

CQUniversity Renewal Plan

1. Background

CQUniversity has a long and proud history. It is one of Australia's most innovative and entrepreneurial universities. It is at the forefront of providing access to higher education for under represented groups. It has a number of areas where it is undertaking world-class research. It has also been one of the most successful Australian universities in attracting international students.

The solutions to many of the challenges facing CQUniversity lie at the heart of the university – its community and its “place”. The power of a university like CQUniversity is in its geographical location – “the power of place”. In developing commercial activity over a number of years the university has to some extent lost sight of its regional base. CQUniversity must become a great regional university. That is not to say that there should be no commercial activity – actually quite the contrary. CMS and other commercial activity must be grown – but there must be a strong regional university underpinning this activity. This is identified in the University's Strategic Plan and it is now time to implement this plan.

This short paper will outline a number of strategies that will be implemented by the Vice-Chancellor and President of CQUniversity to enable it to recover from its present financial and reputational position. These strategies will improve the reputation of the university and gain the support and confidence of all levels of government and community. They will also position CQUniversity to become one of Australia's leading regional universities over the next 5 -10 years.

2. Stages and Timeframe

This recovery plan will be implemented in three stages with all stages overlapping and running in parallel.

Stage 1 – Making CQUniversity Sustainable – 2 years

The Queensland Treasury Corporation Report has indicated that the university has enough resources to operate for another two years. Immediate steps must be taken to increase the income to the university and to reduce costs in a two year timeframe. More students must be attracted to the university.

Strategies

- 1) Realign Executive responsibilities to better enable change.
- 2) Identify a limited number of programs that have local and national demand and undertake a targeted marketing campaign around these. Programs identified are likely to include aviation technology and health and safety programs.
- 3) Begin a “curriculum refresh” process of programs. This will identify programs to be developed and those to discontinue.
- 4) Improve the marketing of the university – including undertaking a reputational marketing campaign.
- 5) Conclude the EBA process as soon as possible.
- 6) Provide new programs for CMS to deliver.
- 7) Increase CMS activity.
- 8) Engage with the new super regional TAFE to become their natural HE partner.
- 9) Attract international students to regional campuses.
- 10) Review and renew the university's DE program.
- 11) Undertake a program of staff development – particularly in the area of project management.
- 12) Give the Mackay, Gladstone and Bundaberg Campuses a greater voice in the management of the university to enable growth and specialisation of these campuses.
- 13) Implement a School structure for the Faculty of Sciences, Engineering and Health.
- 14) Undertake a review of the budget to identify cost savings.
- 15) Make a stepped change in the process of engagement.

Stage 2 – Making CQUniversity a strong regional university – 5 years

CQUniversity must become a strong regional university meeting the needs of its communities. CMS and other commercial activity will be grown – but the aim must be that in five years time CQUniversity is sustainable on its regional operations alone.

Strategies

- 1) Through the curriculum refresh process identify new programs that the university needs to offer.
- 2) Seek funding from the Federal Government to develop these new programs.
- 3) Move from being a multi-campus university to a multi-city university. Campuses in Mackay, Bundaberg and Gladstone must be developed. They will move from being feeder campuses to being campuses on an equal footing with Rockhampton – delivering to the needs of their communities.
- 4) Continue to develop research strengths and promote ourselves as a research university.
- 5) Continue to grow research income – particularly from industry.
- 6) Continue to develop links with local and other TAFEs.
- 7) Continue with internationalisation of the regional campuses and consider transnational activity.
- 8) Continue to develop the DE program and exploit this mode of delivery overseas

Stage 3 – Making CQUniversity a great Australian university – 10 years

In ten years CQUniversity can become one of Australia's great universities. One that is well respected and one that is a role model to other universities throughout the world. We will become an employee of choice within the sector.

Strategies

- 1) Promote CQUniversity in a positive way at every possible opportunity.
- 2) Promote engagement at all levels – until CQUniversity becomes known as Australia's most engaged university.
- 3) Become leaders in specific areas of research.
- 4) Take a leading role in the development of the HE sector in Australia.

3. Action Plan

3.1 Engagement

CQUniversity will become one of Australia's great regional universities. It will contribute to the future prosperity of Central Queensland and it will draw strength from its region. The "power of place" has not been fully realised at the University. Central Queensland is a region which is characterised by its spirit of independence, innovation, entrepreneurialism and its "can do" approach. The University and its graduates will also be characterised by these attributes. These will be at the heart of the CQUniversity brand both in Central Queensland and in the international campuses.

