Planning and Reporting Framework - Governing Policy

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1. Purpose of policy

The following policy provides a framework to outline the core requirements for University planning including development, approval, implementation, monitoring and review of University plans.

2. Policy scope and application

This policy applies to all staff, students and members of University decision-making or advisory bodies.

3. Regulatory background

3.1 Under Section 61 of the Financial Accountability Act 2009 the University is required to undertake planning (including both strategic and operational plans) and budgeting for the University which is appropriate to its size.

3.2 In accordance with the requirements outlined in the Financial and Performance Management Standard 2009 the University must also have appropriate systems in place for evaluating the achievement of its objectives and services stated in these plans, and must report against this performance at least once every three months.

4. Definitions

Please refer to the University's Glossary of Terms for policies and procedures. Terms and definitions identified below are specific to this policy and are critical to its effectiveness:

Consultation process means the provision of opportunity to contribute ideas and suggestions

Monitoring means systematic overview of the implementation of a University plan

University lan means a plan that is the University's Strategic Plan, or a University-wide thematic plan derived from the Strategic Plan (Top Level Plan), or the University's Operational Plan, or a plan for the operation of one or more organisational units (action plan) or a performance and development plan for an individual staff member prepared as part of Performance Planning and Review.

5. Policy Statement

Through the establishment and maintenance of the Planning and Reporting Framework, the University will undertake strategic and operational planning to assist it to:

a. realise its vision and achieve its goals on an ongoing basis;

b. integrate planning, risk, reporting and budgetary processes;

c. behave proactively rather than reactively; and

b. effectively discharge its responsibilities in accordance with its legislative requirements.

All planning at USC is underpinned by the Enterprise Risk Management Governing Policy and the Risk Management Framework and Strategy which provides the basis for integrated risk management at the University.

6. Approach to University planning

6.1 The University will adopt a systematic approach to planning based on:

a. development of action directed towards the realisation of the University's Vision and strategic priorities

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b. effective risk and resource management strategies

c. effective accountability processes including reporting on plan outcomes and

d. continuous improvement of planning processes.

6.2 The University's planning process will be led by the Vice-Chancellor and President with the participation of the University Executive, Council, Academic Board, and Planning and Resources Committee, and will be informed by an assessment of the University's internal and external environments and by consultation with staff and other stakeholders.

7. Planning and reporting framework

7.1 The University will have a planning and reporting framework comprising a hierarchy of plans cascading from the University's Vision (refer Diagram 1):

Tier 1: Strategic Plan

Tier 2: Top Level Plans

Tier 3: University Operational Plan

Tier 4: Department/school action plans

Tier 5: Individual Staff Performance Planning and Review plans

In addition, support plans (or specific purpose plans) may be developed as subsidiary plans to first and second tier plans. These plans articulate strategies to enable our students to succeed or align resources to priorities.

Diagram 1 –Planning and Reporting Framework

7.2 Different types of plans require different level of details but at a minimum strategic, top level and operational plans should include goals, performance indicators, performance targets and timelines.

7.3 The Strategic Plan includes the University's vision, sets the long-term direction of the University and articulates major University level priorities over a four-year period.

7.3.1 The Strategic Plan and any amendments to it must be approved by Council (after review by the Planning and Resources Committee), except that minor amendments to correct omissions or inaccuracies may be approved by the Vice-Chancellor and President and reported to the next scheduled meeting of Council.

7.4 Top Level Plans are second tier plans, the number and focus of which will be determined by Council from time to time, and the Vice-Chancellor and President will nominate a responsible officer (sponsor) for each Plan. Top Level Plans will complement and augment the Strategic Plan and should link strategy to operation.

7.4.1 Top Level Plans, and any amendments to them, must be approved by Council (after review by the Planning and Resources Committee), except that minor amendments to correct omissions or inaccuracies may be approved by the Vice-Chancellor and President and reported to the next scheduled meeting of Council.

