

Enterprise25

Transforming our academic enterprise



University of
South Australia

SUMMARY OF CHANGE PROPOSAL

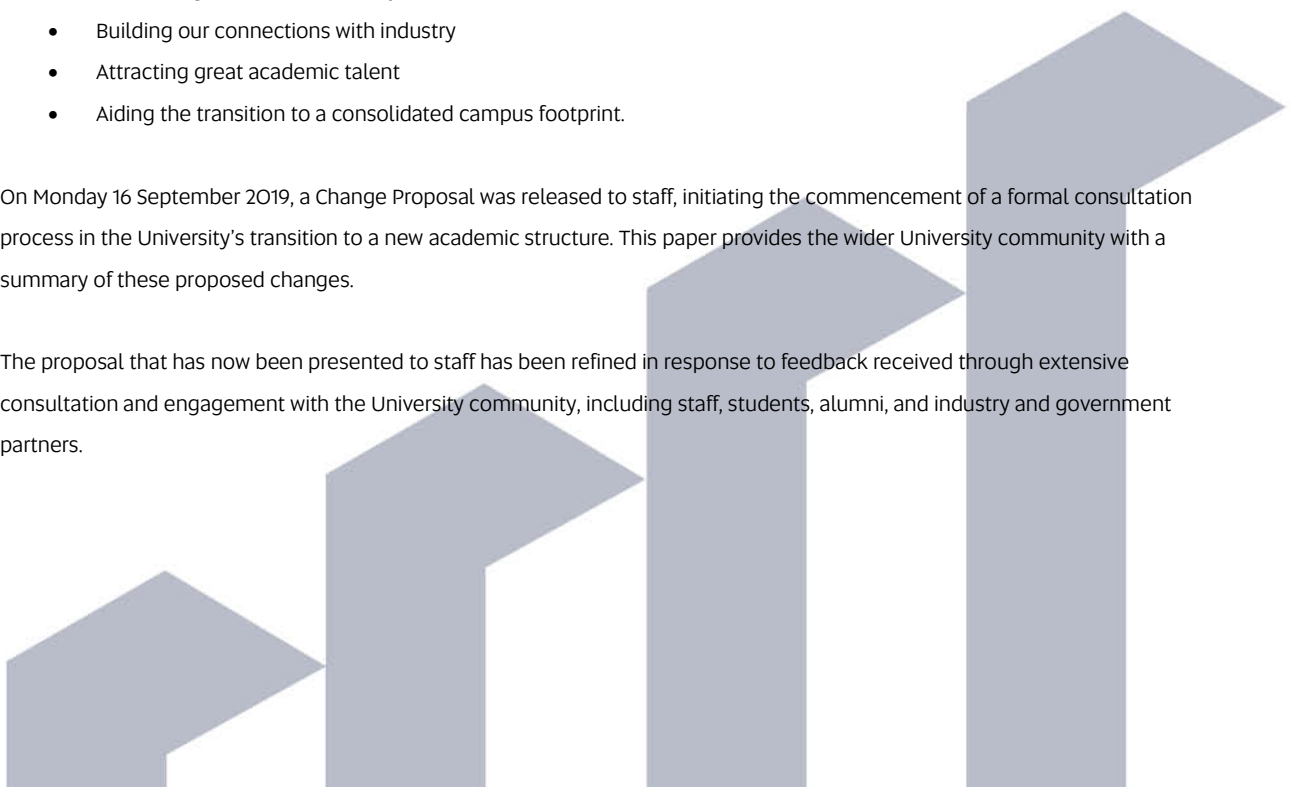
A key commitment in the University's strategic plan - *Enterprise25* - is to introduce a program-focused academic organisational structure. Our new academic enterprise will enable a greater focus on our core activity - delivering our academic programs and conducting end-user informed research of relevance. We will ensure that our resources continue to be focused on the quality of our teaching, research and the student experience, and position UniSA for future ongoing success.

