

School of Veterinary Science

Strategic Plan Priorities

2022-2025



Introduction

Since the first intake of students in 1936, the School of Veterinary Science has achieved a sustained record of excellence in teaching, research and service.

The School manages two flagship programs: our five-year Bachelor of Veterinary Science degree that is accredited by international accrediting bodies in Australia/NZ (AVBC), UK (RCVS) and North America (AVMA); and, our Bachelor of Veterinary Technology degree (managed jointly with the School of Agriculture and Food Sustainability).

The School operates from modern, purpose-built teaching and research facilities at UQ's Gatton campus, allowing students and staff access to an integrated site for animal production, health and welfare teaching and research activities set on more than 1000 hectares of rural land in the Lockyer Valley. Our teaching and support staff provide a supportive learning environment for professional development to global standards for students and staff.

Our clinical facilities and staff support the highest standards of veterinary clinical services for client-owned animals of all species. Student involvement in clinical service delivery is an integral part of authentic work-integrated-learning, preparing our graduates for a wide range of professional careers related to animal health and wellbeing.

Our graduates are resilient, independent and highly capable veterinarians and veterinary technologists who possess the initiative and problem-solving abilities required for professional success in a rapidly changing global environment.

This Strategic Plan outlines our Vision (aspirational future state) and Mission (what we do). The plan will guide decisions by the School over the next three years.

The Strategic Plan is complemented by the School Operational Plan (SVS-OP), delivered as the SVS Plan on a page. The SVS-OP outlines priority actions aimed at making measurable progress towards strategies outlined in the Strategic Plan. The SVS-OP is updated annually.

There are a number of contextual drivers that have influenced our Plan.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the School had identified major contextual issues associated with the relatively high cost of veterinary science teaching, staff workloads, career development and job satisfaction, and difficulties in maintaining a referral-centric veterinary teaching hospital. These drivers have been exacerbated by disruptive impacts associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, global inflationary and supply chain pressures, and the Ukraine war.

The School is engaging in an adaptive challenge in responding to our operating context. Adaptive challenges involve an acknowledgement that what has worked in the past may no longer be fit for purpose. Adaptive challenges involve situations where deeply held beliefs are challenged, and where approaches developed with enormous effort over many years may need to be altered. Successfully addressing an adaptive challenge requires a willingness to revisit and change individual priorities, habits, beliefs and actions.

In response to these challenges, we are placing priority on staff and student wellbeing; on workplace culture, teamwork and engagement; and, on prioritisation of effort to manage workload within a challenging resource environment. At the same time, we wish to maintain or improve the quality of our outputs across teaching, research, service and engagement.



Vision

Our vision is to provide global knowledge leadership through excellence in veterinary science.



Mission

We benefit animals, people and the environment by delivering outstanding veterinary education, research and professional services.

SVS delivers on its mission through:

- Teaching and learning activities built on a comprehensive curriculum that produces competent, internationally recognised veterinary practitioners, veterinary technicians and scientists.
- Veterinary clinical and support services providing excellence in veterinary and technician/nursing care for animals and their owners and referring veterinarians in a clinical teaching environment.
- Research and innovation to create, advance and apply knowledge to benefit animals, people and the environment.
- Engagement activities to establish and nurture positive relationships with the community, veterinary profession and other stakeholders.
- Attracting and developing outstanding staff and students who are actively engaged in a values-led workplace and learning environment.
- Sustainable operations built on efficient and effective use of resources and people to continue to deliver the highest quality outcomes in a sustainable manner.



UQ Values

UQ Values guide our behaviour and provide the foundation of our culture.

Strategic domains

Domains form the highest level of the Strategic Plan. Under each domain there are one or more strategies.



Learning and student experience



Research and innovation



Enriching our communities



Our global profile



Our people



Securing our future





Learning and student experience

We will continue to look for opportunities to improve the quality of our student learning experience, student wellbeing and sense of belonging, and to prepare our students for success in a global environment.

- Manage admissions to ensure a diverse student cohort with attributes aligned to success during study and after graduation
- Work to continually improve our curriculum with partners to support student learning experiences and graduate outcomes
- Use digital innovation, flexible learning and models/simulations to enhance the student learning experience
- Work with stakeholders to enhance the holistic campus experience and support student wellbeing, including extending these activities into professional life beyond graduation



Research and innovation

The School's research strengths span a wide range of areas in animal health (including clinical innovation), infectious diseases, animal reproduction, genetics and genomics, wildlife health, and food security. School researchers are also active in strategic partnerships in one health research including translational medicine and clinical research.

- Support School researcher participation in externally funded research
- Grow research collaborations and partnerships across disciplines and institutions that build on School strengths
- Strengthen recruitment, support and mentoring programs to increase research capacity and capability



Enriching our communities

We aim to enrich communities in Queensland and across the world through education, research, service and engagement – related to health and wellbeing of animals, people and the environment (one health).

- Continue to improve the way our veterinary clinical services provide value to client-owned animals and to our student learning environment through partnerships and through developments in our own service models
- Grow our engagement with Indigenous communities to provide partnerships for community benefit and contribute to UQ's Reconciliation Action Plan
- Engage with alumni, clients and other stakeholders to build positive connections based on our activities and their impacts on local, national and global society



Our global profile

The School of Veterinary Science has local, national and global impacts through our activities. Our two flagship programs (veterinary science and veterinary technology) attract students and staff from around the world.

- Develop partnerships with international organisations to grow activities and impacts across education, research, engagement and professional practice
- Diversify and strengthen international interest and applications for under- and post-graduate programs



Our people

Our people are key to everything the School does and achieves.

- Nurture a supportive and inclusive culture through activities that build collegiality and foster staff wellbeing
- Develop the leadership capabilities of our staff in order to improve communications and empower all staff in decision-making processes
- Promote good citizenship and a 'zero tolerance' policy towards poor behaviours
- Invest in our staff through role clarity, meaningful feedback and development opportunities to support career aspirations and recognise diverse ways of demonstrating excellence
- Manage equitable and reasonable staff workloads and support wellbeing



Securing our future

Achieving our vision requires exercising restraint and making difficult choices partly in order to enable investment in strategic priorities aimed at building a more sustainable and successful future.

- Drive efficiency and effectiveness in our operations through good governance and management of costs
- Seek to diversify and grow revenue
- Manage infrastructure and equipment priorities to support priorities for the School, Gatton campus and University
- Attract philanthropic support for our commitment to delivering benefits to animal, human and environmental health