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Material in this Strategic Plan projects forward and is not certain.
It is provided as a basis for considered actions within UNE
and for the general information of other readers.

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UNE STRATEGIC PLANNING - overview

The **UNIVERSITY of NEW ENGLAND** has a proud history as a public university in a regional location charged with providing education and research services to achieve quality outcomes. UNE is characterised by a small on-campus student group of mainly school-leavers, and a large off-campus cohort, often mature-age and studying part-time. Measures of student experience and teaching indicate UNE has performed well, although recent reviews also suggest improvement is required in some areas. Student demand is slowing and students are seeking responsive on-line services plus increasing flexibility in their programs of study.

UNE has a record of quality research in a range of areas supporting its academic programs, progressing discipline knowledge and underpinning extension activities in the development of policy and practice. However, UNE's performance across its disciplines is variable. The national and international research climate is also changing in emphasis from individual academics pursuing their interests towards larger groups focussed on programs aiming to address significant problems.

One clear reality is that our external environment, including the expectations of students and users of research, has been changing dramatically and UNE must respond with clarity of vision and in a timely, purposeful way.

UNE must meet the growing challenges we face by defining our direction and ensuring that UNE's position is both identifiable and strong.

In this increasingly competitive world, UNE, as with all universities, must work to improve its profile, to maintain core teaching income by attracting students who will become strong graduates under UNE guidance, and to develop its research impact. It is imperative UNE achieves a distinctive, credible positioning based on powerful performance in all aspects of its operation. This calls for objectivity on performance, on core and potential strengths, and weaknesses. Creativity, boldness and genuine intent to achieve focus and decisive change will be needed.

This Strategic Plan 2007-2010 builds from a planning process that included a discussion paper, consultation sessions across the university and with stakeholders, plus written submissions at three stages. Many called for a strong across-university plan without 'silos' and with clear objectives and forward strategies. Expectations, issues and contributed ideas have strongly influenced the structure and direction of this Plan.

This UNE Strategic Plan establishes a top level Vision and university-wide priorities for the next four years. Sub-plans for action in particular areas, guided by this Strategic Plan, will follow. This Plan will also be the fundamental reference for any future UNE Workplace Agreement.

Although there are diverse views within UNE, the weight of evidence, argument and support is for the bold directional changes set out in this Plan to address needs and set a direction for positive outcomes.

Looking forward, the VISION sees UNE as a strong research-based, teaching and learning university. UNE will provide leadership and achieve strong 'real world' outcomes and impact in its region, elsewhere in Australia, and extending to regions of the world – summarised as 'Achieving Regional and Global Impact'.

Five PRIORITIES are identified for concerted attention over 2007 to 2010.

These are priorities for action and investment so that UNE advances towards its Vision, as earned by its performance on many fronts.

The UNE Executive, with the University Council and teams across UNE, will progress the top-level STRATEGIES and develop associated actions, most of which will be set out in the set of associated plans. A Measurement Framework will accompany this Plan. This will include key expectations, timing and implementation responsibilities.

UNE needs to achieve substantial progress towards its Vision and Priorities by 2008. The Strategic Plan implementation program will include a transitional realignment period in 2007, accompanied by changes to resource allocation.

Focussed, productive, creative and valued staff are crucial to achieving UNE's Vision and addressing Priorities, as recognised through this Plan. Our forward development will depend significantly on the initiative of UNE staff across all areas.

We commend this Strategic Plan to the University of New England communities.



Professor Alan Pettigrew
Vice-Chancellor



Mr John Cassidy
Chancellor

PLANNING CONTEXT – expectations, situation, marketplace

Expectations of UNE and its responsibilities to a range of stakeholders are both broad and complex. UNE stakeholders include UNE Councillors, students, alumni, staff, politicians, our regions' communities, business groups, schools, parents and youth, as well as lifelong learners from across Australia and from other countries.

All of these people have a personal connection with UNE and we must expect that they would reasonably see, as signs of UNE's success in 5 to 10 years:

- A university they are proud of because they are aware it is strongly positioned and responsive in the wider world
- A university that is recognised as a leading research-based institution of learning that offers opportunity for, and reaches out to, its stakeholders
- A university that places priority on regional needs, issues and interactions, and provides leadership through effective contributions, and
- A strong university and a key employer actively contributing to local economies.

Other stakeholders with ties to UNE include governments, professions and employers, industry, business and research and teaching partners.

These groups, plus, increasingly, students when selecting their university and interacting with UNE, will continue to expect and require:

- Delivery of quality services and outputs in timeframes and at competitive standards as promised by UNE, and
- Consistent, effective governance, efficient management, and ongoing financial viability.

UNE's positioning and its performance should both reflect and contribute to fulfilling stakeholder expectations.

Features of UNE's recent performance also provide a baseline for planning. Over 2002 to 2006, UNE achieved a number of its targets including some growth in student numbers and higher income. Retirement of sizeable loans leaves UNE in a tight but stable, debt-free financial situation. UNE efforts and achievements on multiple fronts are well-recorded in a series of Annual Reports.

Aims set in 2002 to build higher student numbers have been met in part – with a step-increase in postgraduate coursework clients. However, UNE remains highly dependent on Commonwealth-funded student places and for HECS and FEE-HELP support, as well as on Commonwealth research funds.

From peaks in 2003-2004, student numbers have declined, reflecting marketplace pressures on many universities. Recent UNE data show:

- Less uptake of Commonwealth-supported places (CSP) from a peak in 2003 with particularly lower off-campus (distance education) undergraduate and post-graduate commencements. On-campus CSP numbers have also been lower.
- Domestic fee-paying and international student growth since 2001 being maintained and international on-campus enrolments remaining relatively small.
- Higher degree research (HDR) enrolments have remained steady in recent years, against a UNE goal and national trend to increased enrolments.

