



STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

Progress towards RMIT 2010: Designing the future

RMIT is a global university of technology with its heart in the city. This description is about what RMIT aspires to be in 2010. The description also evokes the ways that RMIT will achieve its vision.

In 2006 a five-year strategic plan RMIT 2010: Designing the Future was put in place to give direction and form to this description. In the third year of implementation of this plan, it is time to reflect on our progress to date.

We have already reached some of the targets we set in 2005, but this means there is more work to maintain as well as building on early successes. Other goals are still to be reached, but with continued focus and further improvement I am confident that they can be realised by 2010.

Throughout this journey RMIT has remained committed to those core values that define us as an institution of learning—that we are useful, creative, connected, fair and passionate.

Although we remain committed to our goals, strategy develops through action and reflection. This document is a reminder of our goals, a reflection on progress to date, and a call to action shaped by the circumstances now before us.



Professor Margaret Gardner AO
Vice-Chancellor and President

Mission

RMIT is a global university of technology with its heart in the city of Melbourne.

Vision

- Global in outlook and action, offering our students and staff a global passport to learning and work
- Urban in orientation and creativity, reflecting and shaping the city of the twenty-first century
- The first choice provider of work-relevant learning in Australia, preparing students for the professions and vocations of the future
- One of Australia's top research universities, internationally known for our applied focus and for excellence in research and research education in our chosen fields.

Our path from vision to reality

Global passport

- Ensure a diverse University with students from inside and outside Australia, and an internationally diverse and connected staff.
- Increase the number of students undertaking an international education experience overseas to 1000 annually.
- Ensure that the majority of programs have professional accreditation or recognition internationally as well as nationally.
- Deliver internationally relevant programs at a network of sites offshore and onshore.
- Internationalise programs through courses, work experience or pedagogy.

Urban creativity and innovation

- Contribute to the sustainable development of our cities.
- Build university infrastructure and services that are integrated with and enhance the cities we occupy.
- Celebrate and support the independence and creativity of our students and staff.
- Embrace innovation in research, education and service provision.

Work-relevant and industry engaged

- Ensure that education programs are informed by advice from industry and professions.
- Provide an assessed work-integrated learning experience for students in every program.
- Build strong external and internal networks in five key industries— aerospace and aviation, automotive, building and construction, health and community services, and media and communications.
- Strengthen linkages between vocational and higher education to develop work-relevant pathways between the sectors and 'dual sector' qualifications combining the best of both.
- Develop career opportunities for our students, and so support strong graduate employment outcomes.

Research excellence

- Build research and engage with industry in key multidisciplinary areas in the Research Institutes, Global Cities, Design, Platform Technologies and Health Innovations. These research institutes will provide RMIT with research focus and the required critical mass to have significant impact in these areas.
- Increase research income from nationally competitive research grants to rank within the top 15 Australian universities.
- Improve publication citations in chosen fields to remain within the top 15 Australian universities.
- Maintain or improve research graduate satisfaction and completion rates to keep within the top 15 Australian universities.

Our progress from vision to reality

Global passport

The University is diverse in its student population with 35% from beyond Australia. The academic staff profile is also diverse with around 50% being born overseas.

The number of students who undertook an international education experience has increased to 317 in 2008, added to this are a further group of more than 170 on international work placement. Innovative projects to internationalise the curriculum and create virtual mobility experiences add to the global passport. The University has increased the number of scholarships available to assist student mobility and support staff mobility through research leave awards and RMIT Foundation fellowships.

A paper mapping the possibilities for further international accreditation and recognition of our programs is being completed this year.

A complete review of offshore contracts and approval of new policy for offshore teaching models has strengthened and consolidated our offshore presence.

Development of RMIT Vietnam and its involvement with Melbourne through work-integrated learning, student exchange and study tours, and delivery of a professional development unit for staff on internationalising the curriculum adds another rich dimension.

Urban creativity and innovation

The University has been developing standards and targets for reducing our emissions, energy and water footprint on all our campuses. We have committed to purchasing 20% green energy by 2009 (currently at 15%) and have reduced our water usage substantially over the last three years. The major redevelopment of RMIT buildings and infrastructure where we have committed to high Green Star ratings for buildings will have a significant and positive impact on improving the sustainability of the cities we occupy.

A \$500m redevelopment program over the next three years will transform around one quarter of RMIT's buildings. The planning involved has seen the development of exciting architecture and integration with the city.

The RMIT Learning and Teaching Investment Fund allocates over \$2m annually to innovative learning and teaching projects. The RMIT Research Investment Fund supports research and innovation. The University also spends over \$4m annually to support student creativity and life through the Student Union and the arts, recreation and sporting activities of RMIT Union.

Major upgrades to online provision and storage for services, research and educational material have ensured innovative delivery. This has been accompanied by significant enhancement of e-resources held by and accessed through the library. Major grants to review improvements to staff policy and indirect costs have been added to a series of projects streamlining services from accounts payable through to centralising examinations which have improved services.

Work-relevant and industry engaged

Every program or program cluster in the University has industry or professional advisory committees.

New policy on work-integrated learning has deepened its place in the curriculum through clarifying the scope and emphasising assessment of this learning.

New industry forums in five key industries (aerospace and aviation, automotive, building and construction, health and community services and media and communication) are providing strategic engagement on education and research questions across the University.

The 'dual sector advantage' has taken shape in new programs and new combinations of courses and an increase in the proportion of students who have an experience which draws on the strengths of each sector.

A new project is in place to improve career support to students including support for students wishing to seek work internationally.

Research excellence

Four new research institutes are in place and with them an increase in research positions and opportunities across the University. The institutes also provide a way of building high quality cross-disciplinary research.

