



UNIVERSITY *of*
TASMANIA

AUSTRALIA

University of Tasmania

**Report on engagement with the
Magna Charta Observatory's**

Living Values Pilot Project

**Living our Values in Higher Education Institutions:
A Self-Evaluation Instrument for Universities**

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1. The University of Tasmania

1.1 Introduction to the University of Tasmania

The University of Tasmania is based in Tasmania, Australia's island state, located south of the mainland and the last significant landmass before Antarctica. Established in 1890, it is the fourth oldest university in Australia (of 39 Australian universities). Tasmania is home to 520,000 people, and the University currently has over 35,000 students, with more than 6,000 international students from 80-plus countries. A major employer for Tasmania, the University has approximately 2,400 full-time equivalent employees.

As the only university based in Tasmania we offer a broad and diverse range of degrees, with more than 100 undergraduate degrees and over 150 postgraduate programs. The University has four colleges and three specialist institutes:

- College of Arts, Law and Education
- College of Health and Medicine
- College of Sciences and Engineering
- College of Business and Economics (publically known as the Tasmanian School of Business and Economics)

- Australian Maritime College
- Institute of Marine and Antarctic Studies
- Menzies Institute for Medical Research

The University College is a new entity, commencing in 2017, offering a suite of associate degrees and enabling programs opening up new educational opportunities for more Tasmanians.

Our three Tasmanian-based campuses are in Hobart (the capital city, located in the south of the state), Launceston (Northern Tasmania's major city) and Burnie (in North-West Tasmania). Additionally, we have three Sydney facilities: Rozelle and Darlinghurst (which offer health degrees) and the Australian Maritime College's study centre in Darling Harbour.

We are among the top research-intensive universities in Australia. The University is ranked in the top two percent of universities globally and in the top 400 universities in the world in all major ranking systems. The University has 5 key research themes, building on our distinctive island setting:

- Environment, Resources and Sustainability
- Creativity, Culture and Society
- Better Health
- Marine, Antarctic and Maritime
- Data, Knowledge and Decisions

Tasmania has a unique and beautiful natural environment, a rich Aboriginal culture and a complex and sometimes dark colonial history. While currently experiencing a flourishing economy – based upon tourism, agriculture, manufacturing, mining, education and services – it remains one of Australia's least wealthy states, with some of the country's lowest rates of education participation. Since its inception, the University has been charged with a leading role in improving Tasmania's social, cultural and economic conditions and this remains central to our current mission, strategic priorities and institutional values.

The University is governed by the University Council, chaired by the Chancellor, Hon. Michael Field AC (a former Premier of Tasmania). Academic governance is delegated by University Council to the Academic Senate, Chaired by Professor Di Nicol.

The Vice-Chancellor leads the University's operations, and we welcomed a new Vice-Chancellor, Professor Rufus Black, on 1 March 2018.

1.2 The University of Tasmania's Mission

The University of Tasmania continues a long tradition of excellence and commitment to free inquiry in the creation, preservation, communication and application of knowledge, and to scholarship that is global in scope, distinctive in its specialisations and that reflects our Tasmanian character. The University will provide leadership within its community, thereby contributing to the cultural, economic and social development of Tasmania.

2. The University of Tasmania: Statement of Values (2011; see also Attachment 1)

Our values rest on a thousand year tradition of higher education and enduring foundations of shared purpose. We are a university: a diverse community that becomes more than the sum of its parts in its dedication to the stewardship of learning and knowledge, academic freedom, excellence and integrity¹. We continually evolve and transform to meet the challenges and opportunities that face us.

We are a Tasmanian institution. We work in a unique setting and actively partner with the communities in which we live, in support of a healthy, civil and sustainable society². At the same time, we are outwardly focussed and part of a global community, engaging with the rest of Australia and the world.

We subscribe to the fundamental values of honesty, integrity, responsibility, trust and trustworthiness, respect and self-respect, and fairness and justice that act as the basis for collective principled action³. To guide the way we work together to achieve our University of Tasmania Vision and Mission, and building on the contributions of all who came before us, we bring these values to life by our individual and collective commitment to:

Creating and serving shared purpose

We value the creation, expansion and dissemination of knowledge, and the promotion of continual learning. We are on a common journey to unlock and develop potential, foster talent and contribute to the life and work of our students, staff, alumni and wider society.

Nurturing a vital and sustainable community

We value the care, connection and energy that come from a community of many levels and dimensions. Keeping our community strong supports each of us to find our place, do excellent

¹ *Magna Charta Universitatum*, published 18 September 1988, The Magna Charta Observatory of Fundamental University Values and Rights, Bologna, Italy

² The University of Tasmania is a signatory to the Talloires Declaration of 1990 developed by the Association of University Leaders for a Sustainable Future

³ *The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity*, published by the Center for Academic Integrity, October 1999

work and extend our capabilities. We enable and participate in authentic conversations that allow us to be agents of change and transformation.

Focusing on opportunity

We value the creative possibilities that arise when people with skills, talents and innovative ideas come together and give each other the confidence to focus on opportunity.