UNE's research performance and income have partially recovered from a fall that began in the late 1990s. UNE's research performance is stabilising in parts and is developing in other areas.

Financially, UNE must achieve its objectives within the income it earns.

Increasing income from teaching of students, research and extension activities, and a wider variety of sources, together with cost management and reduction, are fundamental to UNE's viability and to achieving the aspirations set out in this Plan.

UNE will strive to increase income from all appropriate and available sources.

The strategic planning process in 2006 has assisted UNE to identify some realities of its current performance. As well as positives such as awards and care in teaching, the consultation process identified areas and issues for attention, including:

- Need for leadership to align decision-making and resources to planning, to objectives and to actual performance throughout the university.
- Concern to improve UNE's reputation and position, especially in the core distance education marketplace, in order to attract staff and students.
- Need to modernise IT use in teaching and support services, and to upgrade infrastructure.
- Insularity and cultural resistance to change, with a need for leadership in implementation of plans and programs and in associated staff development.
- Variability of academic, research, teaching, central and service performance, including quality of outputs and outcomes and responsiveness.
- Internal regulation and processes that dull incentive, with a need for wider transparency on positives and negatives, including on UNE's financial position.

Australia's higher education policy and sector drivers have changed significantly since 2002, and the pace of change is increasing. Key external signals for UNE include:

- **Market and policy pressures** for universities to diversify by identifying and harnessing strengths, eliminating some activities, improving performance and building particular expertise.
- **Bipartisan political support for independent quality assessments.**
- **Strong expectations among students, employers and policymakers** for effective professional and career-education addressing workforce skills shortages and for the interdisciplinary thinking and capacities needed for complex problem solving in the globally-competitive knowledge economy.
- **Research funding entities, government and industry** demanding innovation, forceful creative teams, and strong outputs including commercialisation.

- **Plateaus and declines in student numbers** from all sources, including:
 - School leavers and young entrants (due to an aging population and high employment)
 - Postgraduate and mature-age students (influenced by career and family demands, growth in workplace learning, and costs of degrees)
 - International students (reflecting increasing Australian costs relative to growing numbers of universities in Asia, plus university competition world-wide).
- **Strong student expectations for value in their learning experience** and use of technology that helps them meet their constraints on the time and place of learning.
- **Intensifying competition among Australian public higher education providers**, with growth in the number of private providers and potential new entrants, especially in distance and flexible education. UNE now competes for local and off-campus students with a wider range of national and international providers.

UNE must respond to these changing demands through strong performance and by achieving a distinctive, recognised and respected position in the international higher education sector.

Key planning assumptions

This Plan is based on the assumptions that:

- Government policies and funding, including allocation of Commonwealth Supported Places (CSP) to UNE, will be at least as now for 2007 to 2010.
- CSP student education will continue to be the major source of UNE income.
- Through initiatives in this Plan, UNE will achieve its aim to fill all Commonwealth Supported Places against intensifying competition.
- Forecast changes in research funding systems enable UNE to at least maintain research income and provide an opportunity to expand research activity and income.

These assumptions form the base position that UNE's income will be at least at 2006 real levels from 2007 to 2010. If these assumptions prove to be incorrect the Plan will be revised.

A LONG-TERM VISION – strong purpose and positioning

UNE’s Vision is to be a strong research-based, teaching and learning university delivering outcomes in areas of strength to individuals and society.

The Vision and positioning statement below is based on substantial analysis of external directions, and internal strengths and realities.

VISION and Positioning Statement	
POWERFUL PERFORMANCE	<p>In 2010, UNE will be, and be seen to be -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 A successful, exciting, forward-looking research-based, teaching and learning university. 2 At the forefront of creating and delivering relevant research, education and knowledge services for key marketplaces. 3 Demonstrating and respecting excellence, innovation, collaboration, service, diversity, equity, sensitivity to Indigenous and other cultures, and environmental concern. 4 Consistently delivering on commitments in research, teaching, and community and business engagement, backed by strong governance and financial performance.
REGIONALITY FOCUS	<p>UNE will exhibit a portfolio of dynamic activities building on, strengthening and demonstrating expertise in regional and rural systems and social-economic outcomes in Australia and overseas.</p>
GLOBAL REACH	<p>UNE will reach out globally by contributing career-ready graduates and a prominent, robust Australian and international portfolio of research, education, business and community activity.</p>

The first element, Powerful Performance, is the foundation of the UNE Vision. In this competitive environment, powerful performance will be needed for UNE to demonstrate relevance, create impact in research and teaching and learning, and secure long-term viability. UNE must achieve impact to raise its profile and prestige, and to attract the attention of students, staff, partners in learning and research enterprise, and research users. It is the key factor in securing financial resources from all sources.

The proud result of UNE’s heritage and development over many decades is its strength and expertise built by attention to a range of regional issues. Regional expertise and focus is increasingly the basis for UNE winning research grants, commissions or investments in many disciplines. Regionality, in its broadest sense, is the linking theme in research and outreach across UNE, and is the uniting strength on which UNE must capitalise. A regionality theme provides the opportunity for more research, development and integrated teaching, locally, nationally, and contributing globally.

Knowledge, research and graduate careers are increasingly international. To be a relevant and worthy social and education institution, UNE must contribute to and draw from global knowledge in our areas of strength. Expanding global reach through effective contribution will add strength to UNE.

