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22

Student Success and Retention Plan



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

La Trobe University acknowledges that our campuses are located on the lands of many traditional custodians in Victoria. We recognise their ongoing connection to the land and value their unique contribution to the University and wider Australian society.

We are committed to providing opportunities for Indigenous Australians, both as individuals and communities through teaching and learning, research and community partnerships across all of our campuses.

La Trobe University pays our respect to Indigenous Elders, past, present and emerging and will continue to incorporate Indigenous knowledge systems and protocols as part of our ongoing strategic and operational business.

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Message from the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Student Success)

La Trobe University has always been an innovative and future-thinking institution, committed to widening participation. As a result, La Trobe has transformed the lives of thousands of students and their communities and we are very proud that our graduates stand out for their practical approaches, creativity, and resilience.

True to this tradition, La Trobe continues to welcome students with a range of previous educational experiences and at varying points in the degree lifecycle. It is for this reason, that our student success mission – “to provide enriched and supportive experiences that enable every student to achieve their unique version of success, irrespective of previous educational attainment, personal background, campus location and mode of delivery” – is so critical.

To achieve success, we must foster a shared commitment to improving the student experience among every member of our learning community. We are fortunate to have a number of sector leading support programs delivered across our Colleges and central divisions, including Career Ready Advantage, comprehensive placement and Work Integrated Learning experiences, our Elite Athlete Program and the award-winning services provided by our residential colleges. By building upon these programs, and collaborating across our campuses, Colleges and Divisions to develop new offerings, we can support our students to persist, progress and complete their degree in a manner that fits with their personal circumstances and aspirations.

The objectives set out in this Student Success and Retention Plan will support us to deliver an outstanding student experience for all students, from point of offer through to graduation and beyond. This plan supports the achievement of objectives outlined in the La Trobe University Strategic Plan 2018-2022 and encompasses support for our undergraduate, postgraduate and Higher Degree Research cohorts. Five key objectives have been identified, and the associated actions demonstrate our commitment to a whole of institution approach with transparent measures for our success.

I am looking forward to partnering with students and staff from all of our campuses, to meet the needs of La Trobe’s diverse student community and inspire them to achieve their unique version of success.

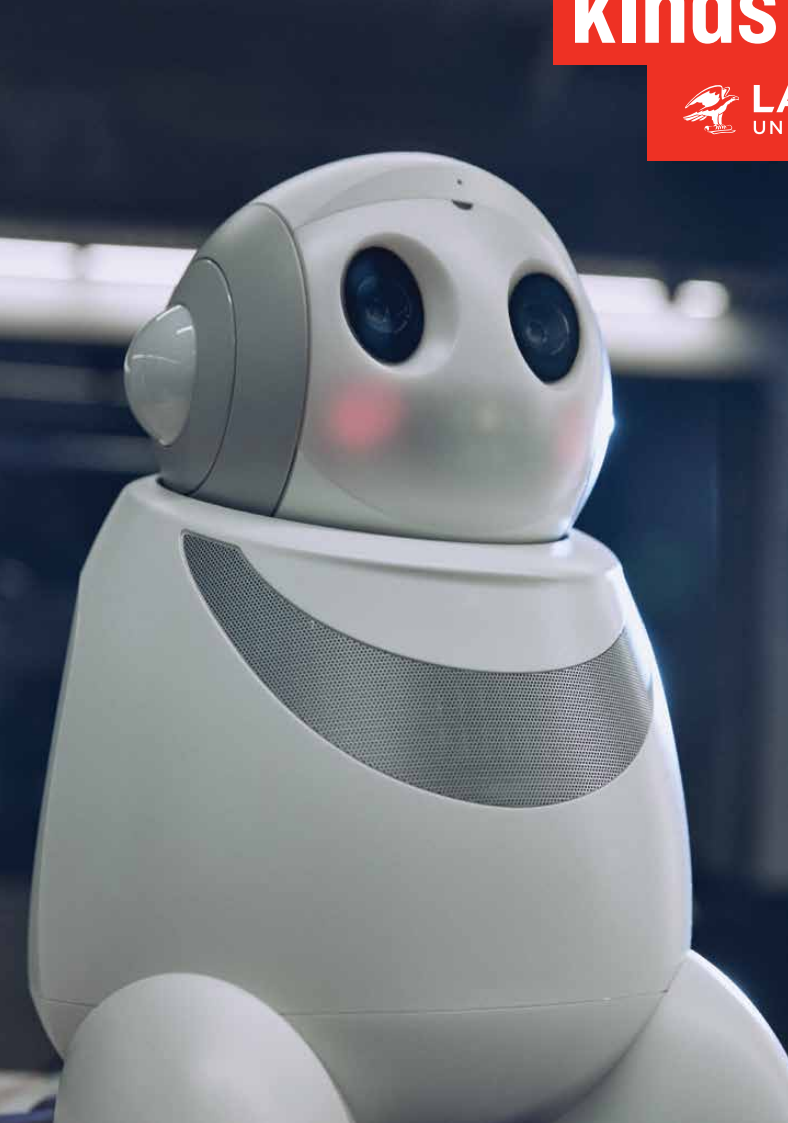
Professor Jessica Vanderlelie
Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Success)