Working from the strength diversity brings

We value diversity and the strength, resilience and creativity that it brings. We harness its gifts. In supporting the contribution and well-being of all, we create a welcoming, caring and inclusive environment.

Collaborating in ways that help us be the best we can be

We value a community that supports each of us to collaborate and to be the best we can be, flourishing both individually and collectively. Being supported to question and reflect gives us the freedom to challenge ourselves and each other. It reminds us that listening to, engaging with and involving others are vital for our success.

We lead by example, supporting each other to act with integrity, be accountable, and consistently live our values every day.

3. The University of Tasmania’s engagement in the Living Values pilot project: perceived benefits and challenges; the context of our participation; and the development of a new strategy.

3.1 *Accepting the invitation to participate*

On 10 October 2017, the University of Tasmania’s then Vice-Chancellor, Professor Peter Rathjen, received an email from Professor David Lock, Secretary General of the Magna Charta Observatory (MCO), inviting the University to pilot the MCO’s self-evaluation instrument as part of the Living Values Project. This followed the University becoming a signatory to the Magna Charta Universitatum in 2011, and its participation in the *Fundamental and Institutional Values in Practice Conference* held by the MCO in association with Glasgow Caledonian University in January 2017.

This was a time of transition for the University. Professor Rathjen, who had signed the *Magna Charta Universitatum* (MCU) on the University’s behalf in Bologna in 2011, was about to depart the University, having accepted the role of Vice-Chancellor at the University of Adelaide. Prior to his departure he and the University’s Senior Executive provided in principle endorsement of the University’s participation in the pilot project. Following Professor Rathjen’s departure, our participation was formally confirmed by the then Acting Vice-Chancellor, Professor Mike Calford in late October 2017⁴.

⁴ Professor Calford, whose substantive role at the University was Provost, has since moved to the role of Provost at the Australian National University.

In his email of 10 October, Professor Lock outlined the following anticipated benefits to pilot institutions:

- a supported and cost-effective evaluation of their values; the extent to which they are relevant, are put into practice and might yield more value;
- an opportunity to make their staff more aware of their institutional values and more committed to them, leading to greater effectiveness and removing barriers to the realisation of an institution's values and lead to; and
- greater alignment of individual and institutional values.

These expected benefits were compelling. It was 6 years since the University's Statement of Values had been endorsed and the University had become a signatory to the MCU and the pilot offered a timely opportunity to review the Statement of Values and better understand the role it and the MCU played at the University of Tasmania.

3.2 New leadership

Professor Rufus Black was announced as the University's new Vice-Chancellor on 10 November 2017, a role he commenced on 1 March 2018. As with any leadership change, this is a time of great cultural change within the University.

Ethical leadership is a theme and practice that threads through Professor Black's career and is central to the new leadership culture and approach to management he is introducing to the University. The 'cascading conversations' that have been initiated recently within the University, in the first instance to guide a new strategic plan, are emblematic of this. These collegial, locally-led, institution-wide conversations have been underpinned by three key questions, each with a strong values component⁵. While any discussion about strategy has implicit values, what is notable here is the methodology, which is intended to be used for all matters of university-wide significance. With the key elements of our Statement of Values being brought to life through the process, it could be suggested that we, at the University of Tasmania, are experiencing "living values" as we participate in these conversations.

This strong and deliberate focus on values at the beginning of a period of new leadership and organisational culture creates some challenges with regards the MCO's Living Values Project. The Living Values Project's intention is to review and reflect upon our values explicitly. This sits somewhat uncomfortably with a process that is actively (yet not didactically) re-engaging the University and its communities with these values, while potentially pointing to how these values may be evolving.

⁵ These questions are:

1. Do we want to be a place-based University that is globally connected or do we want to be a University cast in the global model?
2. Do we want to continue in a growth model or adopt a right-size approach to our future?
3. What are the parameters (for example, those of equity, quality and regional presence) we are committed to in the delivery of higher education in Tasmania?

It was hence decided not to implement the MCO pilot project's 'tool box' *per se*. We would, however, continue to contribute to the pilot project as it was evident that our story may be of interest to the richly diverse community of peer institutions that the MCO represents, all of whom are at a unique stage of implementing values into their institutional setting. Similarly, we recognised that any future work we undertake with a values-focus could benefit from applying the lens offered by the pilot Living Values 'instrument' to the work we've done to date.

Our engagement aligns powerfully with the MCO Secretary General's suggestion at the gathering of representatives from pilot universities in Bologna in March 2018 that the Living Values project provides an opportunity for "systematic reflection" on institutional values and their implementation, especially in relation to the evolution of institutional culture and strategic development.

What follows is offered in this spirit, focusing on the development of our Statement of Values in the period 2009-2011 and touching upon what has followed since.