‘Achieving Regional and Global Impact’ through evident, strong performance, will help to identify UNE and its aspirations within Australia and overseas. The catchphrase challenges UNE to harness and focus strengths, align activities, construct competitive advantage, and earn income from opportunities. UNE must do all this to thrive in today’s competitive world as a worthy academic institution.

Areas of UNE will need to respond differently in their efforts towards UNE meeting the Vision and positioning to benefit the whole institution. While many parts of UNE are already addressing regional matters and issues, all will face the challenges of achieving Powerful Performance and extending their Global Reach.

UNIVERSITY of NEW ENGLAND

VISION and POSITIONING

POWERFUL PERFORMANCE + REGIONALITY FOCUS + GLOBAL REACH

PRIORITIES 2007- 2010	A. Achieve Distinction, Leadership, Advantage	B. Create 'Regional to Global' Impact	C. Ensure Student interests are paramount	D. Focus and align all activities	E. Empower Staff, strengthen Accountability
STRATEGIES	A.1 Achieve distinction through integrated, interdisciplinary innovation	B.1 Harness and build regionality focus; commercialise expertise	C.1 Secure current student markets; provide an outstanding experience	D.1 Ensure clear and effective governance systems and practices	E.1 Achieve beneficial change through forthright, open review
	A.2 Establish and maintain a Vision-led performance structure	B.2 Learn with regional communities: local, national, global	C.2 Ensure excellence, relevance and viability in coursework programs	D.2 Align Plan strategies, resources and decision-making	E.2 Delegate authority, with associated accountability measures
	A.3 Build new focus and outcomes in academic work and service	B.3 Engage productively with surrounding areas, and with alumni	C.3 Achieve superior student engagement, learning and skills outcomes	D.3 Build performance by measurement, assessment and recognition	E.3 Streamline UNE processes
	A.4 Co-ordinate UNE presence to influence key audiences	B.4 Develop new paths though national and international collaboration	C.4 Explore new education markets, modes and opportunities	D.4 Advance organisational renewal with aligned staff development	E.4 Advance use of communication, internet and information technology
	A.5 Sustain competitive advantage in a complex, changing sector				E.5 Align financial management to strategies; diversify income sources

Note: UNE will implement the Plan and develop on these fronts over 2007 to 2010. Elements of Strategies are cross-linked. Aims indicate expected direction, order and timing of advances.

PRIORITY A

Achieve **DISTINCTION, LEADERSHIP, ADVANTAGE**

UNE must take the lead on some distinctive, innovative fronts. The tough competitive environment provides opportunities for inventiveness - as well as threats to universities that are slower to change.

Focused, relevant research performance is essential to UNE's positioning as a strong research based, teaching and learning university 'Achieving Regional and Global Impact'. Visible, accumulating outcomes will be crucial to building profile and prestige in the eyes of students, funders and partners.

However, the assessment basis for Government research funding will change from 2008. The Research Quality Framework (RQF) is likely to require researchers in discipline groups to demonstrate their performance via publications, higher degree supervision and impact statements. UNE cannot rely on past levels of government funding for future research. This reality, and UNE's Vision, demand new approaches.

- **UNE needs a strategic portfolio of high impact innovative activities** that bring together research with a UNE regional-to-global edge, teaching, consulting and extension. Through such a portfolio, UNE can contribute to improvement in society, earn new income, extend careers and lift profile with local, national and international partners.
- To achieve such leadership UNE must work in ways different to the past. In return, there will be potential for higher performance and earnings on RQF and contract research fronts, advantage in attracting research projects as well as undergraduate and postgraduate students, and support from policymakers.
- **All staff will be asked to apply their creative, academic and organisational energies toward these aims** guided by the Priorities and Strategies in this Plan.

STRATEGIES and Aims

A.1 Achieve distinction through integrated, interdisciplinary innovation

- Facilitate integrated and interdisciplinary research-based innovation by bringing together discipline skills and developing regionality expertise across UNE to contribute to problem-solving at local, national and global levels.
- Develop programs across industries, sectors and disciplines to attract high-profile funding and motivated, inventive staff to deliver on commitments.
- Encourage staff capacities and ideas likely to align and add to UNE strategic directions. Implement a systematic UNE assessment and reward system for research, teaching and engagement activities [see D.3].

- Aims.** 1. A strategic portfolio of knowledge and practical activities in which UNE is recognised as leading-edge: assessed by impact, income and public profile in 2009.
2. Initiatives from staff underpinning all elements of the UNE Vision and profile, reported annually and publicised.

A.2 Establish and maintain a Vision-led performance structure

- Critically examine research and teaching data to identify and monitor current and developing UNE strengths.
- Achieve a more efficient and effective organisation through structural reform of Faculties, Schools, current Centres and Institutes against the Vision and priorities.
- Develop and implement a leadership and action structure that facilitates integrated and interdisciplinary research, teaching and service engagement.
- Identify current and future leaders within UNE, especially integrators. Provide specific training and challenging development opportunities.

- Aims.** 1. Key elements of a Vision-led performance structure established by March 2007 with efficiencies identified and measured by 2008.
2. Leadership and succession identified and reviewed annually.

A.3 Build new focus and outcomes in academic work and service

- Consultatively develop processes and tools by which academics can focus their strengths and activities to provide a leading contribution to the Vision and Priorities.
- Establish methods for assessing quality of outputs and outcomes against transparent UNE standards, in academic, professional and central support units. Build these into quality, performance and promotion systems.
- Review allocations of time (to teaching, research, outreach, management etc) in various academic roles in relation to Plan Priorities, finances and benchmarks. Revise academic time allocations to optimise productivity in research, teaching, service and management.
- Develop tools for building external and internal customer focus and strong service delivery in UNE administration and academic units. Implement with consultation. Relate targets to benchmarks, and to performance and promotion reviews.
- Ensure central personnel and systems incorporate academic time in costings and include enhancing academic productivity as a key performance measure.

