

Swinburne in 2015 (as revised during 2010)

1. Introduction

Swinburne has been enormously successful in recent years. We have significantly enhanced our research status and been ranked in the Shanghai Jiao Tong top 500 universities, we have consistently been ranked by our students as one of the highest quality learning and teaching institutions in Australia and we were the Large Vocational Education and Training provider of the year in 2009. The built environment of our campuses has been transformed and the qualifications of our staff have improved enormously. We are progressively maximising our dual-sector advantages. Our staff have a growing sense of pride in what they, and their institution, have achieved and a growing confidence in their place in the tertiary education sector. The investment we have made positions the University for the future. "Swinburne in 2015" outlines how we will capitalise on this investment, building the transformational Swinburne of the future.

"Swinburne in 2015" is not a conventional plan or vision statement. Rather, it is a holistic statement outlining the University's aspirations, the institutional model required to achieve these aspirations and the measures of success which will guide us.

2. The Transformational University

Throughout 2009 and early 2010, the University community engaged in an extensive conversation about the shape of our future. This included discussions with groups across the institution, focus groups and discussion papers. From this consultation, it is clear that the vision for Swinburne in 2015 is as a "transformational institution". As such, Swinburne is an institution that transforms lives through quality education and transforms society through world class research. We will be an institution that provides opportunities for a broad cross-section of society to maximise their opportunities. Swinburne is an innovative institution adapting to the needs of our key stakeholders.

Importantly, Swinburne will be an institution with an absolute focus on the quality of our education and research but will not confuse quality with elitism. In short, we will deliver world class practical outcomes.

The model for the future is summarised in the virtuous circle in Figure 1. Under this model, Swinburne aims to grow its student base across all areas of the institution. This growth will provide the financial resources required to invest in the people and infrastructure required to continue building an outstanding institution. This investment will underpin the development of high quality teaching and research. This quality and the public recognition of the achievements of the University will enhance the reputation of the University as an institution of choice for students and research partners. The resulting reputation for quality will underpin demand and further growth, thus closing the circle.

Importantly, this model clearly identifies that success will require a shared contribution. The model will require outstanding education and training, world class research, flexible pathways for students and high quality administrative systems. Swinburne of the future will continue to recognise and celebrate the diversity of the institution.

