



MURDOCH UNIVERSITY

INFORMATION STATEMENT

2021

Prepared in accordance with Section 94

Freedom of Information Act 1992

1. INTRODUCTION

Murdoch University was formally established by an Act of the Western Australian Parliament in 1973 to meet the growing higher education needs of the community. Named after prominent Australian author and philosopher, Sir Walter Murdoch, the University officially opened on the centenary of his birth on September 17, 1974. As the first University in Australia to offer a new, flexible admission system, tertiary education was made more accessible to the community – a tradition and ethos that Murdoch upholds to this day. Today, with more than 25,000 students and over 1,800 staff, Murdoch is realising its vision as a significant, comprehensive university with world-leading research providing solutions to some of the world's big challenges. Our more than 80,000 graduates, distributed around the world, have influenced free thinking on a global scale. Murdoch has been and continues to be, a creative force for current and future generations.

The University's 10-year Strategic Plan builds upon its strengths, growing Murdoch into a strong, vibrant university community and positioning us to thrive in and make contributions to a modern world. The success of the plan will be measured through the impacts that our graduates, life-changing research and innovative campus developments make to communities, both within Western Australia and across our global locations.

Murdoch University is distinguished by a long and proud tradition of delivering quality research expertise, with a commitment to fostering ongoing research partnerships and collaborations. We have established three interdisciplinary research institutes aligned with each of our major research strengths in food, health and the environment. Acknowledging that we can't live healthy lives without safe and nutritious food, and we can't have food without a sustainable environment, has shaped this collaborative research ecosystem. As the global population grows towards 10 billion over the next 30 years, we continue to undertake world-leading translational research to provide innovative approaches and solutions to some of the world's greatest challenges in these areas.

The University has a long and proud history of providing access to higher education to prospective students via non-traditional pathways. Murdoch offers nine distinct programs within the Access Pathways portfolio. Murdoch's innovative entry pathways have positioned it as having the highest score in enrolments for Low SES students across WA universities and the highest share in WA for students who identify as Indigenous at 2% of the enrolled cohort. Murdoch University consistently works to provide a vibrant, inclusive and diverse learning experience for students. High-quality learning and teaching lie at the heart of our mission. The learning and teaching strategy set an ambitious vision for continued improvements to infrastructure, curriculum, delivery of learning and teaching and support services.

The University serves a global audience of learners across three continents and is active in local, regional and international community engagement to cultivate knowledge partnerships. These collaborations aim to promote discussion and debate on matters such as food security, sustainability, health futures and cultural enrichment through the arts, humanities and social sciences in line with the University's Strategic Plan.

2. LEGISLATION

The management of the University is executed in accordance with the [Murdoch University Act 1973](#) (the Act). The internal legislation of the University consists of:

- Statutes
- By-Laws
- Regulations
- Rules
- Policies

Published versions of these documents are available on the University Legislation page located at <http://www.murdoch.edu.au/Legislation/>.

The University also operates under State and Federal legislation.

3. FUNCTIONS OF THE UNIVERSITY

The functions of the University as stated in Section 6 of the Act are:

- to provide courses of study appropriate to a university, and other tertiary courses;
- to encourage and participate in the development and improvement of tertiary education to meet the needs of the community;
- to undertake and support scholarship, pure and applied research, invention, innovation, education and consultancy, and to apply those matters to the advancement and application of knowledge –
 - to the benefit of industry, business and government; and
 - to the benefit and wellbeing of the Western Australian, Australian and international communities;
- to commercially develop or commercially use, for the University's benefit, any facility, resource or property (real or personal) of the University or in which the University has a right or interest (including, for example, study, research, knowledge and intellectual property and the practical application of study, research, knowledge and intellectual property), whether alone or with others;
- to generate revenue for the purposes of funding the carrying out of its functions;
- to serve the Western Australian, Australian and international communities and the public interest by —
 - enriching cultural and community life; and
 - raising public awareness of educational, scientific and artistic developments; and
 - promoting critical and free enquiry, informed intellectual discussion and public debate within the University and in the wider society;
- to provide the facilities that are necessary or conducive to the attainment of the objects of the University and the performance of its functions.

