2012 REVIEW OF UWS COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT

UNIVERSITY SUBMISSION

August 2012
I have pleasure in presenting the UWS self-assessment submission to the Review of Community and Regional Engagement. May I take the opportunity once again to thank you for agreeing to be part of the Review Panel. The University regards this as a very important review in an area that is central to the UWS mission and purpose in the region.

In preparing the submission, the University has sought to provide the Panel with information about the regional context for engagement, our history as an engaged institution, and the way the University gives life to its commitment to engagement. UWS has over two hundred formal engagement projects and initiatives currently in place. Of these, thirty two have been included in the submission by way of case studies to illustrate the breadth and depth of our engaged relationships with the region.

As a companion document to the self-assessment submission, a compendium of relevant studies, reports, documents, data, and explanatory materials has been brought together to provide more comprehensive background for the Panel in key areas.

The University has taken a participatory approach towards developing the submission to the review, involving both our external partners and our staff members and students. Submissions have been invited from engagement partners and UWS staff, and a number of focus groups and interviews have been conducted with external organisations. As is often the case with such reviews, the self-assessment has been of great value in helping the University to reflect on what is working well, as well as areas for improvement. The immediate contexts for this have been the 2011 Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) Audit, which described UWS as “a University of the people”, and the University’s own internal re-organisation undertaken in 2011 to more effectively position the institution to meet the current and future challenges within a changing higher education landscape.

Preparation for the review has also been an important opportunity to celebrate the University’s achievements as an engaged institution in its region, notwithstanding that there are areas where we would like to do better. One particularly pleasing element of the review was the EngageLab workshop conducted in June to showcase examples of community and regional engagement in practice. Our community partners and in some cases UWS students co-hosted many of the case studies which were showcased during the event.

I trust the submission will prove to be of value in conducting the review, and the University looks forward to hosting the Review Panel in September.

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

Professor Janice Reid AM
Vice-Chancellor
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INTRODUCTION

Purpose and Objectives

The University of Western Sydney (UWS) is undertaking this review of its community and regional engagement strategy in response to a number of imperatives. From an institutional perspective, the review enables the University to evaluate the effectiveness of current strategy and practice in this area, and in particular the quality of collaborations with local and regional stakeholders. The review also provides a basis for considering how best to position the future strategic direction for community and regional engagement to most effectively contribute to the social, economic, environmental and cultural development of Greater Western Sydney (GWS).

The review is also an opportunity to address specific observations about the University’s engagement strategy, practice and performance arising from the 2005 Review of Engagement1 and the 2006 and 2011 cross-institutional audits by the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA). The 2005 Review developed the definition and language of UWS community engagement, emphasising the concepts of mutual benefit, knowledge exchange and partnership. It is therefore now timely to consider plans, perceptions and performance to frame the University’s future engagement strategy and direction. The University believes that such a review should take into account both the current Greater Western Sydney and UWS contexts, guided by the development of global research and thinking about engagement.

In this regard, significant changes have taken place at UWS since 2005. These include development of the Schools Engagement strategy to raise aspirations and access to the University for low socio-economic background students; implementation of a system for Tracking and Improving Community Engagement (TICE); establishment of leadership positions across UWS Schools to coordinate engagement activities; and changes to the management and structure of the Office of Engagement. More generally, UWS has developed as an institution in terms of sophistication in its strategic planning, institutional cohesion, performance in targeted areas of world-class research, national recognition and awards for excellence in learning and teaching, ratification by AUQA of the University’s academic standards framework, and significant increases in quality as measured by student demand, retention and feedback.

The University currently engages with a significant and diverse array of organisations and individuals. These interactions and collaborations range from small research projects in the community to large and complex national and international collaborations. The University also engages with the schools sector, and has introduced service learning programs that involve UWS students in areas of health, community development and services, government and business. The progressive embedding of community engagement in learning and teaching, research and institutional collaborations has been something of an article of faith for the University. This was recognised in 2006 when the AUQA report described UWS as a ‘University of the people’ and more recently in 2011 as an ‘engaged university’ in the study of university civic engagement by Watson and his colleagues.2

The 2012 review aims to evaluate critically how successful UWS has been in operationalising these numerous, diverse and intensive collaborations. To this end, this review is an opportunity to celebrate University achievements in community and regional engagement and to identify areas for improvement.

The methodology for the review is collaborative and participatory, representing an opportunity for dialogue with University staff and the community. A key outcome of the review will be the endorsement of an organising framework for community and regional engagement which is relevant for the University and for the region.

In developing a framework for engagement, the University recognises the importance of a cohesive link between the UWS mission in the region (the ‘why’ of community and regional engagement), the university’s overarching Making the Difference: 2010-2015 strategy and regional priorities (the ‘what’ or focus of community engagement), and the operational framework (the ‘how’) for community and regional engagement.

The philosophy underpinning the UWS approach to community and regional engagement is that engagement is, in its simplest and fundamental form, about the relationship between the University and the region. The previous (2005) review of engagement established fundamental first principles in respect of these relationships. The current review makes the link to these 2005 principles, and explores these within a current perspective. In particular, the 2005 review established that mutual benefit was the ultimate objective of engagement, and the test that each

1Holland B.A., Jackson, J., McKenna, W., and Scott, G., (2005), ‘University of Western Sydney: Institutional review of community engagement 2005’
activity should meet, with a particular emphasis on the concept of knowledge exchange.

This has been an important place-marker for the University over the intervening seven years as it has sought to build the mechanisms and relationships that deliver on mutual benefit and a sense of reciprocity. A key aspect of the learning that has evolved in this time is of that evaluation of benefit is undertaken by engagement partners in a comprehensive sense, rather than on each individual activity or exchange, and that consistency over time is important.

In recognition of the notion that mutual benefit is formed over time and over multiple exchanges, the current UWS operational model for engagement represents an inclusive approach, whereby staff members performing a wide range of functions and activities are able to identify their contribution to the University’s overall engagement effort. The University has found this to be a compelling model for mobilising institutional capacity, as it recognises the contributory nature of engagement, and the fact that engagement is a fluid and evolving phenomenon, rather than an outcome at one point in time.

Integration of the University mission with strategic and operational levels (the ‘why’, ‘what’, and ‘how’) of university engagement is developed in detail in Chapter 2, which introduces the UWS Operational Framework for Community and Regional Engagement, a central focus for the current review.

Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference for the review area are set out below.

These are addressed within each chapter in a way that is consistent with the chapter focus. A comprehensive summary of the indicators and data sources which inform the chapter discussions is provided within the submission or in the compendium of supporting documents/ background materials.

2012 Review of UWS Community and Regional Engagement

Terms of Reference

The Review Panel will be asked to provide strategic recommendations and evaluate the extent to which:

1. The UWS engagement strategy aligns with the University’s Making the Difference Strategy and Plan, and with international directions in strategic community engagement

2. The UWS engagement strategy is focused on key needs and expectations within Greater Western Sydney (GWS)

3. The University’s engagement practices are building sustainable community and regional partnerships which have mutual benefit

4. The concepts of engagement are realised in and integrated across learning and teaching, research, and institutional strategies

5. Engagement is a focus for scholarly practice, and engaged learning is manifest within the experience of students

6. Building capacity for community engagement is reflected in corporate-level strategy and practice, including the University’s systems of recruitment, staff development, promotions, and practice.
INTRODUCTION

External Review Panel

An external review panel to the 2012 Review of UWS Community and Regional Engagement was approved by the Vice-Chancellor, and is made up of the following national and international distinguished external experts:

- **Professor Lawrence S. Bacow**, President in Residence, Harvard Graduate School of Education (President Emeritus, Tufts University), United States

- **Mr David Borger**, former Parramatta Lord Mayor, former State Government Minister for Western Sydney and currently Western Sydney Director of the Sydney Business Chamber, Australia

- **Professor Sandra Harding**, Vice-Chancellor and President, James Cook University, Australia

- **Professor Sir David Watson**, Professor of Higher Education and Principal, Green Templeton College, Oxford University (Former Vice-Chancellor, University of Brighton), United Kingdom

The review process includes on-site visits by the external review panel on 5, 6, 7 and 10 September 2012.

Data Collection and Consultation

The University has taken a participatory approach to developing the submission to the review, involving both our external partners and internal staff members.

Focus Groups

Five focus groups were conducted during early 2012 that involved 71 different community and government organisations across GWS (see Attachment A). An independent facilitator was employed to conduct the sessions. Some participants had existing or past collaborations with the University while others did not, thus providing a diverse range of views which has helped to shape the University’s submission to the review.

Submissions

Requests for submissions to the review were sent to both external and internal stakeholders and the University received 125 submissions. Results were both positive and encouraging, reconfirming the premise that UWS is a ‘University of the people’. Results also suggest that the UWS vision of “bringing knowledge to life in Greater Western Sydney through community and business engagement with our learning and our research” is both ingrained and evident in the operations of the University. Suggestions for improvement were received, and an analysis of the results is provided – together with the submissions – within the compendium of supporting documents/background materials.

Reference Group

An internal Reference Group to the review was approved by the Vice-Chancellor and includes academic and professional staff from across UWS. The Reference Group was chaired by Professor Gary Smith (Pro Vice-Chancellor, Engagement and International), and provided invaluable feedback during the process of developing the University’s submission to the review panel.

Governance

Steering Committee

An internal Steering Committee to the review, as approved by the Vice-Chancellor, is made up of the following members of UWS Executive:

- **Ms Rhonda Hawkins (CHAIR)**, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Corporate Strategy and Services

- **Professor Wayne McKenna**, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic and Research

- **Professor Andrew Cheetham**, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research)

- **Mr Angelo Kourtis**, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students)

- **Professor Kerri-Lee Krause**, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education)

- **Professor Gary Smith**, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Engagement and International)

The Steering Committee met on three occasions, and has provided guidance during preparations for the review.

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3 Note that Professor Bacow will serve on the external review panel by distance, and will not be present at the onsite visits in September 2012
4 Steering Committee meetings were held on 25 January 2012, 23 February 2012, and 23 April 2012
5 Submissions were received from 98 external stakeholders and 27 internal stakeholders


EngageLab 2012

A full-day staff forum, EngageLab 2012, was held on UWS Parramatta campus on 15 June 2012. The event attracted over fifty staff from across the University, including representatives from the nine Schools, four Research Institutes, UWSCollege, plus other key areas of the University. Presentations from external partners were an important aspect of the program. In addition to providing staff with an opportunity to hear presentations on a wide variety of engagement activities across the University, EngageLab 2012 allowed for important discussion on the University’s engagement strategy, and this feedback has been incorporated into the University’s submission to the review panel. Following the success of this inaugural event, it is hoped that EngageLab will become an annual event on the UWS calendar. Video links of EngageLab 2012 are provided below.

Video Links

1. Highlights of UWS EngageLab 2012
   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kBiS6ypG7U
2. UWS Engagement Framework
   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VjKuMwmTmc
3. Engaged Learning
   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JlfnJuab678
4. Engaged Research
   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=408wVxsfwSQ
5. Civic Engagement
   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XiyfN1AYiJg
6. Engagement and the Student Experience
   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VyE7gluH0Tw
7. Future Directions
   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Qjnoqj7cGY

Website

A website was developed specifically for the review that served as a source of information for external and internal stakeholders. The website gave an overview of the review, and allowed for online submissions and feedback. During the three month period following the website launch in May 2012, the site has received over 3,000 ‘hits’ (unique page views).

Acknowledgements

The University acknowledges important contributions made by the following staff in preparing the self assessment submission (in alphabetical order):
Dr Beatriz Cardona, Professor Andrew Cheetham, Ms Rhonda Hawkins, Mr Angelo Kourtis, Professor Kerri-Lee Krause, Professor Wayne McKenna, Dr Paul Rowland, Professor Gary Smith, and Ms Janelle Tisserand.

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8 The EngageLab 2012 program is provided in the compendium of supporting documents/background materials
10 Source: Google Analytics Report, 9 August 2012
11 Video links are also available on the website of the 2021 Review of UWS Community and Regional Engagement: http://reviews.uws.edu.au/
CHAPTER 1
THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY – HISTORY AND CONTEXT.
Chapter Overview

This chapter gives a brief overview of the history and development of the University of Western Sydney (UWS) and situates the UWS approach to community and regional engagement in the broader national and international context. The chapter also outlines the history and progress of the University in developing partnerships within its region, focusing, in particular, on key factors which have defined this development.

1.1 A University for Western Sydney

For many years Western Sydney was regarded as the back garden (or “backyard”) of the Sydney basin. Those who had the chance to go to university had to leave home or commute for several hours a day. The promise of a university that served the region and was comprehensive and respected held the hopes of many. The first movement to establish a university in the region was best articulated by the President of the Interim Council of the university planned for the region. He said in October 1987:

“What we have embarked on today is a project of importance not just of the next decade but for the decades to follow. This area was neglected for so long and in so many ways, not least in the provision of post secondary education, and the establishment of a university college and then a university is the culmination of this new effort to establish a university college and then a university is the culmination of this new attention to the educational welfare of the people of Sydney’s west”… “It is remarkable that a new university should be established in the current climate. It is a recognition of the urgent needs of the region. It is a tribute to those who believed in and fought for this university.”

12 Wilenski, Peter. Introduction to The Hon Nick Greiner, ‘Turning of the sod’ ceremony, Werrington north campus, CUIC collection, UWS Archives.

13 The population of Greater Western Sydney is forecast to grow to 2.9 million by 2036 (RDA Sydney 2011)

14 University of Western Sydney Act, 1988
Education, Humanities and Social Sciences, Business, Computing and Health Sciences.

- **Nepean College of Advanced Education**, established in 1974 with campuses at Kingswood and Westmead. By 1989 it had 3370 EFT students in academic programs in Teacher Education, Business, Nursing, Health Sciences, Humanities, Visual and Performing Arts and associate programs in Engineering and Sciences.

The nature of the Western Sydney regional communities and of the academic programs of the three Member institutions led to both an institutional focus and community expectations that there would be meaningful and deliberate interactions with and involvement of local communities with their Member institutions.

1.3 The Educational Challenge for Greater Western Sydney

Educational attainment and participation in higher education for the people of the Greater Western Sydney region has historically been lower than for the population of the rest of Sydney. Census data show:

- **low educational attainment levels**
  only 26.3% having post school qualifications compared with 39.9% for the rest of Sydney (2006 Census)

- **lower participation in university education**
  4% attending university compared with 6.1% for the rest of Sydney (2011 Census)

- **lower levels of degree qualifications**
  10% of the regional community possess a degree compared with 20% for the rest of Sydney. Figure 1.1 shows the relative density of the population holding a degree across the Greater Sydney region.

![Figure 1.1: Education Density Map 2010 (percentage of degree holders by Local Government Area)](image)
1.4 The University of Western Sydney

The University that first formed in 1989 allowed for the existing institutions to operate much as they had done. The structure was described formally as a “federation” but in its operation, outlook and relationships it was a loose confederation in which internal competition was intense. This was unlike other institutions in the system where amalgamations, on the whole, absorbed the former organisation.

The federated structure, however, was problematic and the first decade of the University’s life was beset by internal competition, inefficiencies and an inability to act in concert for the good of the University as a whole as the three institutions concentrated on their own priorities. The University lacked an achievable collective purpose. It eventually became impossible to hold onto the status quo, to have done so would have been, in effect, to go backwards. Change had, therefore, become inevitable.

The next ten years saw continuing and comprehensive organisational and cultural change – periods of major transformation as well as times of slow, often hard-won and incremental adjustments, consolidation and realignment.

The prospect of amalgamating the three Member institutions had been considered at the University’s formation and again in 1995. The latter debate was occasioned by a very public attempt by one of the three institutions to withdraw from the federation, fortified by some local political support and arguments about the dysfunctionality of the tri-partite structure. However, there was significant community opposition to the breaking up of the University. As a result there was a public process to determine the most effective and appropriate structural and operational arrangements to give force to a renewed federation. This gave rise to the establishment of two layers of governance – the University’s governing body, renamed as the Board of Trustees and three Member Councils which were intended to give focus and form to the strong community interest and partnerships with each Member.

While the internal competitiveness and frailty of the federation continued to be a major impediment to developments within the University, to improving institutional performance and to taking advantage of national policy and funding initiatives, there is no doubt that each member institution maintained a passionate intentionality to contribute to the development, support and future of their own local communities.

1.5 A New Beginning

In 1999, after a year of intense talking, meeting and debating there was a growing sense that unification might not only be possible but desirable and achievable. The governing body of the University, the Board of Trustees resolved to create a new operational framework for the University in which the three Member institutions were merged into a unified and integrated administration and academic structure. The Vice-Chancellor wrote at that time that:

“the organisation and representation of the University will be in three forms: the University as a whole; broadly based academic groupings; and the campuses spread over the region. UWS is to be represented as a major metropolitan regional University with the unique advantage of having direct and focused community involvement and local constituency for each campus”

In the context of such major structural change the University established a consultation process with the communities of the region seeking their input into the practical realisation of the newly coined expression of UWS as an institution with “roots in the region and branches to the world”. This statement was intended to build a sense of pride in the University’s early achievements and to acknowledge its commitment to excellence and relevance in its academic programs and research with particular reference to the region of Greater Western Sydney. The Vice-Chancellor in her 1999 discussion paper, “UWS and its Communities”, stated:

“UWS aims to be an institution engaged with its communities, noting that our reputation rests significantly on “student friendly” campuses, a commitment to and from the communities of Greater Western Sydney and the relevance of our academic enterprise to industry and educational partners. The passion and interest of the region is focussed on UWS as an engaged institution, UWS intends to seek ways to enrich the student experience by bringing research and practical experience of the world they will enter into the curriculum and
to put the University’s critical resources (knowledge and expertise) to work on the problems the communities it serves must face”.

The merger of the three member institutions led to the University becoming a unified institution, characterised in the revised UWS Act as a multi-campus university. Taking effect from 2001, the University was organised through four academic colleges, comprising 22 schools, and four administrative divisions. The focus of planning was to create an integrated set of plans across three domains:

- academic programs and the quality of learning and teaching;
- research development;
- community and regional engagement

The remnants of the Member institutions and old ways of operating were systematically replaced by a collective will to achieve a shared vision for UWS – articulated simply as ‘bringing knowledge to life’ in the Greater Western Sydney region (and beyond). At the same time a new order began to take precedence as the University worked towards a common goal of regional relevance and engagement. The UWS Regional Council was established to guide the University’s engagement with the community, business and industry and to give form to its commitment to mutually beneficial relationships with the regional communities.

1.6 Answering The Question: What Kind Of University?

So uncertain was the University in its early years about its overriding mission and raison d’être that its strategic plans prior to the merger lacked focus and did little to guide the University’s development. In many ways the impetus for change arose from this question and with it the community aspirations of the University.

Beginning in 1998, there was a series of opportunities dedicated to address this question and to give voice to the internal and external communities’ aspirations and expectations of UWS. The conviction about the importance of the University to the region and its commitment to not only be the best university it could be have shaped the University’s institutional character and framed its reputation. In 2001, in her discussion paper, “What kind of University”, the Vice-Chancellor said:

“Every university is a work in progress, but this is notably true of the new universities and especially those whose form and future are shaped by the evolution of their regions and by their histories ...

… UWS has never been just an Australian university: it is also an idea or perhaps an act of faith. It was born of conviction (not widely shared at the time) that a tenth of Australia’s population should have its own university, a “real” one, and that in its teaching, research and outreach it would speak to the aspirations of its communities.”

Over the course of the last decade a coherent and widely shared vision for UWS was developed and became the cornerstone of all strategic planning within the University. This became known as the Making the Difference strategy (further described in Chapter 2). In the same period the University systematically worked to create an organisational structure where resources would be focused on both quality (excellence) in teaching, research and service and on widening participation in higher education (opportunity).

1.7 Student Load and Preferences

One of the most pressing local needs when the University was established was articulated in the initiating vision for UWS “To correct the imbalance of university places available in Greater Western Sydney for people wishing to undertake higher education”. The availability of university places within a region ignites an interest in higher education opportunities for many who might traditionally be cautious about pursuing opportunities to study at university. This is particularly the case in strongly growing regions such as Western Sydney, where many young people going to the University are the first in their families to pursue a university education. The presence of a university in a region also contributes to addressing the impact of social and institutional barriers, and to facilitating opportunities for social and economic mobility.

UWS is a very large university in Australia in terms of Government funded students. But this is just part of the story – student preferences or the extent to which the University is one of choice are the critical determinants for growth. Notwithstanding the upheaval to the academic program arising from the merger, student first preferences for UWS increased by 20% from 2006 to 2012.

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15 Lenehan Lynton Bloom Blaxland (1995), Optimising the University’s Positioning: a two stage research plan, University of Western Sydney
The University’s planning of student numbers vacillated for many years between aspirations for substantial growth and the reality that UWS would need further development to admit large numbers of new students – the catch-cry then was that UWS would not seek out ‘growth for growth’s sake’ but make sure first it was institutionally prepared to ensure a productive student experience. The load data (Figure 1.2) shows a steady increase over the period until the mid-2000s when there was a combination of additional government funded student places and a much-improved capacity to attract and manage more students.

In the international setting the OECD commissioned report on the Response of Higher Education Institutions to Regional Needs\(^\text{16}\) identified the following requirements for effective engagement:

1. A national policy context that seeks to integrate higher education objectives with spatial objectives (economic, social, environmental, cultural) and a national system of higher education that enables autonomy and entrepreneurial activity

2. The characteristics of the region itself, including the degree of regional stakeholder organisation, collaboration and leadership, centralising/decentralising tendencies and relative stage in the investment cycle of the region vis a vis that for the university

3. The degree of responsiveness of the higher education teaching programs to labour market signals - particularly those from the region - and


4. The ability to tailor research programs to regional issues and establish knowledge transfer mechanisms and commercialisation processes to benefit the local area; and

5. The ability to provide local leadership, the provision of local civic resources and adding value to the cultural environment of the region.

In Australia, successive governments (at Federal and State level) have sought to better understand and influence the mechanisms and policies developed to guide and extend institutional and community relationships and partnerships. The Bradley Review of Higher Education Report, 2008, noted that:

"engaged teaching and research should be the norm in universities. However, institutional resources to support engagement have been placed under pressure as a result of the reductions in the real level of public funding per student for teaching and related purposes, and the failure to provide full funding for the costs of Commonwealth sponsored research".

Expectations of universities to engage with their communities were also highlighted in the National Protocols for Higher Education, approved by Australian Education Ministers, which argue that all public universities in Australia have an obligation to:

"engage with the community to enhance material, human, social and/or environmental wellbeing of the community; equip the community with social, cultural and international knowledge, skills and attitudes to improve the quality of life for all citizens; and contribute to a democratic, equitable and civilised society".¹⁸

At an individual institution level there was a growing series of conversations within and among universities about the benefits and difficulties of engaging systematically and effectively with communities as well as a desire to elevate the role of engagement in Australian higher education policy and funding decisions. These led to UWS coordinating and leading the first national universities forum on community engagement in 2002. Entitled “University and Community Engagement”, in which participants discussed these challenges and opportunities, forum representatives acknowledged the need to share strategies and experiences in order to learn more about mutually beneficial engagement between universities and their communities. This was followed by the formation of the Australia’s Engaged Universities Interest Group (AEUIG), which formally became the Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance (AUCEA) in September 2003, following a strategic planning meeting of interested parties at UWS Parramatta Campus.

At this meeting the primary decision was to progress a national university community engagement agenda through the formalisation of the alliance. Recently renamed Engagement Australia, the alliance has created the opportunity for peer and community discussion of engagement including the promotion of social, environmental, economic and cultural development of communities across Australia. This is achieved by showcasing examples of best practice and theory through the Engagement Australia Visiting Scholars Program, annual national conference, workshop program and website.

1.9 “A University of the People” - Engagement at UWS

UWS was established in 1989 to provide “facilities for education and research of university standard, having particular regard to the needs and aspirations of residents of Greater Western Sydney”, UWS Act, 1997. Its establishment was the culmination of a longstanding campaign by the community of Western Sydney for its own university. The claim of place and community relevance makes engagement with the business and community sector an imperative for the University.

The University’s history of engagement and of building relationships with local communities and the region has its roots in the ideas and work of its predecessor institutions, each of which focused on the juxtaposition of their teaching and research developments with the interests and expectations of the communities proximate to their campuses. While there was not a demonstrable engagement plan and strategy as now understood and produced by most universities, there was a simple, long-standing and undeniable connection to regional and discipline-specific communities. These include active work with businesses in Western Sydney at all three institutions as well examples of deep engagement with rural communities through Hawkesbury Agricultural College.

Not long after the University was established, UWS commissioned its first study of community perceptions of the University in order to identify gaps and maximise opportunities for greater engagement with individuals and organisations in the region. One of the findings of this study was an early representation of the University’s place in its region:

UWS is in touch with its local community and with contemporary values. It is not an ivory tower resting on its past reputation and heritage, rather it is a progressive and growing organisation, new and active, not old and decaying.”