4. Developing the University of Tasmania's Statement of Values, and evaluating the benefit of the Living Values Pilot Instrument

4.1 Provenance of the Statement of Values

In April 2009 the University of Tasmania undertook its first ever staff survey. Following this survey, known as *Your Voice*, three working groups were established to contribute to the development of an action plan to address the survey outcomes. One of these groups was the Culture and Communications Working Group (chaired by Professor Margaret Otlowski), which had within its scope the task of:

"Addressing issues highlighted in the survey such as the

- Desire for a more collegial, consultative and collaborative culture of decision making; and
- The need to ground the University of Tasmania's activities within a more explicit conception of institutional values, a strong ethical base and a more trusting and transparent culture within the institution..."⁶

The development of a University of Tasmania Statement of Values was a key recommendation in the Culture and Communications Working Party's (CCWP) Final Report. The CCWP recognised how important a values statement, which reflects the shared views and values of the University community and guides decision-making processes, would be for positively shaping the culture of the University. It also signalled that the process for developing the statement of values was an opportunity for demonstrating collective values in action. This recommendation was accepted and the development of a Statement of Values featured in the *Your Voice Action Plan*, endorsed by the University's Senior Management Team (SMT).

4.2 Creating the Statement of Values

Following the endorsement of the SMT, the University embarked on an institution-wide process of engagement and conversation to develop a University of Tasmania Statement of Values. The process was led by a team of three who came together to create and implement a participatory process with the guidance of an external consultant with strong expertise and experience in participatory leadership methodologies.⁷ Importantly, this group included a member of the SMT, (then) Dean of Law, Professor Margaret Otlowski. As the project matured, this group extended to

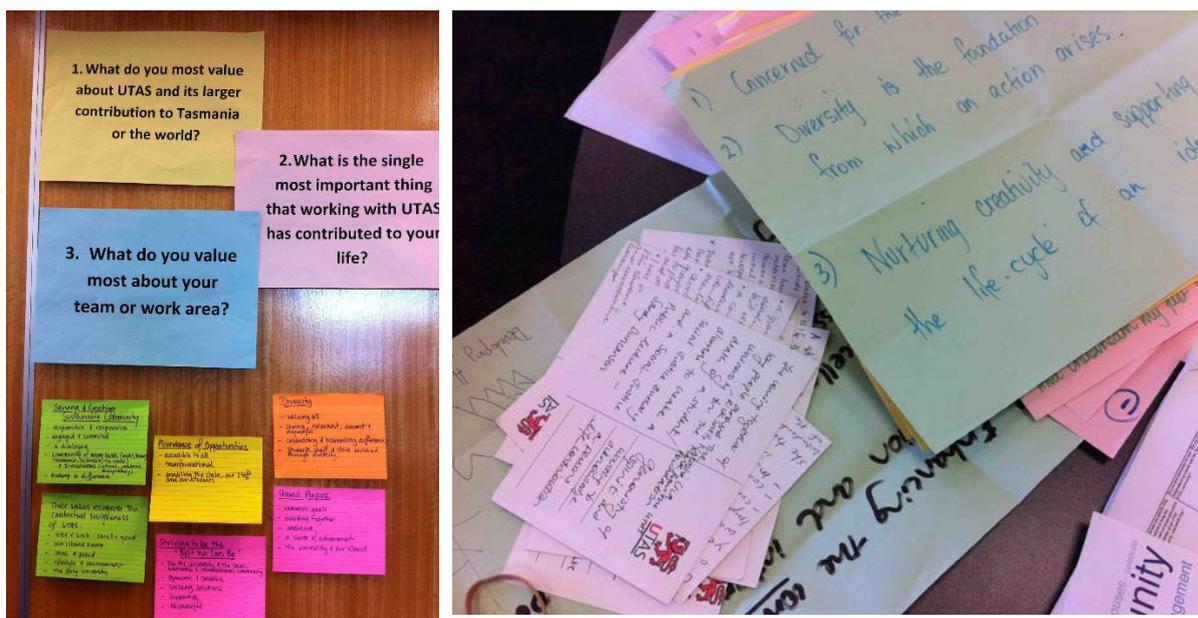
⁶ Culture and Communications Working Party Final Report, 2.

⁷ The team members were: Professor Margaret Otlowski, then Dean of Law; Mr Dean Munday, then Senior Advisor in the Provost's Office; and Ms Jill Currey, then Manager of Organisational Learning, Human Resources. Mary-Alice Arthur from [SOAR](#) was the external consultant.

become a 'core group' of around 8 staff drawn from multiple levels of academic and professional staff from across the University. This tight-knit team, many of whom had been trained in the participatory leadership methodologies adopted through this process, was highly visible throughout the development of the Statement of Values and adopted a co-leadership model that sought to devolve that leadership to all participants engaging in the process.

Consultation began with a cross section of University staff being invited to a Values Scoping workshop. These 40 participants helped to shape both the focus of inquiry into values and the process. Once a process and plan was finalised, an open invitation was sent to all University staff to participate in an interactive process called 'Shape Our Future'. A wider communication plan, including a poster campaign, was implemented to promote the opportunity to 'Shape Our Future' across the University.

Staff were invited to participate in a variety of ways. Some 150 people chose to give their feedback, answering an online questionnaire about values and sharing their stories. Some people participated in a one-on-one interview process. Almost 200 staff attended one of the six workshops that were held at the University's Tasmanian campuses (Hobart, Burnie, and Launceston) as well as its site in Sydney. An important additional purpose of these conversations (also contained as an action item in the *Your Voice Action Plan*) was to introduce and extend awareness of participatory leadership methodologies by using them to guide these discussions. An '[appreciative inquiry](#)' approach sat at the heart of the methodology for this 'Shape Our Future' process.