To create the new academic structure, it is proposed that the University will shift from its current two-layer leadership and administrative structure comprising four Divisions, 14 Schools and UniSA College, to a single-layer structure of seven Academic Units who report directly to the Provost & Chief Academic Officer. The proposed new academic structure will provide the necessary foundation for the University to deliver on our key strategic initiatives outlined in *Enterprise25*, including:

- Delivering degrees of the future
- Fostering innovation and flexibility
- Investing in more student-facing staff
- Introducing new service delivery models
- Building our connections with industry
- Attracting great academic talent
- Aiding the transition to a consolidated campus footprint.

On Monday 16 September 2019, a Change Proposal was released to staff, initiating the commencement of a formal consultation process in the University's transition to a new academic structure. This paper provides the wider University community with a summary of these proposed changes.

The proposal that has now been presented to staff has been refined in response to feedback received through extensive consultation and engagement with the University community, including staff, students, alumni, and industry and government partners.



CASE FOR CHANGE

The higher education sector locally and globally is facing significant change and challenges. Nationally, there is ongoing uncertainty in relation to a range of higher education funding measures, both in teaching and research, negatively impacting on stability and sustainability. We also operate in an ever-evolving economic and social environment and we need to ensure our students are equipped to meet the future needs of industry and society. Since its inception, UniSA has demonstrated a commitment to change and innovation, which has supported our success and growth to date.

The University's current academic organisational structure comprises four Divisions, 14 Schools and UniSA College. This model was introduced in 1998, at which time there were 23 Schools (within four Divisions) across five metropolitan campuses and one regional campus. Over time, changes in the composition of our Schools has led to significant variations between them in terms of their staff and student numbers, scope of research activity, and management of facilities and industry partnerships. During that same period the focus and function of our Divisions have also continually evolved and changed.

While the current academic organisational structure has served UniSA well for the past 20 years, and, in comparison with other universities, our overall operations are considered to be relatively efficient, there are a number of issues associated with the current model:

- Academic activity (teaching and research) is distanced from senior strategy setting, making the University less agile in responding to market trends, industry needs and opportunities for program innovation
- Approvals for program and course development and improvement are cumbersome, and often require duplication of effort, and input from multiple governance groups
- Academic and administrative activities are spread and sometimes replicated across multiple structural layers and areas, which can hamper efforts to facilitate inter-disciplinary collaboration or improve efficiencies of practice
- Variability of operations has given rise to inconsistent administrative processes and procedures between areas, which can be time-consuming, resource intensive and burdensome for staff
- Central administrative units engage with two tiers of academic administration, across 19 different interfaces, often requiring different service arrangements across the Divisions, Schools and campuses.

Our current academic organisational structure is in need of transformation to position it as fit-for-purpose for a contemporary, agile and innovative university. If we are to respond to changes in our sector, we need to transition to a structure that will enable a greater focus on our core activity - delivering our academic programs, conducting end-user informed research of relevance, and building connections between our teaching and research activities.

Our proposed new academic structure will also provide the necessary foundation for the University to deliver on our key strategic initiatives outlined in *Enterprise25*. This includes building our connections with industry and fostering innovation and flexibility to deliver degrees of the future that better meet the needs of our students. We will also be well placed to attract great academic talent, make investments in more student-facing staff, introduce new service delivery models, and transition to operating across a consolidated campus footprint.



OUTCOMES

A new program-focused organisational structure will enable the University to deliver on its ambitions set out in *Enterprise25*, through ensuring less time, money and effort is spent on unnecessary forms of administration and more is focused on teaching, research and direct student supports. Through the proposed academic organisational transformation and the activities that will follow transformation, four outcomes will be targeted.

Outcome 1: Enhanced teaching quality and the student experience

By creating a program-focused academic organisational structure, with new program leadership positions, we will be able to enhance the quality of our curriculum design and delivery and expand our capacity to engage with industry to deliver degrees of the future. These strategies will build the reputation of our program offerings locally, and over time will work towards more of our key academic programs being ranked among the best in the world.