A key challenge arising from the merger was how to develop and manage in a consistent manner the University’s relationships with the vast numbers of local and regional stakeholders. Prior to 1999 each Member responded individually to the needs of its local communities. The unification of the University gave new impetus to the question of how best to manage these relationships.

The University is now well known within the Australian higher education sector as an institution with both a clear legislative mandate to serve its region and a conviction that this is a characteristic that defines the University’s purpose and guides its planning.

The Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA), in its 2007 audit report for UWS, commented that the University had “since its inception worked to maintain close connections with regional communities”. It also has taken a leadership role nationally in conceptualising the nature of universities’ engagement with their communities”. AUQA also formally commended UWS for “fulfilling its mission with a deeply embedded culture of commitment to serve the people of Greater Western Sydney in a mutually beneficial way through programs such as the Cooperative Education Program.”

In order to address the social agendas of the region, the UWS Board of Trustees proposed in 2000 the establishment of a Greater Western Sydney Community Council. Its role included monitoring and evaluation of engagement, advocacy and development of partnerships, and the promotion, communication and advice about engagement. This council was subsequently called the UWS Regional Council, and part of its role included the management of the Regional and Community Grants Program, the Women of the West Award, and UWS Partnership Awards. A sub-committee of the Council was the Business and Industry Task Force with membership derived from leading business and industry organisations.

The 2003 University Strategic Plan identified community engagement as one of the three core functions of the University alongside teaching and learning, and research, The plan outlined the aspiration of UWS becoming “renowned internationally for its leadership and scholarship in community engagement”. It also stated:

- The University will make strategic use of resources and partnerships to excel in community engagement and regional development. UWS will promote civil society and sustainable communities by building their social and intellectual capital with professionally qualified staff, graduates and an engaged alumni.

The Regional and Community Engagement Plan, 2004-2008, was developed to guide community engagement practice. The concepts of ‘engaged learning’ and ‘engaged research’ also began to inform the UWS teaching and research strategy domains, including the 2006-2008 Action Plan for Learning and Teaching, which placed an emphasis inter alia on the importance of a wide range of engaged learning projects at the University. Awards for excellence in teaching and community engagement have been, and continue to be, important reflections of the value the University places on acknowledging and rewarding academic excellence in engaged learning and engaged research.

In 2005 UWS was one of the 29 universities represented at the inaugural meeting of the Talloires Network, becoming a signatory to the Declaration developed at that meeting. All signatories to the Declaration committed their institutions “to educating for social responsibility and civic engagement, and to strengthening the application of university resources to the needs of local and global communities”. The Talloires Network vision guides the work of its member institutions:

“We believe that higher education institutions do not exist in isolation from society, nor from the communities in which they are located. The Talloires Network envisions universities around the world as a vibrant and dynamic force in their societies, incorporating civic engagement and community service into their research and teaching mission”.

19 Macquarium Research Pty Ltd (1993). A Qualitative Exploration of perception of University of Western Sydney, University of Western Sydney
20 Australian Universities Quality Agency (2007) “Report of an Audit of the University of Western Sydney”
21 Talloires Declaration on the civic roles and social responsibilities of higher education, September 17, 2005: Statement arising from Talloires Conference, 2005
UWS has maintained a strong involvement in the Network and has sought to give force to the Talloires Vision in its planning and in its relationships with the communities it serves.

UWS has also taken a leadership role in assuring quality management in community engagement. The framework for community engagement presented at the 2005 Australian Universities Quality Forum proposed attention to the following factors.\(^{23}\)

1. Defining community engagement
2. Identification of the university’s communities
3. Managing community engagement strategically and in an integrated way
4. Involvement from staff and community members
5. Leadership and accountability
6. Incentives
7. Tracking and improving performance
8. Continuous improvement

1.10 The University and the region

Greater Western Sydney is a diverse region geographically within its peri-urban setting, comprising the Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Auburn, Bankstown, Baulkham Hills, Blacktown, Blue Mountains, Camden, Campbelltown, Fairfield, Hawkesbury, Holroyd, Liverpool, Parramatta, Pennith, and Wollondilly. The University has six campuses spread across the region (Figure 1.3), and developing a consistent community engagement agenda for the region became an imperative as UWS sought to consolidate its place as the university for Greater Western Sydney.

Figure 1.3 – Location of UWS Campuses

\(^{22}\) The Talloires Network homepage, accessed 7 August 2012 from http://talloiresnetwork.tufts.edu/what-is-the-talloires-network/

Key issues affecting Greater Western Sydney have been researched extensively within the region, including the important work of Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (WSROC). A 2007 report by WSROC identified significant health, educational and economic inequities in the region, broadly reflecting the socio-economic characteristics of the population. It recommended strategies to address transport disadvantage, housing affordability, education and employment opportunities, and access to open space and healthy food.

As identified by the WSROC report, many population groups in the region face socio-economic and health inequities. These are substantially related to the systemic disadvantage often associated with the incidence of low income households, sole parent families, unemployment, culturally and linguistically diverse populations, refugees, Indigenous peoples, and people with disabilities. To provide perspective for this finding, a more recent study by Deloitte Access Economics (2012) found that GWS comprises postcodes that occupy both the most and least affluent categories within the Sydney area, confirming that the region per-se does not have a homogenous social character. Moreover, Greater Western Sydney by virtue of the extent and nature of its economic and population bases could be argued as having a very good platform on which to improve overall living standards in the region through education and regional engagement.

The SEIFA index (Socio Economic Index for Areas) – combining particularly measures of employment, household income and access and outcomes for health and education, Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) scores and rankings for GWS are shown in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: SEIFA index of relative socio-economic disadvantage, 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LGA</th>
<th>SEIFA index</th>
<th>Ranking within NSW (out of 153 LGAs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fairfield</td>
<td>876</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auburn</td>
<td>922</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bankstown</td>
<td>945</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campbelltown</td>
<td>955</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>966</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holroyd</td>
<td>972</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacktown</td>
<td>973</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parramatta</td>
<td>987</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penrith</td>
<td>1006</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawkesbury</td>
<td>1033</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wollondilly</td>
<td>1,045</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Mountains</td>
<td>1,051</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camden</td>
<td>1,057</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hills</td>
<td>1,117</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ABS, 2006

The Deloitte report notes that “out of the 14 GWS local government areas, eight have a SEIFA index below 1000, implying that these regions are experiencing relative disadvantage compared to the rest of the country”. It is of some concern that the LGAs experiencing disadvantage are clustered in a relatively small geographic area (the eastern section of GWS) rather than being dispersed in the wider GWS region. The clustering of disadvantage may lead to a cycle of lower socioeconomic outcomes as residents can become isolated in this situation from opportunities or encouragement to improve their income, employment and education.

On a positive note, the employment and growth opportunities in the wider GWS region will benefit the residents from low socioeconomic areas. Hence, the diverse nature of the GWS region needs to be taken into account when considering education strategies which address the socioeconomic profile of the region.

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UWS has sought to respond to the needs of the region through its core activities of teaching and research, as well as institutional collaborations with key organisations targeting specific population groups. Many research projects involving community and industry partners are taken forward as part of the UWS research agenda, as well as through the connections forged between University schools and research institutes and the community and government sector.

From an economic development perspective, engagement with regional communities has been made more relevant by an acknowledgment of the role of knowledge creation and transfer for regional competitiveness in the modern global economy. Garlick points out how regional economic attributes can provide an important platform for the application and growth of niche knowledge on which the spatially located university can build its distinctiveness in a global context. UWS has, for instance, focused on the uniqueness of its community profile of culturally and linguistically diverse communities to develop an expertise in the areas of multiculturalism, refugee education and cultural diversity research. Housing issues in GWS have also become a central focus of research for the University’s Urban Research Centre, while the School of Medicine has developed a strong focus on health programs targeting the most significant regional health issues as well as locally disadvantaged communities.

A second important economic imperative shaping community engagement identified by Garlick relates to deregulation policy of the 1980s, where funding initiatives increased competitiveness and a need to develop distinctiveness based on a confluence of institutional and regional attributes. UWS has sought since its inception in 1989 to mark a distinctive identity on the basis of its responsiveness to local and regional needs.

Linking its initial mission to a regional imperative and aspiration set the foundation for the University’s relationship with the region as one of engagement and responsiveness. This connection to place has been articulated in many different ways in the literature, most recently through the paradigms of ‘university-community engagement’ or ‘civic engagement’. The manner in which this relationship with external communities is measured and evaluated has also shifted with a new emphasis on concepts such as ‘mutual benefit’, ‘reciprocity’, ‘engaged research’ and ‘engaged learning’.

Professor David Watson visited UWS in 2010 to conduct a study of community and civic engagement activities. Findings were subsequently reflected in The Engaged University, where reference was made to the “disciplined and thoroughly committed focus on civic and community engagement with the State of New South Wales and region (Greater Western Sydney)”. The UWS examples which were cited included Badanami Centre, SMEExcellence, engaged learning projects by the School of Education, the work of UWS Research Centers, and the Schools Engagement Strategic Plan.

Equally importantly, Professor Watson emphasised the critical role of strategic integration, the ‘whole of university agenda’, which involves embedding social, economic and environmental themes in teaching, learning and outreach activities.

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CHAPTER 2
SHAPING STRATEGY AND PRACTICE.
Chapter Overview

By its nature, community and regional engagement is a multi-faceted and complex phenomenon. For universities which have a distinctively regional context and focus, there are particularly strong imperatives around putting in place the appropriate strategic settings and operating arrangements which best contribute to advancing the region economically and socially. This chapter commences with the UWS working definition of engagement, then outlines the University’s strategic settings for community and regional engagement within Greater Western Sydney. The chapter outlines the organisational arrangements within UWS which provide leadership and support in this area, and concludes with a discussion of evaluating the impact of engagement.

2.1 Definition

The definition of community engagement adopted in 2005 by UWS was developed by the Carnegie Foundation in the preamble to its voluntary community engagement classification,29 viz::

Engagement is the collaboration between the University and a targeted community (regional, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity.

This is further discussed in Section 2.4

2.2 Strategy

The perception of the university as a community of scholars dedicated to research, new knowledge and enquiry, which resonated for many years, no longer defines adequately the modern university in the contemporary and complex contexts in which it operates. Social, economic and cultural transformations during the past 30 years have seen a renewed emphasis on the leadership role of universities within their communities and regions. Concepts such as community development, access and equity, social justice, civic responsibility, sustainability and regional development are increasingly defining components of a university’s sense of both place and purpose. These concepts are reflected in the emerging concepts of ‘third mission’, ‘civic engagement’ and ‘community engagement’.

The University of Western Sydney has a well-honed and productive strategic planning process. In 2006 following the institution changing strategy development process from which emerged the Making the Difference strategy and the all-of-institution AUQA audit, the Executive has worked assiduously to embed the approved mission, vision and values into all aspects of the University’s activities. The AUQA audit report in 2007 acknowledged this early strategy work and commended the University’s strategy process and goal to manage its growth aspirations in a coordinated and systematic way. By 2011 the strategy was not only well known, but recognised as being shared at all levels of the institution. The 2011 AUQA panel commended the University for “its highly developed planning, reporting, quality assurance and resourcing system” and “for its clear and strategic focus on advancing its mission for the benefit of the people of Greater Western Sydney.”

This is an important observation as it demonstrates the extent to which there is a firm foundation of

commitment and action that defines the learning and teaching, research and engagement domains of the institution. In March 2012 the University conducted its first comprehensive staff climate survey. The ‘My Voice’ survey has been used in 38 universities in Australia and New Zealand and seeks responses from staff to a range of questions broadly categorised within the areas of ‘passion’ and ‘progress’. The response rate of 83% was exceptionally high and represented the views of over 2000 staff.

Relevantly the results show that 89% of the respondents are committed to the University’s mission, vision and values. The consultant leading the implementation and reporting on the survey commented that UWS was “unique” in the strength of this response. The quantitative results of the survey also indicated that many staff felt they did not have the time and opportunities for community engagement. The qualitative comments, however, demonstrated both a strong commitment and a strategic response to the University’s mission and engagement activities.

2.2.1 The ‘why’ of community and regional engagement

UWS has responded to the challenges of creating a modern metropolitan university by articulating a distinct identity for itself as an engaged university. Engagement has been a defining aspect of the University of Western Sydney’s mission since its inception. Guided by the paradigm of “Bringing Knowledge to Life”, the University continues to seek to relate learning, teaching and research to the world at large, and to take on wider responsibilities with its constituent communities. The UWS mission in effect, establishes the ‘why’ of community and regional engagement by defining the relationship the institution will have with its region. The mission sets a clear expectation of UWS as a regional partner, where the success of the institution and the region are inextricably linked:

“To be a university of international standing and outlook, achieving excellence through scholarship, teaching, learning, research and service to its regional, national and international communities, beginning with the people of Greater Western Sydney”

The regional characteristics of Greater Western Sydney in turn determine the broad nature of the University’s engagement with the region. This duality has been explored in detail in Chapter 1, in which the University has endeavoured to demonstrate that engagement is shaped by the region’s large and expanding peri-urban setting, its complex socio-economic characteristics, the extent of its cultural diversity, and the configuration of local areas. The University is a multi-campus institution in terms of geographic location and student distribution. This multi-campus character facilitates engagement locally, but has historically provided challenges for institutional cohesion around engagement.

2.2.2 The ‘what’ of community and regional engagement

The University’s aspirations and institutional priorities are captured in a simple one-page institutional strategy – Making the Difference (Figure 2.1). The strategy was recently revised for the period 2010-2015 and specifies that UWS will:

1. Create a superior learning experience
2. Develop focused, relevant and world-class engaged research
3. Build organisational and financial strength

To achieve these strategic priorities there is a cascading set of strategies, plans, actions and projects encompassing all areas of the University’s activities.

Community engagement is not among the three priority areas because, by 2006, it was an embedded and funded aspect of each of these goals. The strategy makes reference to the importance of engagement in its commitment to “being connected locally and internationally”, “bringing knowledge to life through community and business engagement”, to “environmental and social responsibility” and to “engaged learning” and “engaged research”.

Community engagement priorities (the ‘what’) are defined in principle and in the practical outworkings of this strategy. The strategy is a key statement of commitment, and a theme and framework to guide the University’s sense of purpose and strategic direction.

With a distinct focus on the local region and communities, the strategy provides the basis for defining the priorities for engagement in and with the region. This is reflected in the UWS Strategic Plans for Research, and for Learning and Teaching, in the configuration of areas of research and graduate concentration, and in the broader institutional programs which contribute to the social and economic strength of the region through education.
UWS Strategy and Plan 2010 – 2015: Making the Difference

Our mission

“To be a university of international standing and outlook, achieving excellence through scholarship, teaching, learning, research and service to its regional, national and international communities, beginning with the people of Greater Western Sydney”

Our vision

“Bringing knowledge to life in Greater Western Sydney through community and business engagement with our learning and our research”

What we are

- Research-led
- Student-centred
- Community focused
- Responsive and results-oriented

What we believe in

- The primacy of the student experience
- Environmental and social responsibility
- A vibrant and inclusive intellectual community

What we will do

1. Create a superior and engaged learning experience
   - Enable students to study in their own time, supported by ICT-enabled learning resources
   - Create a first year experience that optimises retention and success
   - Implement a comprehensive Indigenous education strategy
   - Develop staff capacity for high-quality teaching
   - Embed engaged learning in every program
   - Create pathways that attract talented students from diverse backgrounds
   - Ensure students achieve the highest possible academic standards

2. Develop focused, relevant and world-class engaged research
   - Increase overall research intensity and performance
   - Achieve outstanding quality in research and scholarship
   - Enhance and increase the scope of our productive research groups
   - Develop effective research partnerships
   - Provide a rich and stimulating environment for research students

3. Build organisational and financial strength
   - Attract, retain, recognise, reward and develop high quality staff
   - Implement 5-year financial and capital plans and a rolling 3-year budget framework
   - Ensure sustainability in the University’s academic program and operations
   - Build robust international arrangements
   - Leverage land-holdings to increase income
   - Build commercially astute and profitable UWS businesses
   - Build productive relationships with Alumni and potential University sponsors

Our current priorities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Widening Participation</th>
<th>Student Retention</th>
<th>Research Outcomes</th>
<th>International Students</th>
<th>Postgraduate Students</th>
<th>Student Satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Figure 2.1: UWS Making the Difference: 2010-2015 Strategy
The *Making the Difference* strategy also provides the basis for establishing a link to specific regional priorities. These priorities have been articulated by the community and through the local government councils for the region, and include housing, transport, education and employment, the environment and health (refer Chapter 1.10).

In response to these regional imperatives, the UWS Engagement Strategic Plan 2010-2013 outlines the parameters for engagement emphasis and practice. These include a broad focus on:

1. engaged learning opportunities for students
2. school engagement initiatives to increase educational attainment and opportunities for young people in GWS
3. support for engaged teaching and research
4. increased community input and partnerships between the university and the community

Of the 201 current engagement projects which are recorded in the TICE system, 126 are directly related to the priority issues for Greater Western Sydney. This is reflected in the summary at Figure 2.2. These projects are described in more detail in the Chapters that follow and a full listing of projects is included at Appendix B.

Figure 2.2: Summary of UWS Engagement Projects in priority areas for GWS Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority Area</th>
<th>Health</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Employment</th>
<th>Environment</th>
<th>Social/Cultural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following tables provide examples of engaged projects under the priority issues for the region and include the various groups within the University working on them. The tables serve to give an indication of the breadth and nature of the engagement activities which form an integral part of the fabric of the University’s core activities in learning and teaching, research and service.
Table 2.1: Examples of Engaged Projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HEALTH</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous Health - Heartbeat - Schools Engagement</td>
<td>School of Science and Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Baby Lab</td>
<td>MARCS Institute for Brain and Behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young People, Technology, And Wellbeing Research Facility</td>
<td>School of Humanities and Communication Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Paediatrics Program</td>
<td>School of Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal Health And Culture</td>
<td>School of Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugee Health</td>
<td>School of Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing Breastfeeding: An Analysis Of The Language And Practices Used By Midwives And Lactation Consultants When Interacting With New Mothers</td>
<td>School of Nursing and Midwifery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Perinatal Journey: The Process And Impact Of Psychosocial Assessment</td>
<td>School of Nursing and Midwifery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Model Of Integrated Care For Dependent Older People Living In The Community</td>
<td>School of Nursing and Midwifery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Sydney Academy Of Sport - Netball Fitness Assessment</td>
<td>School of Science and Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifeline Macarthur Project</td>
<td>School of Social Science and Psychology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EDUCATION</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Max Potential Community Project</td>
<td>School of Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Engagement And Active Citizenship</td>
<td>School of Humanities and Communication Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWS Giants</td>
<td>Office of the PVC Engagement and International, School of Science and Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UWS Penrith Observatory</td>
<td>School of Computing, Engineering and Mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Without Borders</td>
<td>School of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rethinking Multiculturalism / Reassessing Multicultural Education</td>
<td>School of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Pathways To Reading For Disadvantaged Children: Identifying Psychosocial Antecedents And Implementing Effective Intervention To Enhance Literacy, Self-Concept, And Motivation</td>
<td>School of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Fair Go Project</td>
<td>School of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosete Program</td>
<td>School of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools Engagement - Fast Forward</td>
<td>Schools Engagement Unit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EMPLOYMENT</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dollars And Sense</td>
<td>School of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>International Marketing Capstone Unit</td>
<td>School of Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucy Mentoring Program</td>
<td>School of Business, School of Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIFE Students In Free Enterprise</td>
<td>School of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>School of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairfax Partnership - Interns</td>
<td>School of Humanities and Communication Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barriers And Impediments To Employment For Arabic Ancestry In Auburn-Bankstown Corridor</td>
<td>School of Social Science and Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics And Finance Engagement Project</td>
<td>School of Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tri Community Exchange Online Marketing</td>
<td>School of Humanities and Communication Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Arabic Businesses</td>
<td>Urban Research Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Sydney Employment Study</td>
<td>Urban Research Centre</td>
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</table>

**ENVIRONMENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eucalypt Growth In Past And Future Environments: A Novel Approach To Understanding The Impacts Of Atmospheric Co2 And Climate</td>
<td>Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor Of Natural Science Field Projects Environmental Management</td>
<td>School of Science and Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawkesbury River Waterkeeper Project</td>
<td>School of Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Sydney Insect Infestation -</td>
<td>Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest Ecosystem Water Use: Does Species Diversity Matter?</td>
<td>Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Centre Of Expertise On Education For Sustainable Development Greater Western Sydney</td>
<td>Office of Sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnership Between Local Councils And Business Management Students For Business Sustainability</td>
<td>School of Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UWS Solar Car Project</td>
<td>School of Computing, Engineering and Mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot Science: Global Citizens: The Agency Of The Museum Sector In Climate Change Interventions</td>
<td>School of Humanities and Communication Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawkesbury Harvest Farm Gate Trail</td>
<td>School of Social Science and Psychology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOCIO CULTURAL**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Title</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engaged Research Mentoring Winter Vacation Projects In Economics And Finance</td>
<td>School of Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabbit Hole</td>
<td>School of Humanities and Communication Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Through Community Service - Languages In Educational And Community Settings</td>
<td>School of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridging Worlds, Linking Cultures: An Electronic Planning Tool For The Western Sydney Region</td>
<td>Institute for Culture and Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UWS Imagine Cup Team</td>
<td>School of Computing, Engineering and Mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parramatta Community Justice Clinic</td>
<td>School of Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elder Abuse And Older Women Project</td>
<td>School of Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex And Ethics Violence Prevention Program Training And Evaluation</td>
<td>School of Social Science and Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Epping Public Transport Improvement Study</td>
<td>School of Social Science and Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homelessness In Parramatta, Nepean-Blacktown</td>
<td>School of Social Science and Psychology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The way in which the regional priority areas are addressed through university engagement is explored in detail in each of the chapters which follow. Case studies illustrate the diversity of focal points which make up the ‘what’ of engagement, including an emphasis on issues such as improving education and health, building sustainability in a broad sense, fostering cultural cohesion, and assisting small business development.

2.2.3 The ‘how’ of community and regional engagement

Institutional leadership and commitment to a civic mission provide the context for University staff members to work with and respond to local constituencies. The diversity and richness of UWS’ current community engagement partnerships with local and regional businesses, government, and community organisations have contributed to the delivery of health, social, environmental, cultural and economic benefits to Greater Western Sydney.

The UWS approach to operationalising engagement (the ‘how’) reflects the principles discussed in the introduction to this submission, namely that engagement is first and foremost about relationships, and that in relationship-based partnerships (as distinct from transaction-based) the notions of mutual benefit and reciprocity are formed over time.

These dynamics are reflected in the UWS Operational Framework for Community and Regional Engagement at Figure 2.3, where the axes of ‘mutual benefit’ and ‘extent of engagement’ are expressed as a continuum. In this model, activities are able to be categorised and plotted in terms of their contribution and relationship to the high-impact area of engagement, represented as the darker shading in the centre of the model where mutual benefit is most intensive.

The model captures the notion that a sense of mutual benefit is formed over time, where, for example, a short term activity or exchange with an individual partner can mature into, or lead to more intensive and deeply embedded exchange relationships. The model also recognises that by their nature, individual activities or exchanges are deliberately and necessarily specific-purpose and time limited, and may provide demonstrably greater benefit to one partner over the other. However, the University’s experience is that all exchanges nevertheless contribute to the comprehensive accumulation of reciprocity by the University and regional communities over time.

The UWS Operational Framework for Community and Regional Engagement draws on relevant research on building shared meaning, interactional richness and network embeddedness and how the dimension of time and the experience of multiple exchanges shape partner perceptions of mutuality and shared benefit. The expression of ‘mutual benefit’ as a continuum in the framework is informed inter alia by the proposition in the 2008 AUCEA positioning paper that the external community comprises a broad range of stakeholders from industry to community groups. The ‘externalities’ principle has also been invoked in choosing ‘benefit to the community’ over ‘benefit to partner’ for one end of the mutual benefit continuum, reflecting the view that engagement activity in a cumulative sense should benefit broader society.

At the opposite end of the continuum, the operational framework refers to ‘benefit to UWS’, relating to the University’s core responsibilities in education and research. In this context, benefit to student learning is categorised as benefit to UWS, as it facilitates delivery of the institution’s core responsibilities. It is recognised, however, that what is of benefit to UWS students is by extension ultimately of benefit to the community. In this sense, points along the continuum of ‘mutual benefit’ should be viewed in relative terms, recognising that there is some degree of mutual benefit in every exchange, especially when viewed over time.
Figure 2.3: UWS Operational Framework for Regional and Community Engagement

The alignment of the strategic and operational dimensions (the why, what and how) of UWS community and regional engagement is summarised in diagrammatic form at Figure 2.4. This figure illustrates both the integrated nature of engagement strategy with regional issues and priorities, and the way that engagement effort is operationalised in the context of strategy.