The process culminated with a 'Distillation Day' where a team of 20 staff volunteers, as well as an external member of the University Council, all of whom had participated in one of the above activities, sifted through the material generated to find themes, values sets and meanings and to determine the most resonant values for inclusion in the Statement of Values. From this distilled material, a draft Values Statement was prepared by the core team and then shared with the distillation group for feedback before being released by the Provost – who was the Senior Executive lead of the *Your Voice* and Statement of Values projects – to the wider University community for

consultation⁸. When writing to colleagues the Provost highlighted some of the key attributes of the draft Statement of Values:

“Strong themes that came through during the consultation process were the importance of articulating our strong operational values alongside ensuring that we live our values well and implement them day to day. After grappling with semantic issues about ‘what are values’, ‘what are virtues’, ‘what are actions’, the consultation draft sought to capture the best of both of these approaches, naming core operational values and then identifying how these are translated into action in our daily lives.

It was always the aim that the Statement of Values be a relatively brief document – under a page. While this has been achieved, it was also clear that the UTAS Statement of Values would benefit from an elucidation of its meaning. This has created a document that is more likely to engage people, spark discussion and hopefully inspire and positively transform us, individually and collectively.”⁹

In preparing the Statement of Values, the core team had considered how other universities had framed their values statements or codes of conduct or statement of principles. The approach adopted for the University of Tasmania’s Statement of Values was to recognise the importance of the fundamental values that underpin academic integrity and to identify core themes emerging from the consultation process that help translate core operational values into conduct that should guide our daily actions – individually and collectively.

The University of Tasmania’s Statement of Values was designed to sit alongside and help identify how the University achieves its Mission and Vision. It was anticipated that once finalised and endorsed that the Statement of Values would inform future strategic planning, governance and operations at the University.

4.3 Releasing the Statement of Values

Following endorsement by the University Council, the University’s new Vice-Chancellor, Professor Peter Rathjen, released the Statement of Values to the University community. At the time of release, a set of Frequently Asked Questions were prepared to help the community bring these values to life, and these remain accessible on the [Statement of Values website](#). These are quoted in full to help show how the provenance, creation and intended use of the Statement of Values was explained to colleagues:

University of Tasmania Statement of Values: FAQs

What’s the difference between values and what we value?

There has been extensive work done on the fundamental values that underpin academic integrity. We felt it was important to list them here, but to go further. We wanted to create a statement that would both mirror the uniqueness of the University of Tasmania as well as help us to strongly act on our values. All of the statements you see here are built from the contribution of University of Tasmania staff. Their personal stories told us both what they most value in our community

⁸ The Provost, Professor David Rich, was also the Acting Vice-Chancellor for most of the time that the ‘Shape our Future’ process was underway, with a new Vice-Chancellor, Professor Peter Rathjen, commencing in his role near the end of this project.

⁹ Web link (no longer active) in bulk email to staff from Prof David Rich, 7 June 2011.

and what they believe help us to be at our best. The definitions of the statements were also drawn from staff input.

Where did the values statement come from?

In 2010, the University committed to a stakeholder conversation with the purpose of creating a statement of collective values. These values were intended to inform the nature of life and work at the University. Feedback from the “Your Voice” survey indicated that the way we created the values statement had the possibility of demonstrating exactly what it is intended to produce – collective values in action. A small team came together to create a participatory process and deliver a Values Statement by the beginning of June 2011.

Where do values fit in?

The Statement of Values is designed to complement our current Mission and Vision statements. These statements speak to what we do. They are very clear about the excellence we need to display, as well as how we perceive our role and character. Here they are:

Mission

The University of Tasmania is committed to continuing its long tradition of excellence in the creation, preservation, communication and application of knowledge, and to scholarship that is global in scope, distinctive in its specialisations and that reflects our Tasmanian character. The University will provide leadership within its community, thereby contributing to the cultural, economic and social development of Tasmania.

Vision

The University of Tasmania will be ranked among the top echelon of research-led universities in Australia. The University will be a world leader in its specialist, thematic areas and will be recognised for its contribution to state, national and international development. UTAS will be characterised by its high-quality academic community, its unique island setting and its distinctive student experience. UTAS graduates will be prepared for life and careers in the globalised society of the twenty-first century.

Our Statement of Values speaks about the kind of community we want to be in order to deliver on these statements. It speaks about who we are together, and the actions that will take us to success.

Who will be held accountable?

We are all accountable for working in ways that uphold and strengthen our values.

Why does the statement have footnotes?

We felt it was important that everyone could read the background on the fundamental values for academic integrity. It is also helpful to be reminded of the enduring heritage of university life and academic freedom. Footnotes make it easy for everyone to be connected to the same source material.

Why is the statement worded this way?

