USQ Workforce and Talent Management Plan
2016–2020
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INTRODUCTION

The University of Southern Queensland Strategic Plan 2016-2020 outlines a compelling purpose to lead in economic and social development through higher education and research excellence. Our goal as a University is to positively transform people’s lives, whether they be students, employees, or members of the broader regional community within which we operate.

Achievement of this purpose is affected by the current high rate and impact of change in the higher education sector in Australia. The demands on Australian universities have changed markedly over the past decade and all indications are that the scale and type of change is expected to become increasingly uncertain and diverse into the future.

In order for USQ to excel in the strategic focus areas of education, research, and enterprise during these sustained periods of change, it is critical that we have a cogent strategy to attract, engage, develop, empower, and align our people talent. By proactively integrating and improving our people practices, we will be able to create a safe and healthy work culture that promotes positive relationships, high performance and standards of conduct, and is reflective of our core organisational values.

Connecting organisational and talent strategy

Talent management is a set of integrated organisational HR activities designed to attract, develop, motivate, and retain productive, engaged employees. The goal of talent management is to create a high-performance, sustainable organisation that meets its strategic and operational goals and objectives.

The USQ Workforce and Talent Management Plan provides the foundational framework and key strategies to develop the University of Southern Queensland’s future workforce to align with and achieve our long-term strategic priorities and directions.

Contextually, this is a supporting plan under the Enterprise goal of the USQ Strategic Plan 2016-2020, and supports USQ in its aspirations to “be an employer of choice”. The talent management plan and framework is the cog that connects business strategy and HR strategy and ensures they are not operating independently of one another.
Principles and objectives

The USQ Workforce and Talent Management Plan 2016-2020 is underpinned by a dedicated and sustained focus on:

- strong and innovative leadership
- values based behaviours and high standards of professional conduct
- critical capability development
- embracing diversity and inclusion
- a priority on health and wellbeing.

Our objective: USQ – An employer of choice

WE WILL:
Attract, engage, develop, empower, and align a diverse pool of talent in order to build a healthy culture that is collaborative, innovative, and agile.

BY:
- Designing flexible workforce structures
- Growing workforce capability to meet strategic imperatives
- Engaging all members of the workforce

Supporting HR strategy

The Workforce and Talent Management Plan provides the overarching framework that connects various other HR strategies and plans under the one umbrella, and connects them to USQ business strategy.
ENVIROMENTAL CONTEXT AND BUSINESS DRIVERS

There are a number of change disruptions that will reshape the future landscape of work and the work skills needed in the next decade.

The Australian Higher Education Workforce of the Future Report (2016) identified a number of key drivers anticipated to have the most impact on reshaping how universities think about work, what constitutes work, and the skills needed to be productive contributors to work in the future. At a broad level, these drivers include:

- technology and innovation
- competition
- funding and policy
- student expectations
- employer and industry expectations.

Added to these driving forces are shifting expectations of employees themselves around the changing nature of work and the mobility, flexibility and career driven demands of the modern workplace. Other demographic impacts including the increasing diversity of the workforce and generational differences are also playing major roles in driving the need to reconceptualise the workforce.

All these broader factors are overlayed by other workforce trends in the higher education sector itself, including:

- the ageing academic workforce
- increasing global competition for qualified and talented academic staff
- the declining attractiveness of the academic profession in broad terms
- barriers inhibiting the transition of professionals into academic career paths.

The USQ context

Whilst there are major issues facing the whole university sector in Australia with regard to workforce attraction and retention, in certain critical aspects these are exaggerated in regional universities like USQ – factors such as population density, career opportunities and salary conditions, resourcing of regional universities and the impact that has on the professional environment for example. Set against this backdrop are constrained staff numbers, increased staff student ratios and the unerring increase in performance pressure; all of which combine to create an undeniable impact on employee attraction, retention and engagement.

As an institution, USQ in particular has an aging workforce and a shrinking pool of skilled talent to replace the retirement wave over the next five years. In addition, we face the undercurrent of key talent migration and succession risks, all of which will challenge our ability to deliver key strategic aspirations.

USQ, as a regional university in an increasingly competitive labour market, will need to proactively create a workforce of the future that has the critical characteristics and underpinning culture required for us to thrive in this business environment. To achieve our goals and meet our workforce needs, we will need to consider innovative strategies such as increased collaboration with industry and regional employers, and develop mechanisms to more actively engage and encourage professional practitioners into academia to bring fresh experience to education and build mutually beneficial collaborations with industry and community.

