



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE



Growing Esteem...
The University of Melbourne

The Triple Helix

Melbourne's academic programs should form a tightly-wrapped spiral of distinct but related activities that together define the institution's character. The University has set three equal priorities – research, teaching and knowledge transfer.

Contents

Growing Esteem	1
The Tradition	2
1996 – The Melbourne Agenda	3
2005 – The Context	4
The Melbourne Vision	6
A Triple Helix	8
Specific Strategies	9
First Strand: Research	10
Second Strand: Learning and Teaching	12
Third Strand: Knowledge Transfer	14
Enablers	
– Internal	16
– External	16
Conclusion: Melbourne's Prospects for Growing Esteem	18

Where we've come from

Developed in 1996, the Melbourne Agenda encapsulated the vision, goals and strategies that guided the University of Melbourne. Its aim was to make the University one of the finest in the world.

During 2005 the University produced *Growing Esteem: Choices for the University of Melbourne*, a discussion paper which invited involvement and response from all staff, students and colleagues about the future of the University.

This new document has grown from the findings of the consultation process.



Growing Esteem

Universities adjust to their times, yet celebrate continuity. The subject matter taught at the University of Melbourne might be barely comprehensible to its original students, yet they would recognise immediately the ethos and purpose of the campus.

This document outlines key initiatives for the University of Melbourne. Such plans are offered within the enduring tradition of higher learning. They are current answers to an endless question: how, in contemporary circumstances, should the University pursue its motto of growing in the esteem of future generations?

The approach embraces the notion of a triple helix: a public-spirited institution, defined by tightly-bound strands of research, teaching and knowledge transfer, offering its students, staff and community one of the finest universities in the world.



Glyn Davis

Vice-Chancellor

13 December 2005



The Tradition

Just over 150 years ago, the University of Melbourne was founded to offer degrees to privileged students in an intimate setting, at a standard that would match that of Oxford. Adopting the Goddess Nike as its symbol and a poet's promise to 'grow in the esteem of future generations' the University aspired to compete and contribute in equal measure.

In subsequent decades the University embraced research, community outreach, public service and cultural activities consistent with its character as a public institution.

For most of this history the University was funded by government, supplemented with fees from students. Philanthropic income was a happy event, but not a steady stream. Commercial engagement remained beyond the pale of 'a place apart'.

Today the University reflects recent trends in Australian higher education – greater pressure to produce more research, a massive increase in enrolments, declining government support as a proportion of income and growing reliance on fee-paying students to fund core activities.

The University remains public-spirited, but is now a large, complex organisation set precariously between the worlds of regulated public responsibility and market-driven private income. It balances a traditional mission of teaching and research with new expectations to meet economic, professional and community priorities.



1996 – The Melbourne Agenda

In 1996 the University responded to these challenges. The *Melbourne Agenda* reaffirmed the traditional values of scholarship but set out new strategies to make the University 'one of the finest' in the world.

It committed to building an international research reputation, creating world-class working conditions for scholars, offering an innovative campus-based education to students, and maintaining a strong local presence while lifting its international profile, reach and outlook.

The University upgraded and expanded facilities, created valuable partnerships with overseas institutions, attracted fee-paying international students and tapped private sources of income. While the goal of doubling institutional income against total enrolments has proved elusive, the Melbourne Agenda has yielded significant progress.

A consultation process during 2005 confirmed widespread support for the aspiration to be 'one of the finest' – but also that some strategies, such as expanding revenue through growth in student numbers, have run their course.

Where to in the coming decade? This short paper does not address every issue raised in consultation; many excellent detailed suggestions offered during the consultation process will find their way into a new strategic plan for the University setting out specific steps arising from this statement.

Instead the paper goes to three core strategic issues – focusing research effort, shifting teaching toward a stronger postgraduate profile and defining the scope and terms of external engagement.



2005 – The Context

'How can the university engage the broader community and involve it in its operation, and make more of its infrastructure and facilities? It should be one of the most vibrant places within the City of Melbourne, attracting people who may never study or work here'

Gary Thomson, Health, Counselling and Disability Services

What has changed since 1996?

Research is now a global enterprise. The progress of knowledge in many fields relies on significant international funding, large collaborating teams and networks, shared datasets and co-produced outcomes. New global ranking systems compare universities principally on measures such as research citations and global recognition of individual researchers.

