

UN Global Compact

Communications on Engagement Report

The University of Western Australia July 2019



A Message from the Vice-Chancellor

The University of Western Australia has a fundamental responsibility to produce global citizens with an appreciation for economic development, social justice, cultural sensitivities and ecological sustainability.

We support the principles espoused by the United Nations to create a genuinely sustainable future. Our strong commitment to sustainability is reflected in our campus planning principles, our course offerings, research scope and operational efficiencies.

Our UWA 2030 Vision and Strategic Plan 2020–25 recognise and respond to a challenging and dynamic period in the higher education sector. The Strategic Plan strengthens and advances our sustainability commitment through ambitious goals such as global recognition for leadership in public space sustainability; creating a more clean, green and sustainable campus; establishing workforce plans that reflect inclusion and diversity needs; and expanding our positive influence in the region of the Indian Ocean Rim. We seek to enhance our global relevance through partnerships with other forward-thinking institutions, enabled through membership of the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network and the United Nations Global Compact.

In support of our membership of the United Nations Global Compact, it is my pleasure to introduce the inaugural Communications on Engagement Report for The University of Western Australia. This report covers activities undertaken from January 2017 to December 2018.

I proudly acknowledge all staff and students who have contributed to this document and all sectors of the University, as we uphold and advance the United Nations Global Compact principles through teaching, research, engagement and general operations.

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Professor Dawn Freshwater Vice-Chancellor The University of Western Australia



Introduction

The University of Western Australia (UWA) was founded in 1911 as Western Australia's first university. Located in Perth, along the Swan River and on Noongar land, the Noongar people remain the spiritual and cultural custodians of their land, and continue to practise their values, languages, beliefs and knowledge.

More than 100,000 students have graduated from the University in a variety of fields. UWA is a member of the prestigious 'Group of Eight' research-intensive Australian universities: it was placed 91st in the 2019 World University rankings and seventh overall in Australia and New Zealand. In 2015, UWA committed to contributing towards achieving the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals as a member of the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network. In 2016, UWA became a partner of the United Nations Global Compact as well as a member of the Global Compact Network Australia.

In 2019, the University released its UWA 2030 Vision and Strategic Plan 2020–25, which chart an ambitious agenda for the future; one that tests the image of the traditional public researchintensive university. It outlines the mission and vision of the University as well as its values and defining characteristics. Building on these values and characteristics, the University is focused on responding to the grand challenges facing humanity by drawing upon its world-class research in:

- Our Oceans and the Marine Environment
- Life Sciences and Building Healthy Communities
- Environmental Science, Sustainability and Engineering
- Peace, Justice and Culture
- Clean Energy
- Radioastronomy, Astrophysics and the Universe
- Agriculture and Food Security

This Strategic Plan comprises three positioning strategies: Education, Research and Innovation, and Global Partnerships and Engagement. Achievement of these is supported by plans for Sustainable Environments, People and Culture, and Effective and Sustainable Operations. The structures within these positioning strategies and plans as well as the development of partnerships within and outside the University ensures that UWA upholds and enables the principles of the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) and is held accountable to its stakeholders and the wider community.

The following report provides a snapshot of programs and activities within all areas of the University undertaken in the past year which address the 10 UNGC Principles within the areas of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption.

Mission

To provide world-class education, research and community engagement for the advancement of prosperity and welfare of our communities.

Vision

Creating the next generation of global leaders through experience-rich education and world-leading, trustworthy research.

Values

Excellence – We consistently pursue the highest levels of achievement, creating the best possible outcomes.

Integrity – We are honest and ethical and show respect for, and appreciate, each other, our partners and our communities, valuing our differences.

Innovation – We are constantly, and creatively, improving and adapting.

Collaboration – We share our collective intelligence to achieve more.

Equity – We are committed to providing everyone at UWA equality of opportunity, experience and outcome.

Defining characteristics

Relevant – Be relevant to the communities and regions we serve.

Just and equitable – Bring a fresh humanity to education.

Influential – Be the catalyst of social and technical change.

Open – Actively engage and lead beyond borders.