New senior academic leadership positions (Program Deans) will have expertise in curriculum innovation and will hold responsibility for fostering relationships and opportunities to work with other Program Deans across the Academic Units to ensure teaching is delivered by the Academic Unit holding the program expertise. The Program Deans will have the necessary expertise in curriculum design and delivery to enhance the quality of our programs and ensure closer ties with the professions and industries that underpin our teaching and learning strategies and focus on work-integrated learning. They will be expected to nurture and mentor our Program Directors and facilitate innovation in program design and delivery. This includes using the best of digital strategies, active learning, and authentic assessment, and facilitating cross-Academic Unit collaboration.

Outcome 2: Strengthened inter-disciplinary collaboration and collegiality

By transitioning our academic programs and research activity from 19 separate structures (comprised of Divisions, Schools and UniSA College) to seven Academic Units the University has a unique opportunity to break down traditional 'silos' and remove hierarchical layers. This will facilitate greater opportunity for inter-disciplinary collaboration in both teaching and research.

Program innovation will be enhanced through a model in which the Provost & Chief Academic Officer has direct leadership over the structural entities that are delivering the curriculum (rather than through an intermediary Divisional layer).

The new, consistent leadership structure will also enable enhanced governance arrangements, involving all the Academic Units, to be put in place to foster an open and collaborative one-team culture and provide for swifter decision making closer to the action required. We will introduce a coordinated annual planning cycle, ensure that each Academic Unit is aligned in working towards our strategic ambitions, and that our budget model will encourage and reward collaborative endeavors across Academic Units.





Outcome 3: Improved efficiency of our administration

The academic organisational transformation will provide a valuable opportunity to review and streamline processes and operating models, and to cut red tape, with a view to reducing the administrative burden on academic staff.

As the Academic Units will operate under a single layer of leadership, the academic operation of the University will be placed closer to senior decision making. Further, we are committed to increasingly devolved decision making, fewer layers of approval, and reduced processing times, to ensure that our culture is more adaptive and responsive.

Through consultation with staff, processes that have already been identified for improvement, through the realisation of the new structures include: program and course approvals and changes; academic integrity; student appeals and complaints; travel approvals; timetabling; academic promotion; management of advisory boards; alumni engagement; and coordination of adjunct staff. The administrative efficiencies gained over time will be reinvested in additional academic staff positions and student-facing professional support roles.

Outcome 4: Improved research capability and rankings

The University's Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) and other rankings highlight the quality of our research activity across the institution. In order to further improve our position, we need to grow our research income, citations and academic reputation. Only through such measures can we more assuredly position more of our academic programs in international top 100 rankings.

By reducing administrative red tape, and providing improved professional staff support to academic staff and students, we will enable academic staff to prioritise academic activities over administrative activities. These ambitions will be enhanced further through the appointment of an additional 100 academics (over and above our current academic staff numbers) at levels C (Senior Lecturer) and D (Associate Professor), across the life of *Enterprise25*, to build our pipeline for our future professoriate. These new academics will be recruited into our new structure to focus on the delivery of our *Enterprise25* ambitions.

PROPOSED NEW ACADEMIC STRUCTURE

It is proposed that the new academic organisational structure will comprise seven Academic Units, responsible for the University's core teaching, research, and engagement activities, reporting directly to the Provost & Chief Academic Officer.

In creating each Academic Unit consideration has been given to ensuring that there is a reasonably equitable distribution of staff and students, and that each Academic Unit has a number of large and distinctive undergraduate and postgraduate programs. This will enable an effective and consistent new leadership and administrative structure to be applied across each of the Academic Units.

Senior Management Group applied the following principles to guide the design of the Academic Units:

- Alignment to graduate career destinations and industry sectors
- Support of cognate and complementary activities
- Facilitation of inter and cross-Academic Unit multi-disciplinary activity
- Alignment to research themes and priority industry sectors
- Support of research quality, scale and focus
- Alignment with future campus plans.