Higher education is also more clearly a global market. In undergraduate education Australia outperforms most other nations, with overseas students a larger part of its mix. At postgraduate levels, though, in which research prestige looms larger, Australia is behind the United States, parts of Europe and emerging university leaders across Asia.

There are international moves to standardise degree structures. The familiar American pattern of four-year arts or science degrees followed by graduate school is being echoed by the Bologna Declaration among European nations. The Bologna model, set to become the European standard from 2010, advocates a three-year undergraduate program with advanced courses taught in a two-year masters degree or a three-year doctoral program. Historically, this move updates an ancient structure, that of the University of Paris in the 13th century. If this becomes a global norm but Australia continues to prepare its professionals through undergraduate programs, in the longer term our graduates may no longer be seen as globally competitive.

In national terms, Australian higher education is marked by intensive competition for research and teaching dollars, philanthropic support and brand recognition. The regulatory framework is highly prescriptive, with significant compliance costs.

For public institutions, the web of expectations has grown. Once it was sufficient for scholars to teach small numbers of students an accepted canon of knowledge. Then universities were expected to add to the body of scholarship. Now they are required to respond more directly and visibly to external demands. This means teaching larger numbers fuelling economic growth, addressing a wider range of audiences, turning discoveries into products, and devising technical solutions for pressing social problems. The traditional academic tasks of research and teaching have expanded into a 'third stream' of social and economic engagement. Governments, industry bodies and community agencies regard such new forms of 'knowledge transfer' as a test of social relevance.

This growth in mission places more pressure on staff, facilities and finances. The academic workforce is urged to ever greater research success, yet expected to spread effort over a widening array of activities. Inevitably, the question arises whether such a broad spectrum of activity is the best way to make a lasting contribution.

In sum, like other Australian public universities, Melbourne faces the emergence of global higher education and knowledge production, declining public funding for its core activities, greater reliance on student fees and research contracts, more intense competition for the best students and scholars, and greater demand on all fronts. Such trends compel public universities to re-examine their place in society, the scope of their mission and the sustainability of their operations.

'The finest universities in the world don't try to do everything'
Committee of Convocation

'The growth dilemma is the key one for us, and the evidence is clear. If we wish to maintain standards, let alone raise them, it's time to put the brakes on growth in student numbers' Paul Mees,
Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning





The Melbourne Vision

'The University should define itself by what it values and not by rankings or numbers' Undergraduate students' focus group

The University of Melbourne must be attuned to shifts in national policy settings and international standards, the emergence of rankings, new market conditions and new players in higher education.

Yet the anxieties of competition need not determine the University's vision, identity or strategy. In the midst of change, the challenge is to be firm on ends but flexible on means, sustaining character and mission while adapting to new settings. Although the logic of success in most international rankings is to concentrate primarily on research, Melbourne will place an equal stress on research and teaching as in the past, and expand a third focus on knowledge transfer. The University's future will depend on its ability to combine a 'triple helix' of academic programs in each of these domains.

To be true to itself and true to its context, this University reaffirms its 1996 commitment to be 'one of the finest universities in the world'. What should this now mean?

As a fine academic institution, Melbourne honours its traditional promise to uphold the scholarly values of intellectual freedom, honesty, openness and rigour.



As a fine research institution, Melbourne seeks to strengthen its core intellectual disciplines, open new paths to scientific understanding and support critical and creative endeavour in fields that do not fit conventional research paradigms.

As a fine teaching institution, Melbourne aims to attract the brightest student cohorts from the widest range of backgrounds, offering an outstanding educational experience.

As a public-spirited institution, Melbourne declares its intention to make research, student learning and external engagement serve public ends. This includes taking up pressing societal problems in research, producing graduates prepared for responsibility, and promoting inquiry and open debate based on evidence and reason.

As an internationally engaged institution, Melbourne undertakes to work with overseas colleagues and students to meet global challenges with intelligence, ingenuity and respect for cultural and linguistic diversity.

As a university with a strong sense of place, Melbourne reaffirms the unique virtues of its campus locale, where face to face teaching remains the norm, where scholars gather from across the globe, and where learning communities embrace evolving technologies.