All kinds of clever



LA TROBE
UNIVERSITY



Our student success **mission**

To provide an enriched and supportive experience that enables every student to achieve their unique version of success, irrespective of previous educational attainment, personal background, campus location and mode of delivery.

Our student success **vision**

To become an exemplar in innovative and effective student success programs.

Our **values**

This approach is based on our **values** of:

- inclusiveness, diversity, equity and social justice
- pursuing excellence and sustainability in everything we do
- championing our local communities in Melbourne's north and regional Victoria
- being willing to innovate and disrupt the traditional way of doing things

Our **cultural qualities**

Our vision is underpinned by La Trobe's cultural qualities of connected, innovative, accountable and care. Collectively, these qualities will guide our student-centred approach to ensuring our students are given the greatest possible opportunity for success:



Connected

We will actively seek collaboration across Colleges, Divisions, campuses and with external partners, to deliver connected and responsive support for all our students.



Innovative

We will harness the experience of our students and diverse communities to innovate creative solutions to current challenges and deliver evidenced based programs that support our increasingly diverse student cohort.



Accountable

We will evaluate our work and openly seek feedback from students, staff and our community and industry partners to ensure we continuously improve our services.



Care

We will place the student experience at the heart of our work and provide opportunities to challenge, nurture and extend our students, as we support them to achieve their goals and enrich their communities.