The detailed analysis of engaged learning, engaged research and community-based collaborations in the chapters which follow include a comprehensive description and evaluation of the range of activities, relationships and outcomes that constitute engagement between the University and the region. Case studies presented within these chapters illustrate core concepts and bring them to life in an applied sense.
Figure 2.4: UWS Community and Regional Engagement

UWS COMMUNITY & REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT

UWS

WHY

UWS Mission
“To be a university of international standing and outlook, achieving excellence through scholarship, teaching, learning, research and service to its regional, national and international communities, beginning with the people of Greater Western Sydney (GWS)”

WHAT

UWS Vision: “Bringing knowledge to life in GWS through community and business engagement with our learning and our research”

HOW

WSROC Greater Western Sydney Regional Priorities
- Transport
- Housing affordability
- Education opportunities
- Employment opportunities
- Environmental concerns
- Access to healthy food

Characteristics of GWS
- 3rd most populous region in Australia (growing rapidly)
- Large peri-urban area
- Highly multicultural (160 nationalities)
- 3rd largest economy in Australia
- Shift from manufacturing to service sector economy
- High incidence of Low-SES

Issues:
- Transport
- Housing affordability
- Education opportunities
- Employment opportunities
- Environmental concerns
- Access to healthy food

Learning + Teaching Plan
Research Plan
Engagement Strategy
Operational Framework for Community and Regional Engagement
2.3 Organisational arrangements

As outlined in Chapter 1, in 2005 a review was undertaken within UWS to determine how best to embed engagement in learning, teaching and research, to inform the then forthcoming 2006 AUQA audit of UWS. The review was chaired by Dr Barbara Holland, who later became the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Engagement) and the senior University-wide leader of the portfolio. The 2005 review highlighted the following issues:

1. The need to make strategic plans for community engagement more specific: The Regional and Community Engagement Plan, 2004-2008, was developed to guide community engagement practice. However the review found that strategies in the Plan were too broad (e.g., “strengthening links between individual campuses and their immediate communities”) and in many cases did not provide a robust framework for action and decision-making at the unit or division level (Holland et al. 2005). Identified areas of weakness included practices for engagement of partner input to project design; joint development of goals/outcomes; methods for measuring impact/value to partner; realisation of opportunities to enhance student learning through project involvement; and the integration of engagement into curricula and into lines of research.

2. The need for greater leadership, visibility and coordination: The review found that successful and sustainable engagement initiatives required internal investment in institutional infrastructure and leadership at both the senior and local (school, college, discipline) levels. The confusion over the terminology of engagement was exacerbated by a lack of coherent infrastructure or clear leadership responsibilities.

3. Better strategies for the creation of monitoring and improvement systems: The review identified the importance of collecting useful and relevant data for internal and external monitoring of program quality, identifying opportunities for improvement, and evidence of impacts and outcomes. As a result of this observation UWS implemented the TICE system. The 2005 review highlighted the need for clarity and consensus regarding the meaning of community engagement. In order to address this issue, the review committee proposed adoption of the Carnegie definition outlined in Section 2.1. This definition was elaborated in a UWS context as:

   Community engagement is a mode of teaching and learning, and a method for research and scholarship. These activities are distinguishable from outreach and public service in that community engagement requires an intentional knowledge exchange relationship and explicit negotiation between internal and external partners on the nature of the exchange, expected individual and collective outcomes, roles and responsibilities, and benefits or products with the intent that both campus and community will be enhanced by the interaction and that active involvement of each is essential to the successful conduct of the partnership exchange.

The 2005 Review was a significant milestone in the University’s developments toward a strategic and integrated approach to its relationships with external stakeholders. It drew attention to the need for greater investment of resources and institutional leadership in community engagement, full-time senior positions, better systems to track and monitor the range of community engagement activities taking place at the University, and a website for the Office of Engagement.

The Review recommendations relating to leading, embedding and facilitating engagement were implemented in the Engagement Strategy adopted by UWS in 2007. This was supported by new formal structures including:

1. The creation of the full time position of Pro Vice-Chancellor Engagement (previously part-time).

2. The appointments of Associate Deans of Engagement in each of the three UWS Colleges to provide leadership for the development of the engaged learning and research activities and for the public service and outreach activities within the Colleges.
3. Re-structuring of the Office of University Engagement to support the PVC Engagement and provide a focal point for activities that engage the community in the core business of the University.

4. The creation of the Engagement Strategy and Policy Committee to undertake the role of the former Relationship Development Group at UWS in sharing information and working cooperatively in the development of relationships outside of UWS.

5. The development of the UWS: Building Better Relationships with Schools: Strategic Plan 2008-10. This provided a framework for building mutually beneficial, relationships with the high schools and primary schools in Greater Western Sydney.

6. Continued commitment and support for the Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance (AUCEA).

7. Continued commitment and support for activities and role of the UWS Regional Council.

8. Continued support for the UWS Regional & Community Grants Scheme, UWS Partnership Awards, Women of the West Awards and Vice-Chancellor Excellence Award for University Engagement.

In 2009 the University developed the Civic Engagement Strategic Framework - Building better relationships with local governments: 2010-2015. This framework focused on promoting engaged learning opportunities, and the development and promotion of a Community Directory (LINCS) to facilitate access to a list of community organisations and services in GWS. Under this model, UWS engagement facilitators advanced the portfolio themes of cultural vitality, social capacity and environmental responsibility. University staff are encouraged to enter information into the TICE database, which has become a tool for regular analysis of the level and characteristics of engagement activities at UWS.

The model of Community Engagement implemented at the University as a result of the 2005 Review and related engagement strategies placed greater emphasis on exemplary modes of engaged learning, engaged research and community partnerships which displayed the following characteristics:

1. Partnership grounded in the special expertise or capacity of each collaborating organisation
2. Focus on complex, often evolving questions and issues
3. Joint exploration of goals, expectations and limitations
4. Creation of a mutually rewarding agenda
5. Mutually-designed program that promotes shared leadership, decision-making, conflict resolution, resource management
6. Clear benefits, roles and responsibilities for each partner
7. Focus on knowledge exchange, shared learning and capacity-building
8. Attention to communications patterns and cultivation of trust
9. Commitment to continuous assessment of the partnership itself as well as outcomes (Holland 2005).

In an institutional reorganisation in 2010 and following the resignation of the Pro Vice-Chancellor, the engagement function was structurally consolidated within a broader organisational focus on partnerships – the Office of Engagement and Partnerships. Following this first change in leadership, a major restructuring of the University in late 2011 saw the removal of the College organisational layer and the establishment of an academic structure with nine schools in which the Dean is supported by a small school leadership team. In the associated University-level divisional structure UWS Engagement is now included within the portfolio responsibilities of the newly-established Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Engagement and International) (refer to Figure 2.4).

The current review is an important opportunity to reflect on the future role and focus of engagement leadership and practice under this new portfolio.
Figure 2.5: University Organisational Structure 2012
Figure 2.6: University Governance Structure
In the current organisational context leadership and accountability for engagement across the University are vested both at the Deputy Vice-Chancellor level, and enacted through a Pro Vice-Chancellor with portfolio responsibilities in this area and at the Dean level through the activities of Directors of Engagement in the schools.

The 2011 AUQA Audit Report reaffirmed previous findings commending the University’s leadership in developing community engagement programs with the region, and being responsive to the needs of its constituencies. Notwithstanding this positive finding, the AUQA Panel recommended that UWS address what it saw as some inconsistency in the understanding and language of ‘community engagement’, ‘engaged research’ and ‘engaged learning’, and the implications for engagement strategy.

One significant outcome of the structural changes in 2011 was the identification of a leadership position with responsibility for engaged learning and engaged research within the schools (five of the nine schools) and institutes as well as an Executive-level position, the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Engagement and International) providing University-wide leadership.

2.4 Quality Assurance

The broad framework for assuring quality which was proposed to the 2005 Australian Universities Quality Forum is outlined at Section 1.9. The University contends that this broad quality framework is substantially manifest in its approach to engagement. More specifically, community engagement is clearly defined in the University mission and strategy, and there is clarity as to UWS’ regional constituency. The history and linkages around this aspect are discussed at Chapter 1. Section 2.2 outlines the robust integration of strategy and practice, as well as the framework for operationalising strategy.

Performance is tracked through the TICE system. The chapters which follow confirm the extent to which staff and community members are collectively involved in engagement activities and projects.

Notwithstanding this substantial level of conformity with its own Quality Assurance Framework, the University proposes that there is scope for a more structured and systematic approach to evaluation and continuous improvement. Moreover, this area for attention overlaps with the issue of measuring the impact of community and regional engagement.

2.5 Measuring impact

Calculating the impact of the University within its community has evolved during the last 20 years to include models that focus on the role of the University in addressing local issues and developing social capital to the extent that many universities now refer to the local and regional economy in their operational and strategic plans.

As outlined in Chapter 1, the challenges and opportunities presented by the University’s legislative mandate to engage with its communities have been welcomed by UWS as they resonate with its institutional history and sense of place as a university for the people of Greater Western Sydney. In conjunction with the community the University has identified a set of focal areas driven by local and global issues that will affect all citizens of the region. These include environmental stewardship and a concern for climate change, a special focus on vulnerable populations including advocacy for children, wellness, economic development, and collaborations to improve the delivery of exemplary health care and educational opportunity and attainment, especially for the historically under-represented people in the region including Indigenous peoples and new migrant communities.

Measurement of the impact of community and regional engagement is a complex undertaking in view of the social and economic challenges of Greater Western Sydney, and can only be effectively evaluated over a longer-term horizon in the context of regional outcomes in priority areas. UWS would state at the outset that, as with most universities internationally33, evaluating the impact of strategy and practice could be strengthened by a more deliberate and structured approach. A proposed framework for this is discussed in more detail in Chapter 8.

This review has enabled UWS to obtain a level of feedback on the perceptions of community partners of the University’s contribution to regional development, and a more structured and systematic approach to surveying partners is included in the discussion about future directions in Chapter 8. It is worth noting, in the context of understanding and measuring outcomes, that the deepening of engagement relationships identified

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33 Hanover Research, (2011), ‘Best practices in Measuring University-Community Engagement’, February
by partners in submissions and endorsements to this review reflect the University’s growing, strategic and intentional impact on the Greater Western Sydney region.

2.6 External stakeholder feedback

The views of external stakeholders were gathered through two processes. The first was an invitation emailed to over 1500 contacts in community, businesses, schools and government organisations in Greater Western Sydney to submit online their comments regarding their existing or past collaborations with the University and the outcomes of these relationships. 98 responses were received to this survey. The second was a series of 5 focus groups in a range of Local Government Areas (Penrith, Hawkesbury, Canterbury, Blacktown, Auburn), involving representatives from 75 organisations (see Appendix for list of organisations).

In the survey, submissions were designed to elicit information regarding:

- Quality of the relationship between the University and external stakeholders
- Effectiveness of communication strategies on engagement activities between the University and external stakeholders
- Outcomes of collaborations for external partners and the wider community
- Factors which facilitate or obstruct collaborations between the University and external organisations

The focus group sessions were designed to provide external stakeholders with an opportunity to elaborate on these themes. Specific experiences in developing or seeking to develop collaborations with the University were also explored to ascertain the quality and outcomes of these interactions.

Quality of relationship

Figure 2.7: External submission responses to Q1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q1. The University of Western Sydney has strong relationships with local communities, organisations and businesses in western Sydney (n = 98)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No comment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The substantial majority (84%) of external respondents to the survey strongly agreed or agreed with the premise that the University has strong relationships with local communities.

The focus groups produced a range of comments on the quality of UWS community relationships. Some organisations not currently collaborating with UWS expressed a desire for greater UWS outreach to the community to understand local needs, assist school students and their families, or assist with English language. UWS was compared unfavourably with TAFE in this respect in one focus group. Those organisations already in a relationship with the University generally spoke very well of the quality of the relationship, reinforcing the survey findings. However, it was stated in one focus group that “UTS (not UWS) leads the engagement drive in Western Sydney”, with its “Shop Front” model.

Effectiveness of communication strategies

Figure 2.8: External submission responses to Q2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q2. The University makes its engagement plans and activities known to the community, organisations and businesses in western Sydney (n = 98)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No comment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2.7: External submission responses to Q1

The University of Western Sydney has strong relationships with local communities, organisations and businesses in western Sydney (n = 98)
While there was very substantial agreement in the survey that UWS was an “engaged university”, its communications strategies received a less wholehearted endorsement (67%).

Criticism of communication strategies was the subject of a number of qualitative comments in the survey and this was also a theme in several of the focus groups. The major concern was relationship management, in particular around the termination or winding up of partnerships, or lack of a succession plan on the UWS side when a key staff member left. A second theme related to the complexity of UWS and how to connect with the organisation.

Beneficial outcomes

There was a clear endorsement of the benefits of the University’s partnerships for the local and regional areas (85%).

Factors which facilitate or obstruct collaborations

This was a qualitative question in the survey and it was also explored in focus groups. A major theme which emerged was the need for the University to have a single point of contact given it is such a large and complex organisation. The website needed to be up to date, informative, and more user friendly. The feedback indicated that the “Engage with us” button should be in a more prominent position, and inquiries systematically followed up.

Overall

Engagement relationships are highly valued by partner organisations. Problems arise in initiating relationships, and in ending them. The feedback showed that a “life cycle” relationship management strategy and administrative system would address many of the identified problems.

2.7 Internal stakeholder feedback

The views of internal stakeholders were gathered through three processes. The first was an invitation emailed to all staff to submit online their comments regarding the University’s engagement activities with the community and region, and to discuss the outcomes of these relationships. The 27 responses that were received to this survey are provided in the compendium of supporting documents/background materials. The second was feedback received from the Reference Group to the review34, and the third was feedback received from EngageLab 2012 – a full-day staff forum to showcase and discuss engagement activities at UWS. Mutually beneficial outcomes of the University’s engagement with the community and region were both recognised and highly valued by those staff contributing to this review. The main recommendations arising from the feedback have been to further develop processes to improve the management of relationships, as well as improving the support and resourcing of engagement activities, including recognition aspects.

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34 For membership of the Reference Group to the 2012 Review of UWS Community and Regional Engagement, see: http://reviews.uws.edu.au/review-panel-committee/steering-committee-and-reference-group
Chapter Overview

This chapter discusses the University’s commitment and approach to engagement with the Schools sector in Greater Western Sydney. The importance of schools engagement is examined in the context of the UWS mission, with a particular emphasis on its role in building community relationships and partnerships that enhance regional capacity through education. Case studies are presented throughout the chapter to illustrate the range and scope of schools engagement activities, and where appropriate the implications for other areas of community engagement are outlined.

3.1 Context for schools engagement

A commitment to working with the school sector to increase educational aspiration and attainment in Greater Western Sydney (GWS) has led to the development of an extensive, diverse and innovative schools engagement program. Establishment of University/school relationships that take into account the strengths, needs and perspectives of the various stakeholders has been the foundation for mutually beneficial collaborative activities that enhance the intellectual and social capital of the region.

Since 2007 this highly-regarded program has:

- encouraged and helped many students, who may not otherwise have considered post-school education or been eligible, to enrol at university;
- increased the academic enrichment and skill-building opportunities, and thus the choices and prospects, for students of all backgrounds and across the academic spectrum;
- contributed to knowledge and capacity in the region through teacher and school staff professional development, sharing of resources and expertise, and school-related research;
- provided valuable learning for UWS students; and
- enhanced the University’s profile and community recognition of its role in the region.

3.2 Schools engagement strategy

I cannot conceive of a stronger nor more broadly based commitment by a university to the school sector. This commitment, and the initiatives that flow from it...are transforming the education landscape...in (Greater) Western Sydney said Mr Lindsay Wasson, former Regional Director, Western Sydney, NSW Department of Education and Training, at the launch of the first UWS Schools Strategic Plan (Building Better Relationships with Schools 2008-10). The plan articulated the University’s intention to engage effectively with the school sector, and served as a mechanism for a coordinated, whole-of-institution approach.

UWS was the first Australian university to have such a plan. Its implementation fostered productive relationships at all levels of the school sector. It was a catalyst for the improvement and expansion of existing UWS/schools engagement programs and the introduction of successful new initiatives. Working in partnership with the sector increased relevance and viability. The whole-of-institution approach allowed for creative design that drew upon expertise from many different areas, as well as increasing the variety of programs. School students and staff, and senior sector administrators became more familiar with the University, its campuses and facilities, and what it could offer. Many became advocates.

“UWS has demystified the experience of what University is for many students who have no knowledge of what ‘uni’ is”

Mr Paul Zielinski, Principal, Leumeah High School
External Submission 38 (May 2012)
In 2007 a mapping exercise had revealed UWS was involved in many different activities with schools, but most were taking place via localised arrangements and there was no central picture of their nature and impact. It was not known whether they were meeting key school sector needs, if there was duplication of effort, or where synergies and efficiencies could be gained. The strategic plan addressed these issues. It was developed in close consultation with the school sector and also drew upon discussions with a wide range of internal stakeholders. The 2011-13 renewal of the plan retained the same aims and conceptual framework as the original. This reflected the high degree of stakeholder satisfaction with the outcomes. (See Review of the Schools Strategic Plan later in this chapter.)

3.3 Governance and outcomes

The Schools Engagement Reference Group, comprising senior administrators and principals from across the school sector, and the Schools Engagement Steering Group, comprising senior stakeholders from within UWS, provided advice, facilitation and advocacy during development of the strategic plans and their implementation through annual action plans. The establishment of these groups greatly enhanced the effectiveness of the schools plans and represented a new (and admired) approach by a university. Engendering stakeholder ownership and ensuring representatives had sufficient seniority to enact initiatives were key factors in their success.

Priorities formulated by the Reference Group following school sector consultation have remained the same from 2008-12, that is to provide academic enrichment and development of critical thinking skills, and to improve student participation and retention, with a particular emphasis on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education, improvement in maths and literacy skills, and a focus on the disciplines of Technology, Maths and Engineering.

In 2011 nearly 20,000\textsuperscript{35} school students participated in aspiration-building and/or academic enrichment activities. This figure has increased every year and compares with about 8,000 in 2008. (Many thousands more were involved in research projects, marketing events, sponsored programs and on-campus sport.) The Science and Maths Exposed project is an indicative example.

\textsuperscript{35} Not a unique count as we cannot always tell if a student takes part in more than one activity/event/program
3 CASE STUDY 3.1
SCIENCE AND MATHS EXPOSED

Name of activity:
Science and Maths Exposed

Activity partners:
Lachlan Macquarie College (LMC)

Brief description of the activity:
Partnership with LMC to develop and deliver programs encouraging excellence in mathematics and science. This gave hundreds of school students the opportunity to participate in a suite of advanced learning activities. The program also includes professional development courses for teachers. “Integrated Science”, an online set of interactive learning modules for school and university students featuring a problem-based approach to issues of scientific and social significance, which was developed for LMC, was introduced in 2010 and an action research project “Crossing Thresholds in Biology”, which aims to address barriers to learning, began.

Benefits to UWS, partners and community:
• Create, enhance and promote a variety of opportunities and pathways to encourage and enable school students from all backgrounds and a range of academic achievement levels to enhance their educational attainment and increase their post-school options
• Enrich the learning and development of gifted and talented students and help them to realise their potential
• Raise the educational aspirations and attainment of school students with a demonstrated capacity to succeed but who might not see post-school study as an option or who need extra support and encouragement to reach their goals

A link is available at:
Positive feedback from stakeholders, as well as indicators such as student destinations (for aspiration-building programs), showed that aims were being achieved. Across the board, evaluations attested to popularity and effectiveness, particularly in broadening school students’ horizons, increasing knowledge and skills, and expanding future options.

Valued and trusting relationships and extensive links have been built with the school sector (and with interested stakeholders outside the sector). Senior administrators have actively facilitated closer links between their schools and UWS, and played a key role in deciding which schools should join which programs. Thousands of teachers, school staff, leaders and administrators have visited UWS campuses, met with UWS staff, undertaken professional development run or co-run by UWS and participated in other activities.

The number of schools directly connected to UWS grew from about 300 in 2007 to more than 850 in 2012. The majority of these were in GWS. Expansion of existing initiatives included significant development of UWS’s flagship aspiration-building and support program Fast Forward. Nineteen hundred students are now participating with an expected pipeline of 3000 by 2014. A complementary primary school program will be introduced in 2012-13.

Many new initiatives were successfully introduced, for example:

- environmental education programs run in conjunction with Western Sydney Environmental Education Centres
- Academic Speakers in Schools, reaching 3000-4000 students each year
- Young Writers’ Day for talented year 10 and 11 students (see Case Study 3.4)
- Indigenous programs (see Case Study 3.3)
- Math IT – academic enrichment for year 7 and 8 on maths and ICT
- UWS Day - a large-scale event held at two campuses per year giving students hands-on experience of different university subjects
- an increasing range of activities through Lachlan Macquarie College (see box)
- a Physics Academic Enrichment Day which grows in popularity each year
- the Youth Eco-Summit in partnership with NSW DEC and Sydney Olympic Park Authority
- ysf@UWS, a residential science program
- Schools Harvest – practical education in the “paddock to plate” of food production
- Histrionics, a history quiz show for TV
- Art exhibitions for schools
Name of activity:

Fast Forward

Activity partners:

Fast Forward is a partnership between schools in the Greater Western Sydney region and the University of Western Sydney.

Brief description of the activity:

The Fast Forward program gives the opportunity for our high school students to interact with UWS students. The firsthand accounts of what it is like to be a university student, how and why students go to university and the opportunities available at university and beyond have helped many of our students believe that university could be a place for them.

It began in 2004 in just one school and has continued to grow into over 52 schools, offering the opportunity for enhanced academic and personal achievement to a large number of Greater Western Sydney students. In 2006 the program was awarded the Vice Chancellor’s Excellence Award for University Engagement for its work with Year 10 to 12 students at the 11 schools in the program at that time.

Aims of the program:

• To increase GWS school students’ engagement in learning and the completion of year 12
• To develop students’ confidence, knowledge, skills and educational attainment
• To enhance GWS students’ awareness of post school education opportunities
• To promote the benefits of lifelong learning, vis-à-vis life opportunities, to students and their families
• To improve the participation of GWS students in higher education.

Benefits to UWS, partners and community: As part of the program, students are able to take part in a series of experiential learning opportunities relevant to their needs and stage of development. Those students choosing to study at UWS after completing their schooling are also assisted in their transition to University and given the opportunity to be role models to younger students in the program, further developing their leadership skills.

A link is available at:

http://www.uws.edu.au/fastforward/fast_forward/about_fast_forward

3 CASE STUDY 3.2
THE FAST FORWARD PROGRAM
Indigenous education was advanced through the Indigenous School Student Mentoring Program. Heartbeat which is a multi-year program aiming to increase students’ awareness of health issues and interest them in health and medicine careers, as well as familiarise them with the university environment (partners include the Australian Indigenous Doctors’ Association, the Tharawal Aboriginal Medical Service and St John Ambulance); and the Rural Indigenous Students Visit Program. Various other activities linked the University to Indigenous students in the region and rural areas. Closer links were forged with Indigenous elders and communities. Alternate entry schemes for were refined.
Name of activity:
Indigenous School Student Mentoring Program (ISSMP)

Activity partners:
Department of Education and Communities. A number of high schools across Greater Western Sydney participated in the ISSMP including: Airds High School, Ambarvale High School, Leumeah High School, Sarah Redfern High School, Hoxton Park High School and James Busby High School.

Brief description of the project: The ‘Indigenous School Student Mentoring Program’, a joint initiative developed by Schools Engagement and Indigenous Outreach at UWS in conjunction with the Department of Education and Communities. The program aims to build academic and study skills, increase awareness of further education and career options and encourage confidence in setting and achieving educational goals.

The Indigenous School Student Mentoring Program allocates each student in the program a trained UWS student as a mentor. The one-on-one approach allows students to acquire greater knowledge at their own pace.

Other key components of the mentoring program include:

- An initial gathering and induction ceremony at the University to brief students and their families, teachers, DET staff and advisory committee members about the program;
- Monthly mentor visits to the schools including one-on-one mentor/mentee discussions and group work to develop and implement a school of community project; and
- On-campus academic enrichment workshops run by UWS staff and Indigenous educators.

Benefits to UWS, partners and community:
Participants in the program are encouraged to continue at school until the end of year 12 and to consider going on to university or other post-education. The program helps students to explore these possibilities and make better-informed decisions about their future paths. Regardless of the choices students make, the program is designed to help them learn more about themselves and increase their skills and confidence. This will lead to better opportunities and the ability to take full advantage of these.

The benefits to mentors who are involved in the program are discussed in Chapter 6, where the case study is discussed in terms of its contribution to the student experience at UWS.