You may notice that our statements have an action focus. They are purposefully written in the present affirmative, so they can act as a prompt for deeper

conversation and inquiry. We can look at all the elements of a statement such as **collaborating in ways that help us be the best we can be**, such as:

- What are the ways we are collaborating now? How well is that working?
- In what ways can we improve our collaborating? Where can we look for innovative partners?
- What is the best we can be? What's better than that? How do we get there?

Or we can look at the whole statement at once:

- Is what we are about to do **collaborating in ways that help us be the best we can be**?
- How can this project help us focus on **collaborating in ways that help us be the best we can be**?
- Where are we already **collaborating in ways that help us to be the best we can be**? What can we learn from that?

The statements are intended to be challenging; but focusing on them will take us closer to being the University we truly want to be. The Values Statement is a conversation starter, and it is our community conversation and collective action that will make the difference to our future.

4.4 Using, and assessing the benefit of, the MCO's Living Values Instrument

There was widespread, almost unanimous, support for the process and the Statement that was produced by it. Indeed, the process fostered much optimism and goodwill.¹⁰ Given this success, it provides a good opportunity to test the Living Values Pilot Project's Instrument – both identifying any points of alignment, and possibly any attributes from either the 'Shape our Future' or 'Living Values' projects which could be improved. While each of the projects have different intentions, they share a core aim to establish/review values in a university setting, both those that are living and those that are aspired for.

Table 1 highlights where, and to what degree, the two projects aligned. It uses a 'traffic light' approach, where **green** indicates strong alignment, **orange** signifies some alignment, and **red** shows limited alignment. Evidence of this assessment is captured in items 4.1 to 4.3 above as well as Section 5 (below).

¹⁰ For example, here is an email received in response to release of the consultation draft: "Thank you for taking the time and care to craft these important words. I have been involved in a few of the activities relating to the Values process and found it an interesting, gentle, respectful and inclusive experience. It would be great if we could make these values a "real" part of our work at UTAS instead of just a statement. I look forward to being a part of that process."

Table 1: Living Values Toolbox alignment with the University of Tasmania’s “Shape our Futures” project, in 2009-11, to develop a Statement of Values

| Living Values: Guidance for Universities ¹¹ | University of Tasmania “Shape our Futures” project to develop a Statement of values |
|---|--|
| General Principles | |
| Leadership from the top of the university | |
| The adoption of a project-management approach | |
| The engagement of relevant stakeholders and interest in the acceptance of, the need for, and the nature of the Instrument at the outset | |
| Gaining acceptance and buy in from all institutional leaders and the relevant committees and the setting of an aspirational focus. | |
| A well-informed process, in which decisions are informed by relevant data | |
| The process should have a ground up focus but be operated within an agreed overall framework | |
| Engaging two-way communications between those responsible for steering the process and those who are to be engaged in its activities | |
| The necessity of participants being honest, frank and open | |
| The process should be manageable and well managed, implying a limited number of critical values and a robust timescale | |
| Maximum institutional impact should be the goal but with the recognition that embedding values in a continual process. | |
| Project Participants | |
| Participation includes staff at all levels, both academic and administrative and across all units/departments of the university | |
| Participation includes students at varying programme levels and across all departments, and including students’ organisations and those involved in the students’ consultative structures | |
| Participation includes relevant external stakeholders, including those from the community and governing agencies as appropriate | |
| Participation includes members of governing boards. | |
| Project leadership | |
| Full public backing of the head of the institution is apparent from the start | |
| A supporting project team is set up to work with the leader | |
| Heads of academic and administrative units are involved in the design of the process and its subsequent implementation and are able to provide continuing support and encouragement | |
| Mechanisms for engagement | <i>In addition to what is suggested by the MCO, we used postcards, one-on-one interviews, and a means to engage anonymously.</i> |
| Use of the instrument and associated questionnaires | NA |

¹¹ Magna Charta Observatory, *Living Values Project. Living our Values in Higher Education Institutions: a Self-Evaluation Instrument for Universities*. 2017. Items 22-31, pp9-11.

| | |
|--|--|
| Initial staff and then induction briefings | |
| A values webpage with scope for interactive dialogue | |
| Briefing sessions for managers and department heads and subsequent progress workshops | |
| Open meetings and fora | |
| Focus groups | |
| That the process be undertaken over a reasonable period of time to enable full involvement and one or more iterations between different levels and sections of the university | |
| Project timetable/schedule/plan | |
| Incorporates an initial phase for design of the project, instruments to be used and initial contributions to, and agreement of, participants | |
| Includes training and activation phase | |
| Includes implementing mechanism (above) | |
| Incorporates a series of interactive phases to consider emerging finds and adjust as necessary | |
| Includes monitoring of progress | |
| Includes a means of decanting values into the parallel normal organisational processes like course evaluation and development, staff appraisal and development, marketing etc... | |
| Includes a specific closure event on the process of finalising the values | |
| Incorporates evidence and data to inform performance indicators and measure progress | |
| Desired project outcomes | |
| Values and their sub-elements or manifestation in practice and behaviours | |
| In order to link values into the ongoing life of the university, specific experiences of each value in terms of what it means for the role and functioning of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone • Department and unit managers • Senior leadership/board • Governance • Key committees and their processes | |
| A statement of behaviour which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes the university at its best • Is realistic, but also aspirational • Encourages improvement in behaviour and practices • Supports self-reflection, review and goal setting | |

The benefit and veracity of the MCO's Living Values Pilot Instrument is made clear in Table 1. The proliferation of 'green' confirms that the approach and methodology employed to develop the Statement of Values was a key contributor to the success of this project. It also makes stark some key oversights, in particular:

- The lack of student engagement in the process.
- The lack of external stakeholder engagement in the process.

