

# Shaping our Workforce for the Future

Workforce Strategy, Australian Catholic University

*The Australian Catholic University's Workforce Strategy 2012-2014 sets the agenda to improve how the University recruits, develops, manages and retains staff and how it plans for its future workforce needs.*

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## FOREWORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

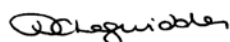
I am pleased to present ACU's Workforce Strategy 2012-2014, "*Shaping our Workforce for the Future*".

This Workforce Strategy will assist the University in meeting legislative obligations, thresholds and standards of the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act, (TEQSA) 2011 for "*well managed higher education operations and human resources*" and our commitments between the Commonwealth Government and the University in the Mission-Based Compact.<sup>1</sup>

The Workforce Planning Strategic Framework responds to recommendation in the Review of Workforce Planning, for "*strategic workforce priorities to be clearly articulated, cascaded and integrated into organisational unit plans*"<sup>2</sup>.

The ACU Workforce Strategy 2012-2014 identifies priorities consistent with the People and Culture Thematic Map, which support the Key Result Area of *Workforce Involvement, Profile & Productivity* in the ACU Strategic Plan 2012-2014. Each priority will require the collaboration and joint responsibility of all organisational units to ensure a high performing and sustainable workforce for ACU.

Human Resources will work collaboratively to support, guide and assist you in the workforce planning journey to '*shape our workforce for the future*' and to develop and implement workforce plan.



Diana Chegwidan  
**Director, Human Resources**

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<sup>1</sup> Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011, Chapter 1, Section 5

<sup>2</sup> Review of Workforce Planning at Australian Catholic University (ACU), November 2010

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## INTRODUCTION

ACU's *Workforce Strategy 2012 – 2014* sets the agenda to improve how the university recruits, develops, manages and retains staff and how it plans for its future workforce needs.

It commits to a series of initiatives that respond to emerging workforce issues such as an ageing workforce profile, particularly, in some academic areas and the demand for and supply of experienced academic and professional staff.

The workforce planning framework illustrates ACU's strategic direction for workforce planning. It identifies ACU's workforce vision of *"a sustainable workforce with the capacity and capability to deliver organisational objectives and achieve strategic goals"*.

This strategy is informed through an understanding of major challenges facing the University and external labour market issues that impact on attracting and retaining both an academic and professional workforce.

This workforce strategy provides direction for those responsible for developing a workforce plan.

Collaboration between Human Resources and Organisational Units (for the purposes of this document, Organisational Units include Directorates, Faculties and Schools) and interventions will steer the University to adapt and respond accordingly.

The Workforce Strategy will be reviewed and refreshed annually to ensure it continues to reflect and respond to workforce challenges facing ACU.

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## STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The *Workforce Planning Framework* (Figure 1) is an important component of ACU's overall strategic planning and management framework. It cascades from ACU's vision, mission and goals to position the University *"to share with universities world-wide a commitment to quality in teaching, research, and service"*.

The framework illustrates a top down approach to delivering organisational objectives to meet strategic goals and support ACU's vision and mission. The framework is informed and supported by a number of Enabling Plans and Thematic Maps.

Organisational Unit plans support the Strategic Plan and consider the impact on workforce requirements and plan accordingly to deliver business objectives.

A key outcome of the workforce planning framework is its vision for *'a sustainable workforce with the capacity and capability to deliver organisational objectives and achieve strategic goals'*.

Australian and global labour market trends, the population demographics and projected skills shortages are well documented. This creates a challenge in attracting staff, (particularly given the global competition for high-quality academics) as well as the retention of employees as a competitive advantage in a tight labour market.

ACU like most of the higher education sector faces similar issues (particularly in regards to the academic workforce). ACU has an ageing workforce profile, faces supply shortage of experienced academics creating a high demand for this cohort with consequential retention issues.