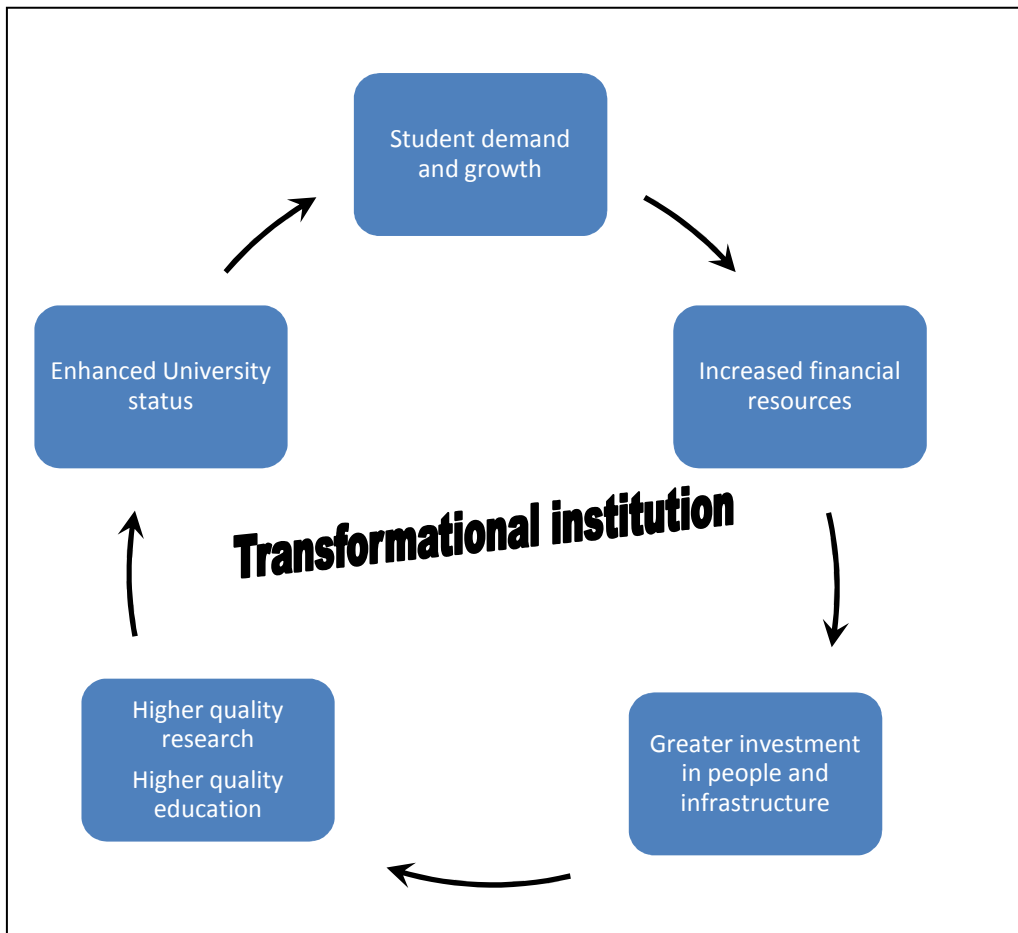


Figure 1: The interlinking elements of building Swinburne in 2015.

The model shown in Figure 1 would suggest that growth could continue indefinitely. Clearly, at some point, an institution would become so large that both educational experience and institutional efficiency will decline. In such a case, the decrease in the quality of education and research would effectively slow further growth. As a relatively small institution, Swinburne is still far from this point.

3. Institutional Growth

From 2012 an uncapped, demand-driven system will be introduced in Higher Education. This change will parallel the system already operational for TAFE diploma programs in Victoria. These changes will usher in a much more dynamic and diverse tertiary educational system. Swinburne aims to grow its student base across all areas of its activities, including undergraduate and postgraduate, TAFE and Higher Education. This growth will underpin the continued drive for quality across the University.

Goal 1 – Growth: Position Swinburne to maximise growth in an uncapped, demand-driven environment and, through growth, underpin the dynamic development of the University.

This Goal will be achieved through three aims, quantifying growth across our various programs.

Aim 1.1: Grow total full-time equivalent on-campus student load from 25,500 EFTSL in 2009 to 32,500 EFTSL in 2015.

Aim 1.2: Grow on-campus enrolments in accredited Higher Education programs by 5% per annum from 18,500 in 2009 to 25,000 in 2015.

Aim 1.3: Grow delivery in accredited VET programs across all modes of delivery by at least 3% per annum over the period to 2015.

4. Transformational Learning and Teaching

A quality education adds value to the individual and transforms their life. Swinburne has a remarkable record of sustained quality in its educational programs. Importantly, Swinburne views quality in terms of the assessment made by students and their employers rather than in input measures such as tertiary entry score.

Goal 2 – Transformational Learning and Teaching: Ensure that Swinburne courses are nationally recognised for their quality, flexibility and industry engagement – supporting all students to achieve their educational and employment aspirations.

A core aim in achieving this goal will be to maintain the exceptionally high value students and employers place on Swinburne programs and the employability of our students.

Aim 2.1: Maintain CEQ outcomes averaged over ‘good teaching’, and ‘overall satisfaction’ at least 10 percentage points above the national average.

Aim 2.2: Maintain CEQ outcomes on the ‘generic skills’ scale at least 10 percentage points above the national average.

Aim 2.3: Maintain the NCVER measure of graduate satisfaction at least 2 percentage points above the national average.

Aim 2.4: Increase, in each year to 2015, both Higher Education and TAFE performance on the TEQSA student engagement measures.

Aim 2.5: Maintain the GDS “full-time employment” and NCVER “graduate employment” measures at least 1 percentage point above the national averages.

One of the defining features of Swinburne is its ability to build pathways for students to succeed. Over many years, Swinburne has demonstrated that an important element in widening educational participation is providing appropriate underpinning and preparation. In addition, a key measure of educational quality is whether students decide to undertake multiple Swinburne qualifications.

In a demand-driven system it will be important that Swinburne continues to innovate, providing programs and pathways which address student needs. To this end, the University is presently introducing a Swinburne Guarantee which will provide a guaranteed place for all students to progress to a qualification at the next level. For example certificate graduates into diploma programs, diploma graduates into bachelor programs and bachelor graduates into master programs. Similarly, a range of bachelor programs with an embedded diploma as the first year are also being developed. It will be key to the Swinburne experience that these initiatives are successful, meet students' needs and are seen as high quality.

