

Background

The [Student and University Experience Recovery Plan](#) was released as part of the University Portfolio and College Recovery Plans on 13 October 2020. This document provides an update and outlines agreed initial arrangements to respond to and support the ANU Recovery Plan for The Australian National University (ANU, University).

The Student and University Experience (SUE) Portfolio was established in April 2020 to provide strategic leadership of cross university initiatives, including all domains of equity and inclusion, violence prevention and the Experience Accelerator, to improve our staff and student experience, build a culture of respect, safety and wellbeing and deliver high quality residential and student services. The Portfolio brings together colleagues and students from across the University, and has a unique value proposition for staff and students—whether they are accessing our services, growing their knowledge and capability, or seeking guidance for or referral of another to services.

The ANU has set itself the ambition to provide a student and staff experience equal to the world's best universities. The SUE Portfolio drives this ambition by leading cross portfolio and cross University initiatives which improve the experiences of staff and students. This includes fostering academic performance, personal development and professional achievement while promoting safety, wellbeing, respect and inclusion. In 2020 and 2021 our staff have shown their dedication, resilience and adaptability as they blended service delivery modes and innovated new support avenues, and laying the foundation for ongoing strengthening and enhancement of student and staff facing services.

Commencing at the end of 2020, the Portfolio has invested in reflecting on the scope of work undertaken in the Portfolio, prioritising service delivery standards, enhancing quality in services, reviewing staff structures and work flows, and aligning these with wider University systems and other work areas. We have looked at how services can be strengthened to support staff as they deliver significant prevention activities and intervention care in our community, the objectives of ANU2025, and alignment with the [Service Performance Framework](#).

To inform this work, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (SUE) and senior staff have led discussions with leaders and subject matter experts, considered recommendations from previous reviews, adopted design thinking and delivered innovations in Portfolio activities, particularly in 2020, and expanded good practice approaches. In 2021, new reviews of governance in the Residential Experience Division (completed) and service redesign (underway) seek to better align and integrate service offerings, and ensure the right environment for staff to lead service innovation and deliver on improvement agendas across our Portfolio responsibilities as we strive to deliver better experiences.

We have considered the profile of current and future students, their needs for enrichment of university life, residential experience and service support and the ways in which services need to evolve to meet emerging and future needs. We have heard staff in the Portfolio as they build to and challenge the Executive, and grow our ambition and objectives to strengthen us as a Portfolio.

There is more work to be undertaken to inform future change to strengthen our services. Leaders across the Portfolio are committed to and value establishing strong foundations for services that will support staff to thrive in their roles, and deliver highly effective services to the ANU community.

Any further changes than those outlined in this update to support service delivery and achieving objectives and priorities, embed strong governance, and strengthen organisational structures are expected to be finalised by end of 2021. Any changes related to service delivery in residences will be actioned alongside contractual obligations with external service providers and suppliers, renegotiating and adjusting these arrangements where necessary, to ensure these arrangements deliver against our objectives and are in the best interest of good practice and the students and staff of the University.

Residential Experience

The Residential Experience Division is responsible for delivering an enriching and rewarding residential experience for approximately 5,500 students who reside on campus. A residential experience at ANU offers a diversity of accommodation options and lifestyles, academic enrichment activities, opportunities to build a diverse social network and a unique pathway to building an enduring relationship as an ANU Alumni.

ANU has set as its target an on campus living experience that is open to all students, at whatever stage of their university career, and provides unique social, study and academic enrichments, encompassing programs, community engagement and special events. The Residential Experience Division delivers accommodation through Purpose Built Student Accommodation arrangements, that support safety and wellbeing and academic success in properties that provide high quality amenities and administration. The Residential Experience Division includes staff working in residences (administration, pastoral care, academic support, management and catering), managing applications, allocations, contract management and financial transactions with students in residences, managing the service delivery partnership with UniLodge, and ensuring student experience priorities are met by external service providers.

Since 2020, the Residential Experience Division has rapidly pivoted and adapted service models and operating protocols to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students living on campus during the COVID-19 pandemic. This work has supported the area to develop robust processes and expertise in supporting on campus quarantining and 'stay at home' requirements, and the ability to deploy that capability as needed. This has ensured the University has on campus accommodation which can be part of a whole of campus strategy to welcome offshore students back to campus as soon as possible.

To support the Recovery Plan, and in contribution to the ANU strategic agenda of on campus living and a 'world's best' student experience, the Residential Experience Division will refine governance arrangements, and build a service and staffing model that is fit for purpose. Over the remainder of 2021 the Division will finalise plans for a 'precinct model' for residential living, and engage external partners in accommodation provision in achieving a precinct model across the residences. A trial of the precinct model will be explored for Burton and Garran Hall and Ursula Hall (including Laurus Wing).

The precinct model will establish pairs of residences that foster social cohesion, strengthen the unique value proposition of each residence and maximise access to and use of infrastructure in different residences to support academic and social enrichment activities. Residential precincts will diversify the experience and offering for students as they progress through their university journey and seek on campus lifestyle options that match their stage of personal development. The precinct model will also strengthen the capacity of staff teams to provide high quality administration and management of students' homes on campus, ensure quality and sustainability of pastoral care, especially support outside of core hours, and strategic development of services and programs that build belonging and support academic success.

