The University of Queensland (UQ) withstood multiple challenges in 2022 to consolidate its position as one of Australia’s leading universities – and among the top 50 universities globally.

Learning and student experience
In total, we enrolled 55,074 students across 932 educational programs in 2022. We graduated 13,860 students.

The University’s research community continues to excel on the global stage, with 42 UQ researchers included on the 2022 Clarivate Highly Cited Researchers list. According to this prestigious global survey of research excellence, UQ now has more highly cited researchers than any other Australian university.

Among the many highlights of this year, UQ secured $50 million in May under the Federal Government’s Trailblazer Universities Program to establish a new Food and Beverage Accelerator (FaBA) to nurture innovation in Australia’s agricultural, food and beverages sector; UQ is also a partner in another successful Trailblazer program – the Resources Technology Industry Accelerator (RTIA) – a $280 million research facility in Brisbane. Known as the Translational Science Hub, the $280 million facility will link our local researchers with non-government organisations, and connect people.

Building for the future
In early 2022, we opened 2 substantial new buildings at our St Lucia campus. The Andrew N. Liveris Building was officially opened in April, as a purpose-built home for the School of Chemical Engineering. In May, we officially opened Kev Carmody House, our new student residential building (although the inaugural cohort of over 600 students took up residence earlier in the year).

In other developments at St Lucia, we opened a new restaurant and events venue in Alumni Court; commenced construction of a new Plant Growth Facility; began a major renewal project of the UQ Lake and surrounds; and established the UQ Global Innovation Hub, so that we can provide a more level playing field when it comes to accessing resources that benefit society.

Enriching our communities
Beyond the direct impact of our education and research programs, UQ is committed to enriching communities – both locally and globally – by spreading understanding, raising awareness, disseminating culture, building capacity, creating opportunities, and connecting people.

A major highlight of this year was the August launch of a new UQ initiative called ‘The Queensland Commitment’. The strategic intent of The Queensland Commitment is to provide a more level playing field when it comes to accessing a university education, by removing many of the personal, financial, and geographic barriers that might deter Queensland students from studying at UQ.

This is our pledge to disrupt education disadvantage by improving our pathway programs and growing our philanthropic endowment fund, so that we can provide many more needs-based scholarships for future generations of Queensland students.

After a difficult and disrupted start, 2022 developed into a year in which the University repeatedly and successfully pursued its mission of delivering for the public good through excellence in education, research, and community engagement.

I am proud to say that we made real progress in the implementation of a number of the strategic priorities this year – the first year of our new 4-year Strategic Plan – while also broadening the University’s societal impact in a range of areas.

A difficult start to the year
As the first widespread wave of COVID-19 transmission took hold in Queensland in early 2022, the University encouraged most staff to work from home for the first 6 weeks of the year. Staff and students started returning to campus in large numbers in mid-February, just in time for the start of the academic year.

However, the sense of normality was short-lived as a severe weather event inundated South East Queensland in late February, causing major flooding across multiple UQ sites, including our St Lucia and Gatton campuses. This led to the closure of all UQ sites across South East Queensland for a week and resulted in a one-week pause to teaching in Semester 1.

Throughout this challenging time, our staff aided nearly 2,000 students who had no power at home – and also found emergency accommodation for 370 students who simply couldn’t return home due to flooding. Meanwhile, teams worked around the clock to protect vital infrastructure and manage the flood recovery and clean-up process.

Research and innovation
As a leading Australian research intensive university, UQ is committed to the generation of knowledge through excellence in discovery science and fundamental research, as well as translating our research into progressive ideas, better services, and products that benefit society.

Some 3,846 active research projects were underway across UQ in 2022 – and we continued to invest in impactful research across a wide variety of fields by approving 1,081 new projects this year.

Many of these projects are seeking to address global challenges, such as climate change and energy transition, food and water security, biodiversity conservation, and disease prevention and treatment.

At the very end of the year, we also announced 2 separate trials of UQ-developed medical innovations. The first involved a proof-of-concept trial for a re-engineered version of the innovative molecular clamp vaccine platform, and the second was a safety trial for a pioneering ultrasound device that has been developed to improve the treatment of Alzheimer’s disease.

Thank you
Despite the challenges we faced early this year, 2022 has been a year of significant achievement and progress for the University. The improvement in our performance and impact this year is due to the collective efforts of our staff working across UQ’s faculties, schools, research institutes and centres, administrative and service divisions. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all of our staff, our senior executive team, and members of the University Senate, including our Chancellor, Peter N Varahgesh AIO. Thank you for your hard work, your commitment to our mission, and your dedication to serving the broader UQ community. It’s an honour to work alongside you.

I look forward to building on our many successes and achievements in 2023, and beyond.

Professor Deborah Terry AO
Vice-Chancellor and President

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