Our student success **strengths**





38,826 STUDENTS

ACROSS ALL CAMPUSES

TOP IN VICTORIA

FOR SUPPORTING LOW SES AND
REGIONAL STUDENTS TO ATTEND
UNIVERSITY

2ND IN VICTORIA

FOR EMPLOYER SATISFACTION¹

**TOP 10 IN
AUSTRALIA**

GLOBAL GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT RATE²

1. Employer Satisfaction Survey, QILT
2. QS Employability Rankings

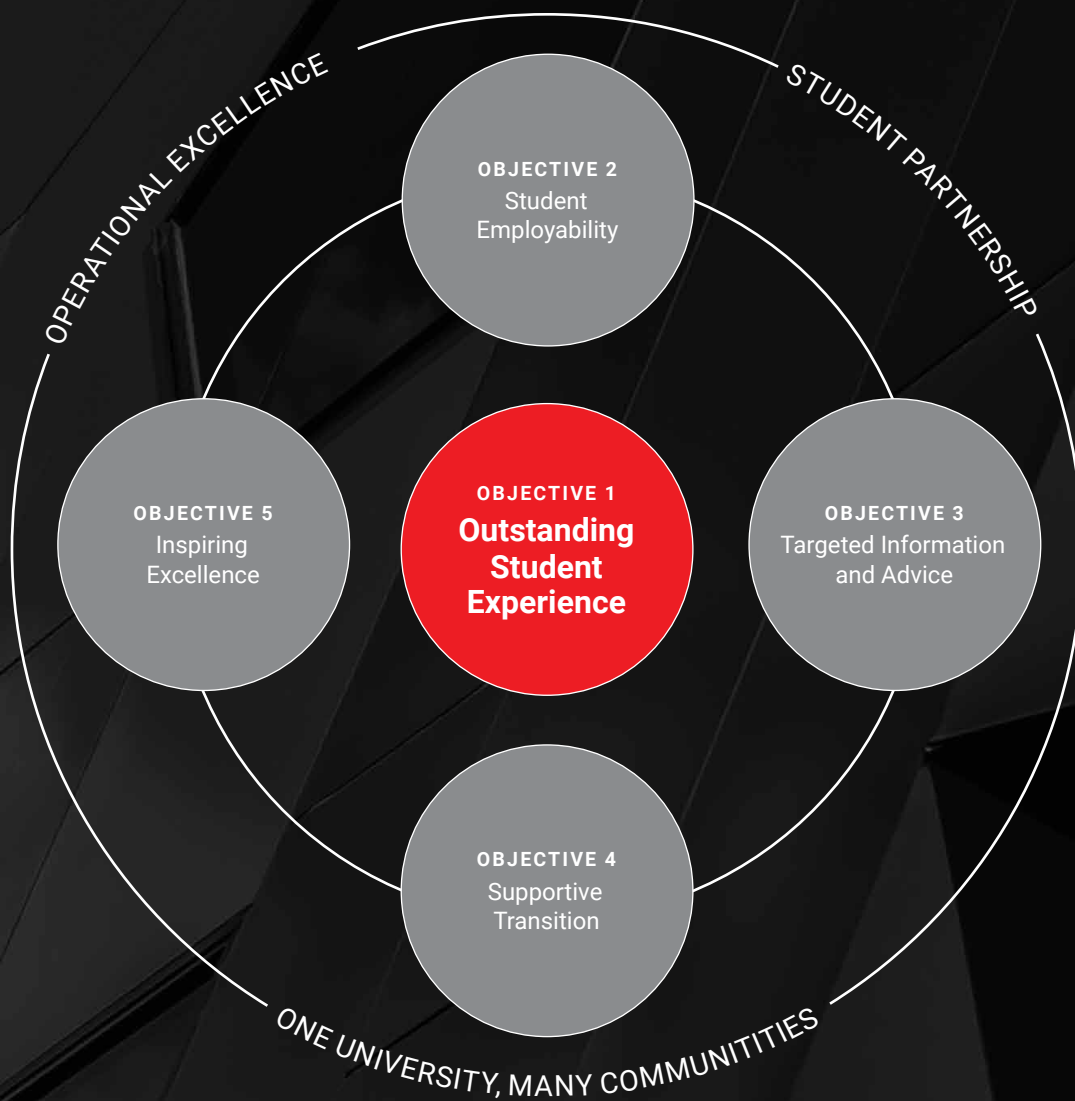
Our student success objectives

The University's core objectives and enablers are identified in the 2018-2022 Strategic Plan. The Student Success and Retention Plan, outlined here, sets out the strategies, and targets that the University community will work to deliver over the next five years. This plan is designed to complement the strategies outlined in the Learning and Teaching Plan, Research Plan and Globalisation Plan, and should be considered in partnership with these plans.



Our student success objectives

Objectives and enablers	What we will do	How we will measure success
Outstanding Student Experience	Deliver a consistently high-quality experience for all students.	The Strategic Plan 2018-2022, identifies that La Trobe will be in the top 12 in Australia and top in Victoria for high-quality student experience (as measured by the student experience survey and the Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire)
Student Employability	Continually improve graduate employability outcomes.	The Strategic Plan 2018-2022, identifies that La Trobe will be in the top 12 in Australia and top in Victoria for graduates in full time employment (as measured by the Graduate Outcomes Survey).
Targeted Information and Advice	Design and implement a clear and comprehensive model for the provision of information and advice to students across all services and campuses.	La Trobe will be in the top 12 in Australia and in the top 3 in Victoria for student retention and student support (as measured by the Student Experience Survey and Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire).
Supportive Transition	Implement a comprehensive, targeted and supportive transition model to meet the diverse needs of our student cohorts across the student lifecycle.	La Trobe will be in the top 12 in Australia and in the top 3 in Victoria for student completion.
Inspiring Excellence	Recognise and celebrate student excellence and support all students to achieve their potential.	La Trobe will be the leading Australian university for the recognition of diverse student excellence.
One University, Many Communities	Provide equitable and targeted services at all our campuses, in a manner that is connected to the campus and local community.	The student experience will be of equally high-quality at all La Trobe campuses as measured by the Student Experience Survey.
Student Partnership	Partner with students in the development and implementation of strategies to support student success.	All relevant governance structures and operational areas will have an active student representative voice.
Operational Excellence	Deliver high-quality, evidenced-based services to students with embedded processes for continuous improvement.	Student support services will be highly regarded by students as measured by the Net Promoter Score.



