

The UNE Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer (Chris Moran) Key Priorities 2026

Summary

Priorities for the Vice-Chancellor & Chief Executive Officer (VC) for 2026 have been developed in alignment with delivery of the 2026 Business Plan and initiation of UNE's 2026-2035 Strategic Plan. They highlight key areas Council requests as focus. The VC has immediate control of some, and others are delivered via management of direct reports.

Given UNE's current financial position, it is important that these priorities provide balance between immediate term operational and financial sustainability and strategic ambitions. It is key that UNE meets its financial sustainability targets, as it is also important that our first steps taken to achieve the longer-term goals of the strategic plan are performed well. In building a new UNE to deliver on our future ambitions it is crucial that collaboration with staff defines the journey.

Topics for focus

1. **Financial Rectification:** Across delivery of the UNE Strategy 2026-35 balanced focus and effort must be achieved between delivering budgetary repair and investing to enable the new Strategy. Crucial to this is the successful delivery of the Financial Rectification Plan, increasing our attraction and retention of students, and increasing staff activation and funding for world class research
2. **Community Collaborations:** Commencing new and deepening existing relationships with our communities. UNE's strategy requires a cultural reorientation in terms of how our people approach potential new partners and deepen the relationships with our existing partners. Developing these skills, systems and processes is vital to delivering on our *Community Collaborations*
3. **Foundational Excellence:** Implementation of a New Operating Model, establishing a *modus operandi* and posting early meaningful wins. In 2026 work is commencing on the transition to a new Operating Model. This is critical to UNE's future viability. It must be undertaken with care, deep consideration and broad staff buy-in and capability building to be successful. The initial focus for a selection of priority work consists of two foci: 1. Staff wishing to undertake transition initiatives that deliver value; and 2. Reducing work in the institution to create time for future allocation.
4. **Professional Development:** In our rapidly changing and challenging environment it is key for our leaders to have the support they need to grow.

Table of objectives and measures

Foundational Objective	Activity	Measure
Financial Sustainability - a sound base from which to build	1. Deliver the Financial Rectification Plan 2. Financial sustainability of Controlled Entities	1. Demonstrate financial discipline by meeting the Financial Rectification Plan objectives 2. Controlled Entities aligned with UNE strategy and demonstrating pathways to profitability
Our Learners, Their Environment and Outcomes	3. Student attraction and retention improvements 4. Development and deployment of native AI learning and enterprise. 5. Student satisfaction rating 6. College cultural improvement	3. Increase in commencing student load, retention and success rates aligned to Business plan KPIs 4. 500 enrolments in AI-native learning environments and AI strategy approved 5. 21 years at 5 star 6. Significant progress on action plan delivery
World-class Research	7. Increasing research income, breadth of engagement and higher degree research learners	7. 10% increase on 2025 research grant funding, 5% increase on 2025 HDR enrolments, and increased output from Balanced Load Academics by 10%
Operational Fitness – preparing for the future state	8. UNE Executive performance 9. Implementation of a New Operating Model 10. Campus planning	8. Program for Executive growth undertaken, and succession planning for all senior leaders developed 9. Appointment of Assistant V-C, transition planning completed, minimum of 6 Opportunities delivered 10. Finalise campus masterplan and surplus land development sub-strategy. Substantial operational savings (target 5%) in building operations including consolidation of use

Staff Satisfaction & wellbeing	11. Continue work to improve culture, safety and wellbeing, and staff engagement	11. Xref satisfaction and wellbeing indicators improve by 5%, Reduction in WHS incidents, PPDR Completion baseline rate
Governance	12. Deliver on UNE's governance uplift plans	12. - New Risk Framework and Risk Appetite policies embedded - Reduction in outstanding Audit Items reduced by min 50%, target 75% - Deliver program to significantly simplify and reduce the number of policies
Community Collaborations	13. Commencing new and deepening existing relationships with our Communities 14. Increasing research collaborations with a priority on these being via Community Collaborations.	13. Formalise Tamworth as a template for organising mode for Community Collaborations 14. Plans defined and 3 new significant partnerships initiated
Personal Development		
Governance	15. Governance qualifications	15. Completed AICD course by 31 December 2026
Leadership	16. Ongoing growth in leadership skills	16. Executive coaching/formal mentoring meeting regularly, at least once per month