Timeline of Sustainability Commitment

- **2009 Operational Priorities Plan** articulated its commitment to "make UWA an environmentally sustainable community".
- **2011** Sustainable Development Plan outlined its environmental sustainability objectives and strategies to improve the environmental performance of its operations.
- **2013** Membership in United Nations Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME).
- **2014** UWA Vision 2020: Strategic Plan expanded its commitment by including "sustainability in environmental, economic and social dimensions".
- **2015** Membership in United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN).
- **2016** Membership in United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) and Global Compact Network Australia (GCNA).
- **2019** UWA 2030 Vision: Strategic Plan 2020–25 articulated its vision and priorities which includes:
 - Focusing our teaching and research on resolving the world's Grand Challenges to improve lives and our environment.
 - Embedding sustainability and fair trade principles into the developmental and operational activities of the campus.
 - O Engaging openly and ensuring our research benefits a wider range of communities.



United Nations Global Compact Networks

Following the submission of a letter of commitment from our past Vice-Chancellor, Paul Johnson, to the then UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, UWA was accepted in August 2016 as a member of the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC), and subsequently thereafter to the regional Global Compact Network Australia. Under the coordination of Associate Professor David Webb, the University's participation in the UNGC draws on its long history of research, teaching and thought leadership in social and environmental sustainability.

Prior to this, in 2013, the UWA Business School became an advanced signatory of the Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME). The School has expertise in a number of areas, with business ethics and corporate social responsibility an important and emerging area of scholarship. The latter, focussing on social issues, exemplifies the activities of the Centre for Social Impact. The PRME Sharing Information on Progress report illustrates the many ways through which our academic faculty, professional staff, students and partners continue to engage in PRME-related projects and are championing responsible management education. The latest report is available at **unprme.org/reports/ UWA2017PRMESIPREPORT.pdf**.

United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network

As a member of the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) since 2015, the University commits to the principles of sustainability in all we do to meet the needs of the present community without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The SDSN mobilises global scientific and technological expertise to promote practical solutions for sustainable development, including the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Climate Agreement. In response to the SDGs, information on the University's sustainability research activities, programs and thought-leaders have been compiled on the Sustainability Research website research.uwa.edu.au/researchperformance/sustainabilityresearch-at-uwa.

Our courses

The University prides itself on providing courses which are progressive, flexible and benchmarked against the world's best. Examples of our master's programs that support sustainability-related learning outcomes include:

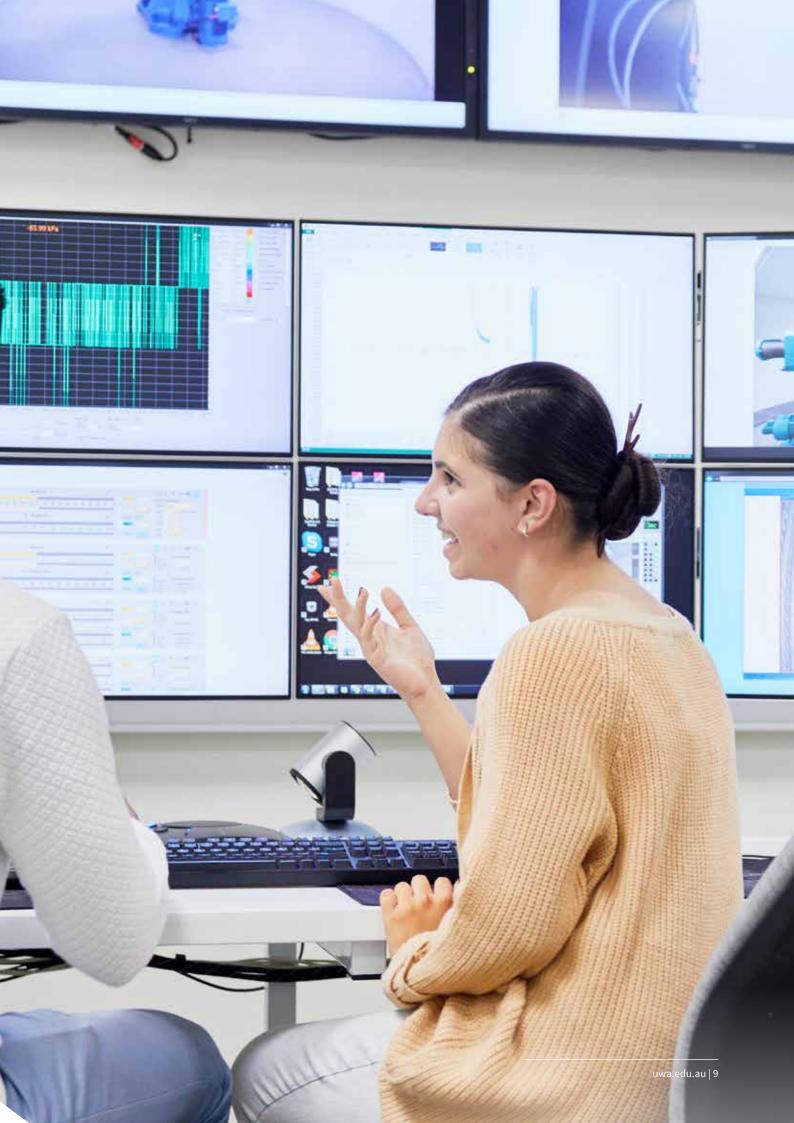
- The Master of Agriculture program allows students to work on international projects to explore sustainable decision-making frameworks and systems to meet increasing world demand for food.
- The Master of International Development program engages students with contemporary challenges of addressing poverty and inequality worldwide through an emphasis on real-world case studies.
- The Master of Public Health program provides a regional and global perspective on health impacts from environmental disturbance, relating to historical, current and emerging perspectives of environmental change.
- The Master of Ocean Leadership program provides multidisciplinary knowledge and skills that are required to strategically address complex human challenges within ocean systems.

