

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Director, Strategic Student Initiatives



WESTERN SYDNEY
UNIVERSITY

POSITION DETAILS

Position Title	Director, Strategic Student Initiatives
Classification	Senior
Position Number	7011562
School/Office	Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor, Student Success
Division	Division of Education and Students

POSITION PURPOSE

Strategic Student Initiatives is the innovation and equity engine of the Student Success portfolio, bringing together scholarships, financial wellbeing, welfare, peer programs, sport, Success Coaches, Western How, digital engagement, Fairfield Connect, and strategic projects into a single integrated structure focused on improving student access, participation, retention, and success. The team includes welfare professionals, Success Coaches, program coordinators, scholarship administrators, business analysts, and strategic project staff delivering both core student support services and major University and government initiatives. Through a coordinated and student-centred approach, the unit drives belonging, wellbeing, academic success, and equitable outcomes for diverse student cohorts across the student lifecycle.

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

1. Drive student success outcomes by delivering integrated initiatives that improve access, retention, progression, wellbeing, belonging, and graduate success.
2. Lead the University's strategic student initiatives portfolio, ensuring programs and services align with institutional priorities, government policy, and emerging student needs.
3. Deliver high-impact equity, welfare, scholarship, and engagement programs that reduce barriers to participation and improve outcomes for diverse student cohorts.
4. Secure and maximise investment in student success, overseeing government-funded programs, , scholarships, and strategic funding streams to achieve measurable impact.
5. Provide strategic leadership and governance for major initiatives, ensuring effective risk management, compliance, reporting, and stewardship of University resources.
6. Build and maintain influential partnerships across the University, government, industry, community, and education sectors to strengthen opportunities and outcomes for students.
7. Embed evidence-informed decision-making through performance monitoring, evaluation, and

- continuous improvement to demonstrate program effectiveness and return on investment.
8. Lead a high-performing multidisciplinary team and portfolio, fostering innovation, accountability, collaboration, and a culture focused on student-centred outcomes.

QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS

1. Relevant tertiary qualification or an equivalent combination of qualifications and experience.
2. Extensive leadership experience managing complex programs, services, or portfolios in a large organisation, with responsibility for delivering strategic outcomes and managing competing priorities.
3. Demonstrated ability to develop and implement strategy, translating organisational priorities into practical initiatives that deliver measurable results.
4. Strong people leadership skills, with experience building, leading, and developing high-performing teams through periods of change, growth, and continuous improvement.
5. Experience managing governance, risk, compliance, and funding requirements, including oversight of budgets, reporting, contracts, or externally funded programs.
6. Highly developed stakeholder engagement and influencing skills, with the ability to build productive relationships and achieve outcomes across a diverse range of internal and external partners.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

This position reports to Pro Vice-Chancellor, Student Success.

This position has supervisory responsibilities and is responsible for the line management of:

1. Manager, Fairfield Connect (7013323)
2. Manager, Success Coaches (7015612)
3. Manager, Student Engagement and Strategic Initiatives (7015669)
4. Manager, Welfare and Scholarships (7003410)
5. Senior Business Analyst (7015670)

Success in the role will be dependent on developing and maintaining positive relationships with:

1. Pro Vice-Chancellor, Student Success
2. Members of the Student Success Senior Leadership Team
3. Members of the University's Senior Leaders Group
4. Faculties and Schools
5. Students
6. Government representatives

CHALLENGES

1. **Balancing increasing student need with finite resources**
The role oversees a broad portfolio of programs supporting students experiencing financial hardship, welfare concerns, transition challenges, and educational disadvantage. Demand for services and support often exceeds available funding and staffing, requiring difficult decisions about priorities, resource allocation, and service delivery models while maintaining positive student outcomes.
2. **Delivering complex strategic initiatives within a changing policy environment**
The portfolio is responsible for implementing major University and government-funded initiatives that operate within evolving policy, funding, and compliance requirements. The role must respond quickly to legislative reforms, new funding programs, and changing stakeholder expectations

while ensuring continuity of services and achievement of strategic objectives.

3. **Influencing outcomes across diverse stakeholders without direct authority**

Success depends on building alignment across faculties, professional units, government agencies, community organisations, donors, and external partners. The role frequently requires negotiating competing priorities, managing expectations, and achieving shared outcomes through collaboration rather than direct control.

4. **Demonstrating measurable impact across a diverse portfolio**

The portfolio spans scholarships, welfare, financial assistance, engagement programs, strategic projects, and community partnerships, each with different success measures and stakeholder expectations. The role must establish clear evidence of impact, demonstrate value for investment, and balance short-term operational demands with long-term improvements in student success and institutional performance.

UNIVERSITY EXPECTATIONS

The University expects that all employees are aware of, and comply with legislation and Western's policies and procedures relevant to the position, including but not limited to:

- Code of Conduct
- Work Health and Safety and Wellbeing Management System
- Enterprise Agreement or Award
- Anti-discrimination principles, Equal Employment Opportunity and staff and student equity.

Approved by: Office for People and Culture

Date: 18.06.2026