About this plan

Building on the core objectives, enablers and strategies outlined in our *Strategic Plan 2018-22*, this Student Success and Retention Plan acts as a roadmap for how we will provide enriched and supportive experiences that will enable our students to achieve their unique version of success. It sets out the actions, measures and targets we must pursue in order to thrive as an innovative, future-thinking university.

The Student Success and Retention Plan is underpinned by five objectives:

- 1. Outstanding Student Experience**
Placing the student experience at the heart of everything we do, to ensure that our students come first as we strengthen our university community. Fundamental to this is the essential role that all La Trobe staff play in enriching the experience of students.
- 2. Student Employability**
Working in partnership with university staff, industry and community we will design and deliver activities and experiences that support the development of knowledge, professional skills and personal capabilities that will enhance a student's lifelong professional success.

- 3. Targeted Information and Advice**

Transforming the way we connect students to our services while providing a seamless experience that is meaningful and meets their learning and support needs.

- 4. Supportive Transition**

Providing a holistic transition experience which enables students to connect, engage and succeed at all stages of their studies through multiple entry points, pathways and study modes.

- 5. Inspiring Excellence**

Recognising and nurturing the unique, outstanding abilities and attributes of our students through community, sporting, cultural, academic and entrepreneurial endeavours, enabling them to explore their passions, expand their horizons and extend their capabilities.

Together, these five strategic priorities will foster Student Success and Retention perspectives in our staff, forge an exchange of knowledge with our communities and position La Trobe to successfully navigate changes in the higher education landscape.

Our core objectives

By placing the student experience at the heart of everything we do, we can ensure that our students come first as we strengthen our university community.

Outstanding student experience

A university education is a life changing experience, particularly for our students that come to university from a range of social and demographic backgrounds. The provision of an outstanding student experience sits at the centre of the University Strategic Plan 2018-2022 and the associated goal and target are mirrored in this Plan.

Our aim is to provide students at all campuses, levels (undergraduate, postgraduate and Higher Degree Research) and modes of study, with experiences that enrich their time at university and support them to realise their aspirations. We will achieve this by providing opportunities to develop real world skills, to contribute to their communities and to develop as global citizens.

By placing the student experience at the heart of everything we do, we can ensure that our students come first as we strengthen our university community.

University staff play a fundamental role in building a supportive and engaging university community. Through our Cultural Qualities and the Customer Service Charter, all staff will play a role – from the delivery of high-quality teaching and support services, to ensuring our campuses are safe, welcoming and inclusive.

