Strategic Plan

Version number	5
Approved by	Corporate Governance Board
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Executive Summary

Sydney Institute of Higher Education (**SI**) intends to formally proceed with plans in development for several years to enter the Higher Education Sector. Building on the successes of Australian Ideal College (under the same corporate ownership), SI will deliver higher education programs exclusively.

SI has established corporate governing and academic governing bodies made up of a mix of internal and external SI staff, who collectively have the qualifications and experience to provide strong oversight and leadership of SI's proposed higher education operation.

Under that structure, the *Corporate Governance Board*, taking advice from the *Academic Board*, has defined an overall vision and purpose for SI, which is to foster an academic environment that upholds and protects freedom of intellectual inquiry, and delivers the best possible outcomes for higher education students.

To achieve this vision, the *Corporate Governance Board* has defined four objectives for higher education to be achieved over the initial period of 2020-2024:

1. For SI to be recognised as a higher education provider delivering educational opportunities for students and staff.
2. To build links with external partners and stakeholders.
3. To have evidence-tested structures and systems in place to continue to grow, sustainably and efficiently.
4. Develop an academic environment that supports all aspects of the student experience.

The *Corporate Governance Board* will monitor the implementation of the strategies described in this plan and the achievement of objectives, using a clear structure of reporting and accountability, as discussed within. The *Corporate Governance Board* is responsible for addressing any areas of underperformance identified. Through that governance structure, the objectives of this *Strategic Plan* will be used to guide decision-making and inform resource allocation, in line with advice and recommendations received from SI stakeholders.

Introduction

SI has formally been launched as a legally constituted private entity, founded on an ambition to become a niche provider enjoying recognition and respect as a private provider of higher education. With corporate governance and academic governance structures established (see Section 7), SI will apply for

approval of registration during 2020. SI has been established from its sister organisation Australian Ideal College, a successful provider of vocational education with campuses in Sydney, Adelaide and Hobart. Drawing on this experience, SI will be an independent entity that will deliver higher education only. In line with these intentions, SI's *Corporate Governance Board* has approved this *Strategic Plan* covering the forthcoming five-year period.

SI's inaugural *Strategic Plan,* encompassing period 2020-2024, defines a set of approved objectives that will enable SI to achieve its overall organisational vision for higher education (as described in Section 3). In some cases, the achievement of objectives will overlap, where achieving one objective will assist with the achievement of others. Further, objectives described here will be greatly aided by meeting the milestones described collectively in SI's *Marketing Plan, Teaching and Learning Plan, Business Plan,* and *Workforce Plan*. Objectives are described, along with a number of strategies to achieve them.

Along with strategies, the *Strategic Plan* describes key performance indicators to measure their success. These are noted, along with a description of the governance and management structures responsible for the monitoring and implementation of the objectives described here. The document is intended to guide management decision-making on future planning and resource allocation. As such, a significant internal reporting requirement (described in Section 8) will provide SI's *Corporate Governance Board* with the oversight necessary to monitor the outcomes of the strategies described here. This is intended to give the *Corporate Governance Board* the ability to seek further advice, to guide any actions required where underperformance is identified, or direct any adjustments necessary where non-achievement of objectives is anticipated.

For the purposes of this Strategic Plan, references to '*year one of operation*', '*year two of operation*' (and so forth) mean a year of operation after being registered as a higher education provider.

Vision and Purpose

SI's purpose for higher education is to build and cultivate an academic environment that promotes the freedom of intellectual inquiry across all aspects of the organisation, and within this the protection of the quality of student experience. The student experience for SI is outcomes-based, with education and service provision designed to improve the student experience whilst on campus, and to equip students with the knowledge and skills for a range of career pathways and lifelong learning. Programs offered are intended to be in growth sectors, in terms of industry employment numbers and student demand.

The *Corporate Governance Board* has approved a number of objectives described in Section 5, the achievement of which will allow the realisation of this vision and purpose for SI's higher education.