In the context of ACU's Mission-based Compact with Government, the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) Act 2011 and a Student Enrolment Plan forecast to 2017, ACU is taking action to meet challenges presented by an ageing workforce profile and constricting labour market through three overarching priorities<sup>3</sup>:

- Priority 1: Understand the composition and mix of our current and future workforce
- Priority 2: Attract, recruit and retain a high quality workforce
- Priority 3: Build a supported, engaged and high performance workforce

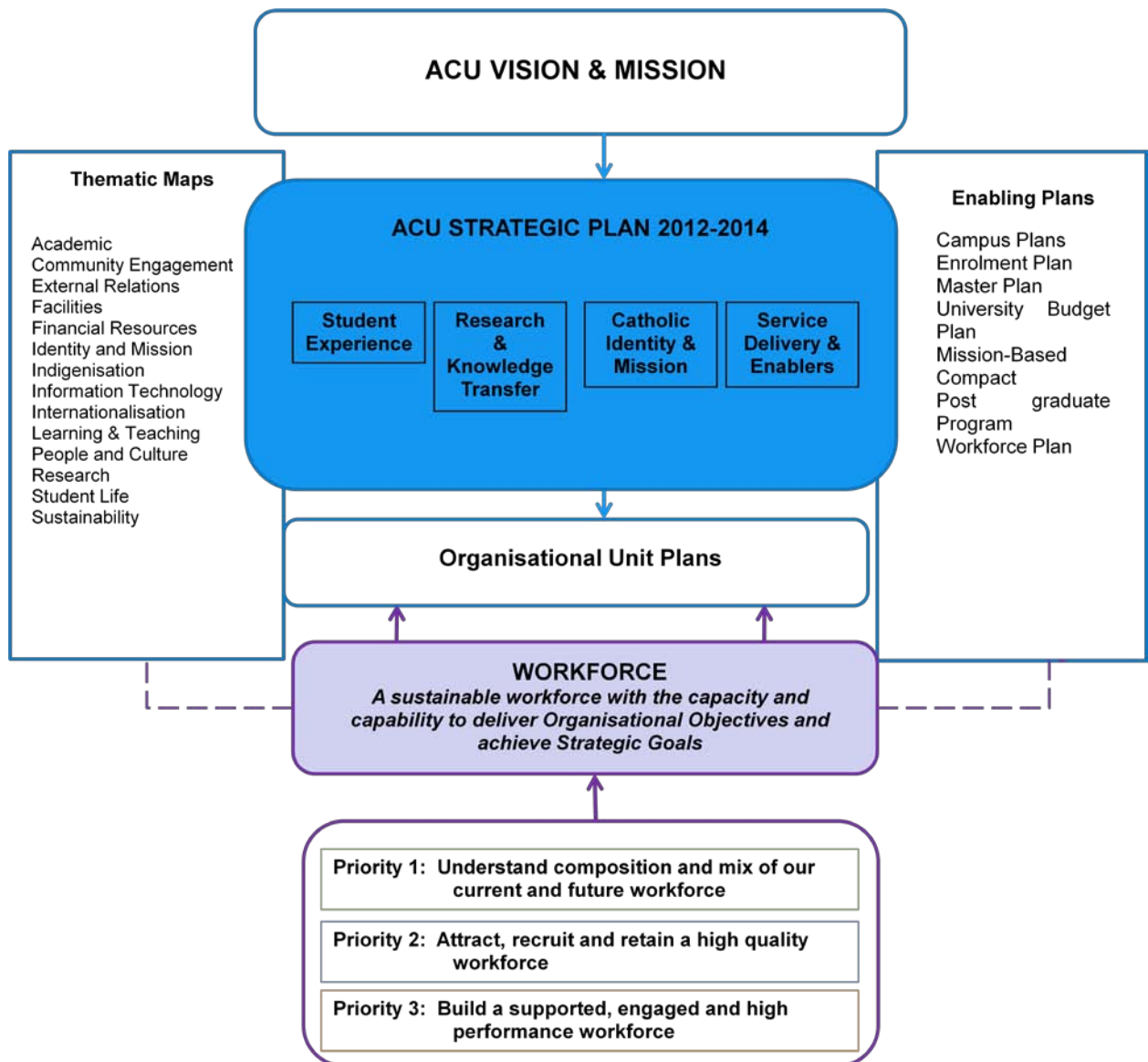
These priorities underpin objectives to support the workforce vision.

This workforce strategy responds to the strategic goals and sets direction for a range of initiatives and projects.

