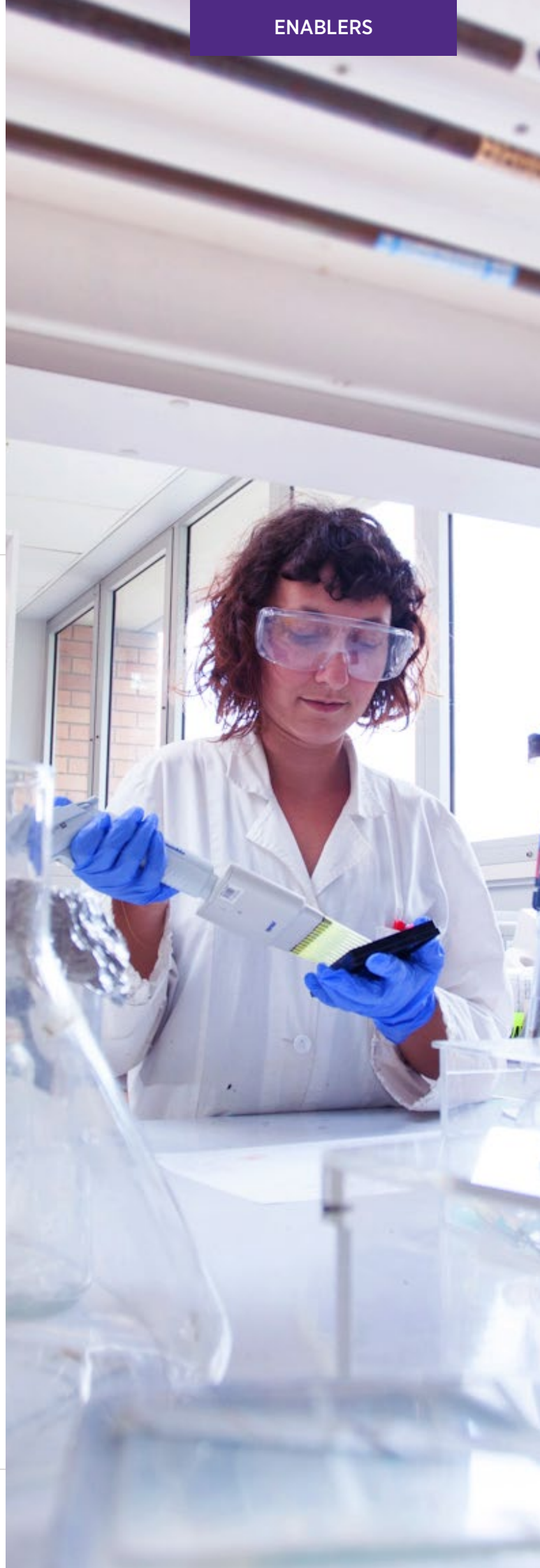
# Appendix A

## Key definitions

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

As referred to by the Tertiary Collection of Student Information (TCSI), the term 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders' refers to a person of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies themselves as an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and is accepted as such by the community in which they live.

### Carnegie Community Engagement Classification

The Carnegie Community Engagement Classification allows universities to demonstrate their commitment to the communities they serve and to demonstrate good practices in the sector. It is a classification framework that represents the best practices in the field and encourages continuous improvement through periodic re-classification. It has been the leading framework for institutional assessment and recognition of community engagement in US higher education since its inception in 2006. A total of 361 institutions in the US are currently classified as Carnegie Community Engaged Campuses. The American Council of Education (ACE) acts as the administrative and research host institution for the classification.

### Community engagement

UQ adheres to the The Carnegie Foundation's definition of community engagement as: "The collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial creation and exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity. The purpose of community engagement is the partnership (of knowledge and resources) between higher education institutions and the public and private sectors to enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching, and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good."

### Equity initiative

Any initiative such as a student-facing program, outreach effort, event, scholarship scheme, governance body, or similar that aims to enhance the access and/or success of students from underrepresented groups.

### Low socio-economic (SES) status

Refers to a student whose permanent address at the time of their first enrolment at an Australian Higher Education institution (referred to as 'first address' by the Department of Education) was in the lowest quartile (25%), by Statistical Area 1 (SA1), as referred to in the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA). The relevant SEIFA index is the Index of Education and Occupation. This variable only applies to domestic students' whose whole permanent country is 'Australia'.