Our research

The University is regarded as one of Australia's top research institutions, attracting researchers of world standing across the range of disciplines, with international leaders in many diverse fields.

Examples of our research centres and projects dedicated to achieving SDG outcomes include:

- Centre for Energy Geoscience
- Centre for Environmental Economics and Policy
- Offshore Facilities and Ocean Systems
- The REV Project
- Centre for Plant Genetics and Breeding
- Centre for Excellence in Natural Resource Management
- UWA Oceans Institute
- Centre for Social Impact
- Centre for the Built Environment and Health





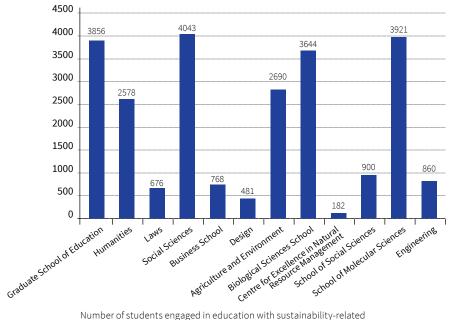
Our students

More than 17,000 students engaged in education with sustainability-related outcomes within all faculties in 2018. The education experience is enhanced through a contribution to society in the form of internships and volunteering. Over 120,000 student hours have been contributed to the community via the McCusker Centre Internship Program and Guild Volunteering Hub. This program is an award-winning structured, quality internship program involving not-for-profit, community and government organisations locally, regionally and globally.

The UWA Student Guild represents all students at the University and provides academic, financial and welfare services. The not-for-profit organisation is run by students, for students.

The UWA Student Guild departments include:

- The Environment Department, which promotes sustainable change by providing a larger platform for students to engage and advocate for environmental action. In the past year, the Department has developed a Guild-wide Sustainability Plan, introduced a zero-carbon emission electric scooter sharing platform, run a Sustainable Careers Expo and introduced a phase-out of plastic straws.
- The Guild Access Department represents and advocates for students who have lived/are living with disabilities, chronic illnesses and mental health issues.



Number of students engaged in education with sustainability-related outcomes within all faculties in 2018.

The Department has run initiatives such as Auslan classes and accessible social events.

- The International Student Department acts as the voice of all international students and advocates on behalf of them on University matters.
- The Welfare Department ensures students are able to get the most of their time at the University, offering initiatives such as mental health and destress workshops.

The 'Student Life' and 'Student Experience' portfolios within the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) provide a wide range of services and support for students over their journey with the University. The following 2017 statistics demonstrate the University's commitment to equity and diversity among the students.

- 1.52% of our domestic students identified as being Indigenous Australians.
- 7.55% of our students identified indicated that they have a disability, impairment or long-term medical condition.
- 17.03% of our students identified as having a non-English speaking background.
- 9.5% of our domestic students were living in a low socioeconomic community.
- Our students come from 84 different countries.
- Of the 26,454 students enrolled at UWA, 2% are from interstate, 7% are from regional and remote WA, 24% are international students and 67% are from metropolitan Perth.