The proposed titles of the seven Academic Units are:

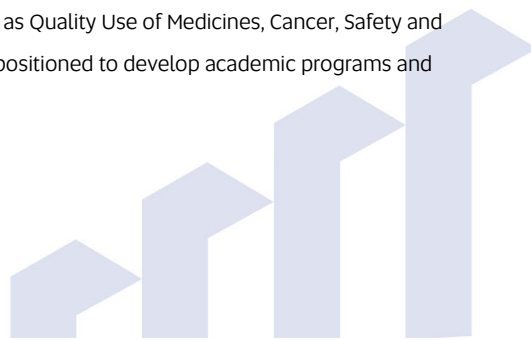
1. UniSA Clinical and Health Sciences
2. UniSA Allied Health and Human Performance
3. UniSA Creative
4. UniSA Engineering and Technology
5. UniSA Education Futures
6. UniSA Justice and Society
7. UniSA Business.

Further detail on the composition of the Academic Units, including the broad program areas and research activities, is detailed below.

1. UNISA CLINICAL AND HEALTH SCIENCES

UniSA Clinical and Health Sciences will bring together the programs from the School of Pharmacy & Medical Science and School of Nursing & Midwifery. This will include programs spanning Nursing, Midwifery, Pharmacy, Pharmaceutical Science, Medical Sciences, Laboratory Medicine, and Nutrition and Food Science.

This Academic Unit will offer excellent research quality and impact in areas such as Quality Use of Medicines, Cancer, Safety and Quality in Health Care, Mental Health and Maternal and Child Health and is well-positioned to develop academic programs and research to meet emerging critical health needs, both nationally and globally.





2. UNISA ALLIED HEALTH AND HUMAN PERFORMANCE

UniSA Allied Health and Human Performance will comprise programs currently offered through the School of Health Sciences and will additionally incorporate the activities of the University Department of Rural Health and the UniSA health clinics. Programs will be offered in the areas of Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Podiatry, Medical Radiation Sciences, Sonography, Clinical Exercise Physiology, Exercise and Sport Science and Human Movement. Graduates will provide an important future health workforce in rehabilitation, disability, health promotion, chronic disease management, pain, wellbeing, and high-performance sport.

This Academic Unit will be well placed to devise new programs that meet the health needs of the future in areas such as Speech Pathology, Prosthetics and Biomechanics. Research strengths of Allied Health and Human Performance will include Pain Sciences, Evidence Translation, Rehabilitation and High Performance in Sport.

3. UNISA CREATIVE

UniSA Creative will be constructed around programs from the School of Art, Architecture & Design and the School of Creative Industries. Creative will offer the program areas of Design, Architecture, Contemporary Art, Communication, Journalism, Media Arts and Creative Industries, and the creative and cultural studies areas across the Arts.

The creative industries agenda is expanding internationally and domestically and with this powerful combination of programs and the associated research excellence of our staff in this domain, UniSA will meet local and global workforce demand for this rapidly developing and diverse sector.

4. UNISA EDUCATION FUTURES

UniSA Education Futures will represent the full spectrum of teaching that will be offered from pathway programs to tertiary education, and the focus on optimizing digital technologies and industry partnerships to produce future-ready graduates.

UniSA Education Futures will lead research activities in Education, Mathematics, Numeracy and Literacy. The distinctive combination of cognate and complementary programs spanning these core facets of Education, in collaboration with the program areas that provide teaching pathways across the other Academic Units will ensure our graduates are well prepared for careers that address key workforce and skill shortages in national priority areas.

UniSA College will be included in UniSA Education Futures with appropriate retention of the UniSA College 'identity' for pathway provision as a distinct offering. This will facilitate closer linkages with the other Academic Units and support our strategy for a University-wide approach to lifelong learning.

5. UNISA ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY

This Academic Unit will offer programs across Engineering, Information Technology, Aviation, Environmental Science, Construction and Project Management. Aligning all the Engineering areas of specialisation within one Academic Unit will foster greater cross-disciplinary collaboration and provide more opportunities for students to develop their broad professional network within Engineering.

UniSA Engineering and Technology will capitalise on research and graduate employment opportunities in the technology industries of the future, including Defence and Aerospace, Advanced Manufacturing, Cyber Security and Data Science, Sustainable Infrastructure and provide graduates with the project management and systems engineering skills needed to support them.