### Regional or remote background

Refers to a student whose permanent postcode at the time of their first enrolment at an Australian Higher Education institution (referred to as 'first address' by the Department of Education) was in a regional or remote area, as defined in the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS). This variable only applies to domestic students' whose whole permanent country is 'Australia'.

### Remoteness area

As referenced in the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) Edition 3, the Remoteness Structure defines 5 classes of relative geographic remoteness across Australia which are characterised by a measure of relative geographic access to services:

- Major Cities of Australia
- Inner Regional Australia
- Outer Regional Australia
- Remote Australia
- Very Remote Australia

### Students with disability

The Tertiary Collection of Student Information (TCSI) refers to students with disability as those who have indicated that they have a disability, impairment or long-term medical condition which may affect their studies.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) defines disability, in relation to a person, as:

- total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions
- total or partial loss of a part of the body
- the presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness
- the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body

- a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction

- a disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgement, or that results in disturbed behaviour.

And includes disability that:

- presently exists

- previously existed but no longer exists

- may exist in the future

- is imputed to a person (meaning it is thought or implied that the person has disability but does not).

## Underrepresented groups

In the interests of inclusivity, The Queensland Commitment uses the term 'underrepresented groups' rather than the term 'equity groups'.

**The Department of Education's Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP)** provides funding to initiatives that improve access to undergraduate courses for people from low socio-economic status (low SES) backgrounds, those from regional or remote areas, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. These are the 3 groups that The Queensland Commitment primarily focuses on currently, and refers to most commonly when using the term 'underrepresented groups'.

## Widening Participation

Widening Participation at UQ refers to programs and activities delivered for students from underrepresented groups to improve access to university and support student success. This includes students from regional and remote areas, low SES background and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders. Widening Participation is the basis for many of the activities delivered to secondary school students, targeted UQ programs include the InspireU Program, Young Achievers Program (YAP) and the Outreach Program.

# Appendix B

## Priority issues for regional communities as identified through UQ's Regional Roadshows 2021–23

**As a university, we are driven by our passion for Queensland – its people, its landscape and its innovation.**

In addition to the over 50,000 students currently enrolled at UQ, almost 60% of UQ's 335,000+ global alumni community are based right here in Queensland.

UQ's Regional Roadshow program aims to celebrate UQ students, alumni and diverse partners across the state and the impact they have in their local communities.

Through this program, UQ representatives visit regional communities to discover more ways to foster growth, health and prosperity for all Queenslanders.

Building on a legacy of regional engagement stretching back 110 years, the UQ Regional Roadshow has visited 22 local communities since 2021: Bundaberg, Charleville, Chinchilla, Dalby, Gatton, Gladstone, Gold Coast, Gympie, Heron Island, Hervey Bay, Laidley, Longreach, Maryborough, Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island), Redcliffe, Roma, St George, Sunshine Coast, Toowoomba, Townsville, Warwick and Winton.

Through strategic roundtable discussions, school visits, workshops, surveys and other events as part of our Regional Roadshows, our community has provided detailed, practical advice on how UQ can best achieve its educational equity goals and provide better outcomes for the state.

The following priority themes have emerged from these conversations and have offered us invaluable guidance in the development of The Queensland Commitment Roadmap.

### Sustainability

Addressing the impacts of climate change, balancing healthy communities and environments with sustainable economic development, and the desire to learn from and partner with First Nations to address these challenges.

### Pathways

Building aspiration and clear pathways into tertiary education for regional, remote, low SES, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and first-in-family students.

### Liveability

Increasing access to health and transport infrastructure, and to community enrichment programs in the arts, culture and sports.

### Visibility

Bringing focus to key local and regional issues. A strong desire to leverage UQ network to elevate key local issues.

### Research and innovation

Improving support for start-ups, including access to programs, funding and collaboration spaces, and greater collaboration between universities, industry and government in accelerating local innovations.

### Jobs and Skills

Retaining talent in regions to address workforce shortages (in health, education and STEM in particular), and understanding the value and impact of student placements and associated challenges such as cost, accommodation, existing work commitments and opportunities.

### Community

Championing locally-led community engagement, particularly with First Nations peoples, and a consistent presence for UQ in the regions.

THE UNIVERSITY
OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

CREATE CHANGE

## Contact

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