University Experience

The University Experience Division was established in June 2021 signalled with the appointment and commencement of the Director, University Experience. The University Experience Division brings together Portfolio-based student and staff facing services, engagement and enrichment programs and education, prevention and early intervention work and initiatives. It has a diverse remit that incorporates clinical services, including managing the University's primary health service partnership, crisis and intervention services, education, prevention and early intervention around violence, and mental health and wellbeing. The University Experience Division leads engagement of potential and

new students from diverse backgrounds, first year student engagement, orientation and transition support programs and co-curricular enrichment programs that develop life skills, build social networks and empower students to thrive in their academic pursuits, in their careers and personal lives.

The University Experience Division contributes to the ANU purpose of an excellent university experience through its diverse remit, ensuring that students with different backgrounds and interests have opportunities to explore their talents and personal excellence. Staff teams ensure support services are integrated internally and externally to deliver holistic support for all members of the community who seek it. It strives to model a culture of continual improvement in programs and as professional staff, and develop these skills in students through a variety of programs.

NECTAR

NECTAR is the Network for Early Career Academics at ANU and celebrates 10 years of leadership and contributions to the ANU community this year. It provides a voice to early career researchers, teachers and academics on University policy and strategic direction, as well as connections to build the capability and capacity of members through mentoring, events and professional development.

NECTAR has representatives in each College and actively participates in cross-University forums and consultations to ensure that current and future generations of academics are supported, developed and valued at ANU.

To support the ANU Recovery and build on the expertise and investment in this important area of activity for the University, the NECTAR teams will transition from the SUE Portfolio to the Research and Innovation Portfolio and work within the team led under the Dean, Higher Degree Research (HDR). The alignment of NECTAR within the Research and Innovation Portfolio will have multiple benefits, providing synergies for researcher support, building stronger networks and mentorship opportunities, and realise new avenues to develop how the University invests in and grows its academics throughout all career stages.

Consultation has been undertaken by the Director, University Experience with the Dean, HDR, the NECTAR team and key stakeholders in determining the best position for NECTAR at ANU. This transition will result in a change of supervisor and reporting lines for team members. The entire NECTAR team will move into the Research and Innovation Portfolio from 9 August 2021. The transition is not expected to result in any change in work location for the team.

Health Services

The ANU provides health services on campus for members of the community, noting this is predominantly used by members of the student community and staff members. Health services at ANU have been provided for many years, though in recent years these have been delivered through a partnership with the National Health Coop, a Canberra primary and allied health service provider. On 21 June 2021 the National Health Coop announced that it was entering into voluntary administration. Since this time the University has been working closely with administrators to understand the current state of the business and future options to provide the most suitable and effective health services for the ANU community.

As communicated to the ANU community when the National Health Coop announcement was made, the health service is continuing as is at this point in time, and there are no impacts on the day-to-day operations for members of the community and clients of the National Health Coop, Conversations and considerations into how to best manage and deliver health services at ANU is ongoing.

Respectful Relationships Unit

The Respectful Relationships Unit was established in 2019 to support the University in changing policies and practices related to sexual misconduct. This work has included responding to disclosures

and case management and support for members of the community seeking guidance, advice and connections to reporting mechanisms, safe making plans, support services and information. The Respectful Relationships Unit led the development of the Sexual Violence Prevention Strategy and delivered education and training programs to ANU staff, students and alumni to grow the understanding of consent and sexual misconduct, responding to instances of sexual misconduct, and respectful relationships in practice in the community.

The education and prevention agenda is vital for the ANU community to achieve lasting change and continual cultural improvements to achieve a campus that is free from violence, where all members feel safe and respected on campus and the campuses are enjoyable places to study, work and socialise. With the introduction of the Wellbeing, Safety and Support team, the Respectful Relationships Unit will focus on the prevention, early intervention and education streams of work, and supporting the University in making change under the Sexual Violence Prevention Strategy. This work will be led by the Manager, Respectful Relationships Unit and supported by policy, project and communications officers with specialties in violence prevention and respectful relationships practice.

The Respectful Relationships Unit will report to the Director, University Experience and work closely with the Wellbeing, Safety and Support team.

Consideration of the best team for delivery of case management and referral supports (a Senior Case Manager and Case Manager) has been undertaken with the Respectful Relationships Unit and it has been confirmed the case management services will be moved to the Wellbeing, Safety and Support team. The Respectful Relationships Unit will play a valuable advisory and support role in the establishment and ongoing success of the Wellbeing, Safety and Support team through collaboration.

Student Incident and Support

Student Incident and Support was established in 2020 to provide welfare support and early intervention programs to students experiencing difficult and confusing times. The support includes Thrive, where students can speak to peers and staff to seek guidance and advice on how to manage issues such as financial pressures, stress and anxiety, disconnection and loss.