6. UNISA JUSTICE AND SOCIETY

UniSA Justice and Society will bring together the programs from the School of Law and the School of Psychology, Social Work & Social Policy, along with the Social Science and Aboriginal Studies program areas from the School of Creative Industries.

Justice and Society will strengthen synergies between Law, Psychology, Social Work, Human Services and Social Sciences. This will enable the development of existing and new specialised areas of critical social need including Human Rights and Social Justice, Child Protection and Youth Justice, Criminology and Criminal Justice, Domestic and Family Violence, Wellbeing, Ageing, Disability, and Diversity.

7. UNISA BUSINESS

UniSA Business will include the program areas of Marketing, Management, Accounting, Finance, Tourism, and Human Resource Management, with associated research centres and concentrations.

The MBA and Executive Education will continue to strengthen engagement with the professions. This Academic Unit will have increased capacity to support graduate career development and extend program offerings in areas that support the state's aspirations for future industry development, including Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Business Analytics and Service Management.



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF EXECUTIVE POSITIONS

A key component of the academic organisational transformation process is to introduce a consistent and effective leadership and administrative structure across all the seven Academic Units. This includes the creation of a suite of new leadership positions. For each Academic Unit, the senior executive team (Academic Unit Executive), with overall responsibility for the leadership and performance of the Academic Unit, will comprise:

- Executive Dean
- Dean of Research
- Program Deans (two or three positions per Academic Unit)
- General Manager.

EXECUTIVE DEAN

As an inspirational and innovative leader, the Executive Dean will be responsible for the overall strategic direction, quality and performance of the Academic Unit. This includes leading the delivery of high-quality teaching and learning, ensuring an excellent student experience and graduate outcomes, and promoting and conducting outstanding research activity (including research training).

Cultivating a collaborative and enterprising culture, the Executive Dean will lead the performance of the Academic Unit's programs and research through constructive performance coaching and promoting a strong commitment to external and regional engagement and outreach. The Executive Dean will be ultimately responsible for representing the Academic Unit locally, nationally and internationally, and for the resourcing, facilities and financial performance of the Academic Unit.

DEAN OF RESEARCH

Reporting to the Executive Dean, the Dean of Research will work in collaboration with the Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research & Enterprise to implement the University's research strategy and work towards research performance targets across the Academic Unit. This includes developing research plans and reports and overseeing the activities of research centres, concentrations and groups within the Academic Unit. The Dean of Research will have responsibilities for research activities of academic staff, which may include research groups, as assigned by the Executive Dean.

The Dean of Research will work closely with the Dean of Graduate Studies to enhance the higher degree by research program for the Academic Unit. In collaboration with Research & Innovation Services (RIS) and UniSA Ventures, the Dean of Research will drive strategies to support research grant applications, industry and end-user research engagement and the commercialisation of research undertaken in the Academic Unit.





PROGRAM DEAN

Program Deans will provide focused senior leadership for a portfolio of academic programs, with accountability for the quality, performance and reputation of these programs. Each Program Dean will provide leadership within a broad program area for teaching (including undergraduate and postgraduate programs, in all delivery modes, and at both metropolitan and regional campuses), and external engagement activities.

Where appropriate, the Program Dean will also provide leadership in relevant research domains (in collaboration with the Dean of Research), across their allocated suite of programs. A priority for each Program Dean will be to ensure UniSA's largest and most prominent programs are highly rated by students, industry and national/international rating agencies.

It will be the responsibility of the Program Dean to ensure that we are developing and enhancing our programs such that they are nationally and internationally competitive and that they meet the needs of the current and future workforces.

GENERAL MANAGER

A General Manager, reporting to the Executive Dean, will support the Academic Unit executive team through developing strategic and annual business plans, facilitating the Academic Unit governance, and providing oversight of facilities, budgeting, and resource management within the Academic Unit. The General Manager will ensure that necessary administrative supports and services are effectively developed and deployed locally within the Academic Unit, and effectively and appropriately delivered to the Academic Unit through liaison with central administrative services, without duplication.