Links area available at:
http://www.uws.edu.au/community/in_the_community/for_schools/indigenous_students
Each year somewhere between 800-1200 UWS students increased their personal and professional skills by assisting with schools engagement activities on a voluntary, academic service learning\(^\text{37}\) or paid casual basis. My involvement was a highlight of my year...The training I received in mentoring combined with education surrounding Aboriginal culture has greatly enhanced the overall value of my degree (Amy Appleton, former mentor in the Indigenous School Student Mentoring Program).

UWS linked with four other Sydney-based universities to successfully bid for substantial Australian Government funding to increase participation in higher education. Funding from 2012 until the end of 2014 for the ‘Bridges to Higher Education’ program will be used for new collaborative projects involving all five universities, the Department of Education and Communities and other stakeholders, as well as for individual universities to enhance or expand existing programs and begin a number of new initiatives.

An agreement was signed enabling students at the two schools on the Nirimba Education Precinct to study UWS units, usually through UWSCollege. Students who successfully complete a unit receive pre-HSC admission offers and those achieving distinctions or high distinctions receive scholarship offers. Fully subsidised by UWS, this program has been very popular and student results have been outstanding.

Competitions for school students run or hosted by UWS have flourished, with the number of entrants growing each year. They included the NSW Brain Bee Challenge and UniSteers run by UWS, the Whitlam Institute’s What Matters competition.

\(^{37}\) In many cases students have a choice of whether to do their ASL in schools or elsewhere
Name of activity:
UWS Young Writers’ Day

Activity partners:
Macarthur Anglican College, and 18 Greater Western Sydney high schools.

Brief description of the project:
This annual event aims to raise the profile of writing, recognise the talent of local students and give them the opportunity to learn from established authors in the company of like-minded peers. In 2011, 150 participants from public, selective, Catholic and independent schools took part. Hosted by Macarthur Anglican School, the event features a keynote address by a prominent author followed by a Q&A session. Students then take part in two workshops each, with 18 across different genres being available in 2011. Workshops are conducted by published authors including UWS academics among others. There is a workshop on teaching creative writing for accompanying teachers. Feedback from participants has been almost universally positive. A post-event competition is held with the best entries published on the UWS website.

Benefits to UWS, partners and community:
The event aimed to raise the profile of writing, recognise the talent of local students, and give students the opportunity to meet and learn from established authors in the company of like-minded peers. Students learnt:

- Multiple perspectives to be open-minded when writing
- That it is important to continue writing in your spare time to improve
- How to think outside the basic structure of writing
- Using my imagination to describe matter eg water, light etc
- How to structure an argumentative piece
- The different forms of publishing available
- To write from the heart
- When you can’t think of anything to write, write anything

A link is available at:
http://www.uws.edu.au/community/in_the_community/for_schools/young_writers_day
This expanded beyond its original purpose of providing professional development for UWS Education alumni, being opened up to non-UWS graduates and offering a suite of courses accredited by the NSW Institute of Teachers. In 2011, 1247 school staff completed courses.

There have been an increasing number of collaborations in running major sector events on UWS campuses – this rarely happened before the advent of the schools strategic plans. About a dozen new school-related research projects began each year. Many of these aligned with the Schools Strategic Plan priorities. A range of new publications garnered a unanimously positive response. *Getting Down To Business: a Guide for Beginning Teachers*, designed to assist new teachers in their transition to working in schools, attracted sponsorship from the Teachers’ Credit Union and was a resounding success.

The number of UWS areas involved in schools engagement has grown each year. The number is less in 2012 due to a restructure which reduced the number of schools, but every school, most research institutes, centres and groups, and many non-academic areas are now involved. The increased visibility of UWS was evident in the growing number of enquiries received about schools engagement, knowledge of and advocacy for the University demonstrated by school sector personnel, and pleasing results in school leaver university preferences.

The Schools Engagement program received a commendation in the 2011 UWS audit undertaken by the Australian Universities Quality Agency. 

“The University of Western Sydney is commended for its extensive programs for engagement with schools and prospective students in the Greater Western Sydney region”.

3.4 Future direction

Towards the end of 2010 the Reference Group reviewed the first strategic plan. All members agreed that its impact had been significant and of great benefit. The review indicated that there were genuine and equal partnerships between the University and the school sector, and that the Plan was helping to make school-to-university a more logical and seamless transition in the minds of students, as well as increasing their higher education preparedness. UWS is now increasingly being seen as a destination of first-choice by students from all backgrounds and academic achievement levels.

“I think the UWS/schools engagement program is an excellent initiative and very respectful and consultative of the industry stakeholders. I applaud the initiative and the openness of the University.” (Mr Mark Raue, Head of Religious Education and Learning Services, Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Wollongong).

The Reference Group agreed that the fundamental principles and primary content of the 2008-10 plan expressed the essence of UWS and schools engagement, and should not be changed in the 2011-13 renewal. Looking at the priorities, members suggested that there should be a greater focus on “middle ground” students, with many programs already targeting gifted and talented students as well as disadvantaged students.

The group identified school-related research as an area where expectations of the 2008-10 plan had not been fully realised. These included involving the school sector more closely in research design, the development of joint submissions, a greater sharing of research outcomes and better evaluation frameworks. Members noted that the schools engagement program was comparatively young and that many of its outcomes would be longer-term.

The Reference Group’s satisfaction with the schools engagement program, the success in meeting strategic aims and the plethora of positive feedback, along with the growing external recognition of UWS in this context, indicate that the focus should be to continue to build on what has been achieved, with the ongoing input of the school sector and other stakeholders.

In 2012 the Reference Group established three working groups. These will operate for a limited time and will formulate recommendations to the Reference Group in three broad areas: Students, Teaching and the Australian Curriculum. Initial meetings have been animated and a lot of ground has been covered. The working group mechanism brings new stakeholders into the arena and will streamline and enrich Reference Group deliberations.

38 “Commendation 8: The University of Western Sydney is commended for its extensive programs for engagement with schools and prospective students in the greater western Sydney region”, 2011 Australian Universities Quality Agency, page 9, report of an audit of the University of Western Sydney, October 2011’, Australian Government Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, Audit Report #3
CHAPTER 4
ENGAGEMENT IN LEARNING, TEACHING AND ACADEMIC PROGRAMS
Chapter Overview

This chapter examines the notion of engagement in student learning and teaching in the context of academic programs, and how it manifests itself in policy and practice at UWS. The chapter opens with an overview of various ways in which engagement in learning is defined and enacted, and discusses the somewhat contested nature of the term as it applies in and across disciplinary contexts. Current approaches to engaged learning are exemplified through the use of illustrative case studies, along with a critical review of these approaches. A review of strategies for building organisational capacity in the area of engaged learning is presented. The chapter concludes with implications for future institutional policy and practice in this area.

4.1 Introduction and working definition

As discussed in Chapter 1, from an engaged learning perspective, connecting scholarship to place is part of a bigger picture on the role of higher education in society. In embracing the broad principle of democratization of knowledge, UWS has approached engagement in student learning and the concept of knowledge exchange with the community within a partner approach. In the 2005 review of UWS engagement, in reference to service learning and the creation of an ‘engaged learning’ experience, the following observations were made:

Curricular engagement typically is implemented in courses where one or more learning goals call for an experiential approach and access to community expertise or community venues to meet those learning goals. Learning goals most often relate directly to course content, but they may also include learning goals related to the social and civic development of the student. These learning goals are associated with the ambition of an institution to link education to the skills of participation in a diverse, knowledge-driven democratic society.

The model advanced by Holland and colleagues at UWS in 2005 also sought to develop a vision for community-based learning across the curriculum. The model of community-based academic service-learning at UWS was integrated into the 2007 Engagement Strategic Plan, which articulated Community-Regional Engagement as one of the three core objectives of the University.

In the 2005 review, inconsistency in terminology was identified relating to engaged teaching and engaged learning as an ‘obstacle to developing institutional leadership and consensus on the university-community engagement strategy’. To address these inconsistencies, the review proposed that community engagement is defined as:

an intentional collaboration between higher education institutions and their larger communities … for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity.

The review panel for the UWS 2011 AUQA Review drew attention to the fact that the University had a number of definitions of engaged learning, and the notion of mutual exchange and reciprocity was not a defining feature of these definitions. For example, in 2010 the Education Committee agreed to adopt the following definition of engaged learning:

Engaged learning at UWS involves learning that takes place on a work/community site as part of course or co-curricula activity and/or these sites are a source for learning within units. (Source: Education Committee Unconfirmed Minutes 12 October 2010)

In a similar way, the 2011 UWS AUQA Performance Portfolio described engaged learning as follows:
Engaged learning strategies involve using the community and workplace as both a site and source for learning and include: site visits, practicum, and clinical practice placements, community service electives, cooperative education programs, the use of real-world case studies and simulations, participation in commissioned community assistance projects, UWS student mentoring programs in schools and the use of the campus and community as a living laboratory for investigating sustainability issues. Scholarships for overseas study and service are also available.

The movement during the past seven years away from a strict notion of mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources as defining every engaged learning activity reflects the University’s belief that mutual exchange and reciprocity are evaluated by partners over the course of time, rather than on an activity by activity basis. The many facets of engaged learning, and the range of ways in which engaged learning is understood are explored in further detail in Section 4.2, where a critique of existing approaches to engaged learning at UWS is presented.

4.2 Engaged learning and academic standards

The UWS Academic Standards and Assessment framework for Learning and Teaching was endorsed by the 2011 AUQA Review as a robust model for ensuring the quality of student learning. The model at Figure 4.1 illustrates the importance of alignment between the design, delivery and support for student learning to ensure appropriate impact at the outcome level.

Figure 4.1: UWS Academic Standards and Assessment Framework for Learning and Teaching
Engaged learning is managed within the academic standards framework. In terms of the impact dimension, employability is substantially shaped by the way in which engaged learning complements formal learning through the use of community/industry places and facilities as both sites and sources of learning. In a similar way, engaged learning is reflected in the design quadrant of the framework, with the requirement that theory-practice links are manifest in all courses, and are mapped to curriculum and assessment. In the delivery and support quadrants, Schools are required to demonstrate that there are suitable arrangements for negotiating and managing engaged learning activities at the student level.

### 4.3 Engaged learning practice

The 2011 AUQA panel commented on the “impressive examples of the range of engaged learning experiences offered by the University”, citing work experience in industry, practical placements, international placements and student exchange, internships, field trips and volunteer work as being particularly relevant. At the same time, the strict relevance of some activities was questioned by the panel. As the AUQA panel suggests, UWS engaged learning activities are diverse in nature and reflect a number of typologies for the engaged student learning experience. Three broad typologies are now discussed, and case studies are provided by way of illustration. These typologies are service learning; capstone projects; and practicum and placements. The typologies and case studies inter alia draw out that engaged learning occurs within models where the benefits to the University and the community are often assessed over different time dimensions, and where activities are able to take on an increasing level of embeddedness often from more humble beginnings.

#### 4.3.1. Service learning

Service learning represents one form of engaged learning at UWS. The UWS philosophy of service learning is based on practical experience in the workplace as a complement to class-room learning. While this approach is also reflected in other typologies of engaged learning, within the service learning paradigm the workplace/industry experience has a distinct community service orientation. The service learning typology reflects the twin dynamics of experiential learning and community service.

The Parramatta Community Justice Clinic is an example of service learning that has become progressively more embedded since its launch in 2009, and provides demonstrable mutual benefit to the University and the community. The case study illustrates the way UWS students work side by side with practicing solicitors to provide assistance to GWS residents who could not normally afford legal representation.
Name of activity:

Parramatta Community Justice Clinic (PCJC)

Activity partners:

UWS- School of Law, Macquarie Legal Centre, the NSW Department of Justice and Attorney General and the Parramatta City Council.

Brief description of the project:

UWS law students work side-by-side with practicing solicitors to give legal advice to Western Sydney residents who cannot afford a solicitor. A grant of $320,000 to the School of Law in 2008 by the Commonwealth Diversity and Structural Adjustment Fund allowed the PCJC to embed itself in the heart of the Parramatta Justice Precinct. The Clinic was established in 2009 to deliver high quality practical legal training to UWS law students, while providing a free legal service to the people of Greater Western Sydney (GWS).

Benefits to UWS, partners and community:

- Law students who elect study at the PCJC leave as work-ready graduates with experience working alongside practicing legal professionals.
- Knowledge about common legal issues affecting vulnerable members of the community.
- In March 2011 the PCJC relocated to premises within the Parramatta Local Court. This allows unprecedented access to the courts and clients for UWS law students - a unique teaching and learning opportunity.
- The Clinic gives access to free legal advice for low income and disadvantaged members of the community.

A link is available at:

Another example of service learning in practice can be seen in the UWS School of Psychology: Macarthur Lifeline Counselling Service. In this example, UWS students perform a similar role conceptually as with the Parramatta CJ Clinic.

4 CASE STUDY 4.2: LIFELINE MACARTHUR PROJECT

Name of activity:
Lifeline Macarthur Project

Activity partners:
UWS - School of Psychology and Lifeline Macarthur

Brief description of the project:
In late 2009 UWS School of Psychology met with Lifeline Macarthur staff to discuss the mental health needs of the Greater West and service learning needs of UWS Clinical Psychology Interns. The meeting identified the need for a service providing accessible and professional psychological services for the community. As a result the Clinic was established in mid 2010. Due to the high demand for the service, an additional specialist clinic commenced in early 2011, and general clinical services were expanded to four days per week in 2012.

Post-graduate students of the Master of Clinical Psychology program are required to undertake 1000 hours of clinical experience to complete the degree requirement.

It is staffed by fifteen Master of Clinical Psychology students under the supervision of A/Prof Rocco Crino and Robert Brockman, and all students gaining varied and complex face to face clinical contact.

Benefits to UWS, partners and community:
- unique opportunity to develop and implement assessment and treatment skills in a community setting with complex case presentations. Superior training for UWS students – real world training
- opportunity for students to engage in community based learning.
- access to effective psychological services, thus enhancing Lifeline reputation as a provider of assistance to the community,
- Providing Clinical Services to an under-resourced community.

Video available (produced by UWS) link:
http://www.uws.edu.au/ssap/school_of_social_sciences_and_psychology/psychology_clinic/about_us_and_find_us

Case Study 4.2:
Lifeline Macarthur Counselling Service.

Another example of service learning in practice can be seen in the UWS School of Psychology: Macarthur Lifeline Counselling Service. In this example, UWS students perform a similar role conceptually as with the Parramatta CJ Clinic.
An example of a service learning approach which is not directly related to the provision of community services is that between the UWS Medical School and the William Rose School. The emphasis in this example is on medical students experiencing first-hand the challenges of dealing with entrenched disability within a ‘special classroom’. The William Rose School reports that the assistance of medical students within the classroom improves the School’s ability to teach these students, and exposure to medical students within this setting has extended the positive learning culture at the school.

**Name of activity:**

The William Rose School – participating school in the “Paediatrics Community Schools Program”

**Activity partners:**

UWS School of Medicine, Paediatrics and William Rose School

**Brief description of the project:**

Community Paediatrics gives UWS fourth-year medical students a broad exposure into the issues affecting children with disabilities. The program increases experiential learning across the Paediatric curriculum. The partnership exposes students to an array of issues so that they gain familiarity with the impact of chronic disabling conditions on the individual child, the family, education and community services. Students spend 2 of their 9 week paediatric rotation in one of six special schools to observe and participate. This is supported by special lectures on disabilities during their term.

**Benefits to UWS, partners and community:**

**UWS Students:**

- Positive social interaction.
- Positive impact on programs.
- Improved practice.

**Teachers:**

- Professional learning.
- Positive learning culture.
- Hands on volunteer assistance with teaching and learning programs.

**Parents/Carers:**

- Highly valuable experience.
- Express their views as one voice.

**Community:**

- Community connections/ partnerships.
- Identifying and sharing practices that effectively engage parents/carers.
- Promoted research and innovation.
As the foregoing case studies illustrate, the concept of service learning has progressively taken on an increasing level of scope and creativity in its application. This reflects an increasingly nuanced and sophisticated approach to understanding how student engagement with community issues is able to add value to service delivery in often unanticipated ways. The case study of The Richmond Fellowship illustrates how art students have been able to add an important additional dimension to the therapeutic care of people with entrenched disability.

4 CASE STUDY 4.4: THE RICHMOND FELLOWSHIP

Name of activity:
The Richmond Fellowship NSW Project: Art Therapy in a Suitcase

Activity partners:
Richmond Fellowship, NSW

Brief description of the project:
Beginning with a field placement for the Master of Art Therapy, this project, conducted by Jane Miller for Richmond Fellowship NSW with support from her supervisor and Course Advisor, Dr Sheridan Linnell from UWS, grew into a state-wide initiative. During her clinical year of the Master of Art Therapy, Jane established and developed art therapy community groups for people living with mental illness in 27 locations throughout NSW and ran 77 groups involving 560 participants and their support staff. Jane also organised a public exhibition of the art of people living with mental illness at the Lewer’s Bequest Penrith Regional Gallery that has become an annual event on their calendar. Now Community Arts Coordinator for Richmond Fellowship NSW (RFNSW), Jane is planning to formally research the effectiveness of her ever expanding work.

Benefits to UWS, partners and community:
- This project extended the joys and benefits of studio and community based group art therapy to marginalised and disadvantaged people living with serious mental illness in isolated areas of regional NSW and disadvantaged areas of the Sydney basin.
- It assisted many RFNSW clients to explore an identity and practice as exhibiting artists.
- The project benefitted RFNSW by adding art therapy to their range of services and offering knowledge of how to facilitate arts based group activities to their regional staff.
- UWS benefitted through the enhancement of the good repute of our students and graduates in the field, the extension of our conceptualisation of engaged learning and community engagement to include clinical placements, and the possibility of a research partnership in the near future.
A further example of the increasingly creative dimension to service learning is seen in the Classrooms Without Borders project which was developed by UWS to encourage future teachers to develop crucial skills in interacting with people from a wide variety of social and cultural backgrounds. Recognising that education needs to reach beyond the classroom, the program gives UWS Education students the opportunity to work with a range of community agencies and not-for-profit organisations across Greater Western Sydney. Of particular interest in a service learning context is the focus on UWS students helping young carers with their studies to ensure they have the best chance of completing their studies and meeting their carer obligations.

### Case Study 4.5: Classrooms Without Borders

**Name of activity:**
Classroom without Borders

**Activity partners:**
UWS- School of Education Primary program with over 40 not-for-profit, community, government and non-government agencies as partners

**Brief description of the project:**
Classrooms without Borders (CWB) was first implemented in 2010. It is a unique university-community engagement unit that is compulsory within the Master of Teaching (Primary). CWB supports diverse and disadvantaged communities, including but not limited to those from refugee, migrant, Indigenous and low socio-economic backgrounds in over 40 agencies across the Greater Western Sydney region. CWB's key focus is to embed engaged learning into the everyday education of UWS students. Within this framework learning is made available to students and community and is reciprocal. For students, it is further developed through additional educational experiences including face-to-face classes, hurdle tasks, and self-paced on-line modules.

**Benefits to UWS, partners and community:**
The attributes UWS students acquire through this program include:

- greater awareness and appreciation of diversity what it can offer
- enhanced recognition and understanding of diversity and difference
- a decrease in prejudice and discriminatory attitudes/beliefs
- increased awareness of what external agencies can offer teachers and students
- increased networking opportunities across the community
- increased visibility for UWS in the region

Benefits to the external partner include:

- consistent and reliable support for agencies to conduct their community support work
- opportunities for community agencies to expand their programs and or plan for future activities
- increased support both educational and life-skill, for those disadvantaged members of the community

**Links are available at:**
In a similar approach, the Refugee Action Support Project provides UWS students with the opportunity to provide specialist assistance to refugee students.

**4 CASE STUDY 4.6: REFUGEE ACTION SUPPORT AND ALNF**

**Name of activity:**
The Refugee Action Support and ALNF Project

**Activity partners:**
UWS- School of Education, Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation (ALNF) and Department of Education and Communities

**Brief description of the project:**
The Refugee Action Support Partnership (RASP) sees UWS Master of Teaching (Secondary) students, who are trained each term by ALNF, work as tutors in local schools. The Program supports students in years 7-11 who have recently arrived in Australia as refugees. UWS developed a partnership with ALNF to facilitate opportunities for UWS students in the School of Education to do service learning in disadvantaged schools and remote indigenous communities at various levels including group support for refugee students, art shows and book collection, fundraising and support with resources, tutoring and professional experience in schools in the Northern Territory.

**Benefits to UWS, partners and community:**
The attributes UWS students acquire through this program include:
- greater appreciation of the manner in which socio-economic factors impact on educational opportunities and social mobility.
- greater awareness the role of culture and language plays in shaping values and attitudes towards education.
- practical skills and the opportunity to apply knowledge to specific contexts.
- ALNF trains tutors in cultural awareness and scaffolded literacy techniques.
- Tutors are awarded a certificate upon completion, signed by the university, ALNF and NSW DET.

**Benefits to the external partner:**
- access to skilled student-teachers delivering resources and educational activities for the children enrolled in the program

**Video available (produced by UWS) link:**
https://alnf.org/Pages/programs/refugee-action-support
4.3.2. Capstone projects

A number of UWS academic programs include a final year capstone unit. These units involve student placements in industry or in government/community organisations, either individually or within teams, as a key component of engaged learning. The difference between capstone projects and practicum is that capstone activities typically involve a negotiated project with the placement sponsor, which allows the students to apply multiple aspects of their learning within a project that meets the sponsor’s needs.
Name of activity:
Professional Design Studio (The Rabbit Hole)

Activity partners:
Western Sydney Public Transport Users (WSPTU), Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre (JSPAC), Television Sydney (TVS), RMIT and community organizations in Western Sydney.

Brief description of the project:
The Rabbit Hole is the University of Western Sydney’s Bachelor of Design fourth year design teaching studio. The Rabbit Hole curriculum incorporates participatory design methods and work integrated learning – an innovative and situated approach to learning and teaching. The emphasis is on studio practice that is student-centred, with the team providing opportunities for students to work on real life design projects with community bodies and industry partners, with a strong emphasis on design advocacy and professional engagement. Students are engaged in meaningful ‘real-world’ contexts, encouraging them to become responsible designers who understand the inherent power of visual communication to shape the world we live in.

Benefits to UWS, partners and community:
• The Rabbit Hole (RH) has an exemplary record in community engagement with Greater Western Sydney (GWS) and UWS communities, a part of our approach to learning and teaching in the RH that inspires and motivates students to make a positive contribution in their own local and professional communities. The teaching team initiates projects that engage with community bodies such as the Western Sydney Public Transport Users (WSPTU), Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre (JSPAC) and Television Sydney (TVS), also providing opportunities for the students to gain valuable industry experience with actual clients.
• The RH live brief curriculum also makes an impact beyond UWS and GWS through curricular collaborations with design institutions further afield. Exemplifying this is the live brief ‘The Difference Design Makes’, a collaboration between the RH and The Works WIL teaching studio at Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) that since 2008 explores issues of ethics in the field of visual communication.
• The effectiveness of these community engagements is also demonstrated by industry recognition of the RH students professional design outcomes. In 2008 students were briefed on creating a name and visual identity for Professional Design Studio, resulting in the RH brand identity. The results were well received and the RH branding project won a prestigious Australian Graphic Design Association (AGDA) award and published in the 2008 AGDA Awards book. A number of live briefs have also been transformative for students, translating into employment.
• In 2011, student teams were briefed on the rebranding of the TVS visual identity, which resulted in TVS offering 3 RH students a design internship each. Furthermore, the RH’s ongoing live brief for the design and production of the UWS BDes graduation exhibition demonstrates the RH’s engaged learning approach that results in industry recognition. Over 30 graduates have obtained direct employment as a result of this annual exhibition and its online presence. Coupled with media coverage, and SHCA support (funding, technical support and resources) this achievement is a testament to the effectiveness of the RH’s innovative pedagogy and the teaching team’s professionalism, as we coordinate complex multifaceted projects that benefit students careers and expose the value of the RH to industry.
The Marketing program in the Bachelor of Business and Commerce has a final year capstone unit where students undertake an industry placement in small groups. In this context, the emphasis is on applying their marketing skills to the development of a marketing campaign/artefact for the sponsoring organisation.

### Name of activity/unit:
International Marketing Capstone Unit

### Activity partners:
The sponsor in the Winetrust Estate capstone offering has put in considerable time and effort to make this experience a deep learning one for the students. Both companies are multi-award winners in their field, with Bev Barnfather winning the 2011 Small Business of the Year. Winetrust is an Australian winemaking specialist organisation. It has been involved with wine businesses throughout Australia and as far afield as North Western China in international markets.