The University serves the community by developing and promoting its strengths as a research and teaching university, focusing on high quality teaching and scholarship, flexible degree programmes, close and effective interaction between staff and students, and providing an international perspective.

The Service to Society lens of the [Strategic Plan](#) ensures that Murdoch University fulfils its functions under the Act.

4. OUR STRATEGY

Our 5-year [Strategic Plan](#) builds upon our strengths, growing Murdoch into a strong, vibrant university community and positioning us to thrive in and make contributions to a modern world. The success of the plan will be measured through the impacts that our graduates, life-changing research and innovative campus developments make to communities, both within Western Australia and across our global locations.

4.1 Our Purpose

Our purpose is to be of service to our communities and apply our creativity, knowledge and determination to making a sustainable difference for current and future generations.

4.2 Our Core Goals

Students and Education: To provide an outstanding education experience for every student leading to our graduates being innovators fully prepared for their future careers.

Research and Innovation: To provide life changing solutions to complex world challenges.

4.3 Our Lenses

Three lenses will focus Murdoch University's actions and priorities.

Service to society: To meet the responsibility of being a university in the service of society and to play a key role in the economic and social wellbeing of our communities.

Collaborative partnerships: To grow and leverage our collaborative partnerships to enable achievement of our core goals for Education and Research.

Global outlook: To extend our impact as a global university.

4.4 Our Pillars

Four pillars will support our strategic activities.

People, values and culture: It is the people of Murdoch University and their commitment that will bring this strategy to success. Our core values and guiding principles come to life through our actions. These are the key to our future.

Physical and digital environments: Developing our physical campuses to be porous environments where the University, its staff and students, seamlessly interact and live side by side with the world beyond is a focus for this strategy and our further horizon. Universities are key contributors to economic and social wellbeing of communities and co-location, co-working and co-employment are key elements for advancing common goals..

Financial strength: Building a strong financial platform is a critical objective for the next five years. In order to have a strong future, we will have a clear focus on growth in student numbers, student retention and completion, strategic management of our costs and strategic investment in high value initiatives.

Value-add services and operations: Supporting the core education and research goals relies on our professional service teams providing both basic business and differentiating capabilities. Our strategy around basic business capabilities is to create efficiencies of scale, to adopt streamlining of transactional processes and to control costs strategically.

5. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Our organisation comprises people who are committed to Murdoch University's success.

Under the [organisational structure](#) of Murdoch University, the Vice Chancellor is the most senior executive position at Murdoch University – serving as both the principal academic officer and chief executive officer for the university. The Vice Chancellor embodies the values of Murdoch and promotes the university's external goals, including stakeholder relations and community engagement. The Vice Chancellor encourages, promotes and facilitates the very best academic and organisational performance across the whole University.

Murdoch University has developed an academic model (two College structure) that will help us deliver on our strategy by promoting greater collaboration.

The two Colleges group together disciplines with similar aims and interests, to foster collaboration and encourage cross-discipline activity.

6. GOVERNANCE

Governance structures at Murdoch University comprise a committee structure and a management structure.

Main committees:

- [Senate](#) (the governing body; Chancellor as Chair);
- Senate sub-committees;
- [Academic Council](#) (principal academic governance committee);
- Academic Council sub-committees; and
- School committees.

Management:

- Vice Chancellor;
- Provost;
- Deputy Vice Chancellors;
- Pro Vice Chancellors;
- College Deans;
- Chief Operating Officer;
- Chief Financial Officer; and
- Directors and other senior managers.

7. ARRANGEMENTS FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN POLICY MAKING

Provision is made for the University's students and staff to be involved in the decision-making processes of the University on which there are elected representatives.

Members of the public can write to the Vice Chancellor and raise any issue or concerns about university policy or administration.

The Alumni Association of the University provide an avenue for graduates to maintain active links with the University and remain informed of university activities and have an input on university policy. Two members of Senate are elected by and from the Graduates of the University.

The student population of the University can participate in the decision-making processes of the University through the various committees that provide for student representation and via the Student Guild that is established under section 20(2) of the Act as the recognised means of communication between Students and the Senate.