Aim 2.6: By 2015, at least 25% of graduating students will have enrolled in more than one qualification at Swinburne.

Aim 2.7: Fully implement the Swinburne Guarantee across all Swinburne programs.

Aim 2.8: By 2015, a minimum of 20 Swinburne bachelor degrees will have an embedded diploma or advanced diploma program.

Blended and online education has grown enormously in recent years and student surveys reveal student engagement for online programs is as high as face-to-face programs. It is clear that changes in technology and social norms mean that online education will be a major element of tertiary education in the future. Swinburne has made the decision to become a significant provider of high quality online education.

Aim 2.9: Grow total online unit enrolments by 10% per annum from 18,400 in 2009 to greater than 32,500 in 2015.

Aim 2.10: Ensure that, by 2015, all students will be able to study at least 20% of their chosen program(s) online.

A distinctive element of the Swinburne education is its vocational focus. TAFE programs have traditionally had strong industry links and within Higher Education, programs such as Industry Based Learning and the, more recent, Professional Learning Model have been extremely popular with students and enhanced their learning and outcomes. In a more competitive market, Swinburne programs will need to further enhance employment and career outcomes for students.

Aim 2.11: By 2015, 100% of Swinburne bachelor degree students will have industry engagement embedded in their programs.

The suite of aims outlined above make clear that Swinburne sees the quality of its education programs as outstanding and aims to maintain that position, as the institution expands. That expansion will mean that innovative new educational programs will emerge and delivery methods and entry requirements will progressively become more flexible to meet the changing needs of students and our society. Importantly, our educational quality will be measured by the "value add" for our students and the way in which a Swinburne qualification can transform their lives.

5. Transformational Research

Swinburne sees world class research as an essential requirement of a great university. Swinburne's research performance has risen dramatically in recent years and the future of the University is strongly linked to the continued growth of our research achievements. Quality research enriches a university's culture and provides the intellectual underpinnings for a knowledge society. As such, Swinburne believes that the University must play a major role in transforming our society through the research conducted by the staff and students of Swinburne.

Goal 3 – Transformational research: Swinburne will be internationally recognised as a high quality research-intensive university.

In achieving this goal, Swinburne will set itself a range of ambitious research metrics as measures of research excellence.

Aim 3.1: By 2015, Swinburne will be ranked in the Shanghai Jiao Tong top 400 universities in the world.

Aim 3.2: Increase National Competitive Grant (NCG) income per FTE member of academic staff by 10% per annum.

Aim 3.3: Increase industry-linked research income (Category 3 research income) per FTE member of academic staff by 7.5% per annum.

Aim 3.4: Increase total publications of academic staff in the Science (expanded) and Social Science Citation Database by 15% per annum.

Aim 3.5: Build collaborative research activity and contribution to the national innovation scheme by increasing jointly-supervised PhDs, joint research publications and active research collaborations by an average of at least 10% per annum.

These measures will provide staff with a clear understanding of the major research measures driving both the national research agenda and also the imperatives for the University. These same research measures will also constitute key elements of Swinburne's approach to strengthening staff performance and development and the academic promotion process.

Research Higher Degree students, and particularly PhD students, form a critical component of a research-intensive university and Swinburne will aim to continue to grow the number and quality of our PhD students. It is important both for students and the University that such students complete their studies in a timely manner.

Aim 3.6: Increase the number of students who timely complete their PhD within four years full time equivalent to above 70% by 2015.

Much of Swinburne's research success has been built on a policy of research concentration. Swinburne has built, or is developing, a series of research centres of international importance. These centres have been critically important to Swinburne's development and the University will continue to support and develop high performing centres. To reach the next level of research performance, however, the University will need to broaden the research contribution of its staff. This will mean a greater expectation for staff across the University to be research active, as measured by the metrics outlined in Aims 3.1 to 3.4. In broadening the research base, it will be important that the University does not abandon its policy of research focus.

This will require all faculties to balance the requirements for teaching expertise across a broad range of sub-disciplines, whilst achieving research critical mass in specific areas. This can be achieved by faculties defining a small number of areas of research strength into which they will recruit. Staff appointed to these areas of research strength will be expected to teach, both in their areas of research expertise, and in related areas where they will have domain knowledge.