### Brief description of the project/unit:
The International Business Project is a capstone unit in international business. The aim of the unit is to give students a real-life action learning project in which they undertake an international business strategic planning and analysis exercise for a client organisation. This project involves students working in small teams for a client organisation under the direct supervision of the lecturer. Students develop a feasibility study to take Winetrust into a new international market. The company already has extensive international clients – 9 countries. Winetrust is interested in expanding its export market to India. Students will execute a feasibility study for Winetrust to enter the Indian market.

Underpinning engagement with sponsors/partners are four principles:
- genuine partnership with the external communities
- mutually beneficial outcomes and the provision of benefits to society
- reciprocity within the partnership
- two-way knowledge exchange

### Benefits to UWS, partners and community:

#### Benefits to UWS:
- Students are better prepared for the realities of working with industry
- Students are working with companies that are keen to see growth in their own business and be part of the 'mentoring' that is at the heart of the capstone units
- UWS gains 'grass root' partners who are committed to our students and have prepared extensively to give the same students an insight into what is required by industry
- Two-way exchange: students refining their skills through active partnership with industry; industry understanding how to use the theoretical skills of the students

#### Benefits to partners
- Being part of the next generation of young leaders
- Access to theory, related to their area of business
- Possibility of influencing curriculum design to match the SME working reality
- An access to mentoring, giving back to the student learning community

#### Benefits to the community
- Increased GDP for SMEs
- Higher levels of employment
- Matching work skills with industry
**Case Study 4.9: Bachelor of Natural Science (Environmental Management)**

**Name of activity:**
Bachelor of Natural Science Field Projects 1 and 2

**Activity partners:**
Professional clients in government and industry. Predominantly local and state government agencies and practitioners in the areas of Animal Science, Environmental Health Environmental Management and Agriculture.

**Brief description of the unit:**
These units aim to challenge students to integrate and apply their combined knowledge of animal science, agriculture, environmental health/ environmental management/ occupational health and safety in a professional setting. Students will engage in learning that embraces a broad spectrum of professional issues, in conjunction with an industry “client”. The focus of these units is for students to develop an inquiry process in concert with their industry partner, to undertake a professional project, report and present their findings in the professional arena and to reflect on their associated learning, personal and professional development.

Students are required to produce an agreed project product for their industry client and evaluate their professional and personal learning throughout their engagement in this activity.

**Benefits to UWS, partners and community:**
These capstone units essentially represent the interface between the students’ BNatSci academic program and their future graduate professional practice. The units provide a closely supported environment in which students enrolled in the final year of their BNatSci program, are able to explicitly link their academic studies with professional practice in their chosen areas of specialisation. Through these units, students develop competencies in research and project management while beginning to build a professional network and learning to operate the workplace environment.

The Field Project units provide industry partners and the communities they serve with students who are able, with UWS academic staff support, to undertake a structured project on their behalf and to report their findings to a professional standard.

High achieving students in this unit are encouraged to present their findings at a professional conference. To this end, eight graduates who completed the units in 2011 presented poster papers at the Environmental Health Australia NSW State Conference in May 2012 with topics ranging through from food safety to household organic waste collection, mosquito monitoring, water quality and swimming pool safety.
4.3.3 Practicum and placements

The practicum experience is prima facie the least mutually beneficial of student learning activities as the immediate benefit is derived by the University and its students in terms of the delivery of academic programs. However, it can be argued that there is a longer term and more subtle community benefit on a number of counts. For example during practicum placements UWS students are exposed to GWS-specific issues in areas such as health and education. This in turn builds longer term community capacity when these students move into their professions. The flow back effect of practicum experience into the academic program is also seen as a two way knowledge exchange in that it facilitates the process of ensuring that UWS curricula is aligned with industry needs within a GWS context.

It is not uncommon for practicum experiences and placements to lead to other types of engagement relationships with placement organisations. These relationships may then facilitate mutually beneficial activities. Practicum and placement experiences are typically deeply embedded in the curriculum. As an illustration of the longer term impact of these engaged learning opportunities from a community partner point of view, some 65% of UWS Nursing students are involved in clinical placements within hospitals in Greater Western Sydney, and an equivalent percentage of new nurses are recruited from the UWS student cohort following graduation. This is a practical example of the mutual benefit dimension taken over a longer term view, where hospital partners have been able to influence the skills and capabilities of future recruits in ways that meet the hospital’s needs within a regional context.

4.4 Future direction

As outlined in Chapter 2, there is a clear alignment between the University’s Making the Difference: 2010-2015 strategy and the UWS Learning and Teaching Plan as it relates to the University’s commitment to engaged learning. This commitment is also reflected in the formation of two of the UWS Graduate Attributes, viz:

1. applies knowledge through intellectual inquiry in professional or applied contexts; and

2. brings knowledge to life through responsible engagement and appreciation of diversity in an evolving world.

Engaged learning is also increasingly reflected in the University’s civic engagement activities which are discussed in detail in Chapter 7. In areas where UWS is seeking to take a stronger leadership role within the region, involvement of students in University initiatives as part of their education is a key component. The SMEExcellence program for small to medium enterprises, and the TV Sydney initiative which appear as case studies in Chapter 7 are illustrations of this.

The value attached to engaged learning is evident in a range of UWS policies and practices, and engaged learning at UWS takes multiple forms, discipline by discipline. While this is appropriate, it is clear that there would be merit in articulating the range of engaged learning typologies, as outlined in this chapter. It would also be beneficial to define the expected outcomes of engaged learning activities and to evaluate these in order to build stronger organisational cohesion in this area. This could be further augmented by a more systematic approach to capacity building for academic staff with respect to strategies for embedding and evaluating engaged learning in the curriculum. While engaged learning has been defined, an important adjustment to this would be the development of a definition for engaged teaching. An important consideration in this regard is that effective teaching is a discipline by discipline phenomenon. However, broad principles for developing an engaged approach to teaching are well established in the literature. They include a focus on such factors as:

1. opportunities for research-infused teaching through the fostering of links between engaged research, learning and teaching

2. scholarly approaches to teaching and curriculum design which are informed by data on engaged learning outcomes
3. curricula that are characterised by a range of authentic learning and assessment experiences, including opportunities to reflect on engaged learning through the use of placements and work-based learning, along with the use of guest presenters from industry and professional bodies; and

4. course learning outcomes that take account of relevant graduate capabilities and employability skills.

The rise of the student and staff engagement movement, for example, through National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and the Australian Survey of Student Engagement (AUSSE), highlights the need to clarify definitions and also to provide scope for a range of activities that encourage student engagement in learning. The notion of engagement is now more complex than in 2005 when the previous review was undertaken, and UWS needs to respond to this complexity through an appropriately nuanced operational model and framework for engaged learning within the University’s broader context of community and regional engagement. In this regard, both the current review and the AUQA feedback confirm the importance of defining and clarifying the definition of engaged learning and engaged teaching at UWS. Equally important is the need to evaluate the impact of engaged learning activities, and to develop opportunities to share good practice among the University community.

4.5 Linkages with other areas of engagement

While engaged learning is one component of the UWS student experience, it is important to note that there are many other ways in which students engage with the University. In a broader sense, students begin to engage with the university before they become a student, and continue to do so after graduation. The conceptualisation of student engagement in these terms is addressed in Chapter 5, where the place of engaged learning is elaborated within this context.

The link between learning, teaching, and research represents another dimension of engaged learning. In this respect the University is committed to ensuring that as part of their learning, students are introduced to research concepts and that these are framed in the context of community and regional engagement where appropriate. In this way students are made aware of the potential for them to contribute to the region’s development and growth in specific areas where they may have, or might ignite a research interest. The university also encourages researchers to teach into undergraduate programs. This also provides a link for students to contemporary community and regional issues and how the university is contributing to addressing these.
2012 review of uW's Community and regional engagement | university submission to review Panel
CHAPTER 5
STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES
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“The role as a PASS facilitator has made me more confident in dealing with a large group of people I have never met before and it made me more determined to do better in my future sessions so that I can enhance the students time and effort when they come to PASS”.

A student response to the Autumn 2012 PASS facilitator survey.

Chapter Overview

This chapter examines the notion of student engagement in its most broad sense, as it relates to the total student experience at UWS. The chapter begins with a detailed outline of the philosophy for the engaged student experience at UWS, and discusses the important role this plays in respect of the UWS mission in the region. The chapter outlines the ways in which the student engagement philosophy is manifest within the ‘lifecycle’ of the student’s relationship with the University, and case studies of key student engagement programs are presented. The chapter concludes by discussing the links between student engagement activities and the University’s commitment to civic engagement more broadly.

5.1 Introduction

The UWS philosophy of the engaged student experience is holistic in that it incorporates not just engaged learning, but also opportunities for the student to build understanding about the importance of community engagement, as well as relevant skills in this area. The University seeks to provide a set of integrated engagement experiences for students, which takes place over the duration of time during which the student has a relationship with the University. This approach is important to the social mission of UWS within Greater Western Sydney, and the University understands that the development of engagement perspectives in its students is an integral part of its commitment to building regional capacity through education. A highly engaged student experience has the potential to enhance the region’s capacity to both build on, and draw from its own human capital for its development and growth. As with many universities, UWS aspires for the student relationship with the University to continue into their working lives, thus continuing student engagement post-University.

5.2 The student lifecycle

In the case of UWS, student engagement is manifest within a student lifecycle framework. The student lifecycle comprises three phases of the student experience, a prospective student phase, a current student phase and an alumni phase. This cycle is represented at Figure 5.1. The prospective student phase is elaborated in detail in Chapter 3, which deals with outreach and preparatory programs for school children in the region.

The framework seeks to identify ‘moments of truth’ opportunities where students will be encouraged to see school-to-university as a seamless transition, with more aspiring to higher education, and many increasing their knowledge and capacity, preparedness for university participation and success, and enhanced future life opportunities, including becoming engaged citizens of their communities. Therefore the lifecycle strategy seeks to inform these ‘moments of truth’ with context and conditions where students can identify with and develop capacity in civic engagement.

5.3 Student engagement with the community

In conjunction with ensuring the successful transition of students to university life as outlined in Chapters 3 and 4, UWS also provides a range of student experiences which are designed to build their skills in working in and with the community. A number of these activities are outlined below.

5.3.1 Indigenous School Student Mentoring Program

This program is discussed in Chapter 3 as a case study in Schools engagement. It is important to recognise however that the program also provides UWS students with an important opportunity to engage with the community in the provision of tutorial services.
Case Study 5.1 Indigenous School Student Mentoring Program

Name of activity:
Indigenous School Student Mentoring Program (ISSMP)

Activity partners:
Department of Education and Communities. A number of high schools across Greater Western Sydney participated in the ISSMP including: Airds High School, Ambarvale High School, Leumeah High School, Sarah Redfern High School, Hoxton Park High School and James Busby High School

Brief description of the project:
The ‘Indigenous School Student Mentoring Program’, a joint initiative developed by Schools Engagement and Indigenous Outreach at UWS in conjunction with the Department of Education and Communities, aims to build academic and study skills, increase awareness of further education and career options and encourage confidence in setting and achieving educational goals.

The Indigenous School Student Mentoring Program allocates each student in the program a trained UWS student as a mentor. Mentors gain a greater understanding of the educational barriers and issues faced by Indigenous youth.

The program involves monthly mentor visits to the schools including one-on-one mentor/mentee discussions and group work to develop and implement a school of community project; and on-campus academic enrichment workshops run by UWS staff and Indigenous educators.

Benefits to UWS, partners and community:
Benefits to UWS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students are discussed in Chapter 4.

The UWS student mentors benefit from personal and professional development and from gaining more awareness of Indigenous Australian culture and barriers faced by Indigenous students in education. They are trained in mentoring, Indigenous cultural awareness and working-with-children before meeting their mentees.

Please attach any photos or links if available:
http://www.uws.edu.au/community/in_the_community/for_schools/indigenous_students
5.3.2 Experiential Learning in Communities

Experiential Learning in Communities (ELC) is a 10 credit point unit in which students learn the value of service in communities, agencies and non-profit organisations, through designing and carrying out projects of substantial benefit to communities in Greater Western Sydney. The unit is organised around a number of focus areas or strands. It includes 10 hours of face-to-face learning, a 45-hour placement in a community agency, and participation in blended learning. Students in a variety of UWS degrees undertake units in this Education Studies Major, in some cases as part of preparation for a Master in Teaching (Primary), (Secondary) or (Early Childhood) in Bachelor Pathway degrees.
Name of activity:
Experiential Learning in Communities

Activity partners:
Charles Sturt University; Swinburne university; Queensland University of Technology, are part of the Office of Learning and Teaching grant. UWS Bankstown students, support services and community.

Brief description of the Unit:
This unit equips students with the skills to apply academic knowledge to issues and problems encountered in UWS-based projects and community agencies. On completion of the unit they should be able to:

- Apply observation, reflection, and interpretation skills in identifying issues affecting community agencies;
- Analyse problems and synthesize information useful to the ongoing concerns of the agency;
- Identify and apply strategies to resolve issues and meet the needs of culturally diverse groups in public sector, non-profit community agencies and at UWS;
- Identify and recognise and be sensitive to issues of cultural and social diversity and their impact on the acquisition of social capital of individuals and groups;
- Develop products of potential benefit to the communities and agencies in which they do their placements;
- Communicate effectively in various modes to a wide variety of stakeholders
- Number of students who have participated:
- Equity buddies was the name given to the agency within the unit.

50 students as coaches
59 first-year students - who were coached

Benefits to UWS, partners and community:
The expected outcomes for all participating students include:
- stronger networks and a greater sense of belonging to a community,
- increased cross-cultural understanding,
- a more positive University experience,
- better knowledge of the supports UWS offers,
- improved academic literacy skills,
- better time management, and
- an understanding of what is involved in completing academic work successfully.

Almost all coaches involved in the program indicated in a survey that they agreed or strongly agreed that they had learned more about students from other cultural backgrounds through Equity Buddies. All students who participated interacted with and learned from people whose cultural backgrounds were different to their own. This was not merely a process that broadened the perspectives of Anglo-Australians; students from immigrant families reported similar learning and a growth in respect for others. For example, a Christian Iraqi decided – after making friends with a Lebanese Muslim – that Islam was not always a ‘punitive and narrow’ religion. A Somali immigrant sympathised with and supported a newly arrived Vietnamese international student who is still struggling with English.

A link is available at:
http://www.uws.edu.au/currentstudents/current_students/services_and_facilities/student_equity2/equity_buddies_network

Case Study 5.2: Experiential Learning in Communities
5.3.3 Student Free Enterprise (SIFE)

SIFE is a teaching strand that runs within the Experiential Learning in Communities unit. SIFE is a philanthropic initiative in which Australian companies provide money and training to support UWS students to carry out community projects in their local regions. Underpinning SIFE principles are that the students will teach and learn through practical application of the knowledge and skills gained at university in the wider community by means of student-designed and implemented projects. Students draw together their own interests and abilities in conjunction with the aims of SIFE to implement small group projects that meet the needs of local communities, by improving the standard of living and contributing to capacity building.

SIFE teams use educational outreach projects to teach important concepts including market economics, entrepreneurship, personal and financial success, and business ethics. This fosters the development of leadership, teamwork, and communication skills. The SIFE program is unique in that it brings together the skills and experience of two generations of leaders: those who are currently leading major organisations, and student leaders. Projects have included developing financial literacy, a community cookbook, assisting unemployed women and fundraising for Ethiopian orphans. Students essentially choose and develop their own project.
Name of activity:
SIFE (Students in Free Enterprise)

Activity partners:
SIFE Australia and a wide range of community groups in Greater Western Sydney, amongst them Best Buddies’ Western Sydney Program, Achieve Australia’s ‘The Good Life – As I See It’ Project, Mission Australia’s Big Heart Enterprises, South East Neighbourhood Centre, Exodus Foundation’s ‘Tins for Tummies’ Project, Hawkesbury Art Prize, TEDx Youth, a collaboration between the Migration Support Program of the Australian Red Cross and Chester Hill High School – to name just those completed between mid-2011 and mid-2012

Brief description of the project:
SIFE is an international non-profit organization that works with leaders in business and higher education to mobilize university students to make a difference in their communities while developing the skills to become socially responsible business leaders. Participating students form teams on their university campuses and apply business concepts to develop outreach projects that improve the quality of life and standard of living for people in need. (www.sife.org)

The SIFE UWS Mission Statement is to provide opportunities for students and businesses to work together in order to engage in social inclusion in Greater Western Sydney. SIFE UWS brings together students mainly from Arts and Business degrees and welcomes all UWS students, undergraduate and postgraduate.

SIFE UWS is unique in Australia in that the students have the option of undertaking student-led SIFE projects as part of their course, including not only academic credit, but also project management training and support with the integration of learning from their community service and their academic studies – which increases the benefits for all parties.

Benefits to UWS, partners and community:
• Opportunity for students to use and critically review their discipline-based learning in a service-learning context (45 – 150 hours in community service)
• Exposure to real-life problems in Greater Western Sydney for academic teaching and research in the framework of community engagement
• Access to student knowledge, skills and enthusiasm for partners and their projects (more than 6,000 student volunteer hours from mid-2011 to mid-2012 alone)
• State-of-the-art support from a range of disciplines for the communities of the projects.

The SIFE UWS 2011-2012 Annual Report can be accessed at:
http://sifeaustralia.org.au///conference_events/national_conference/results/
5.3.4 Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS)

Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS) is a student centred learning program. PASS students work with other students to understand the content of their unit/s and to develop various study strategies to help improve academic performance. Through actively working together with other students, students find that they are more engaged and develop a deeper understanding of the content of their units, while facilitating the learning of less experienced students. Each PASS group is run by a facilitator who has successfully studied the unit previously. PASS is open to any student and is free and voluntary.

PASS is based on a program called Supplemental Instruction which was created by Dr Deanna Martin at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, USA in 1973. Research has consistently shown that students who attend PASS can improve both their course grade and their enjoyment of the subject. Additionally, University data indicates that subjects that run PASS tend to produce lower failure rates. Attendance at PASS does not replace tutorials or lectures. Rather, it supplements them through providing the opportunity to review, consolidate and clarify the course content. PASS sessions run for an hour each week throughout the teaching session.

PASS is currently running in 48 units across the University, with at least one unit running PASS in each School in autumn 2012. The PASS program received a commendation in the 2011 AUQA review40.

“The University of Western Sydney is commended for the successful development, expansion and evaluation of the Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS) program, which is making a valuable contribution to assisting student learning and retention”.

40 Commandation 10: The University of Western Sydney is commended for the successful development, expansion, and evaluation of the Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS) program, which is making a valuable contribution to assisting student learning and retention.” 2011 Australian Universities Quality Agency, page 9, report of an audit of the University of Western Sydney, October 2011’, Australian Government Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, Audit Report #3
CASE STUDY 5.4: PEER ASSISTED STUDY SESSIONS (PASS)

Name of activity:
PASS (Peer Assisted Study Sessions)

Brief description of the unit:
PASS is an academic enrichment program based on the Supplemental Instruction model (SI), initiated in the US some 30 years ago. PASS recruits successful students in traditionally difficult units of study to conduct peer-led study sessions, focusing on collaborative learning and effective study strategies. Importantly, PASS integrates how to learn with what to learn and helps new students quickly establish supportive peer networks and effective study habits so that they are better able to unpack the expectations of university study. The student leaders are referred to as facilitators, to emphasise that their role is not to teach but to model successful learning. As well as catering to PASS attendees, the program provides skills based employment and professional development for facilitators. The program has grown since its inception and now supports units in all UWS Schools. In Spring 2011-Autumn 2012, 6,218 students participated in PASS.

Benefits to UWS, partners and community:
Transition – PASS is a safety net, demystifying university study and providing access to vital social and academic networks. PASS provides an informal and supportive learning environment in which students not only engage collaboratively in the subject content but are also free to ask questions they may feel reluctant to ask in other forums.

Progression – in 2011, 73% of units with PASS sessions saw PASS attendees achieve at least one grade higher than those who did not attend (UWS PASS Report Spring 2011).

Retention – PASS provides students with peer networks that are particularly important in first year, when the isolation experienced by many can be a contributing factor in attrition.

Equity - While UWS is recognised as having a high proportion of low-SES and first in family students, even higher numbers of non-traditional students access PASS. In 2011, 23% low-SES, 66% first in family, 26% VET pathway, 50% Language Background Other than English (LBOTE) and 11% international students attended PASS sessions.

A video link to the PASS program is available at:
http://www.uws.edu.au/currentstudents/current_students/services_and_facilities/pass_-_peer_assisted_study_sessions/student_feedback_-_results_and_awards
5.3.5 Careers & Cooperative Education (CCE) – Placement Programs

The CCE Placement Programs were started in 1995 and to date approximately 2,000 students and 450 organisations have participated. Over the last three years approximately 180 students have completed a placement annually. The placement programs have evolved over the years and now comprise several distinct programs which are described below.

1. **Internships** – The bulk of students participate in this program. Students competitively apply to undertake professional work related to their studies and are paid an “internship rate”. CCE provides employers with the full service of recruiting, short listing applications, scheduling interviews, invoicing for the work and paying the student.

2. **International Internships Outgoing** – Students competitively apply to undertake professional work in an overseas organisation for between 4-8 weeks over the summer vacation. Students are not paid for their work but do receive a grant from their UWS School.

3. **Skillmax Plus** – In partnership with UWScollage, CCE arranges professional work experience for 4-8 weeks for skilled migrants. Students are not paid for their work.

4. **International Internships Incoming** – CCE arranges professional work for 4-8 weeks for overseas students enrolled at UWS on a Study Abroad program. Students are not paid for their work.

5. **Jobs on Campus** – The Jobs on Campus (JOC) program is a University-wide initiative to increase student participation in paid, on-campus employment. Launched in 2012, the program is available to all students, and it is envisaged it will be especially beneficial to low-SES students who may need extra support and resources to build their careers. It also provides support to hiring units through assistance and resources for recruitment and training. The program aims to provide a centralised contact point for both staff members and students.

In terms of outcomes for the internship program, surveys have shown that 47% of students reported the work led to further employment at the end of the placement. However anecdotal evidence indicates that approx 60% of students gain ongoing work as a direct result of their placements within months of completing their placement. Placements are considered co-curricular. However if the placement can be used as a course requirement, CCE staff provide a letter of support for the student to submit to their supervisor. Students receive support before and during their placement. Support prior to the placement includes feedback and advice on the application (resume, cover letter and statement of purpose). In addition to this, regular workshops are offered on resume and application preparation and on interview skills.

Support during the placement includes information on equity, workplace preparation modules, regular monitoring and occasional site visits. Students are required to submit a reflective report at the end of the placement. CCE believes that this support is similar to what a student would receive for a Work Integrated Learning (WIL) placement, that is a placement which is a course requirement. In terms of internship survey feedback:

- 98% of students in 2011 said their internship was a valuable learning experience
- 91% said it added value to their formal degree
- 71% said it was their first professional experience
- 100% said they would encourage other students to apply for an internship
5.3.6 UWS Alumni program

Engagement continues after the conclusion of the student’s university experience through the UWS alumni activities. Alumni practice is not a specific focus of this review, and for this reason is not addressed in detail in this submission. It is important however to note that alumni strategy is an important component in building the bridge between the student’s time at university and their post-university lives. The specific engagement context for this is the role that the alumni strategy can play as an enabler of the broader civic engagement activities that the University seeks to build with the community. Through exposure to effective student engagement practices while at UWS, alumni are an important ambassadorial resource for the University in furthering its links with community and industry partners in the interest of building regional capacity. Civic and public service engagement are discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

5.4 Future direction

As outlined in Chapter 3, there is a robust strategic planning framework around the Schools Engagement Program. However there is potential for a more cohesive approach in other areas of student engagement, and there is thought to be potential for further synergies through a more integrated approach to planning and delivery in these areas. While the University’s organisational arrangements mean it is not possible to locate these activities within or under a single organisational unit managerially, the issue of improving cohesion can be addressed through a more deliberate institutional planning framework over all of these activities.

Feedback from the community in relation to UWS engagement activities suggests that the community takes an organic view of engagement, by which the internal organisational arrangements in this area are quite opaque, and indeed not particularly relevant to the community. An example of this is in the nuanced differences between open day (a self-defined marketing activity) and a mentoring event (a self-defined engagement activity), a difference which is lost on and irrelevant to the general public. This is an important perspective as the impact of both these activities is in the quality and relevance of the interactions they engender between the individual, the university, and the community, in as much as it advances personal journeys towards and through higher education.

A broader definition of student engagement as indicated in the student lifecycle approach provides opportunities for collaboration, resource sharing, and development of a more integrated suite of programs with a lifecycle concept in mind. Linking prospective student engagement programs with current student engagement activities serves not only the concept of lifecycle but helps ensure the success of “transition to university” programs, and enhances not only the student experience but increases retention and success at University.
A stronger student lifecycle paradigm would also see the University’s approach to service learning, work integrated learning, and other forms of engaged learning integrated within a more coherent framework. This would provide students from low-SES backgrounds and those who are first in their family to attend university with a form of learning that improves chances of success and provides an appropriate socio-cultural context for their higher education experiences.