Values

SI's intentions for higher education have been advanced within a set of *organisational values*. Accordingly, this *Strategic Plan,* as a major guiding document, has been developed, reviewed, and approved to ensure SI reflects *these values* across the higher education operation:

- Academic excellence
- Inclusion and equity

- Global citizenship and partnership
- Lifelong learning
- Ethical leadership

SI's business planning frameworks, codes of conduct, and graduate attributes for all students (refer to the *Teaching and Learning Plan*) have likewise been developed to reflect these *organisational values*.

Sydney Institute of Higher Education's Objectives for Higher Education

Objective 1: For SI to be recognised as a higher education provider delivering quality educational opportunities for students and staff

SI must be recognised not only for the quality of the curriculum delivered but also as an attractive option within the sector that can offer a variety of teaching, learning and employment opportunities for students and staff. SI aims to recruit students who are informed about the breadth of study options available in the Australian higher education sector, and who are seeking the opportunities that SI can offer as anew private provider investing in high teacher contact hours. SI must build a reputation of offering quality education: academically rigorous and built upon contemporary scholarship, targeted to growing student and industry sectors, tailored to SI's *student profile*, and designed to prepare students for a range of professional outcomes. Likewise, SI must attract outstanding academic and professional staff to deliver and support higher education operation. To achieve the goals of the *Workforce Plan*, SI must be recognised as a reputable academic organisation that can offer opportunities that add genuine value to an academic career, irrespective of the stage of career at which an academic staff member finds themselves.

Strategies

- Using feedback from SI's network of education agents, explore potential to broaden SI's suite of course work programs offered to develop teaching expertise in other disciplines.
- Require all aspects of the curriculum and teaching support to be reviewed regularly for further enhancements that can be introduced to the curriculum.
- Ensure SI is actively searching and recruiting staff with strong higher education backgrounds and experience through its network and connections within the sector.
- In developing new curriculum, ensure that proposed programs align with growth in relevant sectors, such as employment trends and student demand.
- Cultivate new SI staff before, during, and after the recruitment process to align with the *organisational values* and to keep professional development and continual improvement as major priorities of performance planning processes.

Objective 2: To build links with external partners and stakeholders

To become a recognised provider of quality higher education, SI must have strong networks domestically and internationally. In the first instance, this means not only academic networks between SI teaching and research staff with academic colleagues in their fields of expertise but also in the study and practice of higher education more broadly. It is desirable for SI's development as an academic organisation that

academic staff build external engagement links as well as SI as an organisation having strategic partnerships with other Australian higher education providers for benchmarking and quality assurance purposes, among others. SI should also maintain linkages with professional and industry bodies, who are significant stakeholders in the education SI provides, as potential future employers of SI graduates. This includes corporate governing bodies that provide accreditation and qualification to specialized students.

Strategies

- Encourage academic staff to engage with external stakeholders, professional bodies or industry associations.
- Set benchmarking criteria and form benchmarking partnerships with comparable Australian higher education providers.
- Invite professional industry stakeholders to contribute to the work of the *Program Advisory Committee*.
- Hold general discussion forums between SI and their nearest industry partner representatives to factor external industry perspectives into future planning.

Objective 3: To have evidence-tested structures and systems in place to continue to grow, sustainably and efficiently

SI must continue to grow its market share (within the limits of its constraints), both to ensure financial sustainability, but also to have the resources to continue to deliver and improve the delivery of higher education. This means SI must have the processes and systems in place to ensure that growth is sustainable and takes place alongside further refinements and improvements. These processes and systems inform curriculum development choices and could include market research into employment and student trends. As shown in Section 7, below, SI commenced the development and implementation of its plans for higher education with a proposed organisational structure that has clear accountabilities and reporting lines. Within this structure, SI has developed and approved a broad range of policies, processes, and systems to support the delivery of its initial proposed course work programs. That structure is intended to allow the free flow of data and advice to allow governance decision-making, but also to allow further system and policy refinement to be evidence-based and target issues that emerge when policies are implemented and SI higher education operational. The achievement of this objective will ensure SI operates efficiently and sustainably whilst ensuring it continues to improve all aspects of higher education delivered.