7.5 Support plans are plans that are subsidiary to first and second tier plans, the number and focus of which may be determined by either Council or the Vice-Chancellor and President from time to time. These plans are generally University-wide plans which may be developed to articulate specific strategies or align resources to priorities, and the Vice-Chancellor and President will nominate a responsible officer for each Plan.

7.6 The University's Operational Plan is a third tier plan that outlines the key initiatives and targets for the University on an annual basis. The operational plan will demonstrate how the University will support the delivery of its strategic objectives within the allocated budget. They are developed based on a rolling triennial approach with the primary focus being the first year.

7.6.1 The University's Operational Plan is approved by the Vice-Chancellor and President annually for the following financial year. Any amendments to it must be approved by the Vice-Chancellor and President, except that minor amendments to correct omissions or inaccuracies may be approved by the Chief Operating Officer and reported to the Vice-Chancellor and President as soon as practicable.

7.7 Department/School action plans are fourth tier plans required for each Department (including campuses) and School within the University, and outline the key initiatives and targets for that organisational area on an annual basis. The action plans will demonstrate how the School/Department will support the delivery of its strategic objectives within the allocated budget. They are developed based on a rolling triennial approach with the primary focus being the first year.

7.7.1 Action plans are approved by the relevant member of Executive ('approving officer') - Vice-Chancellor and President, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Chief Operating Officer or Pro Vice-Chancellor - annually for the next financial year. Any amendments to the action plans must be approved by the 'approving officer', except that minor amendments to correct omissions or inaccuracies may be approved by the cost centre manager and reported to the responsible Executive member as soon as practicable.

7.8 Individual staff performance and development plans are fifth tier plans developed and reviewed as part of the University's performance planning and review process in accordance with the Performance Planning and Review (PPR) Policy.

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7.9 Within the framework of approved plans, University policies and procedures, and allocated budgets, Senior Staff are given a high degree of flexibility in decision-making. This devolution of responsibility recognises that Senior Staff are responsible for management of risks and the achievement of plans in an often dynamic environment and that operational management decisions are most appropriately made at the organisational unit level.

7.10 To address principles of transparency and accountability and ensure compliance with legislative obligations, the University will embed regular reporting processes at all levels of the planning and reporting framework to monitor performance and achievement of organisational objectives.

8. Authorities/Responsibilities

PLAN	ACTIVITY	UNIVERSITY OFFICER
	Approve minor amendments to correct omissions or inaccuracies to action plans; and Review and prepare quarterly action plan status reports if required by Relevant member of Executive	Relevant member of Senior Staff (in accordance with the approved USC organisational structure)
Department/school action plans	Approve department/school action plans and amendments to the plans; and Monitor performance of the action plans.	Relevant member of Executive (Vice-Chancellor and President, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Chief Operating Officer or Pro Vice-Chancellor in accordance with the approved USC organisational structure)
	Approve minor amendments to correct omissions or inaccuracies to the Operational Plan; and Review and prepare quarterly Operational Plan status reports.	Chief Operating Officer
Operational Plan	Approve and amend Operational Plan; and Monitor performance of the Operational Plan.	Vice-Chancellor and President
	Approve minor amendments to correct omissions or inaccuracies to support plans; Prepare performance reports as required; and Conduct a review of the support plan prior to its conclusion.	Responsible officer (member of University Executive)
Support plans	Approve and amend support plans; and Monitor performance of support plans.	Council or Vice-Chancellor and President as appropriate ('Approving body')
	Prepare Top Level Plan's performance reports for Council; and Conduct a review of the Plan prior to its conclusion.	Plan sponsor (member of University Executive)
	Approve minor amendments to correct omissions or inaccuracies to Strategic and Top Level Plans; Present Strategic Plan performance reports to Council; and Conduct a review of the Strategic Plan prior to its conclusion.	Vice-Chancellor and President
Strategic and Top Level Plans	Approve and amend Strategic and Top Level Plans; and Monitor performance against these Plans.	Council

END

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