Service-learning incorporates community work into the curriculum, giving students real-world learning experiences that enhance their academic learning, while providing a tangible benefit for the community. It provides students from non-traditional background with context (validating the reason why they are at University), and competence (an experiential framework that allows knowledge to be expressed in a less formal pedagogical setting), and confidence (a sum of context and competence), which both engage students with purpose, and the promises and benefits of a university education.

The discussion in Chapter 4 indicates there is potential for service learning to be approached in a more structured way institutionally. The Experiential Learning in Communities (ELC) program is a study unit with a specific community engagement focus, and would complement UWS courses that contain a service learning activity. ELC is however not universally available to students, and is currently accessed by a relatively small proportion of the UWS student cohort. In the context of the University’s intelligence about the contribution these programs can make towards the overall student experience, it would be timely to review the arrangements for the pedagogical alignment of service learning, and consider a more structured approach to incorporating a specific service learning unit within UWS programs more broadly.

UWS is not unique in regard to needing to address this alignment issue. However UWS’ mission does provide a context for a more deliberate approach to service learning as a complimentary pedagogy which is available to curriculum designers and planners. Embedding engagement more deliberately throughout the student learning experience would be compatible with the UWS mission. More particularly, the availability of coordinated and effective student in-service activity (volunteering, student philanthropy, mentoring), service learning, and civic engagement programs would be central to the success of an embedded student engagement agenda.

Embedding engagement throughout the student lifecycle experience should be at the heart of the student engagement strategy, providing accessible opportunities for students to identify with and experience the notion of community or civic engagement, and to serve as role models to future generations. This will not only enhance the student academic experience, but also increase student potential for an active and fulfilling civic life, post-university. This is an area where the indicators of success are highly visible, both through the achievements and success of students, as well as the development of community partnerships in the social, economic and educational development of Greater Western Sydney.
6 ENGAGED RESEARCH

Chapter Overview

This chapter examines the concept of engaged research at UWS, the current emphasis in policy and practice, and strategies for building organisational capacity. Case studies are included within the chapter to illustrate the breadth of engaged research activity. The chapter concludes with considerations regarding future directions to increase the quantum and impact of engaged research at the University.

6.1 Introduction and context

As outlined in Chapters 1 and 2, engagement is an overarching priority for UWS. The concept of engaged research has been pursued at UWS for over a decade. In that time the definition of what UWS considers to be engaged research has developed from one primarily concerned with applied research involving the local community, be it business, local government or community, to a much broader definition that includes research partnerships involving other research institutions, industry or government both nationally and internationally.

The 2005 UWS Engagement Review defined ‘engaged research’ as research where the community can be a collaborative partner in scholarly work, not a laboratory or mere data source:

Engaged scholarly work relies on intellectual collaborations with external partners to explore questions of importance to community and academia, and to generate knowledge across diverse sources of expertise and wisdom.

6.2 Current emphasis

As discussed in Chapter 2, UWS defines engagement as the collaboration between higher education institutions and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity. When extended to research, this definition involves the relationship of joint chief investigators on research projects, comprising UWS, external agencies and the project partner.

On the scale of mutual benefit, engaged research activities range from collaborative research fully or partly funded by an external organisation but involving active collaboration with staff from that organisation; to contract research that is fully funded by an external organisation, where UWS researchers do the research work, and the output (in some cases including intellectual property) goes to the partner. It is not uncommon in this domain for research partnerships that start out as essentially ‘one way’ in benefit can lead to further, more active engagement as partnerships mature and develop.

The University’s core principle of engaging with communities is reflected in its widening network of research partnerships which now number in the hundreds, and include funded collaborations with business, industry, government and other universities not only in GWS, but also nationally and internationally. These partnerships ensure that the University conducts research that will make a difference and which often achieves a high impact within a relatively short time frame.

Engaged research at UWS occurs essentially in two ways. In a structural sense, over the past six years the University has focused on building a network of research institutes, centres and groups. By targeting specific areas of research strength, UWS is establishing through its institutes the foundation
on which to further develop its reputation as a research-led university. On the other hand, at the level of the research centre, group and indeed the individual School researcher, an important additional stream of engaged research is also in evidence.

6.2.1 Institutes

After a number of University-wide reviews of research, UWS is establishing four research Institutes. These are based on areas of UWS research excellence, including those that met with success in the national 2010 Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) evaluation. The four Institutes are outlined below.

Figure 6.1: UWS Research Institutes

| 1. The Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment |
| Building on the ERA Rank 5 in Field of Research (FoR) 0607 – Plant Biology |

| 2. The Institute for Culture and Society |
| Building on the ERA Rank 5 for FoR 2002 – Cultural Studies |

| 3. The MARCS Institute |
| Building on the ERA Rank 3 for FoR 1702 – Cognitive Science |

| 4. The Institute for Infrastructure Engineering |
| Building on the ERA Rank 4 in FoR 0905 – Civil Engineering |

It is important to note that the focus areas of UWS research institutes align both with existing UWS research strengths and a number of the GWS priority areas identified by WSROC, namely the environment, society and culture, and health. A number of case studies are now presented which illustrate the linkage between the activities of research institutes and these regional priorities. The research activity of institutes also illustrates the UWS research philosophy of researching local issues which have global application or impact.
The Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment in partnership with Blacktown City Council is working on a UWS research project to identify the key characteristics of the current lace lerp infestation in the endangered fragmented remnant Cumberland Plain Woodlands throughout GWS.

6 CASE STUDY 6.1: HAWKESBURY INSTITUTE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT – WESTERN SYDNEY INSECT INFESTATION

Name of activity:
Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment – Western Sydney Insect Infestation

Activity partners:
Blacktown City Council

Brief description of the project:
The Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment, together with Blacktown City Council have been awarded a UWS Research Partnership grant to identify the key characteristics of the current psyllid infestation in the endangered remnant Cumberland Plain Woodlands.

Information about the population dynamics of the current psyllid infestation will be collected in the affected woodlands of Western Sydney, in particular of the Blacktown City Council, in order to predict future development and to help with design of management strategies.

Benefits to UWS, partners and community:
The research will provide information about the lace lerp outbreak and the monitoring data obtained will be used to test different management options for the recovery of lands affected by lace lerps.

A link is available at:
http://www.uws.edu.au/hie
The MARCS Institute BabyLab works in liaison with the NSW Department of Health and focuses on furthering the understanding of child development, and the clinical implications for treating children who suffer hearing or language disorders.

**CASE STUDY 6.2:**
**THE MARCS INSTITUTE – THE BABYLAB**

![Image of BabyLab participants](image)

**Name of activity:**
The MARCS Institute – The BabyLab

**Activity partners/supporters:**
ARC, DARE (Dyslexia Advocacy Resources and Education Charity Trust) Reals foods, Australian Dyslexia Association (ADA), SPELDNSW, Dyslexia Australia Pregnancy, Baby and Children’s Expo, Bub Hub, Playgroup NSW, Narellan Town Centre

**Brief description of the project:**
The MARCS Institute BabyLab is the foremost laboratory in Australia for research on infant speech and language development. Since its inception in 1999 the BabyLab has continued to expand and each year lures many international and local infant collaborating researchers to UWS. Current research at the BabyLab includes:

- The Seeds of Literacy is a 5-year ARC-funded longitudinal study on the relationship between the development of infants’ speech and rhythm perception, speech production, and toddlers’ and young children’s phonological skills and vocabulary.
- In a series of studies on Word Learning, MARCS researchers are investigating how vowel information influences word learning and asymmetries in sound perception.
- The Mother Tongue series of research projects has investigated the infant’s ability to recognise the “phonological constancy” of familiar words even when they are pronounced in dialects the child has not experienced.

**Benefits to UWS, partners and community:**
Around 3000 babies and toddlers are listed on the BabyLab register for research at the University of Western Sydney’s MARCS Institute, and approximately 1,000 pass through the MARCS doors each year. Over and above the quantum leaps in knowledge about infants’ speech and language development, much of this groundbreaking research is on the threshold of clinical application in areas such as hearing impairment and infants at risk of dyslexia.

**Links are available at:**
http://www.uws.edu.au/mtd/strategy_and_planning/what_we_are/engage_with_community_partners/marcs
The Institute of Culture and Society project, Hot Science, is an example of an engaged research project which involves other university partners, and focuses on collaborating with five museums in Australia and the United States to investigate how the sector can participate more fully in climate change interventions and decisions.

**Name of activity:**
Institute of Culture and Society – Hot Science
Global Citizens

**Activity partners:**
Australian Museum (Sydney), Powerhouse Museum (Sydney), Museum Victoria (Melbourne), Questacon (Canberra), Liberty Science Centre (Jersey City, USA)

**Brief description of the project:**
Hot Science Global Citizens: the agency of the museum sector in climate change interventions is an Australian Research Council Linkage Project lead by the Institute of Culture and Society, University of Western Sydney. The research project operates within these gaps looking to the museum sector as placed to provide information, activate broker discussion and decisions around climate change issues, locally and trans-nationally.

**Benefits to UWS, partners and community:**
The project looks to the museum sector – national history, science museums and science centres – to play a role as resource, catalyst and change agenda in climate change debates and decision-making. And as such as unique public spaces where science, government, industry and communities and NGOs can meet, where knowledge can be mediated, competing discourse and agenda tabled and debates, and, where innovative decision-making platforms can be created.

**A link is available at:**
http://ics.uws.edu.au/hotscience/index.php/about
6.2.2 Centres, Groups, and Schools

The engaged research of UWS institutes is by definition highly embedded and mutually beneficial in nature. On the other hand, the engaged research activity at the centre, group and school level tends to reflect the phenomenon of research activity progressively building from specific purpose or small scale or exploratory research and projects to more structured and long term research. In a strategic sense, the University places an importance on this level of research as it is often here that the relationships are built for more mutually beneficial and embedded activities with research partners over time.

The following are examples of engaged research activities conducted from UWS; research centres and groups, involving school-based researchers. As with Institute based research, a number of these case studies are in Greater Western Sydney priority areas.
The UWS Centre for Complementary Medicine Research Centre (CompleMED) has been involved over a long period in a process of developing appropriate practice policy for acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine in Australia. In conjunction with government partners, the CompleMED Centre is actively engaged in this area (including internationally), as well as improving the quality of herbal medicines in Australia, and developing high level scientific proof of the effectiveness of herbal medicines.

**CASE STUDY 6.4: COMPLEMED AND CHINESE HERBAL MEDICINES**

**Name of activity:**
CompleMED and Chinese Herbal Medicines

**Research partners:**
The Centre collaborates with a range of government and industry partners both nationally and internationally, undertaking independent research to support the development of the complementary medicine sector, and to provide opportunities for innovation in research, policy and commercialisation. Local partners include the NSW Office of Science and Research, NSW Dept of Trade and Investment, Regional Infrastructure and Services and LIPA Pharmaceuticals.

**Brief description of the project:**
CompleMED’s research program focuses on the safety, efficacy and use of complementary medicine, and employs a diverse range of disciplines to investigate these issues. The clinical research investigating the effect of herbal medicines on a range of important health conditions has been published in leading medical journals, and CompleMED works closely with several regional and Sydney hospitals including Bansktown Hospital, Sydney Adventist Hospital, Royal North Shore Hospital and John Hunter Hospital.

CompleMED has also played a key role in the development of national policies for practitioner regulation, and in the establishment of Australia’s National Institute of Complementary Medicine.

**Benefits to UWS, partners and community:**
- provide best practice clinical research and outcomes evaluation in complementary medicine
- provide leadership in laboratory research in herbal medicines, particularly traditional Chinese medicines
- provide government and industry with quality, independent research and advice relating to the development of the complementary medicines industry in Australia
- be recognised nationally and internationally as a provider of high quality research training in complementary medicine

A link is available at:
http://www.uws.edu.au/complemed/complementary_medicine/vision_and_objectives
6.3 Governance, performance benchmarking, and evaluation

The WISER partnership (Water and Land Management Innovation & Sustainability Enhancement in Peri-Urban Research) involves working with two Australian Universities and federal and state government agencies for a better future for peri-urban landscapes, with water management as the key driver.

The following are examples of engaged research activities conducted from UWS; research centres and groups, involving school-based researchers. As with Institute based research, a number of these case studies are in Greater Western Sydney priority areas.

**CASE STUDY 6.5: THE WISER PARTNERSHIP**

**Name of activity**
Water and Land Management Innovation & Sustainability Enhancement Partnership in Peri-Urban Research (WISER)

**Activity partners:**
University of New England, University of Melbourne, The NSW Department of Primary Industries, CSIRO Land & Water, Blacktown, Liverpool, Hawkesbury and Penrith Councils and relevant NSW Government agencies are also partners in the project.

**Brief description of the unit:**
The WISER Network comprises of four Western Sydney councils (Blacktown, Hawkesbury, Liverpool and Penrith), five universities (UWS, UNE, UniMelb, RMIT University and QUT) and a number of water dependent businesses, government agencies and community groups.

Water in peri-urban landscapes around metropolitan cities and regional centres is essential for producing fresh food locally, keeping parks, gardens and sporting ovals green and sustaining local businesses and jobs. One of the key challenges for Western Sydney is that its population is set to increase significantly over the next 20 years. The proposed North-West and South-West Growth Centres will add about 600,000 people to the 400,000 already living to the South Creek catchment. In addition, there will be further population growth during this period in the individual city council areas as part of their natural growth and expansion strategy. This poses a considerable threat to regional commerce, industry, and most importantly agriculture, as well as for recreational sites, such as playing fields and reserves which require significant amounts of water to sustain their user friendly quality.

Through the WISER Network, we hope to help stakeholders and agencies work from a common platform with a shared water vision matched to regional sustainability, jobs and prosperity. We also aim to help them develop long-term solutions and strategies for total water cycle and land management with community engagement at all levels of the water cycle.

**Benefits to UWS, partners and community:**
The Network seeks to integrate science, policy, management and communities to improve understanding and management of water and land in peri-urban landscapes with focus on the following key themes to benefit UWS, partner and community through

- Understanding the rapidly changing land use and hydrology of peri-urban regions as impacted by a growing population, metro and regional land and water management strategies, and land and water use for residential, business and other purposes,
- Understanding the role of land and water resources in primary production, identify opportunities and constraints as influenced by the availability of land and water supplies,
- Analysing market options and mechanisms to improve land and water productivity and environmental outcomes,
- Identifying options and opportunities for improved health of river and water bodies,
- Reviewing land and water policies, institutional barriers and community aspirations and identify changes needed to improve associated governance and
- Providing input into regional planning via understanding of water and land resource issues.

Please attach any photos or links if available:
http://www.uws.edu.au/wiser

We use ‘system harmonisation’ approach to tackle the complexity of securing water supplies and achieving balanced land use.

Through WISER Network, we hope to help stakeholders and agencies work from a common platform with a shared water vision matched to regional sustainability, jobs and prosperity. We also aim to help them develop long-term solutions and strategies for total water cycle and land management with community engagement at all levels of the water cycle.
In partnership with government and health care providers in GWS, the UWS Centre for Health Research leads a number of engaged research projects of importance to the region, including in the areas of diabetes, obesity and early reproductive years. The IHOPE (Indigenous Health Outcomes Patient Evaluation) project conducted by the Centre is funded by a national grant, and involves the linkage of hospital and death data, and multilevel modelling, to investigate factors that influence health outcomes after a hospital admission for Aboriginal people. IHOPE is investigating outcomes for people who have been admitted to hospital for ischemic heart disease, stroke, heart failure, type 2 diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and asthma.

### CASE STUDY 6.6: THE IHOPE PROJECT

**Name of activity**
The Indigenous Health Outcomes Patient Evaluation (IHOPE) project

**Activity partners:**
UWS- Centre for Health Research and IHOPE Reference Group

**Brief description of the project:**
The overall aim of the IHOPE project is to inform health policies that seek to reduce the disparity in health and life expectancy for Aboriginal Australians in NSW. Using linked administrative data and advanced statistical modelling, the IHOPE project aims to disentangle the contributions of the individual, the neighbourhood and the hospital of admission on risk of hospitalisation, and risk of poor outcomes after hospital admissions, for Aboriginal people in New South Wales. The aim is to understand where the health gaps are in NSW between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, and whether there are disparities at the hospital or neighbourhood level that could be targeted with specific interventions. The IHOPE reference group was formed in collaboration with the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council (AH&MRC) and includes representatives from Aboriginal Medical Services, the AH&MRC and the Centre for Aboriginal Health at the NSW Ministry of Health. The group has advised on: research areas of interest, processes for community engagement, interpretation of results, disseminating results, and how the results can be best communicated to community and translated into policy and practice.

**Benefits to UWS, partners and community:**
The IHOPE Reference Group provides UWS with:
- Stronger links with Aboriginal community groups
- Direct links with policy-makers at the NSW Ministry of Health
- Better understanding of the issues that are important to Aboriginal people in NSW

**Benefits to the external partner:**
- The IHOPE Reference Group members are able to influence research priorities, have input into how the findings are communicated, and increase their understanding of population and linked data research.
- The IHOPE Reference Group members have used results of the research to inform policy priorities for their agencies.

**Video available (produced by UWS) at:**
http://www.uws.edu.au/chr/centre_for_health_research/research
In conjunction with the NSW government and local Arabic Business and Community Group, the UWS Urban Research Centre conducts research on alternative pathways to employment generation through the development of Arabic businesses.

### Case Study 6.7: Building Arabic Businesses

**Name of activity:** Building Arabic Businesses  
**Activity partners:** Australian Arab Business Network, NSW Department of Industry and Investment  
**Brief description of the project:** The research sought to identify the barriers to employment generation amongst Arabic businesses in Western Sydney. It involved partnerships with Middle Eastern orientated business and community organisations across Sydney as well as Arabic owner-operators.  
**The study had 3 main aims:**  
1. To explore if there are distinct business practices present amongst Arabic owner-operated businesses;  
2. To examine to what extent and in what ways do such business practices impede or enhance business growth and employment generation amongst Arabic business in the Auburn-Bankstown area;  
3. To suggest strategies and pathways to encourage employment generation amongst Arabic businesses in Western Sydney.  
**Benefits to UWS, partners and community:** The research has assisted the Arabic business community in lifting the profile in the business community and raise awareness of the role of the Australian Arabic Business Network in supporting small businesses in Western Sydney.  
A series of policy recommendations were presented in the report aimed at placing the ethnic business community at the heart of future urban renewal plans for Western Sydney.  
**Links are available at:**  
An important feature of UWS engaged research is the extent to which projects engage outside the region proper. The School of Science and Health is addressing rural development challenges in Western China and East India through two long term (10 year) projects funded by the Australian government, and partnered by the Chinese and Indian governments. The aim of these projects is to alleviate poverty, increase food security, and develop more resilient farming systems.

6 CASE STUDY 6.8: RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN CHINA AND INDIA

Name of activity:
Rural Development in western China and east India

Activity partners:
Gansu, China: Lanzhou University, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, CSIRO, University of Queensland.
West Bengal & Jharkhand, India: PRADAN (a local NGO), AVRDC, ACWADAM, ICAR, ANU
PRADAN – Professional Assistance for Development Action
AVRDC – World Vegetable Centre
ACWADAM – Advanced Centre for Water Resources Development and Management
ICAR – Indian Council for Agricultural Research
ANU – Australian National University

Brief description of the project(s):
Agricultural research for development. The research locations; Gansu and West Bengal – Jharkhand represent some of the poorest rural communities in China and India respectively. The research is conducted in a participatory manner, engaging local farmers, extension workers, and researchers in a process of on-farm agricultural research that emphasises adult learning and development of human capacity. Increased agricultural production (crops and livestock) and more sustainable management of natural resources (land and water) leads to many benefits including; poverty alleviation, increased household income, greater food security, improved status of women, and better education and health outcomes for children.

The research, while focussed on local improvement at the scale of the household farm (typically 0.5 to 1ha in area), has been influential on policy formation in China and India, and through this mechanism the research has benefited many thousands of farming families.

Benefits to UWS, partners and community:
Benefits to UWS:
Around $4 million of competitive external research income, generating RIBG and RQ income for UWS. Employing several postdoctoral scientists over the years. Providing PhD and Honours research projects and related RTS income for UWS.

Benefits to partners and UWS:
Developments in research methodology and approaches to conducting research for development (R4D). Specific developments in software for analysing crop production (APSIM) and household income (IAT). Scientific publications (generating research income for UWS) and postgraduate training, enhancing the reputation of UWS. Development of human capacity for research and development in international partner organisations.

Links are available at:
The range, breadth and scope of UWS engaged research is further illustrated in the brief snapshots at Figure 6.2 of other research projects involving Centre, Group and School staff.

**Figure 6.2: Snapshot of UWS Engaged Research Projects**

- **Into the community**
  - Dr Gabrielle Drake from the School of Social Sciences and Psychology, together with Uniting Care Disability and People with Disability Australia have been awarded a UWS Research Partnership grant to explore the processes, supports and outcomes for people who have transitioned from a licensed boarding house to alternative accommodation.

- **Hypertensive disorders of pregnancy**
  - Dr Joanne Lind and Professor Annemarie Hennessy from the School of Medicine are investigating the retinal vascular changes in hypertensive disorders of pregnancy. This research is funded through the Bonnie Babes Foundation.

- **Midwife Initiated Oral Health-Dental Service**
  - Dr Aroh George, Professor Maree Johnson and Associate Professor Hannah Dahlen from the School of Nursing and Midwifery together with Dr Shipi Ajwani, Associate Professor Sameer Bhole and Sharon Ellis from Sydney & South Western Sydney Local Health District and Professor Anthony Blackhorn from University of Sydney are investigating the effectiveness of a Midwife Initiated Oral Health-Dental Service (MOH-D). This research is funded through the Australian Dental Association (NSW Branch) Limited.

- **Sharia in everyday Muslim life**
  - Associate Professor Adam Possamai and Professor Bryan Turner of the Religion and Society Research Centre, Dr Selda Dagistanli of the School of Social Sciences and Psychology and Professor Malcolm Voice of Macquarie University are examining multiculturalism and post-secularism by looking at Sharia in the everyday life of Muslim communities. This project is funded by the Australian Research Council through the Discovery Projects grant scheme.

- **Feel like a smoke? A cheeseburger?**
  - Professor Suzan Burton and Dr Daniela Spanjaard of the School of Business, with Ms Lindie Clark and Dr Ross Mackenzie from Macquarie University and Dr Kristina Jackson from Brown University, USA are investigating the impact of distribution and in-store displays on the purchase and consumption of tobacco and "fast-food". The project is funded by the Cancer Council NSW.

- **Anti-cataract medications**
  - Dr Michael O’Connor from the School of Medicine is investigating how stem cells can be used to understand normal development of the eye’s lens and how vision can be lost by lens cataract formation. This project is funded by the Medical Advances Without Animals Trust (MAWAR).

- **Improved village water supplies in India**
  - Professor Bassant Maheshwari from the School of Science and Health is leading a research team that will build a partnership between Australia and India for a major international collaboration that aims to improve the security of irrigation water supplies and enhance livelihood opportunities for rural communities in India. This project is being supported by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR).

- **Investigating Housing Reform**
  - Professor Peter Phibbs from the Urban Research Centre, along with Associate Professor Nicole Guinan from the University of Sydney, is exploring the performance of land use planning systems. This project is funded by the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) through a Research Funding Grant.

- **Cultivating Capability**
  - Professor Rhonda Craven, Associate Professor Alex Yeung, Dr Marjorie Seaton and Dr Anthony Dillon from the Centre for Positive Psychology and Education, together with NSW Department of Education and Communities have been awarded a UWS Research Partnership grant to determine the issues impacting Aboriginal students seeking placement in opportunity classes and selective high schools.

- **Service delivery systems and homelessness**
  - Associate Professor Michael Darcy and Dr Neil Hall from the School of Social Sciences and Psychology and Ms Stephanie Brennan from Wentworth Community Housing in partnership with Penrith, Blacktown, Blue Mountains and Hawkesbury City Councils have been awarded a UWS Research Partnership grant to examine the ways in which service provider practices and service delivery systems may unintentionally cause or perpetuate homelessness.

- **The Aboriginal Girls Circle**
  - Dr Brenda Dobia, Dr Roberto Parada and Adjunct Associate Professor Sue Roffey from the School of Education and Dr Gawayn Bodkin-Andrews from the Centre for Positive Psychology and Education, together with National Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect have been awarded a UWS Research Partnership grant to investigate the development and effects of an Aboriginal Girls’ Circle.