Aims. 1. An average 20% increase in academic productivity by 2009, measured as research, teaching, extension and management performance and outcomes.

2. By 2009, a clear majority of academics active in both teaching and research, within a new framework for time and workload allocation that also accounts for research intensive, teaching only and academic management roles.

3. Each year, measured increases in customer focus and satisfaction in all parts of UNE at individual, team and system level, for external and internal clients.

A.4 Co-ordinate UNE presence to influence key audiences

- Synchronise UNE policy analysis, submissions and interaction processes to reinforce key messages. Involve Council, executive, staff and student representatives.
- Align UNE branding, web profile, marketing and reporting clearly with the UNE Vision and to 'Achieving Regional and Global Impact'.
- Encourage staff to contribute publicly and to communities in areas of UNE focus and their experience and knowledge.

Aims. 1. Strong UNE positions in policy debates, both on principles and effect on UNE.

2. UNE 'Achieving Regional and Global Impact' recognised by key market and stakeholder audiences by 2008.

A.5 Sustain competitive advantage in a complex, changing sector

- Shape and achieve a coherent, distinctive portfolio of UNE courses, research, and extension that builds prestige via 'Achieving Regional and Global Impact'.
- Base this portfolio on critical analysis of current/developing strengths, regionality expertise, performance, market demands and competition, and finances.
- Ensure each component of the distinctive UNE portfolio provides customer service and stakeholder satisfaction that is superior to customer alternatives.
- Facilitate considered, early adoption of ideas and technologies towards ensuring all aspects of UNE performance are equal or higher than key competitors.
- Continually review and innovatively develop the portfolio with regard to markets, to Achieving Regional and Global Impact, and to monitored benchmarks.

Aim. By 2009, clearly evident, measured and sustainable competitive advantage in key student, education, research and service markets.

PRIORITY B

Create 'REGIONAL to GLOBAL' Impact

UNE is a regional university with a history of responsiveness to needs in its region. A decade has also seen rising allegiance to regionality and growth of this expertise within UNE through projects linking university and local-regional needs. UNE has long won R&D funds for agriculture and environmental science (over 60% of research income in 2006). Now more UNE researchers in these and other disciplines are winning projects based on regional issues. This in turn reinforces research and academic interests in regionality, and strengthens UNE expertise.

Focused research-based action is a lynchpin of UNE's Vision. To reposition, UNE needs to focus, integrate and apply its research strengths and program expertise, to achieve impact in many areas of regional-to-global opportunity.

- UNE actions in research, teaching and service should contribute to addressing regional issues, through results, achievements and outcomes that users want, that they find out about, and that they can use (eg. viable industries, better health, new capacities and stronger societies).
- Through research-based innovation, academic programs and structures to facilitate integrated and interdisciplinary endeavour, UNE can build its expertise toward the interesting, income-generating opportunities that regionality presents – locally, nationally (including the National Research Priorities), and through extending this expertise in Asia-Pacific regions and globally.

➤ **UNE's competitive strategy for research and impact**

1. **Develop integrated, interdisciplinary research-based initiatives** that enable UNE to contribute strongly and visibly to problem-solving regionally and globally.
2. **Ensure focus and alignment** for high-impact outcomes in all academic work – research, teaching, commissioned projects and extension services
3. **Harness, build and commercialise regionality expertise**, the key research and outreach theme and strength across all parts of UNE.
4. **Lift UNE presence on national and global stages:** creative delivery of world-class regionality-expertise. Areas of international distinction adding to global reach.
5. **Open new paths** through local, national and international collaborations.

Engagement with our local area is a foundation to UNE existing in Armidale. Part of UNE's contribution to the region, its societies, families and industries, is to proudly position 'regional' as important. To do this UNE must also reinforce its long-time contribution to people in surrounding areas. However, to be successful in ways expected by stakeholders, UNE must have presence and impact in larger arenas, nationally and internationally.

STRATEGIES and Aims

B.1 Harness and build regionality focus; commercialise expertise

- Identify and map UNE regionality expertise, outputs and connections in research, teaching, learning, extension and engagement, locally, nationally and internationally.
- Encourage creative, integrated, interdisciplinary projects and course development including potentially high-impact and income earning combinations of regionality oriented research, education, and commercial services.
- Refine collaborative interfaces and major investments with regard to UNE's Vision and Priorities. Review and clarify the contribution of entities such as UNEP, ABRI, AGBU, ILRIC, NECOM, NERAM, CRCs and UNE properties.
- Based on the Vision and Priorities, re-develop relations with Australian and international R&D, education and aid agencies: AusAid, ACIAR, WB, WHO.
- Facilitate delivery. Review commercialisation principles, policies and performance against commitments for products, services and multi-faceted UNE-led projects.

- Aims.**
1. Greater presence of UNE on national and global stages. Recognition of clever, creative delivery of world-class regionality-expertise demonstrated by visibility in projects, cross-sector and interdisciplinary conferences, and media.
 2. UNE revenue from research-education-extension project sources increasing annually. Growing income from ARC Linkage, CRCs, and global service contracts.
 3. At least two interdisciplinary global-regionality ventures in operation by 2009.

B.2 Learn with regional communities: local, national, global

- Develop processes including two-way forums to encourage flows of learning into UNE courses, research and practices from communities especially cultural and societal groups, Indigenous peoples, industries and employers.
- Facilitate collaborative partnerships with community groups, businesses and wider industry, to work on community issues and provide research opportunities.

