

The Australian Higher Education Workforce of the Future

Project Background and FAQs

Background

Over the last two decades significant changes have occurred within the higher education (HE) workforce and have involved major federal government policy changes. The recent (2012) introduction of the Demand Driven Model has significantly impacted the sector with considerable growth in student enrolments, and profound changes to the way universities currently operate will occur if the higher education system is deregulated in the manner proposed by the federal government.

The uncertainty of what the future holds for Australian universities is compounded by shifts in economic factors in Australia, rapid technological changes, changing expectations of students, employers, government and industry, and global factors such as international student participation in the Australian HE system and international economic trends.

As a consequence, there is a requirement for universities to reshape their course offerings, and the way in which teaching and support services are delivered to their students. This also involves a need to continually reassess and change the manner in which internal business processes need to be structured to support service delivery to students. At the same time, university workforces are continuing to grow in size and complexity, and effective people management and workforce planning are becoming vitally important to the proper functioning of universities.

As such, AHEIA, in partnership with the Deputy Vice-Chancellors Corporate Group of UA, has commissioned research into what the HE workforce of the future needs to look like if Australian universities are to continue to be competitive in a global context whilst meeting the emerging demands that will be placed upon them.

Research focus

The research will be focused on five themes identified by AHEIA:



Environmental impact factors

Domestic and international student markets, coupled with changes to regulatory and funding environment



Student expectations

The Demand Driven System is placing demands on universities to deliver in line with increasing student expectations



Changing nature of work

The need to effectively meet mobility, flexibility, and career driven demands of the modern workplace



Changing business models

Opportunity to adapt the way universities operate based on changing future needs



Future workforce needs

The nature, capability requirements, and roles and responsibilities of the HE workforce will need to change

Frequently asked questions

1. Why is this review being undertaken?

In order for Australian universities to continue to compete on a global scale, evidence-based consideration of current and future workforce requirements is critical. This review will help us focus on what the future of the sector may look like, and give us the options we need to respond.

2. What will the outcome of the research be?

PwC will present a public report outlining a number of strategic options to evolve the higher education workforce in line with the future demands of the sector.

3. What is the process for conducting the research?

PwC is undertaking research using qualitative and quantitative methods, including literature review and analytics, surveys, and interviews/workshops with key stakeholders, both in Australia and globally. The research will encompass not just universities, but other leading organisations and employer and student representative bodies.

5. Will I be contacted to participate?

You may be contacted to participate in a survey, interview or workshop in November or December. Broad participation by the Australian higher education sector is critical to ensuring a relevant and meaningful outcome of this research.