Aim 3.7: Identify, within each faculty, a limited number of areas of research concentration (in addition to existing Research Centres) and strategically target future academic appointments to these areas of concentration.

6. University Culture

"Swinburne in 2015" aims to build a culture where excellence is encouraged, celebrated and rewarded. Excellence can be measured in many ways: the metrics for learning and teaching and research discussed above, staff qualification, university facilities and, importantly, the desire to improve and achieve to one's full potential. These elements form the nucleus of a vibrant, scholarly institution supporting both staff and students.

Goal 4 – Transformational culture: Create a working, learning and research culture for our people to ensure that we have the organisational capacity to achieve the 2015 vision.

A key element of Swinburne's recent research growth has been the growth in the percentage of staff who are PhD qualified. To achieve the ambitious research targets set for 2015, this growth in qualifications must continue.

Aim 4.1: Continue to increase the percentage of academic staff with a PhD such that Swinburne equals the Go8 level by 2015 (from 62% in 2009 to 73% in 2015).

Formal qualifications in teaching are equally important to formal research qualifications. If Swinburne is to achieve its ambitious agenda for educational excellence, staff will need to be leaders in educational pedagogy and have appropriate teaching qualifications.

Aim 4.2: All newly-appointed academic staff involved in teaching, without prior evidence of teaching competence, will complete the Graduate Certificate in Learning & Teaching within four years of their appointment.

An important element in the development of an organisational culture which values excellence, and encourages and supports staff to achieve excellence, is an appropriate performance and development process. Such a process enables staff members to plan their careers and focus their activities, with the support of their supervisors. For this reason, the University has commenced the implementation and ongoing refinement of a performance and development process, in consultation with staff.

Aim 4.3: Extend and refine the University's performance and development process, on an ongoing basis.

An essential element in the development of a vibrant organisation is the provision of a safe and supportive working environment for staff and students. To this end, Swinburne is fully committed to the principles of Occupational Health and Safety and Equal Employment Opportunity.

Aim 4.4: Embed Occupational Health and Safety, as appropriate, within the Swinburne planning and reporting framework.

7. World Class Infrastructure

In recent years, the University has made significant investments in its infrastructure. These include major renovations of many buildings, the new Advanced Technology Centre, Student Hub, Green Trade Hub and Green Technology Park. The construction of the Advanced Manufacturing Centre will commence shortly. In addition, significant investment has been made in iconic research equipment. To achieve the ambitious aims of the institution, our staff and students require world class infrastructure.

Goal 5 – Quality infrastructure: Develop the institutional infrastructure required to underpin the transformational mission of the university.

With the completion of the projects described above a number of our campuses will have been transformed. In addition, this infrastructure will provide the physical space required to support the planned student expansion. In coming years, there will be further investments in physical infrastructure across all our campuses to meet the needs of a growing institution.

Aim 5.1: Continue to enhance our built infrastructure to provide an outstanding educational and research environment for students and staff.

In addition to serving the needs of our staff and students, Swinburne is committed to progressively reducing our carbon footprint, consistent with the University's Sustainability Strategy (see Goal 6). Modern energy-efficient infrastructure, together with management practices will be critical to achieving such aims.

Aim 5.2: Adopt approaches which continue to reduce annual energy consumption/EFTSL from 5.1GJ/EFTSL in 2009 to 4.5GJ/EFTSL in 2015.

In order to provide the services our students progressively require and to meet the needs of a larger and more diverse student population, Swinburne will invest significantly in our IT infrastructure. The University already has high quality network facilities. In the coming years, this will be matched by a state-of-the-art Student Management System and enhanced supporting software systems.

Aim 5.3: Implement a modern Student Management System capable of integrating activities across TAFE and Higher Education and enhancing services to students and staff.

Aim 5.4: Building on the implementation of the new Student Management System, develop an integrated structure of software systems to provide the necessary services and information for Swinburne to function at its full potential.

8. Social Inclusion, Diversity and Sustainability

As a dual-sector university, Swinburne is ideally placed to play a major role in building social inclusion through the provision of quality education to a broad cross-section of our community. The breadth of educational programs offered by the University and our unique pathway offerings ideally position Swinburne to address the needs of low socio-economic status (SES) communities.

Goal 6 – Social Inclusion, Diversity and Sustainability: Maximise our dual-sector strengths to create a transformational model for community and educational partnership.