By meeting the workforce and research needs of Central Queensland the CQUniversity will grow and become vibrant and sustainable. It can only do this by engaging widely with all sections of the communities it serves. Engagement should be a focus of all staff and of all activity. CQUniversity will become known as Australia's most engaged university.

Engagement must be with:

- Local, State and Federal Government
- Local industry
- Local schools
- Other educational institutions
- Alumni of the University

Engagement must be seen as a two way process. The University needs to serve its communities – and the communities need to support the University. This could be in the form of supporting grant proposals, providing funding, and providing work integrated learning opportunities.

Action Plan

1. Vice-Chancellor will play an active role in CQUniversity's communities.
2. All staff will be encouraged to engage.
3. Engagement activity will be recognised in the rewards processes of the University.
4. Training will be provided to staff in engagement.
5. All parts of the University will have engagement plans.
6. The University will promote itself as an engaged university.

3.2 Engagement with TAFE

Regional TAFEs in Queensland are merging to form a new mega-Regional TAFE. This will operate across Regional Queensland. The new TAFE will operate as a Statutory Body – as does South Bank TAFE.

TAFEs want to be more involved with the provision of higher education. They are very attracted to a model operated by the University of Ballarat. It is very unlikely that Queensland will move to dual sector provision. However there are opportunities for alliances between universities and TAFEs in Queensland.

A model that would be very attractive to TAFE is one in which CQUniversity would allow them to offer its associate degrees under licence. CQUniversity would need to accredit certain TAFEs to teach the second year of our degrees and then award an associate degree. Students getting the associate degree could then continue to study with CQUniversity for a full degree. TAFE would pay the university a licensing fee to deliver our degrees. The model would be as follows:

Year 1	TAFE Diploma
Year 2	CQUniversity Associate Degree delivered by TAFE
Year 3	CQUniversity Degree delivered by CQUniversity (maybe by DE)

These students could then continue on to Honours degrees, Masters degrees and PhDs.

This type of model is also consistent with our "Pathways" initiative. This is being developed across the campuses. CQUniversity will bid for funds from the various Federal Government funds to enhance the pathways program and engagement with other education providers. It is thought that this model would be very attractive to the Federal Government, as it would meet many of its social inclusion goals.

This activity could lead to many new students for the University. If it could be put in place quickly it could mitigate the loss of the 95% funding safety net in 2012. It could possibly be rolled out to TAFEs beyond Central Queensland.

Action Plan

1. Continue dialogue with TAFE
2. Develop model for delivery of Associate degrees by TAFE
3. Develop set of Guidelines for accreditation of TAFE
4. Take lead in preparing a submission to the SADF
5. Prepare a submission for infrastructure funding for development of the pathways project
6. Identify a person to project manage this activity

3.3 Curriculum refresh and development of new degrees

The number of domestic students attending CQUniversity has fallen over recent years. This decline must be arrested and domestic student numbers must be grown. To this end all programs offered by the University must be either:

- Continued
- Refreshed to make them more attractive
- Discontinued.

The decisions that are made must be based on sound business planning principles and on market research.

As well as refreshing the present programs a number of new programs need to be urgently developed. Some of these programs will be in health. A project management approach will be taken to this review.

With adequate investment it is thought that 4 or 5 new programs could be developed for a 2011 start. Each of these will have an intake of approximately 60 students. This will give CQUniversity an extra 240 commencing students in 2011 and this will pipe line to approximately 840 students. Accounting for attrition this should give us an extra 700 students over the next 3 – 4 years. Detailed business plans will need to be produced. New programs that might be considered include:

- Medical Imaging
- Pharmacy
- Pre hospital care
- Medical Laboratory
- Optometry
- Elderly care (nursing)

A new Faculty may be required which is home to Nursing and Sport Science but whose main aim will be to develop these new programs.

Action Plan

1. Identify person to project manage the curriculum refresh.
2. Review the demand for programs.
3. Modify, refresh or discontinue programs with low demand.
4. Undertake market research to determine program needs in Central Queensland.
5. Develop business plan for range of new health projects.
6. Employ a change agent to lead the development of the new programs.
7. Develop range of new health programs .

3.4 International students

CQUniversity should have more international students on its regional campuses. Presently there are only about 250. It is thought that this number could be increased to 500 – 800 in the relatively short term. Both Sunshine Coast University and James Cook University have a greater number of international students.