This is a place where great scholars lead talented students to open their minds, share wisdom and face the great unknowns: a place where each new generation can define a future that it values.

To meet its aspiration to be 'one of the finest', the University now seeks a sharper edge in its research, teaching, and knowledge transfer responsibilities. By focusing its resources and concentrating efforts to lift performance in each of these domains, the University will deepen the relevance and impact of its academic mission. Melbourne will be an institution that excels not just at research, but in bringing ideas to life and making knowledge work for its students, staff and a broader public.

'Elite in its achievements, but not elitist in its values, mode of operation, or its level of social awareness and responsibility' Maree Gladwin, Equity and Diversity

'A campus-based experience remains central to the university education Melbourne should offer' Paul Donegan, Interim Student Representative Council

'We strongly endorse the need to promote the intercultural experience of all students at the University of Melbourne' Gillian Wigglesworth, School of Languages



A Triple Helix

“With careful planning, the decision to go down this track will greatly enhance the experience of teaching, learning and researching at the University”
Jeanette Hoorn, School of Art History, Cinema, Classics and Archeology

In reaffirming the intention to be among the finest, the University will address some deficits in achievement to date – a strong but still uneven research record, pressures of size, span and coherence in undergraduate teaching, and public outreach not always well-linked to teaching and research.

Setting three equal priorities for the University of Melbourne – research, teaching and knowledge transfer – adds a new dimension to the teaching-research nexus. Melbourne’s academic programs should form a tightly-wrapped spiral of distinct but related activities that together define the institution’s character.

Research is the first strand, embracing the systematic generation of new knowledge, development of new ideas and experiment with new techniques. These activities inform student learning and provide an intellectual platform for engaging in knowledge transfer.

The second strand is learning and teaching. It explicates a body of ideas, is informed by available research, and instils habits of inquiry that reflect the provisional nature of knowledge.

The final strand is knowledge transfer. It encompasses many dimensions of interaction between academia and wider society – from the way public intellectuals use media platforms to participate in debate, to policy work for government, industry and communities, to contract research and education services, and to the complex and risky work of creating business ventures to distribute new technology.

A sharper focus on knowledge transfer will ensure the institution is more widely connected to non-academic partners and able to receive, develop, co-produce and share new concepts and their applications. To be effective, knowledge transfer activities should both shape and shadow the University’s research and teaching priorities, and be informed by active social and economic engagement. As a public-spirited university Melbourne will serve local and international communities best by selective engagement, when it has distinctive contributions to make and when the benefits are compelling.

The triple helix has evolved into a metaphor in fields such as innovation studies to model complex and shifting relations among disparate spheres of activity. The Melbourne vision of a fine university sees a triple helix in which sharply-focused, well-supported research, teaching and knowledge transfer remain tightly bound, each reinforcing the other.

Specific strategies

To pursue a triple helix of closely-linked academic activities, the University will configure its programs around those disciplinary areas and societal problems in which the institution can make a difference. Melbourne will design these three strands of activity so they connect and inform each other in as many ways as possible, to generate greater depth and impact.

This means work on setting priorities, structuring programs, designing enterprise systems, and deploying institutional resources to combine the efforts of scholars, staff, students and external partners. Beginning in 2006 the University will review its programs on a three-year cycle. Each iteration will use a transparent approach to sharpen institutional priorities, create measures for testing effectiveness, and evaluate outcomes to inform choices in resource allocation.

'A great university should be a place where ideas are not locked into silos of a traditional kind...we should... facilitate cross-disciplinary activities, both in research and in expanding our capacity to contribute to generating ideas for the development and good functioning of our community'

David Penington, Emeritus Professor and former Vice-Chancellor

'It is crucial to remedy the time poverty of academic staff' Sean Cooney, NTEU Branch





First strand Research

'It would be more strategic to focus our efforts on having world-class expertise on selected key international problem configurations rather than compete across a range of issues' Jenny McGregor, Jacyl Shaw and Liz O'Keefe, AsiaLink and International Office

'The University should focus its development in a limited number of strategic priority areas in which it has outstanding and demonstrated strength and capacity and critical mass, while providing broad opportunities in other areas which do not warrant the same priority in core resource allocation – a broad base with a sharp edge' Tilman Ruff, Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences

Knowledge is the great human project, never completed but always pressing. A public-spirited university helps to nurture scholarship, develop new insights, and promote wider understanding.