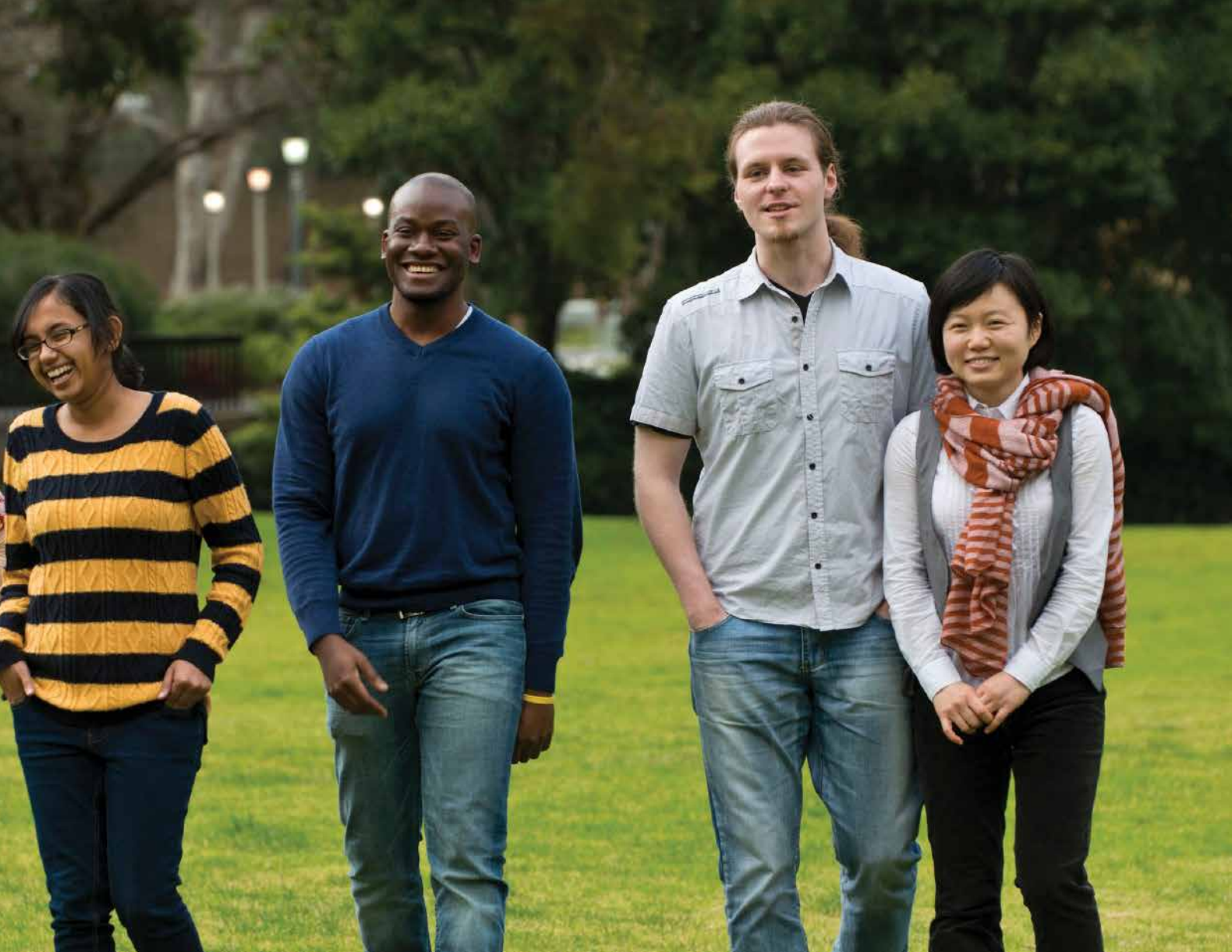
Provide students with diverse opportunities to engage with the university and its local and global communities.

We will encourage our students to broaden their perspectives and contribute towards our local and global communities, through volunteering and global mobility. To support this, we will streamline the process for students to identify and access potential opportunities by the developing an Experiences Portal linked to the Career Ready Advantage program.

Establish a framework for current student communications, across all campuses.

We will redesign the student communications operating model, to increase awareness of our support services, provide a continuing channel for the provision of feedback and increase engagement in the learning community.





Support the work of the Student Associations to enrich the student experience.

Across the life of this Plan, we will work in partnership with our Student Associations and the wider student body, to create a vibrant learning community and deliver experiences that ignite curiosity and allow students to follow their passions.

Develop the La Trobe University Student Partnership Framework and associated resources and support programs.

In partnership with the Student Leadership Liaison Group, we will develop a framework and associated resources to guide all areas of the University to partner with students in the development, improvement and delivery of our work.

Facilitate varied opportunities for students to provide feedback about their experience and for the university to close the feedback loop.

By building on our strong relationships with the Student Associations and formal feedback processes, we will deepen the opportunities for students to share their experiences. We will continue to hold student listening posts at all campuses no less than twice yearly and deliver online and in-person mechanisms to show students how we are responding to their feedback and improving our practice.

Develop and implement university-wide peer-peer mentoring programs.

We will provide opportunities for all students to engage in peer-peer mentoring throughout their degree.

Overall goal for Outstanding Student Experience

GOAL

Deliver a consistently high-quality experience for all students.

2022 TARGET

The Strategic Plan 2018-2022, identifies that La Trobe will be in the top 12 in Australia and top in Victoria for high-quality student experience (as measured by the Student Experience Survey and the Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire).



Employability at La Trobe encompasses the activities and experiences that support the development of knowledge, professional skills and personal capabilities to enhance lifelong professional success.