The University also consults the local Council and community on matters concerning the physical development of the campus, transport, safety and security issues, and how these impinge on the local community.

8. DOCUMENTS/INFORMATION HELD BY THE UNIVERSITY

Documents and records of the University are held in Central Administration, the Academic Schools, Offices, Centres and Institutes. Only a small proportion of the University's records are retained indefinitely – principally for their ongoing historical value.

All records, hardcopy and electronic, created by the University are subject to its *Retention and Disposal schedules* in accordance with the *State Records Act 2000*. These schedules set out the minimum period of time that the various records series generated by the University must be kept before they can be legally destroyed.

Further information regarding the retention and disposal of University records is available at <http://our.murdoch.edu.au/University-Secretarys-Office/Records-Management-and-Archives/Retention-and-disposal-of-University-records/>.

8.1 Student Records

Student records contain information which is obtained during the course of a student's University career. It includes personal and academic details and associated correspondence.

The confidentiality status of student records restricts access to the student and appropriate officers, unless authorised by the student.

8.2 Records Management and Archives

The University Secretary's Office, through the Records Management and Archives Office has responsibility for the University's records management and archival programs. Schools and Offices create and maintain records that are relevant to their functions, in particular, standard accounting and financial records are kept by the Finance Office and standard employment records are kept by the People and Culture Office.

As with most organisations the University operates in a hybrid environment with records being created and received in paper as well as electronic format. Consequently, the Records Management and Archives Office maintains hardcopy files as well as databases, spread-sheets, word processing documents, digital images, records that appear solely on the University's Intranet, and other electronic content.

The University Archives house records that fall within the scope of the Archives collection strategy. These are records that have continuing administrative, legal, financial or historical value to the University and/ or to the broader community. They include records that document the establishment of the University, the drafting of its legislation, major organisational decision making, significant projects, policy and procedures, minutes and agendas of the University's major committees and working parties, architectural drawings and photographs.

The right of access to information is limited by a number of factors including legislation, legal and commercial reasons, privacy considerations (personal information about individuals), and official university policy.

8.3 Library Services

The Murdoch University Library service spans three locations across two campuses. This includes:

- the Geoffrey Bolton Library;
- the Veterinary Library; and
- the Mandurah Campus Library.

Visitors from other universities and members of the community are encouraged to take advantage of our world class print collections, facilities and study spaces.

Further information regarding the university's library services is available at <http://www.murdoch.edu.au/library>.

8.4 Documents Available Free of Charge

A significant amount of information is held on the University's web site, including a large number of documents, information, pamphlets, brochures and booklets which are available free of charge.

You can search for information through the University website located at <http://www.murdoch.edu.au/>.

Graduates of the University receive a graduation package that contains their Testamur and Statement of Academic Record free of charge when they graduate.

8.5 Documents/Information Available at a Cost

There are a number of documents that are available upon application and payment of a fee.

Those available through the University's [document ordering service](#) are:

- Statement of Academic Record;
- Confirmation of Completion of Studies;

- GPA Letter; and
- Certified Copies.

You can search for other documents/information through the University website located at <http://www.murdoch.edu.au/>.

9. OPERATION OF FREEDOM OF INFORMATION IN THE UNIVERSITY

The Western Australian [Freedom of Information Act 1992](#) (the FOI Act) gives the public a right to access documents held by most State government agencies, including public universities, subject to some limitations.

Documents accessible under the FOI Act include (but are not limited to) maps, plans, diagrams, graphs, drawings, photographs, videos, audiotapes, CCTV footage, reports, handwritten file notes, tables, letters, memorandums, and electronic records including emails.

Anyone can also apply to have personal information about themselves in government documents amended if that information is inaccurate, incomplete, out of date or misleading.

The University's Freedom of Information Coordinator can be contacted by phone on (08) 9360 6544 or by email at foi@murdoch.edu.au.

Further information regarding Murdoch University's Freedom of Information processes can be found at <https://www.murdoch.edu.au/about-us/governance/freedom-of-information>