It is thought that the regional campuses of CQUniversity would be attractive to students from the USA, Scandinavia and Europe. No active marketing is taking place in these markets for the regional campuses.

CMS will also continue to be developed. In particular, work will be undertaken to provide a new campus building in Brisbane. Work will also be undertaken to establish an operation in Perth. New and existing programs (including a new engineering management program) will be made available to CMS for delivery.

Action Plan

1. Director of marketing will be appointed.
2. Study abroad program will be developed.
3. Increase engagement with agents and overseas partners.
4. Establish a new campus building in Brisbane.
5. Establish CMS operations in Perth.

3.5 Marketing

Marketing of CQUniversity can be improved. Presently it would seem that most of the marketing effort is focused on advertising. Marketing must be much more than this. Marketing at CQUniversity is very well resourced – there is great potential to do much better. Greater emphasis needs to be placed on market research, product development, relationship marketing, reputational marketing and engagement. The marketing team seem strong – but not in their knowledge of higher education. This must change.

CQUniversity has a number of unique programs such as Aviation Technology and Workplace Health and Safety which, if promoted correctly, could provide much needed student numbers. In the short term these will become the subject of a focused campaign.

Our success in the future will be dependent on how market friendly our programs are. We want our programs to be accessible – but completely open access would lead to our programs being perceived as low quality. We need to have a gatekeeper into our programs – but it maybe that for some programs and/or for some students that this gate keeper is not at the start of a program. So students may get open access to the first subject of a program – but they cannot continue until they have passed that first subject.

The University also needs to have immediate access to its programs. If a person decides to do one of our programs in the morning they should be able to be studying for it in the afternoon! This will be a challenge for the University – but if it can be achieved it will give the University a great competitive advantage.

Action Plan

1. For a short period marketing will report directly to the VC.
2. All marketing activity will be reviewed by the VC.
3. A new marketing strategy and plan will be produced.
4. A reputation marketing campaign will be undertaken in 2009.
5. Faculties will develop ways to make their programs more market friendly.

3.6 Development of the campuses

CQUniversity is structured in such a way that it has one main campus in Rockhampton and a number of campuses which are effectively feeder campuses to the main campus. These feeder campuses are not meeting the needs of their communities. University participation in Mackay, Bundaberg and Gladstone is relatively low and CQUniversity does not have a great market share in these cities.

CQUniversity must move from being a multi-campus university to a multi-city university. All of the four main campuses need to be developed to meet the needs of their communities and to offer a range of programs that will attract larger numbers of students.

If CQUniversity does not develop in this manner there is a strong chance that other universities will move into these cities – Mackay in particular. This would be disastrous for the university.

As part of the curriculum refresh more programs must be offered across all campuses. It may be that the Heads of the Campuses are given more autonomy to develop and deliver programs from their campuses. The university might consider delegating extra authority to them to develop their campuses.

Action Plan

1. Development plans will be drawn up for all campuses.
2. As part of the curriculum refresh campus specialities will be developed.
3. Determine how campuses outside of Rockhampton can be strengthened and grown – including consideration of specialisation and movement of specialisations.
4. Make Heads of Campus at Mackay, Gladstone and Bundaberg members of the Vice- Chancellor's Executive.
5. Give Heads of Campus some autonomy to develop and deliver programs.

3.7 Staff Development

To ensure that the University can move towards being a great university staff must be provided with the required skills. It is also imperative that staff have the skills to bring about change. It seems that project management skills are lacking in the University. Staff development in this area will be provided.

The University expends a large amount of resource on staff development. This activity will be reviewed to ensure that it is being used in the most effective way. Any resource used in this area must ensure that we are providing staff with the skills they require to deliver the objectives of the university and that we are seen as an employer of choice in the sector.

Action Plan

1. Project management training will be provided across the university.
2. A project management approach will be taken to change within the university.
3. A review of staff development activity will be undertaken.

3.8 Research

Much work has been undertaken to structure the way that research is undertaken in university. This has been very positive. It is now recognised by funding bodies that CQUniversity has a systematic approach to its research effort. The research groupings will continue to be supported and developed.

Aspects of research that are world class need to be promoted to enhance CQUniversity's reputation. The university needs to continue to seek research funding and to develop a strategy for moving up university rankings.

Action Plan

1. Research activity will form part of the reputational marketing campaign.
2. A "ranking enhancement" plan will be developed.
3. Research activity will continue to be supported.

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