The position will also have oversight of work health and safety, compliance and risk management within the Academic Unit. This will be facilitated through the General Manager supervising the professional staff based in the Academic Unit, and through fostering close working relationships with Directors and other staff across the University's central administrative units.

It is proposed that the professional staff employed in each Academic Unit will typically report through to the General Manager (either through a direct reporting relationship or through another senior professional staff member in the Academic Unit).



SUPPORTING OUR PEOPLE THROUGH THE TRANSITION

Our people are at the centre of everything we do and to successfully transition to our proposed new Academic Unit structure, and to embed a program and discipline-based culture, our people must be at the heart of our thinking and doing.

We have made an overarching commitment to ensuring that this change has the *minimum impact on the maximum number of people*. This has influenced our thinking on *what we do* and *how we do it* to transition to the new Academic Unit structures.

The Change Proposal paper issued to staff details how they can submit their feedback and they will be encouraged to attend town halls and meetings to hear more about the proposal throughout the consultation period.








STAFF

We have an enduring culture of getting things done and this has been driven by our leaders and staff working together. We have initiated the **ACADEMIC ORGANISATIONAL TRANSFORMATION** discussion openly from conception and have worked through our thinking on what a program-focused institution means to collectively and collaboratively form the foundation of new Academic Units.

It is proposed that the majority of staff will transition into one of the seven Academic Units with no substantive changes to roles and responsibilities. Academic staff will be assigned to an Academic Unit that is most closely aligned with the program areas in which they teach and/or research.

A suite of Change Transition Principles for our staff has been formulated to guide us in how we will engage and provide for our staff in transitioning to the new structure. As we continue the preparation for change and move towards and through implementation, we will continue to invest in the personal and professional development and wellbeing of our staff.

Figure 1 - Transforming our Academic Enterprise Change Principles

	Minimal impact on staff and students	We will progress change with the minimum possible impact on the maximum number of people in our University community
	Leader led change	Our leaders will lead change so that the people who know our University best support their teams through transition
	Consistency of leadership	We will maintain consistency of leadership throughout the change, wherever we can, mindful our leaders may also be affected by the change
	Putting people first	Change will be progressed with consideration for people's working and professional relationships maintaining our solution focussed culture of mutual respect
	Embracing learnings	We will apply best practice and the learnings from our own experience of change
	Doing more than the minimum	We will do more than our minimum employment obligations in supporting our people through change
	Evidence based change	Changes we progress will be strategically aligned to deliver value and based on evidence

STUDENTS

One of the desired outcomes from transitioning to our new academic structure is to further enhance the student experience and coordinated student engagement will be key to achieving this aim.

The transition to a new academic structure provides an ideal opportunity to create greater consistency in the student experience offered across the University. There is also an opportunity to provide more standardisation of student and academic services currently provided by Divisional and central units in areas such as student load planning and management, credit and admissions, program development, policy advice and interpretation, and records management.



It's important to reiterate that students should not notice any change to their studies when the University's transitions to the new academic structure. However, it is recognised that some Higher degree by research (HDR) candidates may experience minor changes if their supervisor's reporting line moves to a different Academic Unit. We are committed to ensuring that any students impacted by the change are consulted with and fully supported throughout the transition.

Going forward, we will continue to update and consult the student community to ensure the student voice is heard throughout the transition.

TRANSITION PROCESS AND NEXT STEPS

The timeline for progressing the change is presented in **Figure 2** below. The current activity to define and consult on the new academic structure is being conducted as part of the Preparation Phase. The transition to the new structure will take place by 1 June 2020 at the latest. **If we can transition earlier without compromising our core principles, we will endeavour to do so.**

Figure 2 – Proposed transition approach and timeline



Feedback on the Change Proposal paper will be sought from our staff for three weeks, closing at **5pm on Friday 4 October 2019**. Feedback received will then help to inform a Final Plan and a series of Implementation Plans, detailing how the transition will progress.

[The Enterprise25: Transforming our Academic Enterprise website](#) will continue to be the central point for all current information and the FAQs will be updated regularly in response to queries. The enterprise25@unisa.edu.au email is also available should you have any general enquiries.