Aim. Success evidenced in part by UNE being invited regularly to contribute to local, national and world regions through public, industry, and community avenues. Audit this contribution during 2009-2010.

B.4 Develop new paths through national and international collaboration

- Recognise international action as key to Achieving Regional and Global Impact positioning and prestige, and important for capacity building in staff and students, and student career mobility.
- Noting costs, risks and capacity, selectively build collaborations with entities strategically aligned with UNE's Vision, positioning and performance. Include exchanges that ensure a balance of benefits to UNE, partners and individuals.

Aim. A synergistic set of collaborations with assessable benefits to UNE and partners. These relationships leveraged to build and communicate UNE strengths.

B.3 Engage productively with surrounding areas, and with alumni

- Review with councils, employers and education providers, projected upper secondary and tertiary needs in regions around UNE. Consider the potential for UNE to expand its reach and widen local participation in higher education.
- Cement relationships with government, Indigenous and other cultural groups, communities, and education providers by ensuring UNE commits to what it can deliver, and then delivers quality and timely contributions.
- Review alumni relations, expectations and returns, and ways to develop alumni activities as part of the UNE experience.
- Develop programs to recognise alumni achievements, leverage connections toward regional and global outcomes, and encourage contributions to UNE.

Aims. 1. UNE acknowledged by local-regional stakeholders and policymakers as engaged and contributing well to regional development. Two-way benefits evident.

2. UNE roles identified and agreed staff contributions calculated into performance recognition, reward and development systems [D.3, D.4].

PRIORITY C

Ensure STUDENT interests are paramount

Students are the rationale of a university and vital to UNE's socio-economic contribution, financial viability and visibility. Students are attracted by the prestige generated by high impact research, by particular courses, and by personal references on quality and forms of teaching and services – the overall student experience.

The UNE planning process including analysis of marketplace trends confirmed that:

- Numbers entering higher education are static and the 'pull' of other universities is increasing. UNE is now a market-acceptor and student numbers have declined.
- Maintaining on-campus and off-campus numbers at 2005-2006 levels against market forces will be a major challenge for UNE. Proactivity, backed by resources will be needed to at least hold income from enrolments. Thus, operational and academic efficiencies will be essential to release funds for UNE development.
- Without an aspirational direction – Achieving Regional and Global Impact – lower student numbers will become the default criterion for restructuring UNE areas.
- UNE must see itself as an innovative and responsive university, offering access to students with various work, career and interest needs in flexible, well-priced forms.

➤ **UNE's competitive strategy for students**

1. **Enhance UNE prestige** by regional and global impact through research-based activity. Ensure the standing of a UNE degree.
2. **Make students top priority.** Fulfilling commitments made to students will take precedence over other activities so as to provide an outstanding student experience.
3. **Achieve new levels of excellence in teaching and learning**, in career education, and as outcomes for students welcomed to UNE from all backgrounds.
4. **Strengthen student attractors** – such as use of technologies, customer focus, and creative openings to global pathways.
5. **Reduce education delivery costs** to lift competitiveness and value-for-money.

STRATEGIES and Aims

C.1 Secure current student markets; provide an outstanding experience

- Ensure decisions on re-engineering the course profile, on approaches to teaching and on student services are evidence-based, drawing on student feedback and market intelligence about employer and student needs, interests and preferences.
- Recognise the imperative of competing strongly in distance education. Use market intelligence and objective benchmarks for courses, delivery and experience.
- Re-engineer the student customer interface and processes across UNE from first contact to admission, enrolment and course experience to achieve quality service including responsiveness and humanity.
- Institute a comprehensive student support model including physical, electronic and personal services to address engagement, progression and retention issues.
- Implement strategies to increase on-campus enrolments, including a co-ordinated UNE-Armidale experience, and pathways to lift tertiary participation. Integrate activities of faculties, directorates and residences.
- Co-ordinate, expand and target UNE marketing and promotion to support core income earning activities, particularly distance education.

Aims. 1. UNE off-campus enrolments recovered by 2008, then held at 2005 levels against market forces. On-campus enrolments at least maintained each year. CSP allocations filled by students each year.

2. By 2009, UNE recognised by stakeholders for a consistently outstanding student experience through engaging, relevant courses, aligned teaching using advanced techniques, and responsive customer services on and off-campus.

3. By 2010, a repositioned UNE attracting 50% (from 30%) of those in the local-region population who decide to attend university.

C.2 Ensure excellence, relevance and viability in coursework programs

- With priority, implement the Academic Renewal program to reduce teaching and administration costs by deleting units and rationalising course structures and rules, to achieve a market-driven, quality course and unit profile in line with UNE's Vision.
- Clarify UNE measures of excellence in teaching, learning, delivery and services. Implement quality assurance aligned with UNE priorities and AUQA expectations. Monitor performance against internal and external benchmarks.
- Review and revise strategies to achieve excellence in teaching and learning, eg. by upgrading academic professional development, encouraging scholarly approaches and engaging in focused R&D including collaborative projects.
- Further develop cross-provider collaborations that utilise UNE strengths, reduce overall costs and ensure a critical mass for courses and units in all areas.

Aims. 1. Continuing recognition of UNE coursework against excellence benchmarks.
 2. By 2009: overall teaching costs per student reduced by 20%; number of units reduced by about 30%; more productive use of academic time, and improved efficiency of teaching and student support.