- **The ordinariness of Australian Muslims**
  - Professor Kevin Dunn, Dean of the School of Social Sciences and Psychology, in partnership with the Islamic Sciences, and Research Academy of Australia, has been awarded a UWS Research Partnership grant to determine a sense of the broader Muslim community attitudes and experiences.
6.4 Engaged research performance and priorities

Notwithstanding the range and scope of UWS engaged research activities, an important indicator of effectiveness for the University is the extent to which engaged research partnerships are funded through government research linkage grants. In the case of UWS, while the overall trajectory for research funding is improving, in the specific category of linkage grants performance has plateaued over recent years, as illustrated in Figure 6.3, where this is benchmarked against the Innovative Research Universities group.

Figure 6.3: Total partner related (Categories 2, 3 & 4) research income for the past 6 years benchmarked against the Innovative Research Universities (IRU): Griffith, La Trobe, Newcastle, James Cook, Murdoch, Flinders and Charles Darwin

While UWS researchers are successful in attracting increasing amounts of Australian Competitive Grant income, this demonstrated track record is not being successfully exploited to attract collaborative income for engaged research projects. This trend is thought to reflect the organic way in which engaged research projects arise, and suggests that a more deliberate and planned engaged research strategy would both provide greater institutional direction for engaged research and also better position the University for collaborative grant funding. One way to address this is for UWS to be more proactive in its outward facing activities that serve to keep industry and government abreast of the university’s research quality, capability and capacity. Such activity would necessarily involve several areas of the University – research, innovation, consultancy, marketing, business development and engagement. It is in these areas that future policy will need to concentrate if the intensity of engaged research is to be raised in a more systematic way.
2012 review of uW's Community and regional engagement  | university submission to review Panel
Chapter Overview

This chapter examines the concept of civic engagement, and its application in policy and practice at the University of Western Sydney. The chapter opens with an overview of the way civic engagement has developed between UWS and Greater Western Sydney as the institution has matured within its community and region. An outline is provided of the ways in which the University engages as a civic partner, and explores likely future directions. The chapter highlights issues arising for the University in managing future civic engagement strategy and practice at an institutional level, and case studies of important civic engagement activities are embedded throughout the discussion to illustrate current and developing approaches. The chapter concludes with a discussion about the links between civic engagement and those areas of engagement which are more central to the University’s core activities, and the implications for institutional strategy and governance.

7.1 Institutional Engagement

Chapters 3 to 6 have discussed UWS engagement practice in the context of its core activities as a University. Civic engagement refers to activities associated with the University’s larger regional leadership role and in developing the social and economic fabric of the communities it serves and its local region. This responsibility arises from UWS’ position as an influencer of community values, attitudes and outlook through its role in shaping intellectual, educational and skills foundations, and through its stature as a large employer and significant contributor to economic development of the region. A recent study commissioned by the University indicates that:

- “The economic contribution of UWS – by the University and its students to the GWS economy was estimated at $845.3 million dollars in 2010.
- The total employment contribution (direct plus indirect) of UWS and its students in 2010 was 8805 FTE jobs.
- The provision of higher education is essential to the future economic growth and development in the GWS region. The economy of GWS is changing, with manufacturing – the largest industry by output and employment – losing ground to service sector, such as finance and insurance, health care and social assistance, education and professional, scientific and technical services. The transition is delivering higher-paid jobs, but requires an influx of workers with higher education qualifications to fill them.
- This economic contribution represents approximately 1% of the Gross Regional Product of the region... equal to the contribution of the combined mining, agriculture, forestry, and fishing sectors to GRP in the region”41.

In the context of the operational framework for engagement, civic engagement occupies a place where, on balance, the benefit of engagement activity falls towards the community rather than the institution, and the type of activities are intended to be on-going and deeply embedded in nature. This area of engagement activity is directly related to the University’s role as a facilitator, co-ordinator and enabler of sustainable regional development. In this regard it is most closely associated with the University’s leadership role in its region and the strategic policy context of this leadership.

The distinctiveness of civic engagement for UWS is that, while certainly shaped by its role in delivering education and research, the University’s contribution and impact are not necessarily

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41 Deloitte Access Economics, (2012), ‘Economic contribution of the University of Western Sydney’, February
directly related to furthering its effectiveness as an educator or researcher. It is the University’s role as a significant regional institution which defines this dimension of activity, in which it engages on an issues-based, policy or development priority basis.

Civic engagement occupies an interesting and complex place within the University’s 2005 mutual-benefit definition of engagement, which has provided the underlying philosophical and operating context for UWS’ approach to engagement over the past seven years. The University believes that the concept of civic engagement occupies a unique place on the continuum of mutual benefit. Most events, debates of development brokered by the civic engagement activities involve the University participating in and contributing to community. This takes the form of either UWS undertaking its role as a member of the community or as a leader on behalf of the region. There is no doubt that civic engagement returns a benefit to the University as it builds relationships within the region. There is also no doubt that the regional community looks to UWS to lead or represent GWS on matters of significance. There is, in these circumstances, a genuine reciprocity that defines the relationship for both the University and the region. The case studies in this chapter illustrate civic engagement activities which often have learning and teaching and research dimensions, but also a real sense of institutional embeddedness.

An important reference point for civic engagement has been the UWS mission, which enshrines the regional context for the University, and effectively places the University’s success and growth in lock-step with that of the region. The extent to which regional connection has become a defining feature for the University is perhaps best seen in the description of UWS as a ‘University of the People’ provided by the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) in its two quality audits of UWS.

7.2 History and current emphasis

As outlined in Chapter 1, the UWS approach to civic engagement has been an evolving phenomenon during the life of the institution. The current emphasis on civic engagement for UWS can be seen in the following case studies, each of which applies University resources and expertise to provide and/or facilitate a whole of GWS focus on important threshold issues for the region.

The first case study relates to engagement with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. As outlined in Chapter 2, the social mission of UWS places an emphasis on meeting the needs of the people of GWS (which has the highest number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons compared to any other metropolitan region in Australia). This is reflected in the governance and consultative arrangements that the University has in place with the Indigenous community of the region, which was invited to provide a submission to the review. The submission makes a number of suggestions in the areas of accountabilities for portfolio management in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander matters, suggestions for improving employment opportunities, and integrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture within University programs. The submission in turn notes benefits to the community arising from “an increase in employment and training for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders”.

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43 See external submission 97
44 Ms Sandra Lee, Board Member, UWS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Board (external submission 97)
CASE STUDY 7.1: UWS PARTNERSHIP WITH THE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMUNITY

Name of activity:
UWS Partnership with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community

Activity partners:
UWS and Indigenous Community elders, leaders and organisations in Greater Western Sydney.

Brief description of the initiative:
UWS engages with Aboriginal elders, leaders, educators, and organisations to ensure optimum effectiveness and outcomes from the University’s aspiration-building programs in communities and schools across Greater Western Sydney; UWS academic programs; and UWS trainee and employment programs.

There are two important governance bodies that provide a community perspective to the University’s strategy and practice in these areas. The UWS Indigenous Advisory Council (IAC) is a standing council of the University, and provides advice on Indigenous matters to the Vice-Chancellor and the Board of Trustees. The UWS Indigenous Employment and Engagement Advisory Board provides more direct guidance for trainee and employment programs.

The University has been fortunate in being able to attract an impressive group of high profile Indigenous leaders to serve on these bodies, along with current Indigenous staff members, students and alumni.

The Elders on Campus program links the University to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across six campuses in the Greater Western Sydney region. The program provides role models and mentors for cadets, trainees and staff and an avenue for community input to University governance arrangements.

Benefits to UWS, partners and community:
The benefits to the University and community relate to the ability to ensure that UWS programs in these important areas are effectively designed and targeted, and achieve outcomes that are consistent with the UWS mission in Greater Western Sydney.

UWS Trainees and Cadets 2011 ‘Making a Difference’
The second two case studies relate to **sustainability**. The United Nations (UN) Regional Centre for Expertise (RCE) for Education in Sustainable Development for Greater Western Sydney is part of a global UN-sponsored network of existing organisations which is mobilised to deliver education for sustainable development to local and regional communities. The central theme is that of a ‘living laboratory’ in which the University is the catalyst for using engaged learning programs within a GWS context to build regional expertise in the area of sustainability. The second case study The Riverfarm is a similar example, but illustrates how the catalytic role of the University is enacted in an applied way.
Name of activity:
Regional Centre of Expertise (RCE) on Education for Sustainable Development – RCE Greater Western Sydney (GWS)

Activity partners:
RCE, UWS, United Nations University (plus see list of RCE-GWS Partners below)

Brief description of the project:
Regional Centres of Expertise in Sustainable Development (RCEs) are endorsed by the United Nations University. They bring together key educational, community, NGO, government, business and council groups in a specific region to link and leverage work that they have, hitherto, been undertaking in parallel. There are 101 RCEs now operating around the world, three of which are in Australia – one in Western Australia, one in Victoria, and since 2012, RCE-GWS in New South Wales. This network provides a rich resource of ideas and strategies for engaging people with the challenges of social, cultural, economic and environmental sustainability. RCE-GWS is hosted by UWS, and operates in a region which, in many ways, is emblematic of the sustainability challenges facing rapidly developing peri-urban areas in many countries. The focus of RCE-GWS is to identify, link and leverage key sustainability initiatives in GWS; obtain joint funding; promote partner activities; and raise public awareness of the area. It operates through a series of action groups, each chaired by one of the RCE-GWS Partner:

- Badanami Centre for Indigenous Education
- Blacktown City Council
- Blacktown Learning Community
- Brewongle Environmental Education
- Hawkesbury City Council
- Hawkesbury Earthcare Centre
- The Hawkesbury Environment Network
- Hawkesbury Harvest
- Nirimba Education Precinct
- Norwest Disability Services
- Office of the Hawkesbury-Nepean
- Parramatta Climate Action Network
- Penrith Business Alliance
- Penrith City Council
- Sydney Olympic Park Authority
- TAFE NSW – Western Sydney Institute and South Western Sydney Institute
- Television Sydney (TVS)
- Western Sydney Sustainability Education Group (WSSEG)
- Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (WSROC)
- Whitlam Institute

Benefits to UWS, partners and community:
- Education: Building UWS, VET colleges and GWS schools as living laboratories for sustainability, EIS Net, Teacher Education for Sustainability, linking GWS school children with those in other countries via the RCE network
- River health: Hawkesbury Waterkeeper project; Hawkesbury Riverfarm
- Waste and energy: ‘Love food, hate waste’ in GWS; Green Office Program; smart metering programs
- Engagement: Youth Eco Summit; Climate Action Summit; Alive Hawkesbury sustainable education program; Engaging SMEs with the Green Skills; Operations & Blue Economy agendas
- Policy formation, change leadership and implementation for ESD: Membership of Australia’s Green Skills Accord Implementation Group; editor of the HE Treaty for the UN Rio +20 Conference on Sustainability; production of a national operations paper for Universities Australia; a national stocktake of sustainability in the curriculum of Australia’s universities
- Learning what works from RCEs around the world: RCE-GWS is working with 100 equivalent organisations around the world to identify successful approaches to public engagement with the challenges of sustainability and successful practice for adaptation in Australia

A link is available at:
http://www.uws.edu.au/rce/rce
Name of activity:
UWS Hawkesbury Riverfarm

Activity partners:
Brewongle Environmental Education Centre – Department of Education and Communities, Darug Custodian Aboriginal Corporation, Hawkesbury Alumni Chapter, Hawkesbury Environment Network, Hawkesbury Nepean Catchment Management Authority and TAFE WSI,

Brief description of the project:
As part of one of its campuses, UWS occupies an historic 40 hectare holding of prime agricultural land on Sydney’s Hawkesbury River – including one kilometre of river frontage originally gazetted in 1799. The UWS Riverfarm has been in continuous operation since the late 18th century, and is now being developed as a living laboratory for learning and action-research on key challenges of social, cultural, economic and environmental sustainability in the rapidly developing peri-urban region of GWS. The Riverfarm is the flagship initiative of the RCE-GWS and a range of partnerships are collaborating to transform this culturally historic site into a unique resource linking land, food, culture and water. The project is a distinctive example of how institutions of primary, secondary, post-secondary and higher education can work in a coordinated way to support the implementation of the new national curriculum for the area and foster learning pathways. In addition a range of community partners have committed to the site including a heritage project recording the oral history from the perspective of the Darug community and “old boys” from the Hawkesbury Agricultural College now in their eighties.

Benefits to UWS, partners and community:
- Living laboratory programs in GWS schools, at TAFE WSI, and at UWS
- River bank restoration
- Oral history recording with the Darug Custodian Aboriginal Corporation and the H.A.C.
- Identification of Indigenous plants
- Demonstration of a low impact site that is carbon neutral and features best practice water conservation management.
- Base for the Hawkesbury Waterkeeper initiative internationally endorsed by the Waterkeeper’s Alliance

PDF document available at:

Links to further information:
In a similar vein, the University takes a leadership role in relation to celebrating the cultural diversity of the region. An example of this is the Ramadan Iftar celebration at UWS. This is an event where the University is seen in the community as taking a lead role in facilitating an understanding of the contribution of Muslim culture within the region, and fostering understanding and cooperation between Muslim and non-Muslim communities.

**Case Study 7.4: UWS Ramadan Iftar**

**Name of activity:**
University of Western Sydney (UWS) Ramadan Iftar 4 August 2012

**Activity partners**
- UWS Religion and Society Research Centre
- UWS Equity and Diversity
- UWS Muslim Student Association
- Bankstown Local Area Command, NSW Police Force
- Former members of the UWS Muslim Harmony Reference Group

**Brief description of the project:**
For the eighth consecutive year, UWS has hosted a ‘breaking of fast’ dinner during the Islamic month of Ramadan in an initiative aimed at strengthening links with the local Muslim community.

Close to 300 community members, students and staff attended the event. Guests included the Hon Paul Lynch MP, Member for Liverpool, the Hon Barbara Perry MP, Member for Auburn, Dr Geoffrey Lee MP, Member for Parramatta, Laurie Ferguson MP Member for Werriwa, Councillor Eddy Sarkis from Holroyd City Council, and Councillor Hicham Zraika from Auburn City Council.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Rhonda Hawkins spoke about the university’s Islamic Studies program and the Religion and Society Research Centre.

The keynote speaker for the evening was Senior Constable Danny Mikati from the Bankstown Local Area Command with the NSW Police Force. Danny shared his experience as a Muslim police officer in Bankstown and gave insights into building cooperation and trust between Muslim communities, one of the fastest growing cultural groups, and the NSW police Force. UWS student and member of the UWS Muslim Student Association, Laila Halwani shared her thoughts on Ramadan and experiences as a student at UWS.

The event was organised by the UWS Office of Marketing and Communication.

**Benefits to UWS, partners and community:**
UWS has a significant student population drawn from the Muslim community within Greater Western Sydney as a well as a significant international Muslim student enrolment.

The initiative is viewed as an opportunity for the University to engage with members of those groups and to build greater understanding and cooperation between Muslim and non-Muslim people.
There are also further examples of more specifically focused civic engagement. SMExcellence, was established in 2007 to assist small to medium business enterprises in the GWS, of which there are over 670,000, employing 49% of the workforce in GWS. SMExcellence is a partnership which involves the NSW State Government, regional employers and the University’s School of Business. The essential purpose of the initiative from an engagement perspective has been to create a central point for providing information and assistance to small to medium enterprises in improving their expertise in business planning and management. The initiative was intended at the same time to provide an opportunity for students to situate their knowledge within an applied context.

The University’s experience with the SMExcellence initiative has been positive in terms of the extent to which the community resource has been accessed by small to medium enterprises, and the way in which the initiative has diversified over the past four years. The experience has also been instructive in highlighting the issues and challenges involved in maintaining a regional focal point such as SMExcellence, and the importance of ensuring an initiative such as this is appropriately embedded within the strategic and operational fabric of the relevant organisational area (in this case the UWS Business School) from which it is hosted. While the future direction of SMExcellence is currently being reviewed by the University, the School of Business draft research strategy has identified issues surrounding the development of small to medium enterprises as one of three research themes for the School.

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Australian Bureau of Statistics (2011)
Name of activity: SMExcellence

Activity partners:
- NSW Department of Trade and Investment
- Tourism NSW (now “Destination NSW”)
- Australian Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)
- Australian Department of Innovation, Industry, Science & Research
- AusIndustry
- Business Enterprise Centres Australia (BECA)
- Council of Small Business Organisations Australia (COSBOA)
- North Sydney Institute of TAFE
- NSW Trustee and Guardian/Department of Justice & Attorney General
- Fairfax Media
- Industry Business Council Australia (IBSA)
- Service Skills Australia (SSA)
- PricewaterhouseCoopers

Brief description of the project:
The SMExcellence project began in late 2007 as an initiative to provide free financial literacy training online to Australian small business owners and operators. The overall objectives of the initiative were to lift the performance of the small business sector and reduce business failure rates. The websites developed under SMExcellence program attract over 45,000 unique visits a month, and have around 15,000 registered users refining their business skills and developing business plans. The first project became a springboard for the establishment of a range of strategic partnerships for UWS within the small business sector including: state and federal government industry departments, government agencies, industry associations, other academic institutions; and a range of small businesses in GWS. Currently there are a range of online training sites that have been developed by the SMExcellence team, including the ‘Small Business Tool Kit’ (NSW Department of Trade & Investment), ‘Winning Business Online’ (AusIndustry and BECA), ‘Business Building Blocks’ (DEEWR), ‘Ask Us How’ (NSW Business Chamber), ‘Local Government Tourism Planning Tool Kit’ (Destination NSW), ‘Planning Ahead Tool Kit’ (NSW Trustee & Guardian), and ‘Introduction to Business Law’ (unit offered by School of Law).

Benefits to UWS, partners and community:
- Increased participation of business owner/operators in formal study
- Provision of free, high-quality training in areas of business, finance, and end of life planning
- Provision of work experience for over 60 UWS students and recent graduates
- Development of expertise in e-Learning at UWS
- Production of some blended learning units allowing flexible study options for UWS students

Television Sydney (TVS) is an initiative in civic engagement which plays an important community-centred role within the region, and includes (though is not restricted to) a focus on services which are germane to the demographic and cultural settings of Greater Western Sydney. Like SMExcellence, Television Sydney also provides an opportunity for the University to embed engaged learning within the curriculum, whereby students are able to expand their learning through hands-on experience within a real-life multi-media setting.

**7 CASE STUDY 7.6: TV SYDNEY (TVS)**

**Name of activity:**
TVS

**Activity partners:**
TVS works in close partnership with community groups, business organisations, local government and non-government services.

**Brief description of the activity/program:**
TVS is a free-to-air television channel based at UWS. TVS is committed to providing an outlet for programs for all the communities of Sydney, with a focus on Sydney-produced programs.

The programs often feature issues that other televisions channels ignore. They encourage innovative program styles where creative producers explore new formats and showcase emerging talent. Genuine not-for-profit community based program makers receive free program airtime. There is a strong commitment to sustainability throughout many of their programs.

TVS has a close relationship with UWS through The Community Programs Unit. Thus unit creates quality video productions for both the University and our community partners. The unit is constantly working on exciting new programs and topics of interest to the greater western Sydney community, as well as capturing the big events at UWS.

**Benefits to UWS, partners and community:**

**TVS benefits the community by:**
- Providing not-for-profit community based program makers with free program airtime.
- Encouraging innovative program styles where creative producers explore new formats and showcase emerging talent.
- Addressing local social, economic, cultural and environmental issues in their programs and providing a space for local filmmakers to present their work.

**TVS benefits the University by:**
Providing Media and Communication students with access to hands on experience in film production, editing, interviewing and presentation.

**Please attach any photos or links if available:**
These civic engagement initiatives are primarily situated within the ‘top right’ quadrant of the UWS Operational Framework for Community and Regional Engagement Framework, where the emphasis is on initiatives and activities which are principally of benefit to community partners, and which are intended to be deeply embedded and on-going in nature.

7.3 The Whitlam Institute within the University of Western Sydney

So significant is the Whitlam Institute as an example of the University’s civic engagement imperatives that it is described in detail to contextualise the level of leadership, strategic focus and relevance to regional issues and concerns.

The Whitlam Institute exists for all Australians who care about what matters in a fair Australia. The Institute bridges the historical legacy of former Prime Minister Gough Whitlam’s years in public life and the contemporary relevance of the Whitlam Program to public discourse and policy.

The Institute was established by the University of Western Sydney in 2000 as an entity within the University under an Agreement between the University of Western Sydney and E.G. Whitlam. The Institute’s spirit is best captured in Mr Whitlam’s own words when signing the subsequent Deed of Gift:

> The greatest contribution that I hope to bestow is inspiration. That the work and causes championed in my parliamentary career and the statesman service that followed, will provide the basis for ongoing research and advocacy from this university into the contemporary challenges that confront and can improve the quality of life for all Australians...[December 2003]

The Whitlam Institute works as an advocate, educator, policy influencer and research institute. It strives to be a leading national centre for dialogue and debate on public policy, promoting continuing reform in the areas Mr Whitlam championed. The Institute is home to the collected papers donated by the Hon EG Whitlam AC QC which inspire its programs. The collection provides on-line access to papers held both at the Institute and in the National Archives. The Institute maintains an active public education program and works with the Schools and Research Institutes of the University to ‘bring knowledge to life’ in the community.

The Whitlam Institute is developing as a permanent Institute of national significance.

7.3.1 Guiding Principles

The Whitlam Institute is guided by the ‘three great aims’ that drove the Whitlam Agenda of 1972. They are:

- to promote equality;
- to involve the people of Australia in the decision-making processes of our land; and
- to liberate the talents and uplift the horizons of the Australian people.

“We want to give a new life and a new meaning in this new nation to the touchstone of modern democracy – to liberty, equality, fraternity.”

7.3.2 The Whitlam Institute’s Approach to Engagement

For the Whitlam Institute engagement is fundamental to its daily existence; an essential and necessary consequence of its mission and culture. This may be best explained by way of illustration.

7.3.3 A Growing Constituency

The Whitlam Institute consciously seeks to develop a large and diverse constituency. This already includes a solid core of individual and organizational supporters; as well as a quite rapidly growing number of Australians, young and old, who are involved in the Institute’s work in one way or another: students writing for What Matters?, those attending forums, using its materials or accessing the e-collection.

While difficult to put an exact figure on it a conservative estimate would suggest that some 15,000 people would come into direct contact with the Institute over the course of the year through its events, exhibitions, schools program, reports. This excludes the UWS community. More significantly, it also excludes online visitors to the website and users of the Collection (30,000) and media coverage. The significance of the latter is that Institute’s forums and events receive substantial coverage, for example, in the mainstream media the 2012 Gough Whitlam Oration was broadcast on several channels, including live on ABC 24; and in the more pro-active online environment some 1,500 people viewed the live-stream of the Prime Minister’s 1 June announcement concerning

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46 Gough Whitlam, ALP Policy Speech 13 November 1972
the Institute and several thousand viewed it subsequently.

The Institute actively develops and maintains relationships with its supporters. This is for a variety of reasons, including: impact and reach; financial support; maximising access to the Collection and it takes many forms.

The Institute’s contact management system has been growing steadily with some 8,200 current records (though inflated by the inclusion of extensive media contacts). However, a stronger indicator of its closest relationships is the 2,500 subscribers to the It’s Time e-magazine which is a key element in its communications and subscribers tend to actively follow the Institute’s development, take an interest in its reports and outputs, as well as participate in its events. It’s Time subscribers get advance notice of major events and activities.

7.3.4 Partners & Collaborators

The Whitlam Institute’s preferred approach is to develop a network of strong, collaborative relationships in realising its program. Setting to one side the Whitlam Institute’s partnerships across the University of Western Sydney, the Institute’s network extends well beyond. Recent years have seen increasingly productive relationships develop between the Whitlam Institute and national cultural institutions such as the National Archives of Australia, the Museum of Australian Democracy, the National Film & Sound Archive and also with other Prime Ministerial Libraries.

The Institute’s project work has developed in cooperation with non-governmental organisations (such as Jobs Australia, Foundation for Young Australians, Centre for Public Education), with research centres and scholars based in other universities (especially with colleagues at the University of Melbourne), philanthropic organizations (Melbourne Community Foundation; Silicon Valley Community Foundation inter alia), industry partners (Business Council of Australia, ACTU), corporate supporters (OfficeWorks), community organisations of various descriptions. The relationship with Riverside Theatres in GWS is illustrative of the way in which these relationships evolve on several fronts: they have been partners in co-hosting the annual Behind the Lines Exhibition of political cartoons and the associated events program, as well as providing their facilities for numerous Institute forums from small public information discussion through to the 2012 Gough Whitlam Oration which took over the whole theatre complex through to practical support in promoting the Institute or in ticketing major events on its behalf.

