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Proposed strategic direction for RMIT
Briefing with RMIT people

Monday 10 December
Tuesday 11 December
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Outline

• What’s happening?
• Why do we need a new strategic direction?
• What’s RMIT’s vision, what do our stakeholders value & where do we need to position ourselves for the future?
• RMIT’s objectives.
• What changes can be expected?
• Next steps.
• Providing feedback and involvement.
• Questions and discussion.
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What’s happening?

• A new strategic direction is proposed for RMIT.

• This will result in a new strategic plan, coupled with an implementation plan.

• The ideas behind the proposed direction were initially discussed in the Vice-Chancellor’s inaugural address in October 2000.

• The proposed direction is a summary of these thoughts and the feedback about the inaugural address received from RMIT people.

• In addition, it responds to the issues and ideas raised by staff over the past 12 months at events such as the departmental visits and faculty lunches.
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What’s happening?

• These thoughts and ideas have been reviewed and developed into a proposed direction by the RMIT Strategic Planning Forum, made up of:
  
  – RMIT Chancellery:
  
  – Deans; and
  
  – Directors of People Services, People & Organisational Development, Financial Services, Property Services and Corporate Affairs.
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Elements of RMIT’s activity

Academic Programs and Services

- Learning Support
- Learning resources
- Student support / counselling

Academic Support Services

Policies, procedures, functionality

Knowledge Management

HR

ICT

Capital Infrastructure

Finance

Marketing

Strategy Positioning

Organisational Think-tank

Learning Support Review
Academic Support Review
R&D Implementation
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Why do we need a new direction?

Issues we face

• Competition is growing quickly - education and research is now offered by a diverse range of new players.

• We are a middle-size, middle ranking, generalist university in a time when success is driven by specialisation.
  – it is not just happening in education

• In addition, we are facing a future of:
  – tighter funding
  – further deregulation
In summary
Our key strategic challenge

What is the new value proposition for a middle size middle ranking generalist institution in a time when success is driven by specialisation?

It can only be about:
• teaching and research synergies
• a wide array of disciplines being brought together for the benefit of students and...
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Why do we need a new direction?

Internal environment
Added to these external pressures is our internal environment.

Internal issues include:
• high overheads;
• duplication of services across the university;
• Poor horizontal integration;
• inconsistent campus conditions;
• bureaucratic processes;
• external ranking for our programs;
• extensive workloads;
• poor research image; and
• lack of differentiated support services to meet the diverse needs of our student body.
Why do we need a new direction?

• The new strategic direction is necessary to build a sustainable future for RMIT.

• In short - if we stay as we are in the current and emerging environments we will simply not be here in five years.
RMIT’s strengths

- We also have many strengths which we want to build on:
  - breadth and depth of programs;
  - extent of business and industry partnerships and alliances;
  - international scope, scale, brand and experience;
  - broad, innovative practice;
  - diverse student and staff body;
  - hard working committed staff who want to make a difference;
  - dual sector; and
  - strong domestic brand.
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Implications

We need to build a sustainable organisation.

• We must be more targeted about what programs we offer, what research we undertake and what partnerships we form by becoming more focused on the needs of our stakeholders.

• We need to increase student satisfaction and teaching quality across the board.

• Reduce overheads.

• We need to enhance the working environment for RMIT people and particularly address workload issues.
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Implications (cont’)

- Significantly improve our research image
- Strengthen horizontal integration capacity for the benefit of students and clients

We need a strategy that addresses these issues and best positions RMIT for future sustainability.
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Starting point

• As a starting point we need to articulate:
  
  – what we aspire to (our vision for RMIT);

  – what our customers, clients and partners value;

    and, therefore,

  – what sort of organisation we need to be (our position in the market).
Starting point

What are the themes informing RMIT’s vision?

• RMIT was founded to serve working people.

• RMIT is internationalised.

• RMIT is about innovation and working at the interface between technology and people.

• RMIT values its independence and yet recognises its interdependence.

• RMIT promotes the values and practices of a civil society that is aiming for global sustainability and measures itself against the triple bottom line.
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Starting point

RMIT’s vision.

RMIT is a dual sector public university that is engaged, partnered and creative in servicing individuals, enterprises and communities both nationally and globally and committed to innovation – the generation of new ideas and their take-up by people.

- Triple bottom line

It measures its performance through financial, social, environmental & cultural indicators.
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Starting point: What do our students and clients value?

