It is essential that UCC navigates and responds to the challenges of the sector at regional, national and global levels; that it also works alongside the University to build new alliances and initiatives.

**INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this five-year plan is to position the University of Canberra College (UCC) so that it can expand its reach and impact in its traditional role as a leading provider of pathway programs into the University of Canberra (UC). Central to the plan will be for UCC to continue to add significant value to the University and to be nimble and to continue to build in organisational resilience and flexibility. It is essential that UCC is not only responsive to the direction of the University of Canberra as it navigates and responds to the challenges of the sector at regional, national and global levels but that it also works alongside the University to build new alliances and initiatives. UCC is a unique pathways institution in that it is embedded in the University and as such its direction is at once determined by, and must align with, that of the University of Canberra.

**BACKGROUND**

The University of Canberra College is a controlled entity of the University of Canberra Group and specialises in preparing both Australian and International students for study at the University of Canberra. It achieves this by providing pathways directly into UC through programs such as:

- Diploma entry programs for both international and domestic students. Successful completion at the diploma level leads to direct entry to a relevant University of Canberra degree program with credit
- Access programs for domestic students which enables school leavers and non-recent school leavers to both qualify and prepare for study at the University of Canberra
- The Graduate Certificate in Academic Foundations as a pathway for international students to postgraduate study at UC
- ELICOS programs through its UC English Language Institute wherein students improve their English proficiency to gain entry either direct to UC or via a diploma program
OUR PLANNING

The University of Canberra’s Strategic Plan 2013-2017 is titled Breakthrough. This is conceived as the second phase of a ten year planning cycle which commenced with the 2008-2012 Plan. The 2013 – 2017 is an ambitious plan which will enable the University to break into the ranks of world class universities in both research and teaching performance and will position the University as one of Australia’s most innovative tertiary institutions. Aligning with the positioning and aspiration of the University and working alongside the University, UCC shapes its own strategic plan.

The UCC strategic plan sits within a planning and reporting framework that is nested within the broader UC Group planning landscape as follows:

- **UC GROUP**
  - 10 year Vision Statement

- **UC GROUP**
  - 5yr Strategic Plan

- **UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA COLLEGE**
  - 5yr Strategic Plan
  - Bi-annual progress report and annual review

- **UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA COLLEGE**
  - 5yr Long term financial model
  - Bi-annual progress report and annual review

- UCC Triennial rolling Operational/ Business Plan
  - UCC Triennial rolling Budget
  - UCC Triennial rolling 3yr Marketing Plan
  - Quarterly progress reports and annual review/recalibration of the plans

- UCC Academic Program Plans
  - Quarterly progress reports and annual review/recalibration of the plans
KEY SECTOR & ORGANISATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS IN OUR STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA CONSIDERATIONS:

The University of Canberra’s growth strategy will have implications for the College:

• If the University pursued an alliance with an interstate and/or offshore educational provider, the College would need to be able to quickly respond through the provision of pathways programs. Moreover, UCC will need to be equipped to manage this in a de-centralised, multilocated operating environment.

• The establishment of the University of Canberra Hospital provides opportunities to support the University in the development of a number of allied health qualifications. This will need coordination, consideration and resources.

• The UC strategy to open up regional hubs also augers opportunities for the College to respond with a number of blended learning offerings (a mix of digital and face-to-face UC access and diploma programs).

DOMESTIC MARKET CONSIDERATIONS:

• Demand driven funding applied to domestic students from 2012. This will place UC and thereby UCC in heightened competition with other tertiary providers especially those located in the ACT, for example the ANU. The demographic projection for the number of people in the ACT of traditional university age is not predicted to grow substantially until after 2020. Moreover, the proportion of the population who already have an undergraduate or postgraduate degree is far higher than the national average (and above the Government’s attainment target). This will place pressure on the capacity of UC and UCC to source/grow “local” students.

• Further, given the above, the capacity of UCC to participate constructively in the Government’s 2020 equity target of 20% participation in universities by people from low socio-economic backgrounds is constrained. The role of postcode in defining low Socio-Economic Status (SES) works against the Canberra location and while a new measure is currently being introduced it will only marginally change the result.

• The shift to digital education removes geographical limitations. There is real opportunity in the regions around Canberra for a blended approach to educational offerings that begin with a ‘pop-up’ UCC campus in a town (eg in the Town Hall in Bega); have an on-line component; and then finish with an on-campus experience. The recent government commitment to most of the recommendations of the Gonski Review of Australian School Education augers a long term shift to greater retention rates in schools and thereby an increased domestic market for VET and higher education offerings. UC/UCC will do well to watch the emerging trends.
INTERNATIONAL MARKET CONSIDERATIONS:

- The high value of the Australian dollar and the continued impact of the global financial crisis will negatively affect international student numbers in Australia.
- Australia’s popularity in some major source countries has declined and this is compounded by those countries themselves expanding their own provision of domestic higher education.
- America has entered the market and the availability of this “choice” will affect numbers.
- Any change to the Australian migration policy (or perception of an impending change) will have an immediate impact on international student numbers. If, for example, the capacity to articulate from a student visa to permanent residency was removed for key segments of the current UCC market, the drop-off in numbers would be immediate.

At the recent APEC summit in Vladivostok, Australia welcomed the APEC leaders’ endorsement of an initiative on higher education. The initiative is designed to make it easier for students and researchers to move around the region, and for universities to offer their services in other economies. Australian students will be able to undertake parts of their degrees in APEC economies, confident that these overseas courses will be credited towards their degrees. And our universities will be able to set up campuses in the APEC region more easily, earning valuable income for the universities and for Australia. While implementation details will need to be worked through, this further provides both opportunities and threats to UCC and UC.

ORGANISATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS & IMPLICATIONS FOR UCC:

- The education sector is an increasingly regulated one and the steady growth in compliance places UCC resources under pressure. Increasingly staff are being diverted from planning and program improvement to meet compliance requirements. Moreover, addressing the level of regulation and compliance pressures requires an increasingly higher skill set and UCC has long term, loyal staff that were recruited before these pressures were apparent.
- As universities become less bounded by geography, the requirement for digital educational offerings is on the rise. Recent studies show that UC students (including UCC students) engage readily with Moodle. This suggests that UCC/UC is well placed to make greater inroads into digital education and provision of blended educational offerings (ie a mix of on-line and face-to-face). This ‘digital-plus’ approach will take lead time, training and money to effect, but is critical to the longer term viability of the college.
- UCC growth is limited by lack of space. The planned growth of UCC will be constrained by this issue.
UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA COLLEGE

GROUP VISION

The vision for the UC Group under the banner of “Breakthrough” is to be recognised as:

“one of Australia’s most innovative tertiary institutions: world ranked, with regional, national and international reach.”

OUR MISSION

University of Canberra College, a member of the UC Group, aligned with the vision and aspirations of the group aims to be:

“...a leading pathways institution for Australian and International students”

OUR VALUE PROPOSITION

UCC has track record of success including:

• Being the leading supplier of international and domestic students to UC
• Securing a higher rate of retention at UC for their international students than those who gained direct entry
• Having the oldest and most enduring ELICOS Centre in Australia
• Being nimble and responsive
• A track record of financial success and financial independence

OUR CULTURE AND CORE VALUES

Ensuring that UCC remains equipped for the challenges ahead, the Board and Executive keep pace with contemporary governance principles and practice in education. A code of conduct is in place and a core set of values is established to guide the decisions and actions of the UCC team. These are:

• The pursuit of excellence
• Service to our students
• The respect and dignity of each person
• Validation of the culture of others
• Fairness and ethical consideration
• Innovation and enquiry
• Evidenced-based practice
• Collaboration and mutual support

*University of Canberra Strategic Plan 2008-12, Re-vision 2011
The mission of UCC will be delivered through achieving two overarching UC Group and then five UCC specific goals:

**THERE ARE TWO UC GROUP GOALS THAT UCC WILL SPECIFICALLY SUPPORT:**
1. Attainment of 16,500 EFTSL by 2018 (1000 EFTSL for UCC)
2. More effective engagement with the world around us

**LINKED TO THESE ARE FIVE UCC SPECIFIC GOALS:**
1. UCC students are equipped with the necessary skills for success at the tertiary level
2. New courses and programs are identified and developed as pathway opportunities in support of the University strategic direction
3. Program delivery is adapted to maximise the opportunities of the digital age, whilst also enhancing the student learning outcomes and experience
4. Establishment of a regular cycle of review of programs ensuring their continued relevance to, and support of the University’s direction and admission strategy
5. Creation of a great workplace which attracts, engages and retains excellent, entrepreneurial and diverse staff committed to the mission of UCC and the broader vision of the UC Group

**TO ACHIEVE THESE SEVEN GOALS UCC HAS SEVEN INTERLINKED STRATEGIES:**

**Strategy One: Grow the number of international students enrolled at the UCC**

By 2018, through a mix of innovative pathway programs and marketing approaches, UCC will host a thriving and expanded community of international students.

**Strategy Two: Broaden the number of source countries for international students to build student diversity**

The international students making their way to UCC in 2017 and beyond will not only come from established source countries. Relationships and agreements will be forged with new source countries providing opportunities for a new and diverse range of students to broaden their own opportunities and also enrich the campus community.

**Strategy Three: Contribute to the internationalisation of the Bruce campus by expanding international relationships and strengthening collaboration with existing international partners**

It is not only the thriving and diverse community of international students at UCC who contribute to the internationalisation of the Bruce campus. By 2017 UCC will also have rich relationships with a number of overseas academic institutions and the flow and exchange of staff between UCC and these will provide an extra international dimension to the campus community.

**Strategy Four: Grow the number of domestic students enrolled in pathways programs who will articulate to the University of Canberra**

By 2017 UCC will be fully responsive to the direction of UC and have programs and pathways in place to attract a range of new domestic students – these students will increasingly identify UCC as the college of choice as it provides streamlined, accessible and supported pathways to a tertiary education with the University of Canberra.

**Strategy Five: Build engagement and educational opportunities with communities in the ACT, the Australian Capital Region and beyond**

By 2017 UCC will have rich and established relationships with a number of schools and academic institutions within and across the region. These collaborations support innovative and digital approaches to education; provide access to tertiary opportunities to a cohort of students who would traditionally miss out; and also provide a consistent stream of students for UCC and UC.

**Strategy Six: Strengthen internal operations and performance**

By 2017 UCC will be typified by operational resilience and excellence. It will be managed for ongoing financial and strategic viability having established a planning, evaluation and reporting framework that supports continuous improvement and the capacity to respond to the emerging needs and direction of UC and the market. Financial Planning will include initiatives to reinvest a proportion of the accumulated surplus in agreed projects.

**Strategy Seven: Develop an effective and sustainable team**

The UCC team will be positioned for success. Through a mix of ongoing professional development and recruitment, all staff will have the requisite skills for their jobs and will be performing at their best. They will be ably supported by the right systems and tools and will enjoy the most effective teacher to student ratios possible.