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<sup>3</sup> TEQSA, Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2011, Chapter 1, Section 5 Management and Human Resources

**FIGURE 1: WORKFORCE PLANNING STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2012 – 2014**



## A SUSTAINABLE WORKFORCE WITH THE CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY TO DELIVER ORGANISATIONAL OBJECTIVES AND ACHIEVE STRATEGIC GOALS

ACU's 'Shaping our Workforce for the Future' strategy will be implemented over three years. Throughout this period the strategy will be monitored and evaluated to ensure progress.

The successful implementation of this Workforce Strategy requires commitment and involvement of all staff across the University. Importantly, it is led and championed by the Executive. Human Resources play an important role in collaboration and implementation with organisational units. A well integrated program where everyone understands their roles and responsibilities is important.

**Table 1: Roles and Responsibilities**

<b>Workforce Strategy Partner</b>	<b>Roles and Responsibilities</b>
Executive	Will champion the strategy and provide high level direction from a whole of ACU perspective
Associate Director, HR Strategy, People and Culture Strategic Recruitment and Workforce Strategy Unit Capabilities and Development Unit Organisational Performance Unit HR Relationship Managers	Will lead and coordinate the strategy across the University and provide advice on best practice for key workforce issues
Organisational Units (Faculties and Schools and Directorates)	Will undertake workforce planning and align workforce plans to the Workforce Strategy 2012-2014
All Staff	Seek opportunities to support the University's Workforce Strategy to build a positive work environment

The indicator of successful workforce planning is to have the right staff with the right skills in the right roles at the right time and close the gap between demand and supply, as measured by high performance as defined by the university and the number and length of vacancies. Within this broad measure, attraction, development and retention indicators will show whether particular strategies are working to close the gap.

**Table 2: Priorities Reference Map**

A Sustainable workforce with the capacity and capability to deliver Organisational Objectives and achieve Strategic Goals		
Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3
Understand the composition and mix of the current and future workforce	Attract, recruit and retain a high quality workforce	Build a supported, engaged and high performance workforce
<b>Objective 1</b> <i>Provide accurate and relevant workforce data and commentary to assist business decisions</i>	<b>Objective 1</b> <i>Improve attraction strategies</i>	<b>Objective 1</b> <i>Build capability to support individual and ACU growth</i>
<b>Initiatives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a sound understanding of data elements and measures</li> <li>• Develop a consistent approach to workforce planning for organisational units</li> <li>• Ensure legislative obligations are met including commitments made in Mission-Based Compact</li> </ul>	<b>Initiatives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build an Employer Value Proposition (EVP)</li> <li>• Streamline the recruitment process to offer a more efficient and effective service</li> <li>• Ensure all candidates both successful and unsuccessful, have a positive recruitment experience</li> </ul>	<b>Initiatives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement a capability framework</li> <li>• Establish development programs for both academic and general staff and support succession planning.</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 2</b> <i>Profile and forecast ACU's workforce</i>	<b>Objective 2</b> <i>Grow labour supply</i>	<b>Objective 2</b> <i>Build leadership and people management capability</i>
<b>Initiatives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build the workforce ACU needs to execute its strategic plan</li> <li>• Expand workforce forecast to include non teaching workforce</li> <li>• Build workforce planning expertise across organisational units</li> </ul>	<b>Initiatives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve renewal of the ageing workforce profile</li> <li>• Build critical mass to meet increase in student demand</li> <li>• Increase Indigenous staff participation rate</li> </ul>	<b>Initiatives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop highly skilled and committed leaders and managers</li> <li>• Build supportive program for emerging leaders</li> <li>• Implement Leadership Competency Framework</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 3</b> <i>Monitor workforce trends</i>	<b>Objective 3</b> <i>Improve retention strategies</i>	<b>Objective 3</b> <i>Build a positive performance culture</i>
<b>Initiatives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Map and measure the optimum workforce profile targets and ranges</li> <li>• Measure workforce trends against internal benchmarks</li> </ul>	<b>Initiatives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a comprehensive and integrated employee reward and recognition program.</li> </ul>	<b>Initiatives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a culture of managing for performance at ACU</li> </ul>

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## WORKFORCE PRIORITIES SETTING

A Sustainable workforce with the capacity and capability to deliver Organisational Objectives and achieve Strategic Goals

### Priority 1

#### **Understand the composition and mix of the current and future workforce**

Changes to funding under the Mission-Based compact, legislative requirement to provide DEEWR with a comprehensive set of staff statistics annually, and a shrinking labour market emphasises the need for understanding the makeup of the workforce.