C.3 Achieve superior student engagement, learning and skills outcomes

- Reassess the 2005 Distance Education Review in relation to this Plan. Implement recommendations on students, learning, technology, and DE leadership.
- Develop and embed UNE-wide standards for academic engagement, course materials and use of IT facilities. Invest in staff, systems and training to achieve best-practice use of IT in teaching, learning and student services.
- Review the use of access centres and explore other strategies (including flexi-centres) to underpin student learning and engagement.
- Enhance provision of student career-ready / career-engaged skills and experiences.

Aims. 1. Measurable increases in student engagement and learning outcomes.
 2. All education activities (courses, teaching, timings, technologies), redeveloped to ensure focus on client service and their learning outcomes by 2009.
 3. UNE recognised as a leader in distance programs, on-line delivery and results.

C.4 Explore new education markets, modes and opportunities

- Consider the potential of a UNE-electronic arm offering low-cost, high-demand education for specific markets nationally and internationally.
- Consider the potential of UNE providing high-skill career education at interfaces of university and vocational offerings, on-campus and by distance, aiming to grow regional tertiary participation, enhance access and equity, reduce attrition, and to diversify and lift income. Review links with TAFE and schools.
- Trial new models for meeting continuing professional and career development needs, eg. accumulating credit through learning modules, working with various employers - potentially in collaboration with UNE Partnerships.
- Recruit international students to UNE Armidale through suitable, attractive courses, high-quality learning and community experiences, international partnerships, and effective marketing.
- Linked to Achieving Regional and Global Impact, and prestige, strategically develop pathways and partnerships with international and domestic providers, applying UNE criteria for customer service, academic and delivery standards and course viability.

Aims. 1. Feasibility studies for new market areas (High-skill, UNE-electronic) complete by end 2007. UNE operating soundly in one new and sizeable marketplace by 2010.
 2. Double the number of international students attending UNE Armidale by 2009.
 3. A stronger portfolio of UNE student and teaching alliances in Australia reflecting UNE Vision and positioning objectives, plus financial expectations.

PRIORITY D

FOCUS and ALIGN all activities

Focus is likely to be ‘the’ key step in UNE achieving distinction and success in research, education, impact and reputation. Resource allocation will be used to build focus, including through hard decisions on what activities can no longer be supported. Sustained focus will be vital to achieving all parts of the UNE Vision, including distinctive positioning, powerful performance, and operational efficiencies.

During planning, it has become clear that UNE and all staff need to align in serving current and future customers and creating customer value. UNE’s primary customers are students in key marketplaces, plus local, national and global research users and partners. Within all of UNE, the priority of work must now be:

1. fulfilling UNE teaching and learning promises and commitments made by UNE Schools and individual academics in providing course programs
2. scholarship and research feeding into teaching quality and career-readiness
3. research and extension aligned with UNE goals and meeting needs.

In addition, through analysis, discussion and consultation, UNE has distilled a set of key points regarding focus and the parallel challenge of organisational alignment:

- Positioning UNE to be Achieving Regional and Global Impact will require strategic investment to focus research and teaching, to harness synergies and to extend regionality expertise and global reach. Some areas will need to be reduced, others enhanced or initiated.
- Consistent governance will be vital to sustained performance. Governance responsibilities apply through the university including Council, Executive, each member of staff and UNE associates. Strong governance will support ideas, innovation and focussed investment in research, teaching and careers.
- Academic curiosity, discovery and innovation contributing to the overall UNE Vision and objectives will be supported. Focus of intellectual and service effort and alignment of resources will be crucial. The future UNE will develop its work and staff on linked fronts towards the UNE Vision and in line with Priorities.

- Changes will be achieved with consultation. Much of the onus for positive change and renewal will lie with the creativity and responsiveness of all UNE staff.
- Engaged, focussed, interested and productive staff are crucial to achieving UNE priorities and performance targets, for the benefit of all and the institution.

STRATEGIES and Aims

D.1 Ensure clear and effective governance systems and practices

- Consultatively review the relationships and working of UNE entities (Council, Academic Board, Executive, academic and associated units, all committees) in relation to implementing the UNE Strategic Plan including governance, quality, time and cost efficiency, and strategies for procedural simplification.
- Seek an Academic Board plan related to implementing the UNE Strategic Plan.

Aims. 1. Efficient, aligned organisational structures communicating, interacting and adding-value towards UNE Vision and Priorities.

2. UNE will continually meet governance, regulatory and reporting requirements.

D.2 Align Plan strategies, resources and decision-making

- Review by the Vice-Chancellor of executive arrangements for aligning and developing sub-plans, and for ongoing review against Strategic Plan Priorities, strategies and aims, plus benchmarks and targets in subsidiary plans.
- Manage Strategic Plan implementation as a formal project through 2007-2009.
- Align future resource budgeting and allocation clearly to UNE decisions toward achieving Plan Priorities and performance targets throughout the university.

Aims. 1. Major Plan implementation stages progressing through 2007; refine 2008.

2. Regular, transparent reporting of progress across UNE including resource flows.

D.3 Build performance by measurement, assessment and recognition

- Design and implement a UNE Performance Measurement system based on the Strategic Plan Priorities, strategies and aims, flowing logically to subsidiary plans and through to performance appraisal and recognition.
- Consultatively design and implement a sensible, effective personnel performance appraisal system useful for all staff, clearly aligned with Priorities, and tailored to UNE circumstances and stakeholder expectations.
- Link performance appraisal with reward and promotion systems that enable UNE to recognise excellent and strong performance, and to deal appropriately with under-performance of individuals or groups.

Aims. 1. UNE Measurement operating by mid 2007; UNE Appraisal during 2007-08. Executive performance targets based on UNE Plan set and published by Feb 2007.