Viewed nationally, Melbourne is a leading research university. It scores strongly against every national research indicator for size, from income and publications to research higher degree load and completions. It is uniquely placed in the Parkville precinct, able to work closely with some of Australia's eminent bio-medical research institutions. A number of disciplines at Melbourne are ranked among the best in the world.

Yet the University does not have the consistency of performance or the research impact it seeks. Ideas generated at Melbourne do not always persuade academic peers. The University lacks sufficient high citation researchers who count among the top 250 in the world in their fields.

Policy direction and the lessons from international comparisons alike argue for fewer research fields performing at a higher level, and stronger cross-disciplinary links between them.



To ensure the University is investing primarily in areas of greatest research performance and potential, a transparent and systematic review will test whether each disciplinary area is within the top three in Australia. If performance is not at an acceptable level faculties will work on an improvement plan since, in the long run, investment will focus only on those academic areas deemed capable of national leadership and international relevance.

This process of evaluation will commence in 2006 to prepare the University for the Research Quality Framework exercise, due to commence the following year. Internal reviews will follow an academic logic so that essential capabilities are not lost due to inappropriate measures of performance.

To encourage more intensive cross-disciplinary research across networks of academic departments, industry and other tertiary institutions, in 2006 the University will establish a Future Generation Fund which will support priority projects. In 2006-2008 the University will recruit at least 10 Future Generation Professors to lead collaborative research on these projects. The University will strengthen its existing, highly successful program for attracting Nobel Laureates and other world-eminent scholars.

'Structural, curricular and financial factors within the University... often mean that there is less than optimal collaboration between departments and across faculties'
Howard Sankey, Department of History and Philosophy of Science

'We must allow a reasonable time for groups to meet 'agreed' levels of performance – this cannot be done overnight' Neal Enright, School of Anthropology, Geography and Environmental Studies

'Some disciplines are indispensable for an institution such as the one envisaged, and the task is then to ensure that those areas also measure up quality-wise'
Ray Volkas, School of Physics

'I wish to work in an organization... that has the brightest minds working to address important local and global issues and to translate their findings for societal good...' Sue Elliot, Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences

'The greatest threat to maintaining research productivity for many staff is the availability of unfragmented time'
Janet Hergt, School of Earth Sciences



Second strand

Learning and Teaching

'A high degree of specialisation at an early stage in your degree is not always appropriate – it can be too restrictive'

Undergraduate students' focus group

'We offer a very large number of subject options...allowing students to follow their own preferences...However...students often focus their learning quite tightly and miss out on breadth' Michael Lew, Department of Pharmacology

'If limiting the available courses means those offered are better supported, the trade-off may well be worth it' Postgraduate students' focus group

'A proper redesign of courses and structures within degrees...will guarantee diversity of offerings while providing a basis on which to assess the value and viability of programs' Jane Munro, International House

'Some faculty quickly default back to 'a campus- based experience' when challenged about the desirability for more online delivery of material' Ziggy Switkowski

'An ongoing and responsive research program, alongside access to innovative technologies...will maintain (our) edge in the e-learning arena' Kerri-Lee Krause, Centre for the Study of Higher Education

Teaching is the principal means by which the University disseminates knowledge, trains students as scholars and professionals, and prepares the next generation of researchers. Student learning is a crucial strand in the triple helix, the original and enduring purpose of a university.

Melbourne aspires to offer internationally transferable qualifications to talented students, built on strong pedagogy and inspired by exceptional scholars. To do this it must first address growth in student numbers and subject options. These were rational responses to a general need for fee revenue and to internal competition for enrolments, but with widely recognised negative consequences.

If Melbourne is to reverse the trend toward ever more undergraduates studying ever more specialised subjects, it will need to address the structure of program delivery.

The Bologna model seeks a standardised credit transfer system and a common degree structure. Not every qualification can be recast around this model, and in Europe some professional training will retain its present form. Yet the wider trend toward broad undergraduate programs followed by intense professional training at postgraduate level seems likely to become a global norm.