To be successful, our people will need to demonstrate foresight in navigating a rapidly shifting landscape of organisational and skill requirements. They will increasingly be called upon to continually reassess the skills they need, and quickly put together the right resources to develop and update these. Employees in the future will need to be adaptable lifelong learners.
Characteristics of the USQ Workforce of the Future

For USQ to be an employer of choice and respond and adapt to the changing internal and external environment, key to our future success will be a culture and workforce with the following characteristics.

More specifically, the future USQ workforce will be characterised by:

- a healthy and respectful work environment where individuals are empowered and supported to take ownership of their careers, development and well-being
- meaningful and impactful collaboration, engagement and partnerships with industry and communities
- flexible job roles and career paths that can rapidly adapt to shifts in global trends, societal expectations, and organisational goals
- innovative, flexible and tailored solutions to support employee productivity, performance, and engagement
- high standards of integrity and professional conduct
- diverse talent pools that leverage the strengths of an increasingly diverse labour market
- ability to adapt to a constant state of change through innovative continuous improvement
- agile decision making frameworks and structures that embrace advancing technologies and human capital
- a differentiated employee value proposition that reflects USQ’s position as an employer of choice
- increased and continuous professionalism of the workforce in line with business critical capabilities aligned to organisational strategy
- optimised digital, remote, and emerging technologies for skill development.
USQ TALENT MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The USQ Talent Management Framework provides the platform to align USQ’s people practices across the talent lifecycle. The framework facilitates talent management activities and processes with business areas across the organisation, and provides a basis for Human Resources to work with leaders in those areas to articulate and align organisational and people needs and identify targeted talent development activities.

Key Talent Strategies

Over the next five years, the University of Southern Queensland will prioritise three key strategies to achieve our objective to be an employer of choice:

- **Design flexible workforce structures**
- **Grow workforce capability to meet strategic imperatives**
- **Actively engage all members of the workforce**

These key strategies have been chosen based on a review of best practice in the Australian higher education sector, consultation with executive leaders in the University, and the current maturity of talent management and systems at USQ.
1. Design Flexible Workforce Structures

In order to adapt to a constant state of change and build an agile workforce, we will need to redesign existing roles, design new roles, provide industrial flexibility, offer compelling career pathways, and build an agile organisation with nimble supporting structures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>High Level Actions</th>
<th>Indicators of Success</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Ensure the right people, with the right skills are in the right place in the organisation at the right time</td>
<td>1.1.1 Empower employees to own their career development and equip supervisors with the skills to have career development discussions</td>
<td>Specific measures to be developed.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.1.2 Create a career development framework that provides lateral development opportunities and assists with cross-institutional collaboration</td>
<td>Broad indicators:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1.1.3 USQ workforce planning methodology is used in work areas to identify and plan for current and future critical roles and skills</td>
<td>• Key talent in the right roles</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Diverse talent pools appropriately represented in the workforce</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Organisation is staffed in the right mix</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.2 Create dynamic and flexible workplace structures to embed nimbleness and agility in response to change</td>
<td>1.2.1 Review industrial and employment frameworks to enable appropriate flexibility and agility</td>
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<td>1.3 Leverage business intelligence to inform evidence-based decision making</td>
<td>1.3.1 Identify and analyse critical talent data to develop meaningful talent metrics, scorecards, and dashboards</td>
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</table>
2. Grow workforce capability to meet strategic imperatives

As our business changes in response to internal and external drivers, the capabilities of all employees will need to be developed in new and emerging areas.

The foundation of our capability development will be a focus on our core values as an organisation, and the importance of building leadership at all levels.