7.3.5 Education & Outreach

This part of the Institute’s program has been growing rapidly and is likely to continue to do so. By way of example, the What Matters? School essay competition has grown from some 800 entries in 2008 to over 3,500 entries from over 200 schools in 2012. There are several elements to this work: the schools program; hosting travelling exhibitions on aspects of Australian social history; the annual Behind the Lines exhibition; public information forums on matters of public policy interest.

7.4 Governance

As discussed in Section 6.2, the engagement initiatives which fall within the definition of civic engagement arise from the UWS mission. In the UWS Operational Framework for Community and Regional Engagement framework, the UWS mission is reflected on the ‘horizontal’ axis, which encapsulates the sense of partnership the University aspires to build with the region. The strategic settings through which the University delivers on its mission within GWS are represented on the vertical axis. In this regard, Making the Difference: 2010-2015 is the strategic template within which all University activity is framed. The vertical axis reflects the fact that University activities under the Making the Difference: 2010-2015 strategy are diverse, and for this reason assume different levels of relationships with the external community.

Within the global governance settings established by the UWS mission and strategy, specific civic engagement activities have arisen from both the institutional networks in which the University participates in the region, and also as a response to identified or emerging need or opportunity. These dimensions are illustrated within the case studies presented. From a governance perspective, civic engagement is an all-of-Executive responsibility beginning with the institutional leadership provided by the Vice-Chancellor and Board of Trustees. Management of various civic engagement activities is transacted through the Deputy Vice-Chancellors and in a portfolio context by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Engagement and International), the position which has portfolio responsibility for University engagement. The UWS Engagement
7

Plan in turn outlines the strategic focus for engagement more broadly over (typically) a three year period.

Notwithstanding the governance settings described, it is clear that civic engagement activities often arise outside the strategic planning context for the University, for example in response to emerging opportunities. From the perspective of increasing its leadership role in civic engagement, it is apparent that the University’s longer term planning for engagement could be more deliberately developed in consultation with the community and region.

The case study on the SMExcellence initiative suggests that management of key relationships, and progressive evaluation of impact are areas for strengthening within a more deliberate governance model. This is related to the issue of improving more generally the monitoring and assessment of impact, which is discussed in Chapters 2 and 8. From a governance perspective, the arrangements for civic engagement initiatives are very well developed by virtue of their multi-partner character and level at which these activities arise and are managed.

7.5 Development of scholarly practice

Civic engagement activities often provide opportunities for enhancing scholarly practice. In the examples cited in this chapter for instance, the Television Sydney and SMExcellence initiatives provide both an opportunity for students to acquire first hand experience in the applied aspects of their scholarship, and in turn provide the University with the opportunity to ‘map’ scholarship in its application back into the taught curriculum. In a similar way, the UN Regional Centre for Excellence and the SMExcellence initiatives provide a platform on which to build research activities of mutual benefit to the University and the community.

7.6 Building organisational capacity

Because the coordination and strategic intent of the civic engagement aspect of community and regional engagement is in a relatively emergent form, the notion of building organisational capacity in this area is one to which UWS must turn its attention. While there are mechanisms to capture and record such activities (eg through the TICE data base), development of a stronger planning and community of practice framework and momentum around civic engagement would ensure the University optimises both opportunity and delivery in this area.

A priority area for attention which has arisen during this review is the apparent diversity of approaches in external relationship management across the institution. To some extent this would not be unexpected, given the breadth and scope of partnership arrangements referred to in other chapters. Of concern is the anecdotal feedback from University staff that in some cases, partners have remarked on the apparent lack of knowledge by University staff of other contacts the partner has with the institution. Of perhaps greater concern though is that staff members report situations where the process of scaling down or bringing relationships to close – for example at the end of a time limited project – has not been managed well and this has not reflected UWS in a positive light in the eyes of the ex-partner. The recently-formed UWS Relationship Development and Management Committee has a mandate to develop a set of protocols to strengthen the University’s effectiveness in the broad area of managing community and business relationships. An early model which is emerging in this regard is illustrated at Figure 6.1. As the model indicates, development of a single UWS Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system is central to managing this aspect of civic engagement more effectively.

The Director of Information Technology Services is leading a project to determine the strategic focus and parameters for this CRM building on the experience of the current large array of specific systems (over 40 across the University). The project plan anticipates a decision on the relationship management strategy and accompanying single system by the end of 2012.
Figure 7.1: Relationship Development and Management Institutional Partnerships

1 INITIAL APPROACH
External stakeholder approaches UWS individual group with opportunity
OR
UWS individual group identify and external stakeholder to approach with opportunity

2 STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION
Individual group identifies relevant UWS stakeholder meeting convenes

3. INTERNAL ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITY
Meeting confirms stakeholders extent and desirability of opportunity

4 CLARIFICATION OF OBJECTIVES
Meeting held with potential partner to affirm bilateral relationship requirements

5 INITIAL PRIORITIES
Relationship management framework developed to action identified priorities and clarify process and accountabilities

6 STEERING GROUP
Establish steering group where appropriate to enable participation by both parties in relation to strategy & communication

7 LOCAL LEADERSHIP
Respective team leaders action objectives and report against framework

8 COMMUNICATION COORDINATION
Relationship Development and Management Committee monitor report & communicate progress

UWS EXECUTIVE
Approve Partner
Affirm Strategy
Approve Agreement

INITIAL ADVICE

University of Western Sydney
Bringing knowledge to life
CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS
**Chapter Overview**

The foregoing analysis of UWS community and regional engagement, in conjunction with feedback arising from this review indicate identifiable areas of strength for the University in terms of its engagement with the GWS community and the region more broadly, as well as areas for improvement. The review has been an opportunity to test the integration between the strategy and practical levels of university engagement. On both counts there are important conclusions to be drawn which are discussed in this chapter. Alongside these conclusions are outlines of actions being undertaken which relate directly to the issues discussed.

### 8.1 Effectiveness of Engagement strategy

As outlined in Chapters 1 and 2, UWS engagement strategy is encapsulated in the University’s mission and *Making the Difference: 2010-2015* strategy, which establish a clear sense of purpose and mandate for action. The breadth of engagement activities and the extent to which these are valued by community partners is apparent in the partner submissions, focus group discussions, and partner interviews conducted in support of the review. This value is also apparent in the preparedness of partners to be part of the demonstration case studies which were developed for the review. Examples of the perception of benefit by partners were seen in the recent UWS Engagelab workshop, where the William Rose School, Sarah Redfern High School and Richmond Fellowship all provided positive endorsement of the benefit to their institutions of engagement with the University.

While caution should be exercised in seeing these as indicative of the view held by all partners, the comments can be seen as a positive indication that the University has the right strategic settings to link engagement strategy with community and regional priorities. This is also supported by the fact that the case study presentations for the review are in areas that address education, health, systemic disadvantage, sustainability, and broader community development. As shown in Chapter 2, of the 201 current engagement partnerships in the TICE database, some 126 are in regional priority areas.

Notwithstanding this level of alignment between institutional strategy and community and regional priorities, there is an indication that within these overall strategic settings, there is capacity to improve the alignment of institutional and unit-level strategy. The Engagement Plan outlines the areas of priority for University activity and focus. A number of areas of engagement activity are similarly supported by a strong strategic focus. Examples of these are the schools outreach programs, programs associated with partner development in a ‘giving’ context, and the alumni strategy. However as identified in formal School reviews conducted over the period 2010-2011, there is not always a similar level of strategic planning reflected in engagement activity at the University School level. Feedback from external partners reinforces the conclusion that programs which have structural and institutional support are seen to have the highest impact.

During the submission development process, staff proposed that this is in fact a strength of the UWS approach, in that engagement activities that really make a difference are essentially driven by passion and commitment at the individual staff member level. The University considers that without detracting from the impact of individual initiative, there is potential for a stronger institutional footprint over the planning dimension of engagement.
across the institution. The organic approach to engagement outside of the more formally adopted institutional programs is reflected in the generally held view that the UWS tracking system for engagement activities (TICE) does not capture all projects, nor is it used to its potential for institutional or School-level stock-takes of engagement activities within priority domains. In a similar vein, the process of contacting partners to seek their input to development of the University submission has highlighted the need for an institutional data base of engagement partners to replace the plethora of local data bases currently deployed across the institution.

A similar situation in relation to planning disconnect exists with student engagement, where there is clearly an identifiable student lifecycle approach in place in the way some Schools plan and manage student engagement, but as discussed in Chapter 5, this approach is not consistent across the institution. The implications of this inconsistent approach is the potential for an ‘unevenness’ in the UWS student experience as it relates to developing the outlook and skills that allow students to contribute most effectively in the development of their communities.

With the establishment of the Engagement and International portfolio and associated positions within Schools, there is an opportunity to establish a stronger overall strategic focus and planning regime across UWS. To do this requires a careful and managed balance between strengthening the institutional direction for engagement while supporting the organic nature by which projects and partnerships are able to develop. This will need a more consistent level of focus and integration in planning around community and regional engagement, rather than a ‘targets and controls’ approach. The feedback from both external partners and staff refer to the potential for lost opportunities through insufficient planning, and the need to involve the community more directly in the planning process.

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<th>Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Ensure alignment of school and unit engagement plans and activities with the UWS Strategy and Action Plan.</td>
<td>Deans and Executive Director, Strategy and Quality</td>
<td>End 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Encourage individual staff and partners to align their projects and activities with the University’s overarching strategic framework</td>
<td>VC, Executive and Deans</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
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8.2 Evaluating impact

In developing the submission to the review it became clear that there is a need for a more structured approach to evaluating the quality and impact of community and regional engagement. This is also reflected in submissions to the review from external partners who nominated feedback and evaluation systems as areas for attention.

Evaluation presently occurs on an ad-hoc basis. Current research suggests that the need for a greater focus on the outcomes and impact of community engagement is not uncommon for the sector, both in Australia and internationally\(^3\).

The research also suggests there are two levels to evaluation, one being the activity/project level in terms of its return to individual partners, and the other involving evaluation of the community impact at a whole-of-institution level. Yet a further dimension is the question of measuring point in time impact, vis-a-vis changes in impact over time\(^4\).

The University of Bradford’s Reciprocity, Externalities, Access and Partnerships (REAP) tool was examined during the course of the current review of engagement. The tool is relevant in relation to characterising the dimensions of engagement. REAP may provide the basis for a potential outcomes and ‘value-add’ model that

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would be appropriate within a Greater Western Sydney context. The Holland Matrix and the Gelmon Assessment Approach provide alternative models that map dimensions of engagement on the basis of both institutional and community indicators. However, the unit of analysis in both models appears not to have the multi-dimensional orientation of the REAP model.

Work done by Michigan State University would also be important in informing the development of survey instruments to assess the impact of engagement with community partners. Development of a more deliberate approach to evaluating the impact of engagement would be taken forward in parallel with external benchmarking against Australian and international universities which share a common engagement context with UWS, as identified in Chapters 1 & 2. Benchmarking would also be an important element in addressing quality assurance mechanisms and outcomes identified in the self-assessment for further development. It is significant, for example, that the UWS Medical School project with the William Rose School is similar conceptually to the Tufts Medical School’s externship program, in that both have an element of providing care for individuals whose access to services is limited.

8.3 Engagement practice

The UWS Operational Framework for Community and Regional Engagement has been developed as the basis for framing the University’s discussion about practice in the areas of schools engagement, engaged learning, engaged research, student engagement and civic engagement. This framework appears to resonate well with University staff as it represents an inclusive rather than exclusive approach, and incorporates the notion that the cumulative impact of engagement exceeds the sum of its parts. The capacity of the model to reflect the iterative nature of engagement as it unfolds over time also resonates with staff who are experienced in developing and managing engagement projects and partnerships. The framework establishes a close link to the principle of mutual benefit and knowledge exchange established by the UWS 2005 Review. The framework extends the understanding of these principles in the light of the way UWS engagement practice has been refined over the past seven years. As discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, both the University and the region have developed substantially over this period.

A range of case studies has been presented as part of the review submission. A summary of the mapping undertaken within the four chapters is represented at Figure 8.1, where the five broad areas of engagement practice are plotted against the UWS Operational Framework for Community and Regional Engagement. It is significant that these five areas overlap in that part of the framework where engagement has the highest impact, namely the middle area of the axes where mutual benefit is most intensive. This relationship supports the validity of the framework in which engagement projects, at a specific level or University-wide, are seen to accumulate in a way which gives force to a collective community and regional impact. Development of a more robust evaluation framework (discussed at Section 8.2) would add an important governance dimension by which to further validate this relationship.

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<th>Action</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Develop an appropriate evaluation framework and methodology in three key domains:  - Individual projects/activities and benefits to partners;  - Whole-of-institution projects/activities and community benefit;  - Impact over time</td>
<td>PVC (E&amp;I) Executive Director, Strategy and Quality</td>
<td>End of 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Develop a benchmarking strategy</td>
<td>Executive on advice of PVC (E&amp;I) and Executive Director, Strategy and Quality</td>
<td>2013</td>
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50 Michigan State University, (1996), ‘Open Points of Distinction: A Guidebook for Planning and Evaluating Quality Outreach’
The discussion of the fundamental dimensions of engagement at Chapters 3 to 7 indicates a number of areas for further development. The proposed typology for engaged learning which is foreshadowed in Chapter 4 would have a positive impact in the conceptualisation and integration of engaged learning. In particular, such a typology would augment planning in this area in the nine UWS Schools (see Section 8.1), and could also form the basis for tracking and evaluating impact over time. In an applied sense, the typology would also be a practical framework for discussions between academic staff and supervisors about integrating engagement within their teaching.

The discussion of engaged research highlights the role that linkage grants play in effective community and regional engagement over the longer term, and the need for UWS to improve focus and performance in this area. From the perspective of the research-teaching nexus which is elaborated in an operational sense in Chapters 4 and 6, there is an indication that in its areas of research concentration, the associated teaching programs are among the best performing in the University. This is reflected at Table 8.1.
The discussion of student engagement in the broad sense at Chapter 5 proposes that a student lifecycle model should inform the design of the student experience in all teaching programs, intensifying the emphasis on community engagement. Such an initiative could also be progressed using a typology model, which would facilitate planning at a University School level to ensure community engagement (as well as engaged learning) is an identifiable part of the student experience at UWS. This would align pedagogy and curriculum more closely with the UWS Graduate Attributes.

From a civic engagement perspective, Chapter 7 identifies a range of activities in which the University is currently involved. The essential characteristic of this engagement is that UWS should be seen as the beacon or catalyst for bringing civic partners together in areas of major relevance to the region, such as environmental sustainability, community cohesion, and small to medium enterprise development. In an initiative championed by the Chancellor, the University is presently exploring its capacity to provide an expertise, facilitation and linking role in respect of key GWS economic priorities. To be known as the UWS or GWS ‘Gateway’ this initiative would see UWS being the ‘first point of call’ for government, industry and community sectors in locating, accessing and linking to relevant research, data, information and resources (including people) within the region. This initiative would sit well with the philosophy of civic engagement articulated in the UWS strategic and operational models, and with the University’s broader responsibility in the context of its expertise, role and resources. The outline of this initiative is provided in Appendix 1.

A number of the case studies presented in Chapter 7 explore, in part, the leadership dimension of the University’s civic engagement. The UWS Gateway initiative has the potential to extend this further. This concept is embraced in the context of the leadership role which is emerging in current research about university engagement discussed in Chapter 1. Moreover, staff submissions to the review suggest there is potential for UWS to take a stronger leadership role and one which is more proactive. The University appreciates however that this dimension of engagement requires careful and sensitive management in terms of achieving the right balance with regional partners while ensuring there is consistency of involvement, activity and outcomes.

As outlined in Chapter 2, transport is one of the key areas of focus identified by regional communities of councils. This is one area in which the University’s increasing leadership role is manifest, through facilitating a whole-of-GWS strategy development, planning, and lobbying dynamic.
Name of activity: Greater Western Sydney Transport Alliance

Activity partners:
Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (WSROC), Macarthur Regional Organisation of Councils (MACROC) Western Sydney Community Forum, Penrith Business Alliance, TAFE NSW, NSW Business Council, Parramatta City Council, Public transport Users Group

Brief description of the project:
UWS initiated the concept of an alliance as a mechanism to promote the needs and interests of GWS regarding transport infrastructure. UWS works with a range of Council, state government and transport organisations to promote improved transport outcomes for the university and the region.

Safe, efficient transport is vital for access to work, education, health and for social inclusion generally. There is growing concern about the lack of transport across the region of Greater Western Sydney, particularly with significant population growth in the past years and projected to rise steeply to 2036.

UWS has worked with a range of government, community and transport provider organisations to try to improve transport to UWS campuses and in the region of Greater Western Sydney generally. UWS itself is a major “trip generator” with over 40,000 staff and students accessing our campuses.

UWS academics in the Urban Research Training Centre have been actively consulted about future visions and plans for Greater Western Sydney including transport.

This engagement has included UWS working with:
• the regional organisations of councils in the region WSROC and MACROC to hold a Transport Forum in March 2011 (Getting Western Sydney Moving) and help establish the Greater Western Sydney Transport Alliance in 2012.
• the NSW government – by providing submissions to their development of a NSW Transport Master Plan and presenting a paper on key priorities for UWS and the region
• the Commonwealth government – in support of the Epping to Parramatta rail link which the government indicated its willingness to support with $2.1 billion funding
• Parramatta City Council, in advocating for transport options such as an Epping to Parramatta rail link and light rail, with a view to more effective transport in the Parramatta campus area
• the Western Sydney Public Transport users group – including establishing a UWS sub group
• the Sydney Alliance (which is a broad network of churches, unions, community groups and other organisations) to push for improved transport commitments by the government, and which has held community forums to seek community views on priorities

Benefits to UWS, partners and community:
• Unified regional voice in promoting transport needs of greater Western Sydney with State and Federal Governments
• Capacity to harness significant regional capability in areas of transport planning and funding
• Ability to improve transport options for GWS citizens, including UWS students
• Ability to bring UWS research on GWS urban development to bear in transport planning

Improved transport outcomes for UWS from this extensive engagement have included:
• A UWS stop being planned for the light rail plans promoted by Parramatta city Council
• Improved footpaths, bus stops, frequency and routes of buses,
• Safety issues addressed regarding pedestrian crossings and location of bus bays
• Continuation of trains from the Campbelltown station to the Macarthur station for proximity to our UWS campus
8.4 Capacity building

A number of the initiatives proposed at Sections 8.1 to 8.3 will build institutional capacity, by virtue of their impact on consistency of practice and approach. Chapter 4 also discussed staff training and development within this context. Staff submissions raise, in general, the potential for a stronger level of practical support for engagement activities at a staff member level.

The review has also raised the potential for doing much more in building communities of practice within UWS in the area of community and regional engagement. The Engagelab workshop in particular was an opportunity to reflect on current practice in the context of the case studies which were presented. Participants commented positively on the discussion and exchange of views and experiences that took place as part of the workshop, and welcomed the opportunity to do this on a regular and more structured basis. The University sees significant benefit in the sharing of practice in an area such as community engagement, and proposes that development and facilitation of such forums should be factored into the new Engagement and International portfolio work plan. This would be taken forward in partnership with the portfolios of Education, Research, and Students.

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<tr>
<td>1. Developing more structured and regular communities of practice for engagement within UWS and ensure the outcomes of forums are integrated into planning and reporting.</td>
<td>PVC (E&amp;I) Deans Executive</td>
<td>End of 2012 and ongoing in 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Review practical support for engagement activities at a staff member level.</td>
<td>PVC (E&amp;I) Deans Executive</td>
<td>End of 2012 and ongoing in 2013</td>
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8.5 Managing relationships

While the University has received positive feedback from current partners in the interviews and case study presentations developed during the review, there is an indication from submissions to the review that relationship management more broadly with partners could be strengthened. Improving institutional cohesion in situations where there are multiple relationships with partners, and developing protocols when scaling down and retiring partnerships are particular areas identified for attention to improve the sense of professionalism the University imparts in managing partner relationships. The work of the UWS Relationship Development and Management Committee is important in this regard. The need for an institution-wide data base has also emerged through the process of developing the University self-assessment submission.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Develop an appropriate and contemporary organisational structure for the leadership, management and evaluation of engagement at UWS. This action aligns with the current activities underway to review and reshape the University’s Development (Advancement) and Alumni activities.</td>
<td>Vice-Chancellor and Executive</td>
<td>End of 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Revise and re-energise the University’s relationship management strategy and practice.</td>
<td>Vice-Chancellor and Executive</td>
<td>End of 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Finalise the review of the University’s CRM and implement the new system identified in this process.</td>
<td>Executive</td>
<td>End 2012 and system in place by 2013</td>
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</table>

1 Holland B.A., Jackson, J., McKenna, W., and Scott, G., (2005), ‘University of Western Sydney: Institutional review of community engagement 2005’
8.6 Conclusion

Development of the University submission to the UWS Review of UWS Community and Regional Engagement has provided a timely and purposeful vehicle for reflecting on areas of strength and areas for improvement.

Overall, the University’s strategic and operational frameworks for engagement appear to be fit for purpose and robust within a Greater Western Sydney context, and have resulted in engagement activities which are prima-facie of potentially high impact for the region. The extent to which the number and reach of projects and programs have grown over the past three years indicates a developing capability in engagement.

The growth of ‘beacon’ projects in the civic engagement domain are indicative of a growing maturity and sophistication in both strategy and practice, and a sign of increasing leadership in this area. Notwithstanding this, the review indicates the need for more integrated institutional planning and practice development in some areas, a more robust approach to evaluating the impact of engagement, and a greater institutional focus on aspects of relationship management.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


## Attachment A: Focus Groups conducted as part of the 2012 Review of UWS Community and Regional Engagement

### Focus Group #1

| Number of Participants | 17 |
| Local Council Area     | Penrith |
| Participating Organisations |  |
| 1. Home and Community Care |
| 2. Department of Human Services (Centrelink) |
| 3. Western Sydney Area Health Services |
| 4. St Anthony’s Family Care |
| 5. St Clair Youth and Neighbourhood Team |
| 6. After Care Penrith |
| 7. Penrith Women Health Centre |
| 8. Penrith City Council |
| 9. TAFE |
| 10. Department of Housing |
| 11. Nepean Migrant Access |
| 12. Bridging the Gap |
| 13. St Mary Police |
| 14. Home and Community Care Services |
| 15. Wesley Mission |

### Focus Group #2

| Number of Participants | 12 |
| Local Council Area     | Hawkesbury |
| Participating Organisations |  |
| 1. TRI Community Exchange |
| 2. Hawkesbury City Council, Community Services |
| 3. Hawkesbury City Council |
| 4. Penrith Family Relations Centre, RA |
| 5. Centrelink Windsor |
| 6. St John of God Hospital |
| 7. Nova Employment, Richmond |
| 8. CRS Australia |
| 9. Richmond Community Services |
| 10. Nureen Women’s Housing |
| 11. Richmond Women’s Cottage |
| 12. Richmond TAFE Outreach |

### Focus Group #3

| Number of Participants | 18 |
| Local Council Area     | Canterbury |
| Participating Organisations |  |
| 1. Centrelink |
| 2. Metro MRC |
| 3. WSCF |
| 4. Macedonian Australian Association of Sydney |
| 5. ADHC |
| 6. Bankstown Multicultural Health Service |
| 7. OSTARA PRA (Disability Employment Service) |
| 8. BSC LifeCare Relationship Services |
| 9. SDN Brighter Futures |
| 10. AMEP – Campsie |
| 11. Mary’s Place |
| 12. Manager Access – Burwood Community Support Team |
| 13. Aftercare |
| 15. ADHC Fairfield |
| 16. Carer Advocate |
| 17. SWSI TAFE (Bankstown College) |

### Focus Group #4

| Number of Participants | 15 |
| Local Council Area     | Blacktown |
| Participating Organisations |  |
| 1. Red Cross |
| 2. Community Resources Network |
| 3. Mission Australia |
| 4. United Care Burinside |
| 5. WISE Employment |
| 6. Blacktown City Council |
| 7. BREED Community Partnerships |
| 8. Gambling Help |
| 9. WentWest |
| 10. Relationship Australia |
| 11. Afford |
| 12. Mt Druitt Family Referral Services |
| 13. Brighter Futures |
| 14. Centrelink |

### Focus Group #5

| Number of Participants | 13 |
| Local Council Area     | Auburn |
| Participating Organisations |  |
| 1. Barnardos Auburn |
| 2. Bhanin Association |
| 3. Sydney Gambling Treatment |
| 4. Wesley Mission |
| 5. Guildford Community Centre |
| 6. Anglicare |
| 7. LifeLine |
| 8. NSW Fair Trading |
| 9. Family and Community Services |
| 10. Department of Immigration and Citizenship |
| 11. Auburn Hospital Multicultural Team |
| 12. Family Planning NSW |
| 13. ADHC |
## Attachment B: Engagement projects recorded in the TICE system, as at 31 July 2012

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## APPENDICES

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