Strategies

- Staff involved in marketing and communications to submit marketing strategies and outcomes from previous semesters to the *Corporate Governance Board* for approval, using (among other sources) recruitment agent research.
- Make policy implementation review and monitoring a regular item of *Corporate Governance and Academic Board* meetings.
- *Corporate Governance Board* and *Academic Board* to maintain an 'open line' for staff or students to provide feedback on the day-to-day operations, with any agreed recommendations delegated to appropriate operational SI staff.
- *Corporate Governance Board* and Executive Management Team to lead annual planning days with all staff focused on improving, and where possible, streamlining systems and processes to improve outcomes. Recommendations to be considered for future SI strategic plans.

- *When developing new curriculum, intend that proposed programs align with growing sectors in industry sector growth and student demand.*

Objective 4: Develop an academic environment that supports all aspects of the student experience

Fundamental to SI's indicators of quality for higher education is a robust quality assurance of the curriculum and the programs delivered. The academic objectives to ensure this is described in more detail in SI's current *Teaching and Learning Plan*. SI must develop and support a student experience that is quality assured in all aspects, however, including those that go beyond the classroom. The student experience begins before classes have commenced, with orientation programs tailored to the cohort, and ensuring that student support for academic and non-academic issues that can impact their ability to participate in education continues through to graduation. Central to achieving this is a commitment to the physical environment and facilities available for students. Working with advice from academic staff, IT expertise, and operations staff, SI must develop and maintain an environment conducive to the quality curriculum and scholarship it seeks to foster. Academic committees and the *Corporate Governance Board* will monitor the implementation of plans for improving SI's electronic teaching and learning infrastructure on campus and online.

Strategies

- *Academic Board* to gather recommendations *from Academic Board Committees* about the effectiveness of student support provided after one semester and provide advice on further recommendations.
- Appointing a *Library and Information Services Coordinator* upon registration, and SI to implement a library and learning resources acquisitions plan over the first three years of delivery.
- *Corporate Governance Board* to take advice from *Academic Board*, teaching staff and facilities staff to approve plans for further investment into electronic teaching and learning infrastructure during the first five years of higher education delivery.
- <u>*Executive Management Team*</u> to approve supervised staff time for strategic projects aimed at improving the student experience, taking student perspectives into account.

Key Performance Indicators

SI's *Corporate Governance Board* has set and approved measures of achievement of the objectives described in Section 5. These are detailed in the table below.

Objective	Strategies	Key Performance Indicators
SI to be recognised as a higher education provider delivering quality educational opportunities for students and staff	- Expand program offerings based on agent and market research in growth areas in employment trends and student demand, and further broaden teaching - All curriculum to be reviewed annually for innovation in teaching.	- SI *Academic Board* to receive a submission for a new program proposal with the first 5 years of operation. - All non-casual academic staff to hold Masters or PhDs (or be PhD candidates) by the end of the first 5 years of operation. - All academic staff to have had training in using the LMS and, where relevant, supplementing their programs with e-learning elements.

	• Recruit staff with strong experience in higher education. • Ensure a genuine focus on and commitment to professional development with new staff.	• Teaching quality surveys are to be implemented in each class and efforts will be made to address any deficiency in teaching quality.
Build links with external partners and stakeholders	• Academic staff encouraged to present research outcomes at conferences/industry fora. • Benchmarking partnerships to be formed. • Seek external industry advice in program development. • Build overall partnerships with industry to seek perspectives on education.	• Full-time teaching and research academic staff to have presented a minimum of one conference paper on average each year. • SI to have at least one benchmarking partnership in place by the end of the second year of operation. • *Program Advisory Committee* to have representatives of two separate industry groups sitting regularly by the end of year two.
To have evidence-tested structures and systems in place to continue to grow, sustainably and efficiently	• *Corporate Governance Board* to regularly review marketing strategy. • *Corporate Board and Academic Board* to monitor policy implementation and make decisions on improvements. • *Corporate Board and Academic Board* to invite feedback on policy implementation through the year. • Annual planning days to be had for staff to review and make recommendations on systems and process improvements. • *Corporate Governance Board* review through *Risk Management Plan*. • *Proposed programs align with growing sectors in industry sector growth and student demand*	• Student recruitment is to be attained with the use of onshore and offshore agents with the objective of achieving 175 total students per semester by year 3 in line with growth and resourcing projections. • One major staff planning day to be held at the end of the first year of operation with recommendations for improvements considered and approved for year two by December. • Boards to be able to describe at least one significant policy improvement made each year following consideration of staff feedback, separate from their own identified improvements.
Develop an academic environment that supports all aspects of the student experience	• *Academic Board* to procure advice on improving student support at SI. • *Library and Information Services Coordinator* to develop and deploy a	• At least one student focus group forum to be held each semester of the first four years of operation collating recommendations for improving the student experience. • *Corporate Governance Board* to show consideration of at least one significant