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Understand the workforce needs and identify the business critical</td>
<td>2.1.1 Develop and embed the USQ People Capability Framework into key talent</td>
<td>Specific measures to be developed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>capabilities for the future to enable achievement of the University</td>
<td>management activities</td>
<td>Broad indicators:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of Southern Queensland Strategic Plan 2016–2020</td>
<td>2.1.2 Align HR Learning and Development Portfolio to the USQ People Capability</td>
<td>• Key capabilities developed across leadership and critical roles</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Framework</td>
<td>• Development programs lead to demonstrated improved organisational performance</td>
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<td>2.2 Ensure there is a diverse and capable talent pool across a range of</td>
<td>2.2.1 Create innovative learning and development opportunities that put learners at</td>
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<tr>
<td>professions within the organisation, and maximise their productivity</td>
<td>the centre and utilise leading learning technologies</td>
<td></td>
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<td>and performance</td>
<td>2.2.2 Develop resources to support supervisors to empower their employees</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2.2.3 Encourage cross divisional mentoring and knowledge sharing</td>
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<td>2.3 Equip employees with the key capabilities and skills needed to thrive</td>
<td>2.3.1 Design learning and development opportunities and pathway programs in key</td>
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<tr>
<td>in the current and future business environment</td>
<td>areas of focus</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.4 Develop strong, future-focused leaders with business acumen and</td>
<td>2.4.1 Refine leadership development framework to align with USQ People Capability</td>
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<tr>
<td>strategic management skills to achieve the shared vision of the</td>
<td>Framework</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>2.4.2 Revitalise key leadership development programs to ensure they are meeting</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>contemporary business needs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2.4.3 Offer a range of connected learning opportunities to build leaders and</td>
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<td></td>
<td>managers at all levels</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>2.4.4 Enable leaders to coach for enhanced performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.5 Ensure there is a strong leadership pipeline that builds management</td>
<td>2.5.1 Formalise and implement a leadership development and succession strategy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>potential and supports succession planning</td>
<td>and framework</td>
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Specific measures to be developed.

Broad indicators:
- High levels of satisfaction with Leadership, Management and Supervision in Employee Engagement Surveys:
  - 2016 – 71%
  - 2018 – 73%
  - 2020 – 75%
3. Actively engage all members of the workforce

Creating an engaging work experience that supports the health and wellbeing of employees, promotes a diverse workforce, values inclusion, and respects different cultures, will provide the environment from which high levels of discretionary effort and performance will flow. Looking after our people as our number one asset will ensure we achieve our business results.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Place a priority on health and wellbeing</td>
<td>3.1.1 Implement the health and wellbeing framework and strategy across the organisation</td>
<td>Satisfaction with wellness factors in engagement survey • 2016 – 60% • 2018 – 65% • 2020 – 70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Embrace workforce diversity, equity, and inclusion</td>
<td>3.2.1 Action employment equity and diversity strategy priorities 3.2.2 Broaden career development programs to support priority diversity groups at USQ</td>
<td>Identified workplace diversity targets for priority groups are met or exceeded • 2016 – 50% • 2018 – 75% • 2020 – 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Provide an enriching and meaningful work experience for all employees</td>
<td>3.3.1 Complete biennial employee engagement surveys, and implement targeted action plans 3.3.2 Align rewards and recognition framework with high level performance and demonstration of values based behaviours</td>
<td>Ranking in sector for levels of employee engagement • 2016 – #4 (79.8%) • 2018 – Top 3 (80%) • 2020 – #1 (83%+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Differentiate USQ as a leading regional employer with a unique employee value proposition that captures the organisation’s reputation as an employer of choice</td>
<td>3.4.1 Articulate a distinctive employee value proposition to potential employees 3.4.2 Implement employer brand and social media recruiting and engagement strategies</td>
<td>Specific measures to be developed. Broad indicators: • Strength of USQ’s employment brand in the recruitment market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 Attract top talent in response to strategic focus areas in research and education</td>
<td>3.5.1 Enhance use of social media to target talent pools 3.5.2 Improve the recruitment experience for candidates 3.5.3 Form strategic relationships with target industry employers</td>
<td>Job Applicant Interest Rates • 2016 – 16.4 per vacancy • 2018 – Regional sector average (18.5) • 2020 – Regional sector 90th percentile (22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6 Instil values based behaviours into our culture</td>
<td>3.6.1 Embed USQ core values into key talent management activities</td>
<td>Satisfaction with culture and values factors in engagement survey • 2016 – 70% • 2018 – 75% • 2020 – 80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the USQ Workforce and Talent Management Plan is a shared responsibility, with the Human Resources Department providing the essential frameworks, processes, structures and supports, working in partnership with line managers to implement activities in work areas across the University.

Operationalising the Workforce and Talent Management Plan is further enabled by various HR supporting plans, strategies and activities throughout the organisation.

In addition to the indicators of success outlined for each of the key strategies, the impact of our key talent initiatives will also be reported against Strategic Success Indicators in the University of Southern Queensland Strategic Plan 2016-2020:

SSI-8: Identified workplace diversity targets for the University are met or exceeded.

SSI-9: Employee engagement levels are at or above the university sector mean.

CONCLUSION

Over the next five years, the University will be faced with a range of challenges and opportunities in a constantly changing operating environment.

One of the keys to thriving in this period is to continually improve our workforce in recognition that our people are our number one asset.

The strategies outlined in this document will support us to create the future workforce that is required to achieve our strategic objectives, position the University as an employer of choice, and truly make our organisation a great place to work.