2. Priorities and performance targets in role descriptions, position advertisements, enterprise agreements, AWAs/contracts, aligned to the Strategic Plan and sub-plans.
3. Retain, build and attract strong, focussed staff through challenging work opportunities and fair systems for identifying and acting upon levels of performance.

D.4 Advance organisational renewal with aligned staff development

- Invest in organisational and staff development programs to support Plan directions including focus, structures and performance measures. Needs include:
 - Identifying, building and mentoring future leaders, across all areas, including skills in planning, review, difficult decision-making, motivation and management.
 - Tiered programs on change, self-appraisal and personal development under evolving circumstances, counselling, re-orientation and creative thinking.
 - A set of initiatives to build customer service on multiple fronts.
- Introduce systematic staff succession and recruitment planning based on analysis, including monitoring of age, diversity and equity profiles against UNE principles.

Aims. 1. Engaged, UNE focused, results and service oriented staff who will see excellent performance being recognised, and problems being actively addressed.

2. A work environment that acknowledges diversity, and encourages and utilises the skills, experiences and ideas contributed by all UNE people and communities.

PRIORITY E EMPOWER Staff, strengthen Accountability

Achieving powerful performance on many fronts is essential to UNE securing its Vision and future. All strategies in Priorities A to E are directed toward the enduring 'powerful performance' of the Vision.

This Plan also recognises heartfelt concerns and frustrations about the way UNE has been operating. Added to these, are expectations of Council and contractual stakeholders for efficiency and delivery.

Operational challenges noted during planning consultation include: cultural shelters, resistance to change, insularity, self-interest, time use and work ethic; need for both leadership and skilled managers communicating and taking hard decisions; layers of administration, bureaucratic burden, process orientation and general inefficiencies.

Consultation also provided perspectives on how to address a range of these issues:

- UNE needs more empowering structures linked to accountabilities to face realities, be tougher and bring in new ways, build a culture of self-improvement.
- UNE needs less complexity, more energy, to inspire all-staff engagement in change programs, to free resources to tackle issues and support development.
- Understanding our performance is vital. UNE needs frank and realistic benchmarks for many facets of performance. Assertions are not results. This applies for claims of 'excellence' and for all other elements in the UNE Vision.

STRATEGIES and Aims

E.1 Achieve beneficial change through forthright, open review

- Identify aspirational benchmarks for excellent UNE performance in research, teaching, extension, collaborations, student experience, learning and career outcomes, technical support, administration, and investments. Include in sub-plans.
- Capture the planning consultation momentum into new review, communication, and information transfer paths across and through UNE structures.
- Instil a culture of continuous improvement with decisions based on data /evidence.
- Ensure UNE fulfils its commitments to social values including equity, Indigenous and equal employment opportunity, sensitivity to the environment and ecologically sustainable development.

Aims. 1. Benchmark data and evidence used in UNE planning, communications with internal and external audiences, decision-making and reporting on performance.

2. Stronger UNE and area performance measured against decided key benchmarks.

E.2 Delegate authority, with associated accountability measures

- Recognising UNE's responsibilities as a public institution, design and develop delegated accountability systems that work to empower UNE managers.
- As part of structural change, introduce externally advertised Heads of School positions plus systems for delegation of authorities and accountabilities to them. Also provide leadership and management training.
- Ensure empowerment includes processes for institutional review and staff-self appraisal and performance enhancement.
- Prepare risk management profiles to support implementation of UNE directions.

Aims. 1. Progressive implementation of new arrangements for leadership and associated increases in responsibility and authority in operations 2007-2008.

2. UNE, and its parts, consistently delivering on commitments in research, teaching, learning, career-readiness, community and business engagement, governance and financial and regulatory performance.

E.3 Streamline UNE processes

- Substantially simplify UNE administration, through cultural and procedural change in all UNE parts, and refocus from processes to service and results orientation.
- Leaders in central areas will critically and consultatively review all administrative processes in relation to Plan Priorities, and develop change options including proposed shifts in work/responsibility and cost-return-risk analyses.
- Review whether UNE is securing potential social and financial returns from proactive adoption of UNE policies such as OH&S, equity and diversity.

Aims. 1. Substantial reforms to processes by 2008. Measurable performance results from streamlining in improved academic productivity and services and lower costs.
2. Ongoing, measurable contribution of streamlining reforms to performance enhancement, productivity increases and cost reductions.

E.4 Advance use of communication, internet and information technology

- Achieve optimum, cost-effective and quality use of UNE technology investments, by ensuring IT decisions are realistic and backed by all-staff training/development.
- Consultatively achieve an internet-intranet communication and information system that integrates stand-alone processes and databases across UNE.
- Build productive and positive IT usage for and by all types of stakeholders including students from first contact, different groups of staff, and partners in research, teaching-learning and extension activities.

Aims. 1. By 2010, UNE benchmarked in second to first quartile of university IT systems, in terms of services to and usage by staff and customers, and returns on UNE and user investment costs.

E.5 Align financial management to strategies; diversify income sources

- Achieve and sustain a transparent budgeting process that staff can see is supporting UNE in aligning its planning, decisions and outcomes over time.
- Provide tools for incorporating options-analysis, based on full costs and benefits calculations including intangibles, into sub-plans and project feasibility studies.
- Ensure the full costs of all activities are identified, understood and covered by recurrent or project funding.
- Critically review infrastructure, align facilities with UNE directions and optimise service provision including through options such as outsourcing.
- Diversify UNE revenue sources through initiatives in this Plan including specific programs for international and fee-paying students, commissioned research, consulting and extension work, commercial opportunities, philanthropic investment and fundraising.