Strategic intents – Experience UWA

Learning opportunities	All students will have access to a broad and dynamic range of co-curricular activities that add value to their educational outcomes at UWA.
Digital capability	UWA will utilise and maximise digital systems and data to provide a personalised, engaging and relevant student experience.
Student wellbeing and success	Students are provided with support, guidance and relevant programs that optimise their academic success and sustain positive wellbeing.
Vibrant and connected community	UWA is welcoming, contemporary and an engaged community for all students which has a strong sense of belonging and fosters an ongoing connection with the University.
Career development and employability	Students are provided with ongoing and relevant career development opportunities through which they identify their career goals, and maximise employability.
Inclusive and diversified student community	UWA fosters aspiration for higher learning for all, and celebrates difference and inclusivity.
Indigenous knowledge and leadership	UWA Indigenous students are supported to succeed and Indigenous knowledge and culture is embodied across all aspects of the student experience, for the benefit of all students.



Human rights

Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and

Principle 2: make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

Our research in political science and international relations has a focus on the development of policies and responses to major societal opportunities, challenges and injustices. Exploring a range of contemporary issues and challenges facing governments, peoples and international organisations, we examine and compare political systems and politics and relations in a range of countries and regions.

Kelly Gerard undertakes research in the political economy of development policymaking in Southeast Asia. Kelly won a 2018 Discovery Early Career Researcher Award, (\$365,103) from the Australian Research Council to work on her project: 'Advancing Gender Equality Through Aid: Realising Women's Empowerment'. This project aims to evaluate links between aid programs and women's empowerment in Southeast Asia. This study will directly inform aid programming to generate more successful approaches to women's empowerment. Its analysis of the political economy of aid programming offers a new approach for policymakers to understand project outcomes, as well as a framework to design tactical reform alliances. Women's empowerment has gained substantial visibility as a global development objective, but progress

has been slow. This project offers the first study of the political economy of the design, implementation and evaluation of aid programs for women's empowerment across development institutions, companies and NGOs. Exploring these dynamics is a key to understanding how aid initiatives can generate successful approaches to empowering women. The project will build on current practices to improve aid programming and place Australia at the forefront of donors' efforts to advance gender equality.

With a research focus on the challenges facing countries on the Indian Ocean Rim and the world, the University has made some key investments to help drive research excellence and community engagement. The Public Policy Institute draws on the University's distinct geographical advantage as Australia's Indian Ocean capital city to collaborate with neighbouring countries and their institutions to deliver policy solutions for the Indian Ocean Rim and the broader Indo-Pacific region.

The recently established Africa Research and Engagement Centre (AfREC) produces research, teaching, training and other collaborations with partners to address sustainable development challenges and responsibilities and to strengthen wider Australia-Africa relations. Richard Vokes, who is a member of AfREC, recently won a 2019 Australia Africa Universities Network research grant for his project, 'Aquaculture Production and Sustainable Livelihoods in Africa: Lessons from Uganda and Kenya'. This project will create a new research network that connects across universities in Uganda, Kenya and other international institutions. The project is a study of small-scale aquiculture production (artisanal fish ponds) in Uganda and Kenya. It focuses upon how fish-farming can improve the lives of women, especially those in the lowest socioeconomic categories, by: improving their nutritional security (and that of their children); growing their incomes; and contributing to their empowerment in relation to domestic decision-making. The project seeks to understand how fish-farming projects can more effectively contribute to these goals, to develop gendersensitive models for establishing new ponds, and to provide extension services to existing production sites.

Student equity

The University of Western Australia's Access and Participation Plan outlines the various alternative entry pathways and academic support for students from low socioeconomic status, rural and remote and non-English speaking backgrounds. The programs offered include mentoring, peer support, tutoring and scholarships. The access pathway supports the University's goal of equity and engagement, with a commitment to recruitment of students of high potential but limited means and opportunity. UniAccess, UWA's disability office, operates a comprehensive, confidential service to support students registered with a medical condition or disability that may affect their academic achievement.

Aboriginal Australians

The University has started developing a comprehensive UWA Indigenous Strategy under the leadership of the Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Education which builds on our strong foundation, promotes excellence and innovation, and accelerates UWA's achievements in Indigenous higher education. The UWA Indigenous Strategy will enable the University to meet the requirements and aspirations of the Australian Government's Indigenous Student Success Program and its commitments under the Universities Australia Indigenous Strategy 2017–20. The Indigenous Strategy is being imbedded in the Integrated Planning Exercise for rollout across the University through 2018 and 2019.

indigenous.uwa.edu.au/indigenous-strategy





Labour

- Principle 3: Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;
- Principle 4: the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;
- Principle 5: the effective abolition of child labour; and
- Principle 6: the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

Within the Management and Organisations Department at the UWA Business School, there is a research focus on areas including organisational behaviour, human resource management, business information management, employment relations, general and strategic management, transport and logistics.