- While a process to ‘decant’ the values across the University was drafted this was not fully implemented and momentum in the project was lost.
- Likewise, a process to develop a ‘Values in Action’ document, listing key behaviours associated with the Statement of Values, stalled and was never completed.

The first two points can be attributed to the Statement’s provenance in a staff survey, leading to a bias towards staff and overlooking students and external stakeholders¹². With the Vice-Chancellor’s Office currently undertaking a project to improve engagement with external partners, we are confident that we will be well positioned to have meaningful conversations with external stakeholders in any future values-focused work.

The inability to maintain momentum in values-themed work arising from the Statement after its launch is also thrown into strong relief by the cluster of ‘orange’ and ‘red’ at the bottom of Table 1, suggesting the ‘Shaping our Future’ project would have benefited from greater focus on a deeper set of desired outcomes.

In all cases, the presence of guiding principles such as those provided in the MCO’s Living Values Pilot Instrument would have ameliorated these weaknesses. These weak spots will need to be addressed in any future explicit values-themed work, and the identification of these highlights the benefit of the MCO’s Living Values Pilot Instrument. Furthermore, there are no immediate gaps identified in the instrument, with the key beneficial attributes of the ‘Shaping our Future’ project all evident in the advice the instrument provides.

5. What has changed at the University of Tasmania as a consequence of the project?

5.1 Embedding the Values

Following the completion of the ‘Shape our Future’ project and subsequent launch of the University of Tasmania’s Statement of Values, there have been various actions undertaken to ensure the Values are woven into the fabric of the University and are truly embedded. The following is a non-exhaustive list of actions to date:

- the Values feature in advertising and staff recruitment processes and are included in all our position descriptions;
- the Values are included as part of the annual (at least) Performance and Career Development process - for both academic and professional staff;
- framed copies of the Values are displayed across the University;
- the Values are contained in relevant Policies and Procedures across our University including in the University Behaviour Policy applying to all staff and students¹³;
- the Values are considered in the application and selection of Career Development Scholarships (for example, one of the two themes for the Scholarships in 2017 was "cross organisational collaboration");
- the Values underpin how we approach and work with our staff (for example, organisational redesign and recruitment; as part of our position descriptions; and interview questions);
- are included in the University Strategic Plan, *Open to Talent*;
- elements of the Values also form part of the Vice-Chancellor’s Annual Review process;
- are included in the Graduate Quality Statement¹⁴;

¹² These first two points were also brought to our attention, early in our engagement with the Living Values Project, by our MCO Living Values Ambassador Professor John Davies.

¹³ http://www.utas.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/657179/University-Behaviour-Policy.pdf

¹⁴ http://www.utas.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/636921/Graduate-Quality-Statement-Policy.pdf

- have been expressly referenced in the 2018 Convocation Address for commencing students along with a short video which include the values:
<https://spaces.hightail.com/space/RnBiOzthO2>.

5.2 ***Signing the Magna Charta Universitatum and engaging with the Magna Charta Observatory***

A very important outcome of the process was the recommendation that the University of Tasmania becoming a signatory to the Magna Charta Universitatum, which occurred in the latter half of 2011, with the then Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter Rathjen travelling to Bologna for the signing ceremony.

This has led to further values-related engagement by the University at the invitation of the Magna Charta Observatory. In January 2017, the Chair of Academic Senate, Professor Dianne Nicol, attended the *Fundamental and Institutional Values in Practice* Conference held by the Magna Charta Observatory in association with Glasgow Caledonian University.¹⁵

Upon her return to Tasmania, the Chair of Academic Senate utilised this workshop's framework to lead a strategic session with Academic Senate together with Professor Margaret Otlowski to consider the following questions in relation to the University of Tasmania's *governance, students, curriculum and research*:

- What experience do we have of putting values into practice?
- What are the challenges and what do we know about how they might be overcome?
- How do we collectively facilitate the embedding of values?
- What are the priorities?

This led to lively and constructive discussion at Academic Senate of which a brief summary follows:

Academic Senate Session on Values in Practice: Summary of key discussion points

Governance

Members reported on the embedding of the University's Values in the three core aspects of governance, with the following priorities:

- **Explicitness** – The Values are known, displayed and prominent. The Values guide the deliberations of all important decision making bodies of the institution. Each year, and more often for critical matters, decisions will be assessed against the Values (i.e. has this decision been made in a fashion and with an outcome that is aligned with the University's Values).
- **Collegiality and Consultation** – The University is founded on the principle of collegiality and consultation as a mechanism to achieve and demonstrate this. These will be used to drive how decisions are made consistent with the values.
- **Transparency** – When decisions are taken there will be feedback outlining

¹⁵ Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU) has developed a Behaviour Framework, which seeks to provide an explanation of how the GCU values can be embedded, through individual behaviours across the board and at People Manager and Executive Board levels. The Framework also provides examples of how focusing on values can be used practically, in staff recruitment, induction, self-assessment and personal development, performance development and annual review, setting team standards and for change and improvement.