To position for such a future, Melbourne will introduce more graduate programs. It will aim for at least one-third of all enrolments at postgraduate levels, with some faculties standing alone as graduate schools.

The guiding principles will be to ensure rigorous standards at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, keep career options more open at the point of undergraduate enrolment, and enable more considered choices by students about their further study, including online and off-campus elements.

During 2006, a University task force will work with each faculty to plan for a graduate school approach. Designing new graduate programs will also provide an historic opportunity to evaluate and improve the intellectual coherence, research relevance and cohort experience in undergraduate programs, taking full advantage of online support for learning. These programs should set a new benchmark in Australian higher education, offering a first rate undergraduate education whether students proceed to graduate school or not.

A parallel review of research programs will help align teaching and research priorities.

To pilot and refine its graduate school approach, the University will introduce a small number of prestigious new professional programs. These will offer guaranteed entry to high-achieving school leavers, subject to meeting progression standards

in a generalist undergraduate degree. Examples may include a politics, philosophy and economics program leading to graduate law school, and a medical science undergraduate program leading to graduate study in medicine, dentistry or physiotherapy. Such programs aim to make the University a destination of choice for graduate students who have completed a first degree in liberal studies from Melbourne or elsewhere.

A shift towards greater graduate study poses obvious challenges. In time it should stabilise and even reduce the overall size of the student body. Adopting a different course mix, cost structure and fee profile requires a carefully planned transition. This means detailed attention to admission and financial aid policies, the quality and economics of programs, and disciplinary differences in designing new study paths. In some areas, for example, the current undergraduate honours year may remain in its own right, but also count as advanced standing in a graduate program. A strong focus on scholarships for graduate school is essential to ensure a diverse range of people benefit from access to the institution.

Over the medium term, a reconfiguration of student profile should alter teaching patterns. Here a guiding principle will be to design more manageable workloads. Addressing 'time poverty' is important if academic and professional staff are to attend to quality student support, research, knowledge transfer and program evaluation.

'A US-style BA-BSc that enabled students to develop more background knowledge and discover their interests might be wise' Janet McCalman,
Department of History and Philosophy of
Science/School of Population Health

'Actively exploring multiple modes of subject development and delivery... is not optional, but essential. This must be done in parallel with an ongoing program of research and pedagogical evaluation...' Liz Sonenberg for
Department of Information Systems

'A systematic approach must be taken to selecting students, though not a mechanical one' Aaron Walker,
18 year old student, Western suburbs





Third strand

Knowledge Transfer

'We maintain that one mark of a truly international university is its capacity to support its own intellectual examination and leadership of issues of national importance, and their relevance to global concerns'

Kate Darian-Smith and John Murphy,
Australian Studies Centre

'There are research outcomes where the University has a social obligation to develop and transfer the technology'

Jim Angus, Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and
Health Services

'There is wide variation in the level of familiarity with the commercial sector and the ways in which ideas find their way into profitable products'

Charlie Day,
Melbourne Ventures

The third strand of academic work at Melbourne is knowledge transfer. This recognises that universities occupy a public space, with community expectations of a broader contribution to intellectual, social and economic life.

The challenge is to become more accessible to non-academic communities, players, and potential partners. Such parties bring other resources and expertise, along with their own agendas. When it works well, knowledge transfer takes the form of co-production, in which academic forms of knowledge and expertise find new applications, purposes and platforms beyond the typical reach of scholarship.

An obvious example is the role academics play in stimulating and informing public debate via the media, bringing scholarly expertise to complex public problems that the wider society faces. Here education is extended to a broader canvas, and the wisdom of research offered and tested in the public domain.

A less obvious role is that played by the nationally significant portfolio of cultural collections and activities supported by the University. Collections, galleries, museums, theatre companies and performances all supplement the rational forms of disciplinary discourse taught in the University. These cultural resources can engage communities in collective experiences, providing opportunities for reflection and conversation on the never-ending questions of how we make our lives meaningful, our work valuable and our values workable.

For government and industry, much attention on knowledge transfer centres on the commercialisation of knowledge developed on campus. This is important work – many break-throughs in areas from medicine to microelectronics cannot benefit wider communities unless converted into stand-alone technologies and taken to market.