Student employability

Technological advances are dramatically shaping the nature of work. The reality of this uncertain future is that our graduates can expect to navigate a labour market with limited employment security. To be successful they will need to be adaptable, resilient, creative and confident in their abilities. The La Trobe University Strategic Plan 2018-2022, outlines a goal and target for employability that is mirrored in this Plan. To achieve our goal, we must work in partnership across the university, with our industry partners and alumni to design and deliver industry relevant, curricular and co-curricular experiences for our students.

Employability at La Trobe encompasses the activities and experiences that support the development of knowledge, professional skills and personal capabilities to enhance lifelong professional success.

The Career Ready Advantage program is a sector leading employability program and we will use it to recognise the efforts of our students as they connect with industry and engage with experiences aligned to their desired employment and life goals. Through our curricular and co-curricular offerings, we will support students to articulate their skills and personal capabilities and develop the confidence to succeed across the life of their careers.

This objective of the Student Success and Retention Plan supports the vision outlined in the La Trobe Learning and Teaching Plan and will focus on the non-curricular aspects of our work in employability.

Renew the Career Ready Advantage program to support connection to the curriculum and increase student engagement across the student lifecycle.

We will partner with staff and students to ensure all relevant curricular and co-curricular activities connect easily to the Career Ready Advantage program. Additionally, we will monitor the take-up of employability opportunities across diverse student cohorts, including identified equity groups.

Facilitate opportunities for students to engage in diverse work-based learning activities inside the curriculum and out.

We will collaborate across the university to identify opportunities for our students to explore the nature of work, through formal placement, industry challenges, projects and site visits. In addition to domestic and in-person activities, we will also facilitate increased international and virtual work-based experiences.



Increase engagement with the La Trobe Industry Mentoring Program.

We will partner with alumni and industry to provide flexible opportunities for our students to connect with an industry mentor nationally and internationally. In addition, we will build the confidence of our students to make the most of their mentor relationships.

Provide opportunities for students to develop skills in innovation and entrepreneurship.

We will build upon the strengths of our existing curriculum, the La Trobe Incubator and our industry and community partners, to offer activities (hackathons, innovation challenges etc.) that foster an enterprise mindset in our students.

Position Unitemps as the leading provider of recruitment services for La Trobe students and alumni.

We will continue to promote work on campus opportunities through Unitemps and extend our network of national and international employers.

Develop a renewed strategy to maximise engagement of students, staff and alumni with LinkedIn Learning resources.

We will provide support to students and staff to realise the potential benefits of LinkedIn Learning resources to their professional and personal development.

Overall goal for Student Employability

GOAL

Continually improve graduate employability outcomes.

2022 TARGET

The Strategic Plan 2018-2022, identifies that La Trobe will be in the top 12 in Australia and top in Victoria for graduates in full time employment (as measured by the Graduate Outcomes Survey).

The student experience of our services will be seamless and of a high quality, irrespective of the varied operational areas providing advice.

Targeted information and advice

Many students encounter challenges during their studies and La Trobe University strives to empower and guide our students at every step. Students can count on our staff and programs to provide them with the greatest possible opportunity to succeed in their studies. At the core of our information and advice strategy is a commitment to a seamless and easy to navigate model of student advice, that is data informed and ensures equitable service provision across all our campuses and for those studying online.

The student experience of our services will be seamless and of a high quality, irrespective of the varied operational areas providing advice.

La Trobe has a range of high-quality student support programs available to students. We have an opportunity to connect our services in a manner that is meaningful to students and meets their learning and support needs. To achieve this, we will work in partnership with our students and academic colleagues to ensure our services meet their needs and supports the fundamental student-teacher advising relationship. Additionally, we will leverage technology to create a connected, data informed and responsive model, that will provide tailored advice to those who request it and allow us to target proactive support to those identified as at risk.

Design and implement a student information and advice model that incorporates and connects all service areas.

We will achieve this by mapping our existing services, identifying gaps in our provision and clearly articulating to students and staff the pathways for accessing support. In addition, we will develop a series of online resources and diagnostic tools to enable students to identify their needs and connect with just-in-time support.

Implement comprehensive learning support across all campuses.

We will deliver the La Trobe Learning Hub at all campuses, and provide face-to-face, online and after hours learning support to all students. Additionally, we will connect the Learning Hub to the classroom, through the work of our Subject Support Tutors and Peer Learning Advisors.