Recent reviews of services to support wellbeing and serious incidents have included a recommendation to enhance this capability and to provide members of the ANU student community with a centralised point of contact. Good practice has shown this can assist in managing issues early on and providing alternatives to counselling as a first point of contact as well as support students in identifying support needs, and provide more targeted connections to appropriate services in the support system, which can be overwhelming for many students to understand and approach.

To support an enhanced capability, the Student Incident and Support team will be moved into Wellbeing, Safety and Support team from 1 August 2021. The structure of the Wellbeing, Safety and Support team will be refined in collaboration between staff and the Director, University Experience.

Wellbeing, Safety and Support

Wellbeing, Safety and Support will be a new team established to provide welfare, mental health and sexual misconduct case support to members of the ANU community.

Recommendations from the 2021 internal *Audit of student mental health services*, from the 2020 *Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Task Force* and the *Audit of the ANU Counselling Service* in 2019 all include a direction to expand the capacity of the University to provide specialised intake, assessment and response services to students. The team will bring in elements from the Respectful Relationships Unit and Student Incident and Support team, and invest in this capability with additional staff, providing a more robust structure and support in the staff's professional practice. This will grow the capacity of the ANU to provide welfare and case management support.

The team will be established with a Senior Manager, Wellbeing, Safety and Support, who will oversee case management and support across three streams: Welfare, Mental Health and Sexual Misconduct.

The Wellbeing, Safety and Support team will expand its capacity and become the centralised resource for student critical incident response expertise and case management, providing welfare checks, support planning, safe-making for students not living on campus who are having matters considered in ANU disciplinary processes, wellbeing guidance and programs, mental health supports for students, provide critical incident response expert guidance and support to pastoral care teams in on campus residences, and respond to disclosures from staff and students related to instances of sexualised violence and sexual harassment. The structure will support staff management, though it is intended all staff in the team will support across the three streams of work to meet clients' needs. This team will operate according to the current service roles and protocols with regard to the ANU Security-provided services that respond to critical incidents on campus.

The Wellbeing, Safety and Support team will consist of nine staff, including practice leads to guide the work, senior case managers, a case manager, coordinator and welfare officer. The team brings together case management roles from the Respectful Relationships Unit, three staff and the team of casuels from Student Incident and Support, and four new roles including the Senior Manager, a practice lead specialising in the sexual misconduct stream of work, a senior case manager in the welfare stream and a welfare officer. The refinement of the team structure will be undertaken in collaboration between the members of the team and the Director.

ANU Counselling

The ANU provides free and confidential support to students and staff through registered psychologists available on campus, Monday to Friday.

There are no changes proposed to ANU Counselling.

Engagement and Success

Engagement and Success oversees programs and University-wide initiatives such as First Year Engagement, orientation, transition to university, ANU+, Griffin Hall (the ANU non-residential hall) and SET4ANU.

There are no changes proposed to Engagement and Success.

Dean of Students

The Dean of Students provides independent advice to students regarding University policies and processes in relation to academic and personal matters. The Dean of Students can advocate for the collective interests of students among the wider University Leadership and within Colleges and Portfolios. It also supports students through processes at the University and is able to conduct and support mediation and restorative processes.

There are no changes proposed for the Dean of Students.

Dean of Staff

The Dean of Staff role began in 2019 to trial a similar independent advice and support function for staff as the Dean of Students. The Dean of Staff supports and advises staff on University processes and advocates for staff interests with University Leadership and within Colleges and Portfolio structures.

There are no changes proposed for the Dean of Staff.

Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (SUE)

The Office is responsible for leadership and strategic direction setting of the Portfolio's purpose, and advocating for and representing this at the Senior Leadership level. The Office supports Portfolio wide initiatives and programs, management of complex policy matters, oversight and delivery of taskforces and limited term projects, external representation of the University, engagement with key stakeholders, and affiliates of the University, including student associations.

There are no changes proposed for the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (SUE).

COVID Response Office

The COVID Response Office is led by Professor Tracy Smart AO and is responsible for leading the policy and preparedness planning for the COVID-19 pandemic. The Office manages the guidelines and systems to enable local areas and units to make informed, COVID-smart decisions to support their operations. It is expected for the Office to continue through 2022 to provide support and expert advice to the ANU community and senior decision makers, taking into consideration the evolving situation with the pandemic.

There are no changes proposed for the COVID Response Office.

Equity, Inclusion and Belonging

Equity, Inclusion and Belonging are key aspects to improving the experience of staff and students at ANU, and in supporting our community to achieve its best with the excellence that comes from being diverse and having a strong sense of belonging and being a part of the University's purpose and value.

The work is brought together under the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access Framework, which includes seven working groups and an oversight committee. As the ANU has matured in its approach to IDEA concepts it is timely to reflect on and review the efficacy of the structure to support University-wide initiatives and tailored local actions so that each team and business area across the ANU is empowered to bring the concepts of IDEA, and the best practice guidance of equity and inclusion advocacy and policy groups, into the everyday business of Colleges, Schools, Portfolios and Divisions.

To support the stocktake and review the IDEA area will be staffed with a Senior Project Officer and an Administrative Officer reporting in to the Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (SUE). The work on the review will be overseen by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (SUE) and Senior Adviser.

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