	library and learning resources acquisition plan. • *Corporate Governance Board* to review and, if applicable, approve plans for further investment into electronic teaching and learning infrastructure. • *Executive Management Team* to allow staff to work on strategic projects aimed at improving the student experience.	recommendation for improvement from student perspective each year, directing the *Executive Management Team* to allow staff time as a strategic project. • Library and learning resource acquisition plan to be implemented over the first three years with results monitored annually. • SI to show evidence of consideration and approval of plans to approve investment into improving electronic teaching and learning infrastructure, with at least one minor-to-significant improvement each year.

Governance and organisational structure

The governance of higher education at SI is shown in the SI *Organisational Charts*.

As can be seen, the highest level of responsibility for the governance oversight of higher education is SI's *Corporate Governance Board*. Authority for higher education is delegated to the *Corporate Governance Board* from SI's Board of Directors. The *Corporate Governance Board* is accountable for SI maintaining compliance with the *Higher Education Standards Framework 2015*, and has approved the objectives, strategies and performance indicators for higher education defined above.

The SI *Strategic Plan* will be communicated to all major internal and external stakeholders, including through publication on the SI higher education website (when launched) to which all internal staff will be referred.

Senior managers and supervisors are required to read and familiarise themselves with the *Strategic Plan* as a major guiding document that will inform decision-making and resource allocation at senior levels of SI:

Monitoring and reporting

The *Corporate Governance Board* monitors and is ultimately responsible for the implementation of all approved plans, policies, and processes at SI. This includes the *Strategic Plan* and associated guiding documents (such as marketing, business, and workforce plans, among others.) Through the *Organisational Chart* (section 7), individual staff report to supervisors and work units, and so forth upwards through *Executive Management Team* and the *Corporate Governance Board*. Reporting happens regularly at monthly, quarterly, and by semester where appropriate, with each functional area of SI providing at least one annual report for the *Corporate Governance Board*, either by itself or in collation with other reports. Corporate and academic governing bodies will also regularly solicit reports as needed.

The *Corporate Governance Board* takes advice from the *Executive Management Team*, from the *Academic Board* on academic matters, and from the *Audit and Risk Committee*. Upon review of this advice and reporting, the *Corporate Governance Board* regularly reviews the overall performance of SI

against the objectives and KPIs herein. The Board is empowered to direct action and address any areas of underperformance identified, via the committee structures that report to it, or via a staff member who is a member of the *Executive Management Team*.

The *Corporate Governance Board* is expected to issue an annual review of the progress of strategic indicators based on information and advice it has received and sought from across SI. These annual reviews will factor in the redevelopment of the next *Strategic Plan*.

Review

The *Corporate Governance Board* reviews the *Strategic Plan* a minimum of once per year, with the full redevelopment and rewriting of a new *Strategic Plan* to commence from at least six months before the end of 2022, or sooner if the *Corporate Governance Board* requires.

Version History				
Version number:	Approved by:	Approval date:	Revision notes:	Next review date:
1	Corporate Governance Board	04/09/2017	Adopted	
2	Corporate Governance Board	16/10/2017	Minor grammatical changes	
3	Corporate Governance Board	07/05/2018		
4	Corporate Governance Board	16/09/2019	Removal of BICT	
5	Corporate Governance Board	23/07/2020	Revision to include sector growth, student demand	

▲ Linked Documents

➦	Business Plan
➦	Graduate Attributes
➦	Learning and Teaching Plan
➦	Marketing Plan
➦	Workforce Plan

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