Develop predictive analytics models to inform targeted intervention and outreach.

We will draw upon multiple data sources, including measures of engagement, performance and demographic information, to identify students who may benefit from proactive advice and support.

Position Succeed@LaTrobe as the frontline core proactive risk advising program.

Through continued partnership with the Colleges, we will increase the scalability of the Succeed@LaTrobe program and extend its reach across the university.

Overall goal for Targeted Information and Advice

GOAL

Design and implement a clear and comprehensive model for the provision of information and advice to students across all services and campuses.

2022 TARGET

La Trobe will be in the top 12 in Australia and in the top 3 in Victoria for student retention and student support (as measured by the Student Experience Survey and Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire).

Provide targeted support and opportunities for students to connect, engage and succeed at all stages of their studies.

Supportive transition

For a number of years, La Trobe University has been committed to raising aspirations and championing student participation in higher education. We have delivered on this commitment through a range of programs that empower students in the transition to university and through the first year of study. Our mission to support diverse cohorts must continue as our students progress through their studies. Across the life of this Plan, we will build on the existing early support model to:

Provide targeted support and opportunities for students to connect, engage and succeed at all stages of their studies.

As part of a holistic and inclusive approach to supporting transition, at all stages of the student lifecycle, we are moving beyond the concept of retention, to focus on the whole student lifecycle and student progression, persistence and completion. As part of this work we will acknowledge the diverse social and economic pressures facing our students and will proactively assist students to develop their resilience, agency and capacity for self-management and care. Additionally, through the implementation of evidence-based and data-informed initiatives we will support the successful transition of students from and through multiple entry points, pathways and study modes.

Implement a comprehensive approach to orientation and early transition.

We will work with the Colleges, campuses and Student Associations, to deliver a high-quality orientation experience for students irrespective of point of entry.

Develop an online orientation and transition portal that supports the evolving needs of all students from offer to graduation and beyond.

We will leverage existing and emerging web-based resources to deliver an online portal to provide just-in-time support for students at various stages of the student lifecycle.





Provide support for transition across the student lifecycle.

We will partner with Schools to offer a yearly re-orientation program to continuing students, to develop their sense of connection with their School and build career confidence.

Implement an actionable measure of student success across commencing, continuing and graduating cohorts.

We will embed a series of tailored modules into the Student Experience Tracker to collect actionable insights that will inform our communications to students and support outreach to those self-identifying as 'at risk'.

Develop bespoke strategies to re-engage departed students.

We will actively support students on 'leave of absence' and provide proactive outreach to facilitate their return to study. In addition, we will gather meaningful data regarding a student's reasons for leaving the University and utilise this information to improve our practice.

Develop a comprehensive student well-being plan.

We will support student well-being and resilience by collaborating with staff and students as partners to develop the La Trobe Well-being Plan and associated resources.

Overall goal for Supportive Transition

GOAL

Implement a comprehensive, targeted and supportive transition model to meet the diverse needs of our student cohorts across the student lifecycle.

2022 TARGET

La Trobe will be in the top 12 in Australia and in the top 3 in Victoria for student completion.



Excellence at La Trobe recognises and encourages outstanding student contributions through community, sporting, cultural, academic and entrepreneurial endeavours.

Inspiring excellence

The uniqueness of La Trobe is best expressed by the outstanding abilities and attributes of our students, many of whom have overcome personal and educational challenges to achieve excellence in their cultural, sporting, entrepreneurial, leadership and academic pursuits. For a number of years, we have been recognising academic and sporting excellence through the Hallmark and Elite Athlete programs and providing pathways to study for those actively engaged in their communities through Aspire. Extending our efforts requires a more holistic view that recognises excellence in all its forms and seeks to develop the potential of all our students.

Excellence at La Trobe recognises and encourages outstanding student contributions through community, sporting, cultural, academic and entrepreneurial endeavours.

Our redefined vision of excellence at La Trobe offers us a powerful opportunity to support students to explore their passions, expand their horizons and extend their capabilities. The strategies identified in this Plan will connect students to a cohort of learners, develop their capabilities for leadership and provide experiences that will challenge, excite and inspire. Through the provision of tailored services and curated experiences we will support all students to achieve their goals and reach their unique expression of personal excellence.