A fundamental step is a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the size and makeup of the workforce including size of workforce, occupational growth, employment structure, workforce characteristics, employee movement and workforce diversity. It is an initial step towards evidence based workforce planning for the University and each organisational unit. It assists identify gaps and forecast future workforce needs, plan for recruitment action and foreshadow impending retirements.

**Objective 1: *Provide accurate and relevant workforce data and commentary to assist business decisions***

#### **Initiatives**

- Develop a sound understanding of data elements and measures
- Develop a consistent approach to workforce planning for Organisational Units
- Ensure legislative obligations are met including commitments made in Mission-Based Compact

**Objective 2: *Profile and forecast ACU's workforce***

#### **Initiatives**

- Build the workforce ACU needs to execute its strategic plan
- Expand workforce forecast to include non teaching workforce
- Build workforce planning expertise across organisational Units

**Objective 3: *Monitor workforce trends***

#### **Initiatives**

- Map and measure the optimum workforce profile including targets and ranges
- Measure workforce trends against internal benchmarks

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A Sustainable workforce with the capacity and capability to deliver Organisational Objectives and achieve Strategic Goals

Priority 2

## **Attract, recruit and retain a high quality workforce**

Targeted workforce planning ensures organisational units have the sufficient number of appropriate staff to deliver on objectives over the next three years and beyond. Visibility of ACU brand name is paramount to attracting potential applicants. Seek new solutions to fill mission-critical positions, including job redesign or targeted recruitment.

### **Objective 1: *Improve attraction strategies***

#### **Initiatives**

- Build an Employer Value Proposition (EVP)
- Streamline the recruitment process to offer a more efficient and effective service
- Ensure all candidates both successful and unsuccessful have a positive recruitment experience

### **Objective 2: *Grow labour supply***

#### **Initiatives**

- Improve renewal of the ageing workforce profile
- Build critical mass to meet increase in student demand
- Increase Indigenous staff participation rate

### **Objective 3: *Improve retention strategies***

#### **Initiatives**

- Establish a comprehensive and integrated employee reward and recognition program

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A Sustainable workforce with the capacity and capability to deliver Organisational Objectives and achieve Strategic Goals

Priority 3

## **Build a supported, engaged and high performance workforce**

Provide clear direction, supportive management, strong leadership and vision, professional development opportunities and fair and equitable management of people. All staff bring to their work a positive and collaborative approach to create a productive and happy workplace.

Skills and knowledge of the current workforce are comprehensive, relevant and up to date.

### **Objective 1: *Build capability to support individual and ACU growth***

#### **Initiatives**

- Develop and implement capability framework
- Establish development programs for both academic and general staff and support succession planning.

### **Objective 2: *Build leadership and people management capability***

#### **Initiatives**

- Develop highly skilled and committed leaders and managers
- Build supportive program for emerging leaders
- Implement Leadership Competency Framework

### **Objective 3: *Build a positive performance culture***

#### **Initiatives**

- Develop a culture of managing for performance at ACU

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## WHERE TO FROM HERE?

Human Resources was restructured and under the guidance of the Associate Director HR Strategy, People and Culture the newly established Strategic Recruitment and Workforce Strategy Unit (SR&WS), Organisational Performance Unit and the Capability and Development Unit together with the HR Relationships Managers is taking a new approach to implementing this strategy.

An action plan to focus on achieving the objectives and meeting the three strategic priorities has been developed. The action plan is a statement of what we want to achieve and the key actions necessary to get there. The action plan is linked to the Key Result Area (KRA) and Indicators and Targets of ACU's strategic plan.

This Workforce Strategy will be sustained by the following documents as part of a Resource Kit:

- Workforce Planning Procedure – including a step by step guide
- Workforce Profile data collection - a data-set with the optimum 'employee mix' including targets and ranges
- Workforce Planning Questionnaire;
- Workforce Planning Priorities Map template; and
- Workforce Planning Action Plan.

The above documents provide direction, guidance and tools that will assist organisational units to interpret and implement priorities and themes in the workforce strategy when developing workforce plans.

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## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

For further information on the Workforce Strategy contact the [Workforce Planner](#) and refer to the [Workforce Planning Resource kit](#) (which includes templates).