The Conference entailed a number of working groups considering a series of questions with particular focus on the contexts of governance and organisational matters, curriculum, research, student matters and staff matters.

how consultation was used.

Students

Priorities in this area were outlined as:

- the need for staff to model the behaviours and demonstrate the culture expected from students and the importance of identifying and 'calling out' behaviour that does not model our University Values. A Code of Conduct could be utilised to describe the behaviours expected of both staff and students; and
- the need to acknowledge, recognise and respect the diverse student population, undergraduate, postgraduate and alumni included.

Other challenges include how to encourage students to be involved, how to incentivise them to engage and how to continue to engage distance students. To this end, it was agreed that student representatives should be involved in all Committees, not just the overarching governance bodies.

Student feedback would be listened to and acted upon with advice on how their feedback had been used to inform change reported back to students. By way of specific example, the agenda item on student feedback has been moved to the front of University Learning and Teaching Committee agendas so that it is afforded an appropriate amount of time and is not a rushed item at the end of the meeting.

Curriculum

Members indicated a need for more consistent opportunities to discuss the practical implications of the Statement of Values and to use those Values in developing potential solutions to problems. The need to increase awareness of the Statement of Values was also highlighted. It was suggested curriculum renewal was a good opportunity to include the University's Values front and centre through the course proposal templates. Values could be made visible through overt reference in intended learning outcomes and assessment. Finally, references to the Statement of Values could be incorporated into e-mail signatures and lecture slide templates.

It was also recommended that the University's Statement of Values include a statement about the curriculum being student focused with the student voice playing a central role.

Research

Members agreed that researchers should exemplify the University's Statement of Values, whilst recognising that the research process can be regarded as competitive and individualistic. Ongoing challenges identified include:

- the need to be respectful regarding feedback on grant or ethics applications;
- identifying and building on opportunities arising through embedding research in the community whether that is the wider public or discipline based communities; and
- locating the University physically in the heart of communities and inviting them to participate fully in the research process.

Academic Senate found it useful to reflect on the University's values and how they may be linked to day to day behaviours. Members were supportive of the ongoing development of a process to articulate how the University's values may be fully embedded into the business of University life at both institutional and individual levels. It was suggested that a participatory and consultative process for developing guidance on how the wider University community can put our values into practice would help build and model a positive culture.

The session concluded with a recommendation that the Vice-Chancellor approve the development of an institution-wide process which seeks to “examine the need to refresh and reaffirm our commitment to our Statement of Values and develop a process to articulate how the Statement of Values may be put into practice on a daily basis.” This recommendation was endorsed at the February 2018 Academic Senate meeting, at which the report from this session was tabled.

6. The benefits and challenges for the University of Tasmania arising from the Living Values Pilot Project

As outlined in section 4, the Living Values Pilot Project – in particular its associated instrument – has highlighted the strengths and weaknesses of the values-focused work that the University of Tasmania has been undertaking since 2009. This will prove invaluable for any future values-themed work that we undertake.

Furthermore, through our ongoing active engagement with the Magna Charta Observatory and peer universities we have recognised that our work to date offers a powerful story for others at different stages of introducing values into universities – being able to share this story and learn with others is rewarding in and of itself.

A key underlying message in this report is the importance of acknowledging, understanding and responding appropriately to your institution’s current context, being careful not to simply launch into a given project and/or apply whatever ‘tool’ is available. While this is vital for any successful project, projects that are focused on culture must be particularly alert to this as the best intentions can soon result in unintended outcomes. Mindful of this, the University has engaged in the Living Values Pilot Project with a retrospective glance, firmly informed by its present conditions, where it has been agreed that it is not the best time to be implementing the project. Specific values-based project work will occur at a later time and will draw upon the recommendation from Academic Senate (flagged in 5.2, above) as well as our engagement and learnings from the MCO Living Values Project.

So while we share our experiences here, we also emphasise that this experience has confirmed that there is no standard approach, and rarely can an approach that was successful once be simply replicated at the same institution or elsewhere. We invite others who choose to undertake similar values-led work to be equally alert to the risks of applying an ‘off the shelf’ approach, and the need to tailor their work, specific to institutional nuances and the current context.

The Living Values instrument is helpful and clear about not prescribing any approach, noting that it “can be adapted for use in particular settings”.¹⁶ Nonetheless, in a busy and complex operating environment which is vulnerable to a culture of ‘quick fixes’, the temptation to seek out and apply a ready-made solution remains, and any signs of such an approach are to be challenged. Only then will values-focused process help evolve an institution’s culture in beneficial ways.