Aim 6.1: Implement a detailed Social Inclusion Strategy and achieve all targets within that Strategy.

Aim 6.2: Boost participation in TAFE by students from low-SES backgrounds by an average of at least 4% per annum from 11.1% of enrolments in 2009 to >14.0% of enrolments in 2015, and participation in undergraduate degree studies by an average of at least 6% per annum from 10.0% of enrolments in 2009 to >14.2% of enrolments in 2015.

Aim 6.3: Continue educational expansion at outer metropolitan locations where educational attainment has traditionally been low.

As part of Swinburne's commitment to broader society, we aim to be a leader in environmental sustainability. This commitment will include elements of our education and research activities as well as the way we conduct our day-to-day activities. The University has developed a detailed Sustainability Strategy to guide us in achieving these ambitions.

Aim 6.4: Achieve all targets set for 2015 in the University's Sustainability Strategy, particularly including the targets to:

- embed sustainability concepts in all educational programs***
- reduce carbon emissions by an average of at least 2% per annum from 44,500 tonnes in 2008 to <38,500 tonnes in 2015.***

9. Internationalisation

Internationalisation has many complementary elements. For Swinburne, internationalisation includes the education of international students in Australia, trans-national educational activities in other countries, including our Sarawak campus, study abroad opportunities for Australian students, internationalisation of the curriculum, international benchmarking of our activities and international research collaboration. Internationalisation enriches the University and our students and is a central requirement for students in a modern world.

Goal 7 – Internationalisation: Achieve the desire that – “Every Swinburne student will be a global citizen”.

In achieving this goal, the continued growth of our international student population both in Australia and Sarawak will be important. In addition, Swinburne will aim to enhance student mobility between Melbourne and Sarawak. This enhanced mobility will further strengthen the links between Melbourne and Sarawak and open up important cultural links for all Swinburne students.

Aim 7.1: Increase international student commencements onshore, excluding ELICOS and exchange student commencements, by an average of 5% per annum, from 4,350 in 2009 to 5,900 in 2015.

Aim 7.2: Increase enrolments at Sarawak by an average of 10% per annum from 2,750 students in 2009 to 5,000 students by 2015.

Aim 7.3: Increase the number of students transferring from Melbourne to Sarawak and from Sarawak to Melbourne by an average of 10% per annum from 56 in 2009 to > 100 in 2015.

Just as the University sees pathways for domestic students as a key element of the Swinburne advantage, pathways offered through Swinburne College will provide the same opportunities for international students. Swinburne College has the opportunity to develop into a major pathway college in future years, expanding its geographical base and expanding significantly.

Aim 7.4: Position Swinburne College as a major pathway college in Australia and increase its enrolments by 8% per annum from 950 in 2009 to >1,500 in 2015.

Swinburne wishes to be an international provider of education. This is clearly articulated in the above aims. In addition to these ambitious growth targets, Swinburne also intends to continue to develop high quality trans-national activities. These activities will broaden our geographic outreach and provide opportunities for international students to pathway to Melbourne or, in some circumstances, to receive a full Swinburne qualification offshore. In all cases, however, the same commitment to quality will be maintained across all Swinburne activities.

Aim 7.5: Develop a suite of sustainable and high quality trans-national activities and increase the number of Swinburne students studying in such programs by an average of 12% per annum from 730 in 2009 to >1,500 in 2015.

The Australian economy and our society are closely linked to the rest of the world. We are an export economy and our society is increasingly multicultural. Australian students must be able to work within this international community. Students progressively expect that their university qualifications will equip them as global citizens. University curriculum can achieve only so much in achieving these outcomes. Students are enormously enriched by the opportunity to study and live in another culture. For these reasons, Swinburne is committed to ensuring our students are provided with achievable options to study in other countries.

Aim 7.6: Enhance student mobility as a core broadening element of a Swinburne education and increase the number of outbound exchange students by an average of 8% per annum from 465 in 2009 to >750 in 2015.

10. Conclusions

The Goals outlined above are ambitious. If achieved, they will continue the transformation of Swinburne and position the University as an institution with true international standing. This vision will challenge us as a university to make bold and sometimes difficult decisions. We need to be uncompromising in our pursuit of excellence. We also need to retain our focus on the core elements which will distinguish Swinburne from other institutions. It is this role which “Swinburne in 2015” is intended to fulfil – to provide the University with focus and clarity as to our future directions.