This is an emerging strength of the University, as the infrastructure of commercial engagement develops – expertise in patent law, access to venture capital, support in business management. It may also become a public funding imperative, since governments will likely tie future research grants to commercial applications and economic contributions.

Yet another valuable source of knowledge transfer is the work of alumni, who directly or indirectly act as ambassadors for the University. Knowledge transfer is central to the notion of a university embedded locally, nationally and internationally, able to bring intelligence and learning to significant issues. By working more closely with non-academic partners, the familiar activities of teaching and research can be extended to support both a learning society and an innovation economy.

The University of Melbourne will bring together its many and now disparate knowledge transfer activities under a single leadership. It will develop a consistent program for knowledge transfer, with clear and measurable performance indicators. It will develop a portfolio of knowledge transfer activities that link students, staff, alumni, industry and community groups around specific and tangible goals. Such activities create opportunities for students to engage with a wider world as part of their learning.

Social and economic engagement programs will have to flow logically from the academic mission, which requires clear-sighted judgment about relevance and contribution. This mirrors a theme running through this document – that to realise its vision Melbourne must do fewer things better, to combine more tightly the many streams of activity that define its institutional character.

'The imperative for knowledge transfer... reinforces the need for a greater level of partnership between business...and the University.' Sanchia Aranda, Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre & School of Nursing





Enablers

'Whilst the University has enormous strengths in research and teaching, senior industry and government figures have expressed their uncertainty about how to reach into the University to work with that potential' Jim Falk, Australian Centre for Science, Innovation and Society

'When it comes to making decisions about, communicating or facilitating our research, we do not operate in a mode that enables a hypertext organisation. Data about our research is compartmentalised across different University communities trapped in its use for specific purposes' Simon Porter, University Systems Project

'Our system of promotion does not place enough emphasis on contributions to knowledge transfer' Jannie Van Deventer, Faculty of Engineering

'It needs to be clear that the incentives...match the strategic plan in a fundamental way.' Alison Young, Department of Criminology

To support the aims of *Growing Esteem*, a number of changes are essential. Some are in the hands of the University, others rest on the support of the national government.

Internal

To become one of the finest universities in the world, the University requires an internal discipline of systematic evaluation and a willingness to move resources in response to academic performance and potential, refining over time the measures that faculties will use to make decisions. If the University is to stand with the finest, this must be true of every program and academic unit, and be tested regularly.

Likewise, the University's enterprise systems and administrative processes must support each stream of academic work. For cross-disciplinary and knowledge transfer efforts to succeed, budgets, policies and incentives will need to be more transparent to staff, and programs more visible to potential partners, sponsors and beneficiaries.

A shift toward more graduate entry will affect admissions policy, timetabling, capital infrastructure and online access to course materials. The University needs the capacity to offer more scholarships to the brightest local and international students to enrol regardless of personal circumstances, and to design its own systems for assessing merit and equity. Extending the Access Melbourne scholarship program will be a major focus for philanthropic outreach, offering scope to support wider access for postgraduates as well as undergraduates.

These financial and administrative challenges will have to be addressed if the overall strategy is to prevail. Happily, the University of Melbourne is well-served by a talented and committed staff who work closely with academics. Recognising and developing this partnership will be a key part of the future. Attainment of Melbourne's core goals rests on collaboration.

External

The University can serve the national interest best by playing to its strengths, building its global profile in research, setting a benchmark for student learning, and offering a distinctive choice – one among many – for talented students, scholars and professional staff.

There are constraints on the University's strategic choices imposed by Commonwealth policy. In an ideal world higher education would see a reversal of the recent decline in public support per student. But if the current decline is set to continue, the task is to persuade government to lift those restrictions that prevent the University from taking more responsibility for its own income and expenditure.

The University must make a strong case to Canberra for policy change. To compete and contribute in a global setting the University needs to be able to set its own fees, to pay for the staff, facilities and services essential in a leading university. The University must be freed from current restrictions so it can decide the right distribution of students between disciplines, fee-paying and subsidised, postgraduate and undergraduate.

Students in turn should be supported for the real and total cost of study. This requires an end to arbitrary caps and conditions on FEE-HELP borrowing for self-funded students. Ideally it would also see a reallocation of some HECS places from undergraduate to postgraduate courses, with any surplus places reallocated by government to other institutions so that the Victorian pool of publicly supported places is not reduced.