Aims. 1. From 2007, resource allocation aligned with Plan directions and targets.
2. By 2010, UNE costs reduced across-the-board by 15%; in central areas by an average 25% (real \$), with measured increases in productivity, quality and service.
3. By 2010, 40% of income independent of Government funding or place allocations.

UNE PLAN – MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK

A strong Strategic Plan provides the key reference points for monitoring and adjusting performance towards the Vision and Priorities – which may be refined as external circumstances change. In the future, UNE will consider using conceptual measurement systems for tuning performance (such as a Balanced Scorecard). Reporting models such as Triple Bottom Line will also be taken into account.

For this planning period, particularly the first years of re-orientation, it is most important that UNE measure and report its performance and outcomes against what it says it will do. UNE currently operates a network of quality assurance processes mainly relating to academic products but performance assessment across UNE is not well developed. A number of challenges will arise in deriving responsible UNE Measurement and Performance Appraisal systems during 2007. In particular:

- UNE needs to meet the call from many energetic and concerned staff for a performance appraisal and reward process that aligns with UNE's plans, links with key decisions and is applied to also address performance problems.
- The UNE executive and managers need to lead introduction of new systems. Identifying UNE measures, and flowing these to sub-plans targets is a first stage to achieve collective ownership, usage and respect for new processes.
- UNE the organisation, and many staff, are not used to developing firm targets (or key performance indicators – KPIs). An introductory process is needed, one that also takes into account various influences on results.

This Strategic Plan introduces, as part of the Measurement Framework, the concept of Strategies with indicative Aims. These provide important guidance to those developing, contributing to and implementing subsidiary plans.

- In sub-plans, measurable targets will be expected where the manager and team have considerable influence over potential results. Guidelines will be provided.
- The 2005-2006 UNE financial and statistical statements will provide a baseline for reporting financial and operational performance including students and research.

The commitment to achieving a strong, useful and balanced UNE Measurement Framework by June 2007 is stated in strategy D.3. UNE Measurement will flow from the Plan to sub-plans, to decision-making, then back through review, appraisal and reporting, for continuous improvement. Demonstrating this, an initial distillation of UNE level performance expectations in this Strategic Plan is provided on page 19.

The overall accountability for implementing the UNE Strategic Plan 2007-2010 and its strategies, rests with the Vice-Chancellor and executive management.

This Plan identifies broad Priorities to address major UNE change needs and to achieve strong outcomes. It is not organised around academic or administrative units. **Responsibilities for developing and steering particular university-wide strategies will be published by the Vice-Chancellor.**

In each sub-plan, strategies, actions and measurable targets should follow visibly from the UNE Strategic Plan. Just as this Plan provides a basis for executive KPIs, targets in the sub-plans will flow into KPIs for senior manager and academic leaders.

Reflecting the reality of operational requirements in today's demanding environment, parts of the university cannot function as 'silos'. Integration and interaction is crucial. Many of the subsidiary plans will need to attend to strategies across five University Priorities, while some will concentrate on addressing one or two Priorities.

For instance, Human Resource Development planning, actions and targets, will be pivotal to progressing all five Priorities towards the longer term UNE Vision. In addition, the Human Resources function could be responsible for co-ordinating, refining, progressing and reviewing four or five UNE Plan strategies. Along with other parts of UNE, the HR function should also take a major role in developing and implementing the Empowerment and Streamlining strategies.

The Vice-Chancellor will convene regular structured university level reviews of progress against key points of the Strategic Plan – including the key planning assumptions, general performance and major areas under development. With Council input, this process will fulfil requirements under the National Governance Protocols and the general principles of responsible management.

UNE subsidiary planning will include development of 2007-2010 plans for each major academic and organisational unit, plus across-university plans for:

- Teaching and Learning
- Student Services including Residences
- Research Management
- Human Resources Development and Equity
- International
- Development
- Marketing
- Information Technology
- Facilities and Environment
- Financial and Cost Management.

AT UNIVERSITY LEVEL – key performance expectations set by this Plan

- **UNE Plan implementation:** structural change, sub-plan responsibilities early 2007; transition to 1.2008.
- **Achieving Regional and Global Impact :** awareness and impact measurably evident by 2009.
- **Visible leadership in regional-to-global impact** through integrated and Interdisciplinary innovation.
- **Students as top priority, customer focus :** measurable increases each year from 2006 base.
- **Challenging benchmarks for teaching, learning and careers-education** excellence attained by 2009.
- **Outstanding student learning and university experience:** benchmarked and achieved by 2009.
- **UNE distance education position and enrolments** returned to 2005 levels by 2008, maintained to 2010.
- **Repositioned UNE attracting** and graduating 50% of surrounding region student cohort by 2010.
- **Double the number of international students** attending UNE Armidale by 2009.
- **Income from education** increased by sound operation in at least one new, sizeable market by 2010.
- **Diversified revenue sources:** by 2010, 40% of income independent of government funding or places.
- **Powerful Performance - Focus and Alignment:** Measurement system 2007, Appraisal and Reward 2007-08, Results from Empowerment and Streamlining strategies by 2008-2009.
- **Enhanced academic time use,** using multiple strategies: academic productivity up by 20% by 2009.
- **Cost of course delivery:** by 2009, overall teaching costs reduced by 20%; improved efficiency of support.
- **UNE cost reductions (and/or productivity increases):** 15% across UNE, average 25% centrally, by 2010.
- **Secure Government support** and funding during Strategic Plan implementation and UNE development.

This summary of key performance expectations at UNE level indicates priorities for alignment of budgets over 2007 and 2008. Resources are limited and will follow this Strategic Plan.



University of New England