Mike Gillan undertakes research in employment relations, industrial relations and global production networks. He is part of a team that won a 2018 Australian Research Council Discovery Grant (\$305,116) for the project: 'Global Production Networks and Worker Representation in Myanmar'. This project will assess the impact of global production networks on worker representation in Myanmar's garment sector. It will generate important new knowledge about Myanmar's growing integration into global value chains and its impact on employment relations and the wellbeing of workers. The first study of its kind, its findings will be used to theorise how complex interactions between different economic and social actors across geographic scale affect the rights and interests of garment workers, and the quality of their employment. Project findings will provide a strong evidence base for government policies and socially responsible business practices that promote sustainable and equitable economic development in this

rapidly evolving nation which, in turn, contribute to the maintenance of political and social stability in Australia's region.

A second project by Mike Gillan, funded by the International Labour Organization (\$23,100) also focuses on the garment industry in Asia: 'Scoping Exercise – Developing Diagnostic Tools and Key Indicators to Inform the Development of a New Regional Programme Focusing on Industrial Relations in the Garment Industry in Asia'. This research takes laws, regulations, capacity, gender inequalities and other factors into account, and will inform a regional program to support decent work in the garment sector.

David Lawrence has won \$1.1 million to undertake a large scale project: 'Answering The Call, a National Mental Health and Wellbeing Survey of Police and Emergency Services', supported by Beyond Blue. Beyond Blue worked together with police and emergency services agencies, peak bodies, unions and other key groups on this landmark, national survey to provide a detailed picture of the issues affecting the mental health and wellbeing of employees, former employees, and volunteers. In total, 21,014 police and emergency services volunteers and current and former employees across a range of roles, ranks and locations participated in the survey.

This project involved gathering personal mental health experiences of police and emergency services employees as well as experiences of partners and family members. This material helped to inform the development of a nationally representative survey of police and emergency services personnel in Australia. The results reveal a workforce that is deeply affected both by the nature of the work that they do and the pressures of the environments in which they work. This work informs support for agencies and individuals affected by poor mental health and will prevent suicide.



Staff

The University's Inclusion and Diversity Committee is an advisory committee to the Vice-Chancellor on matters relating to equality, inclusion and diversity. The Committee includes representatives of both staff and students who have expertise or an operational focus that considers inclusion and diversity matters beyond the single lens through which they are often presented in order to respond in a more complete and sympathetic manner. The Committee also manages the activities of the working groups made up of the University's five priority groups: Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD); Gender Equity; Disability and Inclusion; Student Equity and Participation; and LGBTIQA+.

LGBTIQA+

In May 2019, UWA was awarded Platinum status and listed in the top five employers nationally for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex (LGBTI) inclusion in the 2019 Australian Workplace Equality Index. The index, which provides a national benchmark for LGBTI workplace inclusion, is designed to gauge the impact of inclusion initiatives on the culture of organisations. This is a great recognition of the steps we have taken over the years to develop an inclusive campus. Some of the key achievements include establishing Australia's first university network for bisexual staff, students, and alumni; implementing the first study of the LGBTI student experience at an Australian university; and developing a transgender policy to protect the rights of staff and students.

Gender

The University is currently in the process of applying for Athena SWAN accreditation. The Athena SWAN Charter recognises excellence in employment practices that advance and promote the careers of women and gender minorities in science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine (STEMM). UWA is developing an action plan to ensure our institutional structures, governance, policies and processes continue to proactively support equality, diversity and inclusion in the most effective way possible. The aim of the action plan is to integrate the Athena SWAN values and practices into existing institutional processes. As part of this plan, in 2017 UWA launched an academic recruitment drive called 'Be Inspired', and the Faculty of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences (where women make up only 13% of academics) set a target that at least half of new appointments will be women. This is being supported by a new people and culture strategy, and proactive identification of women is underway.

In the recent Impact Ranking, a subset of The World University Ranking based on the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, UWA submitted for one individual goal, Gender Equality (SDG 5), and ranked 29 out of 336 universities from over 70 countries.





