Strategic Plan
2011-2015
Introduction

The Faculty of Health Sciences is pleased to present the Strategic Plan for 2011-2015. This plan is set in a global context and was developed in a collegial manner following discussions with faculty staff, students and external stakeholders and by engaging with the University's directions as outlined in The University of Sydney’s White Paper and Strategic Plan 2011-2015. An extensive analysis of the performance of the faculty in achieving the 2005-2010 strategic plan was undertaken and shared as part of the process of development. The findings of the Faculty of Health Sciences Achievements Review 2005-2010 (refer Attachments) show that the faculty is well positioned to engage with the vision of the University to achieve world-class research, research enriched learning and teaching across the university, and mutual accountability in governance and collegial relationships.

The respective groupings within the faculty have already commenced work on many of the strategies outlined in the Strategic Plan and their progress will be monitored in the faculty's workplan, a process used successfully over the past several years. This workplan represents the body of work needed to achieve both the effective running of the faculty and the tasks needed to achieve the substantive changes outlined in the strategic plan.

The faculty intends to report regularly through the appropriate mechanisms, including the Board of the Division of Health Sciences on progress toward achieving the goals outlined in the strategic plan.

Where the Faculty came from in 2005

In 2005 the faculty was justifiably proud of its achievements over many years as a leading research institution in health sciences and educator of allied health professionals in Australia.

At that time the faculty acknowledged that external changes were driving a need for further reform over and above those which had resulted in a revised organisational structure, curriculum and educational program reform, and substantively increased research performance. These changes included internationalisation of health and health professional education and the need to further lift research productivity, all of which needed to be carried out in the context of funding and investment challenges to higher education.

In 2005 the faculty, therefore, began an ambitious program of renewal and change. Its achievements over the past five years are far reaching.

In Research Performance

Since 2005 the faculty has greatly increased its contributions to research in the health sciences and disciplinary fields in the allied health professions. This is evidenced by the sustained increase in success in competitive grants and numbers of research publications. Competitive grant success and research income in the faculty has grown at a significantly higher rate than the University average. Also of note is the 36% increase in faculty research publications between 2005 and 2008 (refer Appendix 1).

By 2011 the Faculty of Health Sciences has a much larger and more vibrant professoriate, increasing from 31 professors and associate professors in 2005 to 42 in 2011. This is partly the result of a program to support and encourage research performance, enabling more staff to achieve promotion. In addition, the faculty undertook a targeted international recruitment campaign, attracting outstanding academics from across North America, the United Kingdom, Ireland and other parts of Europe.
In Taught Programs

The faculty set out over the 2005-2010 period to develop a profile as a predominantly postgraduate provider of allied health professional preparation programs and has led the way in developing outstanding graduate-entry master’s degrees in the allied health professions in Australia. These changes were undertaken in order to adapt to an increasingly complex health and community sector as well as to ensure graduates are best placed to contribute their leadership to health innovations and best practice in a global context. The postgraduate right-to-practice degrees recruit a mature group of students who have developed core graduate attributes in their undergraduate programs.

A cornerstone of the move to graduate-entry master’s degrees in the allied health professions was to offer a foundation course in health sciences. The Bachelor of Health Sciences was re-launched in 2008 with a new curriculum that offers students a rigorous education in the scientific bases of health, the contexts of health globally and nationally, and both personal and professional development in choosing a second major, with all but two of the second majors coming from other faculties. This degree prepares students for a corporate/professional role in health or to undertake further study to become a practitioner in the health or community care sectors.

In order to improve the student experience the faculty began a learning revolution in late 2008 with the support of the University through a large Teaching Improvement and Equipment Scheme (TIES) grant. This revolution has been far-reaching and includes: design of a faculty-wide curriculum framework underpinned by four value statements, a revised system of teaching awards, recruitment of educational designers and an e-learning team, implementation of an agreed academic workload policy, rationalisation of unit of study offerings and the closure of low-demand courses.

In Faculty Management

The faculty has achieved solid financial performance and a strong engagement with other faculties at this university as well as nationally and internationally. By 2007, building on a consultative process underpinned by an administrative services review, the faculty had implemented a major restructure of its organisational structure and governance. The faculty was an early adopter of the shared services model that is now being rolled out across the University and accelerated with the implementation of the University Economic Model.