Competitive research income from ARC Linkage grants increased in 2008, and a major increase in the number of applications for ARC Discovery grants is hoped to be a precursor of greater success this year. This is a step towards demonstrating greater research quality.

Research citations of publications by field and disciplines are being collected and these are identifying where RMIT has national and international excellence on these measures.

Research postgraduate satisfaction has increased substantially over the last two years, more postgraduate research scholarships have been funded by the University each year for the last three years, and completion rates at RMIT for research students are above the national average.

The Research Investment Fund allocates around \$9m annually to support tenure track postdoctoral fellowships, early career researcher awards, research leave and the research institutes.

The following table shows evidence from indicators and accompanies that with information about the shape of RMIT that shows our breadth and diversity.

Goal	Indicator	Target	2005	2007
Strong graduate outcomes in employment and further studies	HE graduates in FT employment	Graduates in employment or further studies at 5% above sector average	83.6%	83.7%
	TAFE graduates in employment		82.8%	83.2%
	HE graduates in further FT study		13.5%	13.5%
	TAFE graduates in further study		35.4%	45.1%
High graduate satisfaction	HE coursework overall satisfaction	Overall satisfaction index at 5% above sector average	65.8%	67.6%
	VET overall satisfaction		82.9%	82.7%
	HE HDR overall satisfaction		70.1%	83.0%
Strong research performance	National competitive grants ranking	Top 15 nationally on key research indicators	23/38	23/38
	Higher degree research completions ranking		8/38	9/38
	Weighted publications ranking		12/38	12/38
Strong liquidity (current assets/current liabilities)	Current assets/current liabilities	1:1	0.65	0.87
Strong net operating result/net assets	Net operating result/net assets	To achieve or exceed the sectoral average	2.4%	3.4%
High international standing	Ranking in the top 100 THES world universities		200th in world, 10th in Australia (2007)	
Good infrastructure quality	75% of buildings classed as satisfactory by the Tertiary Educational Facilities Management Association		70.9%	75.0%
Unscheduled absenteeism	Unscheduled absenteeism	To achieve or be less than the Australian university average	6.4	5.6

The shape of RMIT

Students (number of enrolments)	(headcount)	(percent)
Higher education	43,974	67%
Vocational education	21,683	33%
Domestic	42,772	65%
International	22,885	35%
Total	65,657	

By Location	(headcount)	(percent)
City	40,608	62%
Bundoora	6,029	9%
Brunswick	2,550	3.9%
Vietnam	2,914	4.4%
Regional Victoria	289	0.4%
Off-campus Australia	2,430	3.7%
Other offshore (Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Singapore, Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, Shanghai, Wuhan)	10,837	16.5%

Portfolios	(headcount)	(percent)
Science, Engineering and Technology	20,712	31.5%
Design and Social Context	21,097	32.1%
Business	23,627	36.0%
University programs	221	0.3%

Level of education	(headcount)	(percent)
Postgraduate research	1,612	2.5%
Postgraduate coursework	8,759	13.3%
Undergraduate	33,603	51.2%
Diploma, advanced diploma and above	9,957	15.2%
Cert 1–4	10,248	15.6%
VCE/VCAL	536	0.8%
Other	942	1.4%
	(EFTSL)	(percent)
Total—equivalent full time (EFTSL)	43,341	

Fields of study		
Natural and physical sciences	1,960	3.0%
Information technology	3,074	4.7%
Engineering and related technologies	6,954	10.6%
Architecture and building	3,024	4.6%
Agriculture, environment and related studies	293	0.4%
Health	3,019	4.6%
Education	1,243	1.9%
Management and commerce	15,465	23.6%
Society and culture	2,740	4.2%
Creative arts	4,458	6.8%
Mixed field programs	1,110	1.7%

Fee types	(EFTSL)	(percent)
Government funded	22926	52.9%
Australian fee-paying	3670	8.5%
International fee-paying	16288	37.6%
Other	457	1.1%

Staff		
Total (number of staff excludes casuals)	3,604	
Total (full time equivalence—FTE)	3,338	
	(FTE)	(percent)
Academic	1,054	31.6%
Academic staff born in Australia		49.9%
Academic staff born overseas		50.1%
Teaching (VET/TAFE)	486	14.6%
Administrative, technical and professional	1,798	53.9%

Next steps

In the first three years of our five-year Strategic Plan RMIT 2010: Designing the Future much has been accomplished. In particular, work in the following areas will continue over the next two years to ensure that our goals are met:

- **Teaching and Learning:** Continue to promote innovation in teaching and learning and further develop opportunities for work integrated learning. Develop priorities for internationalising the curriculum and enhancing the student experience.
- **Research:** Support the research institutes in continuous improvement against Institute plans developed in 2008 and focus on increasing citations in recognised journals and pursuing competitive grant opportunities. Establish a Graduate Research School to consolidate administration and support for research students.
- **International:** Implement the Dual Hub plan, driving closer links between RMIT's Australian and Vietnam campuses. Develop strategic institutional relationships to support increases in staff and student mobility (including work integrated learning) and increase the international recognition of RMIT qualifications.
- **Industry Engagement:** Develop some strategic partnerships in key industries to provide education, work integrated learning and research.
- **Students:** Continue to focus on work integrated learning and graduate outcomes. Continue to use student feedback to further develop our offerings and implement the next stage of the student portal to enhance our ability to communicate effectively with our students.
- **Staff:** Continue to implement the outcomes of the staff survey, and conduct another survey to measure progress and identify new areas for development. Continue to strengthen leadership and communication.
- **Infrastructure:** Continue to invest in major infrastructure, including developments for the Design Hub and the Swanston Academic Building. Continue to improve ICT infrastructure, both in Australia and in Vietnam.
- **Financial:** Continue to work to ensure financial targets are met, allowing the University to invest in education, research, infrastructure and staff development.