Environment

- Principle 7: Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;
- Principle 8: undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and
- Principle 9: encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

Environmental research

Dirk Zeller is a Professor of Marine Conservation and Director, Sea Around Us – Indian Ocean (**seaaroundus-io.org**). Professor Zeller leads research on catch reconstructions and illegal and unreported fishing, fishing effort and first-order assessment of stocks, coral reef fisheries, ocean governance, fisheries policy and economics. He collaborates with colleagues around the world on Indian Ocean and global fisheries issues and meta-analyses; with FishBase and SeaLifeBase on biodiversity (the global biodiversity information systems for fish and non-fish marine life, **fishbase.org**, **sealifebase.org**); with the Fisheries Economics Research Unit (UBC, **feru.oceans.ubc.ca**) on issues in resource economics; with the Changing Ocean Research Unit (UBC, coru.oceans.ubc.ca) on issues of climate change and fisheries; and with legal scholars on issues related to international maritime boundary law and the UN Law of the Sea Convention.

A current project by Dirk Zellar, 'Deriving an index for the fish biomass currently left in the exclusive economic zones (EEZs) of the World's maritime countries', is funded by the Minderoo Foundation. This project will produce an index or measure for the fish biomass currently left in the EEZs of the world's maritime countries as a contribution to the Global Fishing Index developed by the Flourishing Oceans initiative of the Minderoo Foundation. The status and composition of a country's high seas fisheries components will be taken into account via the species-stock level of assessment, which is based on stock range not EEZ boundaries.

UWA undertakes world-leading research in marine ecology and biodiversity. Thomas Wernberg was recently given \$460,000 in funding by the Australian Research Council for the project 'Turf Wars: fighting the new battle facing blue forests'.

Kelps are the trees of our oceans, and a defining feature of Australia's Great Southern Reef, supporting major fisheries and coastal recreation worth more than \$10 billion each year. This project will generate knowledge underpinning novel adaptation strategies for these critical ecosystems. Globally, kelp forests are collapsing and being replaced by persistent unwanted algal 'turfs'. This project is using ecological models and field experiments to uncover drivers and critical thresholds for turf expansion. It will greatly increase our capacity to identify tipping points from kelp forests to turf and uncover new solutions to prevent and recover kelp loss. Through stress experiments and genomic analyses, this project aims to discover resilient kelps that promote forest persistence under stress. By expanding our understanding of critical habitat transitions, and exploring new solutions, this project aims to enhance our capacity to respond to the ongoing degradation of Australia's Great Southern Reef.

Campus operations

The University has committed to reach net zero emissions from energy use by 2025, and is currently implementing its Energy Plan which includes energy efficiency measures and on and off-site renewable energy generation.

A key component of the energy balance will be thermal storage, and the design and construction of a 4ML thermal storage tank is underway. The pursuit of the net zero energy balance is a collaborative effort with researchers within the University, including the School of Mechanical Engineering and the Australian Urban Design Research Centre.

In 2019, the Green Impact program was introduced to support staff in undertaking meaningful actions to make the University a healthy and sustainable campus. Staff have been invited to create teams within their department or faculty and get creative in tackling sustainability issues. The program raises awareness of sustainability by giving people a focused approach to tackling issues and supporting them in achieving these actions. This program was first piloted in Australia in 2017 by the University of Melbourne and builds on the success of 'Green Impact', which was developed by the National Union of Students in the Univer Kingdom 12 years ago.





Anti-corruption

Principle 10: Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

Nolan Sharkey's current research focuses on international tax and the interaction of income tax laws of different countries, particularly Australia, China, Singapore and Hong Kong.

He recently published a paper, 'Applying foreign anti-corruption law in the Chinese tax context: Conceptual difficulties and challenges in eJournal of Tax Research'.

At the core of the international effort to combat corruption is the 'home country' anti-corruption legislation that penalises companies in their home state for engaging in corruption extraterritorially. This article examines the application of Australia's foreign bribery legislation to the Chinese tax context. In China, vague laws are created by the central government in order to facilitate flexible and localised implementation. In a system where formal legal institutions are underdeveloped, informal rules are significant in guiding the actions of local officials. Australia ought to consider the nature of the relationships between China's central and local governments prior to implementing its extraterritorial jurisdiction. Upon doing so, it will become apparent that a strictly 'legal' analysis is an inappropriate yardstick by which to gauge the legitimacy of an official's behaviour.

Julia Powles' research focuses on civic and rights-based responses to emerging technologies. She recently authored a response to the Australian Human Rights Commission and World Economic Forum white paper on 'Artificial Intelligence Governance and Leadership'. Her research interests include privacy, intellectual property, internet governance, and the law and politics of data, automation, and artificial intelligence. She has a particular interest in stimulating health, energy, and bioscience innovation in a way that safeguards the public interest.



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