This is the case the University will put to all political parties. Melbourne is committed to a public mission, but needs greater licence to pursue that goal. With more freedom of action the University can develop, in time, a new funding strategy around graduate schools, with sustainable teaching programs ministering to a smaller student cohort.

Beyond government, there is a further audience the University must reach. The idea of an institution that stresses research, graduate schools and targeted knowledge transfer runs against conventional wisdom. By long practice, Australian universities are comprehensive, predominantly undergraduate and operate across many campuses. Reputation is measured by entry scores and engagement by good works.

To conceive the University mission as a tightly-focused trio of activities, each justified by shared goals, is to suggest an unfamiliar and perhaps unwelcome innovation.

The poet Wordsworth observed that an artist who is great and original must create the taste by which they will be enjoyed. As it pursues this agenda over the next decade, the University of Melbourne must help widen Australian expectations about the role and composition of higher education. It must argue for diversity within the system so students can choose the type of institution that works best for them. It must present the case for graduate schools as a viable and valuable way to train professionals. And it will need to demonstrate that a different approach to student selection can still achieve equality of opportunity for the broadest range of students.

'The answer to our own strategic questions will be linked to the positions taken by other institutions in our region, including government institutions'

Mark Considine, Centre for Public Policy

'Making the University one of the finest in the world is not on... (unless) the Government changes its mind... gives up the 35% rule and perhaps raises the 25% limit on HECS surcharge...

With more money, more can be paid to get first-class staff, facilities can be improved, etc' Max Corden, Faculty of Economics and Commerce

'Fewer constraints would enable the University to respond to market pressure in a more not less, constructive manner in terms of the University's mission and contribution to its various constituencies' Ian Harper, Melbourne Business School



Conclusion

Melbourne's Prospects for Growing Esteem

'The bottom line is we have to be viable and world class... We have to be clear what sort of university we want and what disciplines we want' Ian Williamson,
Department of Geomatics

'The University has a key role to affirm the value of certification/ credentialing... to ensure the increasing value of its alumni's academic qualifications over time' Wendy Lawler, Marcia Lewis, Holly Sereni, Mike Bicknell, Kate Kennedy, Sue McGraw, Ben Ragg, Tim Roman and Ann Clark, Development Office

'There is a much greater potential to work with the private sector'
Chris Ryan, Australian Centre for Science, Innovation and Society

'Public interventions should be endorsed and valued by being recognised as serious business'
Chris McAuliffe, Ian Potter Museum of Art

'My team and I had a long chat about it... What this strategy means is immediately clear. That in itself is energising.'
Sue Collins, Events and Projects

Whatever the current constraints and however challenging the global competition, the University of Melbourne is singularly fortunate.

It enjoys a magnificent campus in a superb inner-city setting, access to the best and brightest students, a long tradition of world-class research and numerous links to cultural, political, industrial and community life.

Thanks to generations of support from graduates and the public, the University can offer the most generous scholarship scheme in Australia, attracting talented students from beyond state and national boundaries. The result is a vibrant and multi-cultural intellectual milieu.

Given these great advantages, Melbourne can be one of the finest universities in the world. The means to do so are relatively straight-forward, if neither easy nor quick.

The University must be tough-minded about what is core to the institution, and focus research effort in areas of relative advantage and importance.

The University must work toward a different student mix, with more graduate programs to ensure its qualifications set local benchmarks and retain their global parity.

The University must develop mechanisms for supporting knowledge transfer activities where scholarly forms of knowledge can make a difference.

For students all this can deliver a more coherent undergraduate grounding followed by superb professional training in an institution that combines research excellence with a focused commitment to the communities it serves. Together, such initiatives will reinforce the triple helix of academic work that characterises a fine university. They create a Melbourne Experience grounded in one place but with many points of entry to a world of ideas, expertise and possibilities.

In the past decade the *Melbourne Agenda* has served the University's mission and community well. In the transition to *Growing Esteem*, the University takes up again the long but rewarding path to becoming one of the finest universities in the world.





Notes



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

Further Information
The University of Melbourne
Victoria 3010 Australia

General Enquiries
Telephone +61 3 8344 4000
Facsimile +61 3 8344 5104

www.unimelb.edu.au