This points to another risk of such processes. If the aim is to evolve an institution’s culture in beneficial ways it is vital that it does this in ways which do not perpetuate the unhelpful aspects of the culture it is seeking to improve. Given the instrument’s stated potential benefit in “enhance[ing]

¹⁶ Magna Charta Observatory, *Living Values Project. Living our Values in Higher Education Institutions: a Self-Evaluation Instrument for Universities*. 2017. Item 11, p5.

the effectiveness of governance and other internal processes,”¹⁷ it seems important to interrogate the potential additional bureaucratic burden values-focused activities may bring to these.

The area of greatest risk here seems to rest with endeavours to understand, define, implement and monitor the ‘value of values’ across different domains. The approach shared at the 2017 conference in Glasgow (and picked up by our Academic Senate) provides an example of this, with its aim to understand, define, implement and monitor values across different domains of a university (ie. research, governance, students, etc...) and for particular sets of individuals (ie. executive, managers, students, stakeholders, etc..). While the benefits of these conversations are evident, there is an inherent risk that pursuing such an approach, especially its implementation and monitoring components, could introduce additional administrative demands which may be resisted by staff and work counter to the values project’s goals of improving culture and enhancing processes.

We offer no answer here, rather we highlight this dilemma and the need to be cognisant of it. One approach worthy of exploration arises from returning to the people-centred principles the instrument offers for creating a Statement of Values. With a focus on consultation and participation, these same principles may be the best approach to assessing the benefit of this work, embedded meaningfully into other staff engagement activities, rather than introducing a new set of processes into an already over-burdened environment. The ‘Cascading Conversations’ methodology recently introduced to the University of Tasmania may offer one such approach.

7. Next steps for the University of Tasmania

The ‘Cascading Conversations’ methodology that has been introduced by our Vice-Chancellor Professor Rufus Black seeks to engage systematically and systemically with staff on matters of shared importance, the first being the settings to guide a new University strategy. Prompted by the FAQs which accompany our Statement of Values, we might ask of this current process:

“Is what we are doing in the Cascading Conversations:

- Creating and serving shared purpose?
- Nurturing a vital and sustainable community?
- Focusing on opportunity?
- Working from the strength diversity brings?
- Collaborating in ways that help us be the best we can be?”

While it is early days, the answer to all of these is “yes”.

Could we be doing better with regards our values-in-action? The answer is also “yes”.

While the shape of any future values-focused work is yet to be determined, our continued engagement with the MCO and its member institutions will help us to do this in the best possible way.

¹⁷ Ibid, Item 13, p5.

Attachment 1

University of Tasmania Statement of Values

UTAS

STATEMENT OF

VALUES

Our values rest on a thousand year tradition of higher education and enduring foundations of shared purpose. We are a university: a diverse community that becomes more than the sum of its parts in its dedication to the stewardship of learning and knowledge, academic freedom, excellence and integrity. We continually evolve and transform to meet the challenges and opportunities that face us.

We are a Tasmanian institution. We work in a unique setting and actively partner with the communities in which we live, in support of a healthy, civil and sustainable society. At the same time, we are outwardly focused and a part of a global community, engaging with the rest of Australia and the world.

We subscribe to the fundamental values of honesty, integrity, responsibility, trust and trustworthiness, respect and self-respect, and fairness and justice that act as the basis for collective principled action.

To guide the way we work together to achieve our UTAS Vision and Mission, and building on the contributions of all who came before us, we bring these values to life by our individual and collective commitment to:



CREATING AND SERVING SHARED PURPOSE

We value the creation, expansion and dissemination of knowledge, and the promotion of continual learning. We are on a common journey to unlock and develop potential, foster talent and contribute to the life and work of our students, staff, alumni and wider society.



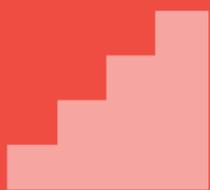
NURTURING A VITAL & SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY

We value the care, connection and energy that come from a community of many levels and dimensions. Keeping our community strong supports each of us to find our place, do excellent work and extend our capabilities. We enable and participate in authentic conversations that allow us to be agents of change and transformation.



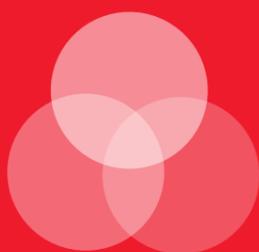
FOCUSING ON OPPORTUNITY

We value the creative possibilities that arise when people with skills, talents and innovative ideas come together and give each other the confidence to focus on opportunity.



WORKING FROM THE STRENGTH DIVERSITY BRINGS

We value diversity and the strength, resilience and creativity that it brings. We harness its gifts. In supporting the contribution and well-being of all, we create a welcoming, caring and inclusive environment.



COLLABORATING IN WAYS THAT HELP US BE THE BEST WE CAN BE

We value a community that supports each of us to collaborate and to be the best we can be, flourishing both individually and collectively. Being supported to question and reflect gives us the freedom to challenge ourselves and each other. It reminds us that listening to, engaging with and involving others are vital for our success.

We lead by example, supporting each other to act with integrity, be accountable, and consistently live our values every day.

For further information please visit:
www.utas.edu.au/ourvalues