**Individuals** - Facilitating individuals into productive work and careers by providing quality education programs & services characterised by:

- Work integrated education and research experiences.
- Tailored support services.
- Flexibility of access by both mode, location & time.
- Learning management for successful achievement.

**Enterprises** - Facilitating innovation and enhancement of organisational performance by providing educational and learning programs/services characterised by:

End result: Satisfied, employable & completed learner/citizen.
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Starting point

What do our research partners/clients value?

Partners/clients:
Useful, novel, timely and cost effective research outcomes characterised by excellence.

End result: Solutions to multi-faceted real world problems.
RMIT position

To meet the needs of our stakeholders & to achieve our vision what sort of organisation do we need to be?

Positioning:

RMIT is a university of technology that combines expertise in technology and people and the interface between them.

RMIT applies this expertise to facilitate:
• individuals into productive work and careers;
• innovation, thereby enhancing performance in organisations; and
• communities in adapting to change.
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RMIT – our objectives for the future

• **Relevance to meet emerging needs in the work place**
  – Identify new areas of need and refresh existing areas of focus
  – Tailor services consistent with market need.

• **Improve quality**
  – Improve quality across the board guided by integrated scholarship.

• **Build capability**
  – Grow our research capabilities and profile.
  – Strengthen our teaching expertise with new modes
  – Learn more about our students as they change

• **Scale**
  – Achieve determined scale.

• **Realignment of resources:**
  • Eg target infrastructure
What changes can be expected?

**In short:**
- New way of looking at RMIT and what we deliver.

- New way of working for RMIT people.
  - Dissolving boundaries – working together in new and innovative ways.
  - Possible structural change.

- Evolving program portfolio.
  - Need to match external needs with RMIT’s quality criteria. This will mean reallocation of some of RMIT’s program resources against these criteria:
    - Student satisfaction
    - Employment outcomes
    - Completion rates
  - Through reallocation we can devote time & resources to enhancing our strong programs and developing programs that meet emerging needs.
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New ways of thinking about RMIT

- **PATHWAYS**
  - Vocationally targeted pre-vocational, VET, bridging & re-entry programs

- **Mass**
  - VET, undergraduate and post graduate mass market openly framed common architecture coursework programs (including non-award courses and corporate training)

- **Niche**
  - VET, Undergraduate and Post Graduate niche market profession related coursework programs

- **Practice based R&D**
  - Higher degrees by minor thesis, project or professional practice. Consultancy services

- **RESEARCH**
  - Research Masters & PhDs, Post Doctoral research and research services to industry
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The Concept

External Needs

Programs and Projects

- RMIT Pathways
- RMIT Prime (Mass, Niche & Practice related R&D)
- Provision of services (incl. T&L research)

People

- Scholarship and Research clusters
- Discipline refresh

RMIT Teaching

RMIT Research

Learning Support Services & Resources Functions
Impact on the way we work

• The proposed direction will involve changes to the way we work - the extent of this change has not been fully determined yet.

However, one thing is certain - to meet the needs of our stakeholders RMIT must change.

→ RMIT must align itself with what we know our students value: work integrated learning; tailored support services; & access flexibility

→ Adopt clear approaches to decision making about what programs, what content and at what quality will ensure our future.
   Eg. Phasing out of the lowest quality programs as measured by externally visible indicators (CEQ, PREQ & TAFE student sat’n)
   Targeted reapplication of resources to areas of manifest need

→ We also need to reduce overheads and duplication across the university.
Priorities for 2002

1. Overhead analysis, reduction and reallocation to new costing models

2. Reformed profile process

3. Quality improvement and AUQA / AQTF preparation
   - Program improvement and program quality assurance cycle
   - Program renewal / strategic courseware development

4. Learning support and academic support processes / structures

5. Research grant applications and research appointments
Next steps

- The new strategic direction has been agreed to in principle by the RMIT Council.

- After feedback from these sorts of discussions has been evaluated an implementation plan will be developed - due date 21 December 2001.

- As soon as the implementation plan has been finalised all staff will receive another briefing on the initiatives to be pursued.
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Feedback and involvement

• If you would like to provide feedback please speak to your direct supervisor who will pass on your comments.

• Alternatively, use the email address on the RMIT future website. All feedback sent in via the website will be forwarded to the Strategic Planning Forum

• FAQs are also on the site and will be updated as more questions come in from you.

• New and important information will be highlighted in E-mail News.
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Questions/discussion

with the Vice-Chancellor and the Strategic Planning Forum.