Develop and implement an institution-wide domestic coursework scholarships strategy.

We will collaborate with key stakeholders from across the university to guide the way we allocate, market and administer domestic coursework scholarships. A key focus of this strategy will be to ensure our scholarships support La Trobe's commitment to inclusivity.

Provide targeted support programs for students on scholarships (regardless of type and awarding body).

We will implement a program that provides additional support to all scholarship recipients, through enrichment activities, academic mentoring and proactive case management (for equity-based scholarships).



Recognise a broader expression of excellence at La Trobe.

We will develop an institution-wide program that recognises and encourages outstanding student contributions through community, sporting, cultural, academic and entrepreneurial endeavours.

Deliver a coordinated approach to developing student leadership.

In partnership with the Colleges, our Student Associations and the Residential Colleges we will provide a comprehensive program to encourage and support student leadership.

Overall goal for Inspiring Excellence

GOAL

To recognise all forms of excellence, supporting students identified for their potential and excellence across academic, athletic, cultural, entrepreneurial and leadership activity.

2022 TARGET

La Trobe will be the leading Australian university for recognition of students' academic and personal strengths.

Our enablers

By placing the student experience at the heart of everything we do, we can ensure that our students come first as we strengthen our university community.



One University, Many Communities

La Trobe is a connected network of campuses and communities, united by our commitment to be 'One University, Many Communities'. We strive to provide equitable and relevant opportunities and experiences to students from all campuses. In this way, 'One University, Many Communities', signifies our deep understanding and commitment to celebrating the uniqueness and strengths of our individual student cohorts and the communities in which they live.

Across our campuses and in partnership with our local and international communities, La Trobe University will provide experiences that enable our students to achieve their aspirations and contribute significantly to the communities in which they live and work.

Student Partnership

At La Trobe we believe that students provide a wealth of new ideas and imaginative solutions. We will seek to partner with students whenever possible, to improve our current systems and to inspire students to become the next generation of leaders.

To encourage the participation of a diverse range of students in partnership activities, we will create a variety of platforms and pathways for students to contribute and share their perspectives. While some students may seek to continually provide feedback and others may only want to participate once, all students will have the opportunity to share their views as they see fit.

Operational Excellence

From its founding, La Trobe has challenged the traditional model of the university and inspired the next generation of change makers. To continue this tradition, we must foster a culture of innovation across the university, work together to improve our practice and hold each other accountable for our role in supporting the student experience.

We will achieve success by embedding robust evaluation and committing to a process of continuous improvement across all services. Additionally, we will support and assist our staff to embrace our cultural qualities to the benefit of our students and the communities we serve.

GOAL

Provide equitable and targeted services at all our campuses, in a manner that is connected to the campus and local community.

2022 TARGET

The student experience will be of equally high quality at all our campuses as measured by the Student Experience Survey (SES).

What we will do

- Connect with our diverse student cohorts to help us to understand their unique perspectives and needs.
- Collaborate across campuses to leverage the strengths of each campus and benefit the entire La Trobe community.
- Facilitate new forms of connection, engagement and collaboration with our industry partners and the communities we serve.

GOAL

Partner with students in the development and implementation of strategies to support student success.

2022 TARGET

All relevant governance structures and operational areas will have an active student representative voice.

What we will do

- Offer flexible forms of student partnership across services
- Include students in ground-up development of policy and services.
- Provide open and honest communication to students that conveys our goals, challenges and strategies for improvement.
- Clearly articulate how student feedback and partnership has improved service provision.
- Facilitate opportunities for students to develop the capabilities required for their active engagement in university governance.

GOAL

Deliver high-quality, evidenced-based services to students with embedded processes for continuous improvement.

2022 TARGET

Student support services will be highly regarded as measured through the Net Promoter Score.

What we will do

- Provide development opportunities for staff to contribute to a culture of innovation.
- Communicate and collaborate across Colleges and portfolios to deliver high-quality services.
- Draw on emerging technology and infrastructure to improve the scalability of our services.
- Support further research into student success and undertake ongoing and robust evaluation to ensure our services remain equitable, responsive and aligned to the needs of our students and campuses.



Disclaimer: Every effort has been made to ensure the information contained in this publication is accurate and current at the date of printing.

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