Where the Faculty of Health Sciences is Today

The faculty today is in a position of strength, evidenced by the achievements set out above. In presenting the Strategic Plan for the period 2011-2015 the Faculty of Health Sciences looks outward with heightened anticipation at the next series of changes that require us to broaden our horizons. This plan has been developed to ensure that the faculty meets the challenges that these changes will present. The faculty will ensure that all of its students are involved in research-engaged enquiry. The faculty will contribute to research world-wide that addresses health, disability, functioning, and rehabilitation, at a level way beyond its numbers. This research will result in outstanding improvements in the lives of persons who experience impairment, injury, illness, chronic health conditions or disability. The faculty takes as its underpinning proposition the values embedded in the moral and legal framework of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) ratified by the Australian Government in 2008.

The faculty also approaches the achievement of the goals and strategies of this plan with a firm commitment to developing partnerships that are global in their impact and committing to the concept of mutual accountability that is integral to a thriving academic and research community. Our global outlook is embedded in each goal with specific international strategies included in the detailed strategies and tactics section which follows the Faculty of Health Sciences Vision Statement and Strategic Goals Summary.
Faculty of Health Sciences Vision Statement and Strategic Goals

The Faculty of Health Sciences is a world leader in health sciences and allied health research and education. We are an acknowledged leading global hub of excellence in research and education in health sciences.

**Goal 1**

Develop and sustain a critical mass of researchers in a limited number of areas self-evident as health sciences/allied health research with at least one area which is multi-disciplinary in nature.

1. Focus support on a small number of areas of research excellence, aligned with educational programs in health sciences. [WP6][1][WP8]
2. Target recruitment of both staff and research higher degree students to align with these identified areas of research excellence. [WP9]
3. Improve the research climate in the Doctor of Philosophy and Master of Applied Science programs. [WP4]
4. Implement an effective Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) strategy. [WP6]

**Goal 2**

Ensure high quality research enriched learning and teaching programs which offer students the opportunity to pursue a career in an allied health profession; in a corporate role in health; or as academics and/or health sciences researchers.

1. Create advanced learning opportunities for the highest achieving students in all undergraduate and Graduate Entry Masters courses. [WP9]
2. Establish a research experience for all students in undergraduate and postgraduate courses. [WP9]
3. Embed learning and teaching in indigenous health and contexts in all undergraduate and Graduate Entry Masters courses. [WP10]
4. Institute best practice in integrated academic and clinical learning in professional preparation programs and an integrated work placement in the Bachelor of Health Sciences, Bachelor of Applied Science (Exercise and Sports Science) and the Master of Rehabilitation Counselling. [WP3]

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1 WP The University of Sydney 2011-2015 White Paper
Goal 3
Increase participation of students from culturally and socially diverse backgrounds including indigenous students to build a health workforce appropriate for Australia’s social and cultural diversity.

a) Increase the proportion of students from culturally and socially diverse backgrounds and provide appropriate support to these students in all undergraduate courses. [WP11]

b) Increase the proportion of students from culturally and socially diverse backgrounds in postgraduate professional preparation programs including a pathway from the Bachelor of Health Sciences. [WP11]

c) Increase the proportion of students from indigenous backgrounds in the Bachelor of Health Sciences and professional preparation programs. [WP10]

d) Increase the proportion of students with a disability in the Bachelor of Health Sciences and professional preparation programs. [WP11]

Goal 4
Develop and sustain a faculty who are present in the public domain nationally and internationally through their writing, their research, their commentary and their presence.

a) Develop capacity among the faculty to promote, advocate and lead public debate, contribute to public policy and engage with leading international health agencies. [WP14]

b) Sustain and expand partnerships with leading health policy, advocacy and research groups nationally and internationally. [WP14]

c) Develop staff, students, alumni and supporters as ambassadors for our faculty. [WP14]

Goal 5
Develop and sustain a network of supporters and strategic partners to uphold, develop and build the vision of developing and applying health sciences/allied health knowledge for the health and wellbeing of people nationally and internationally and to provide a rich environment for high achieving students and staff.

a) Build and nurture relationships with influential individuals and organisations who will champion our cause in the first instance through HealthSciences@Sydney and FHS Alumni and Development Officers. [WP15]

b) Build capacity amongst staff to form productive relationships with influential individuals and organisations. [WP13]

c) Ensure that key supporters become a community celebrated in and outside the faculty. [WP15]