

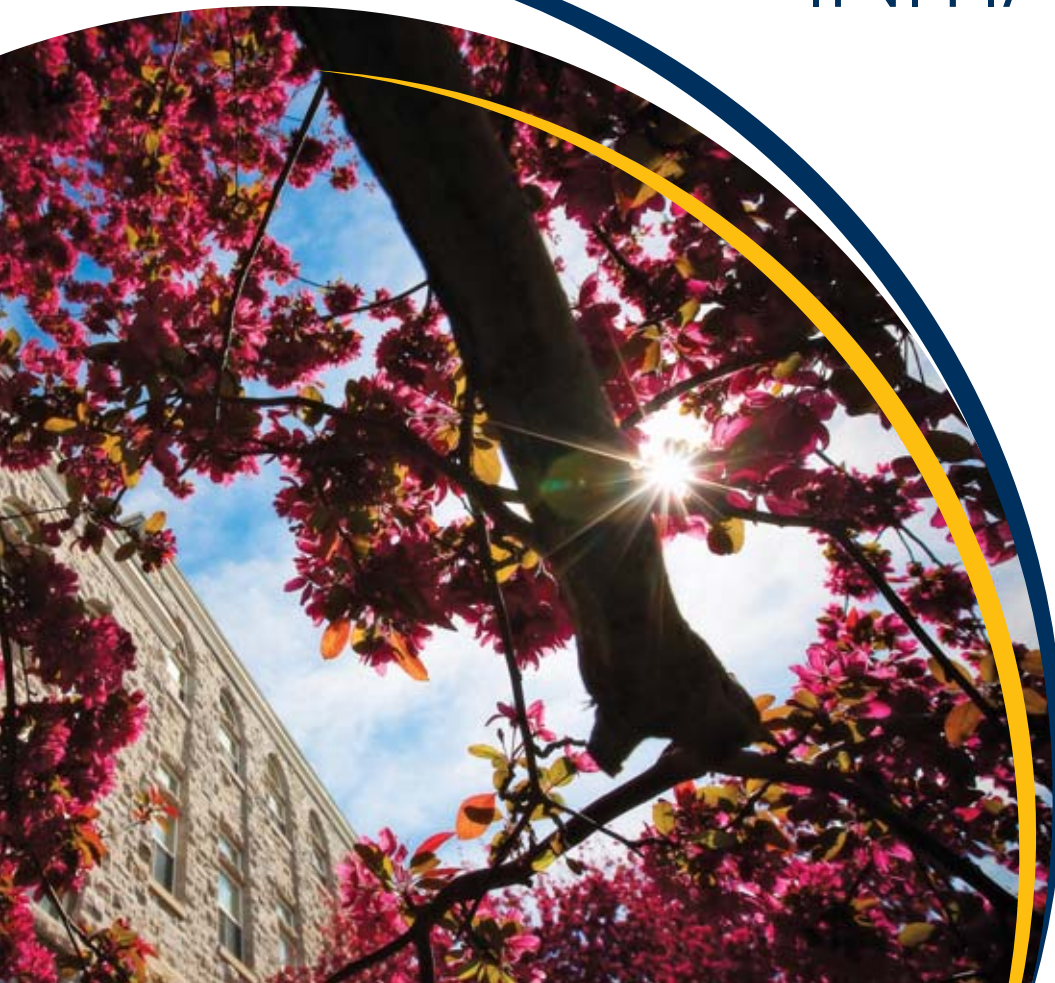


Queen's  
UNIVERSITY

# Strategic Framework

2014-2019

INITIAL REPORT



# Principal's message



Earlier this year, I introduced the strategic framework as a capstone planning tool to strengthen Queen's vision as a balanced academy. It sets out four strategic drivers — the student learning experience, research prominence, financial sustainability and internationalization — that are essential to our continued success in delivering a transformative student learning experience within a research-intensive environment.

In this initial report on the strategic framework, you will read about the ways in which we are enhancing student engagement and experiential learning, working to secure funding for our research, developing high quality programs that will diversify revenue, and increasing our international reach.

It is worthwhile to reflect on why the balanced academy is so important to Queen's. It stems from our belief that teaching and research are not two separate aims of a university; they are mutually beneficial because they inform each other through a spirit of inquiry-based learning. We believe that we can excel at both, without the need to sacrifice one for the other. But we also know that our success is not guaranteed.

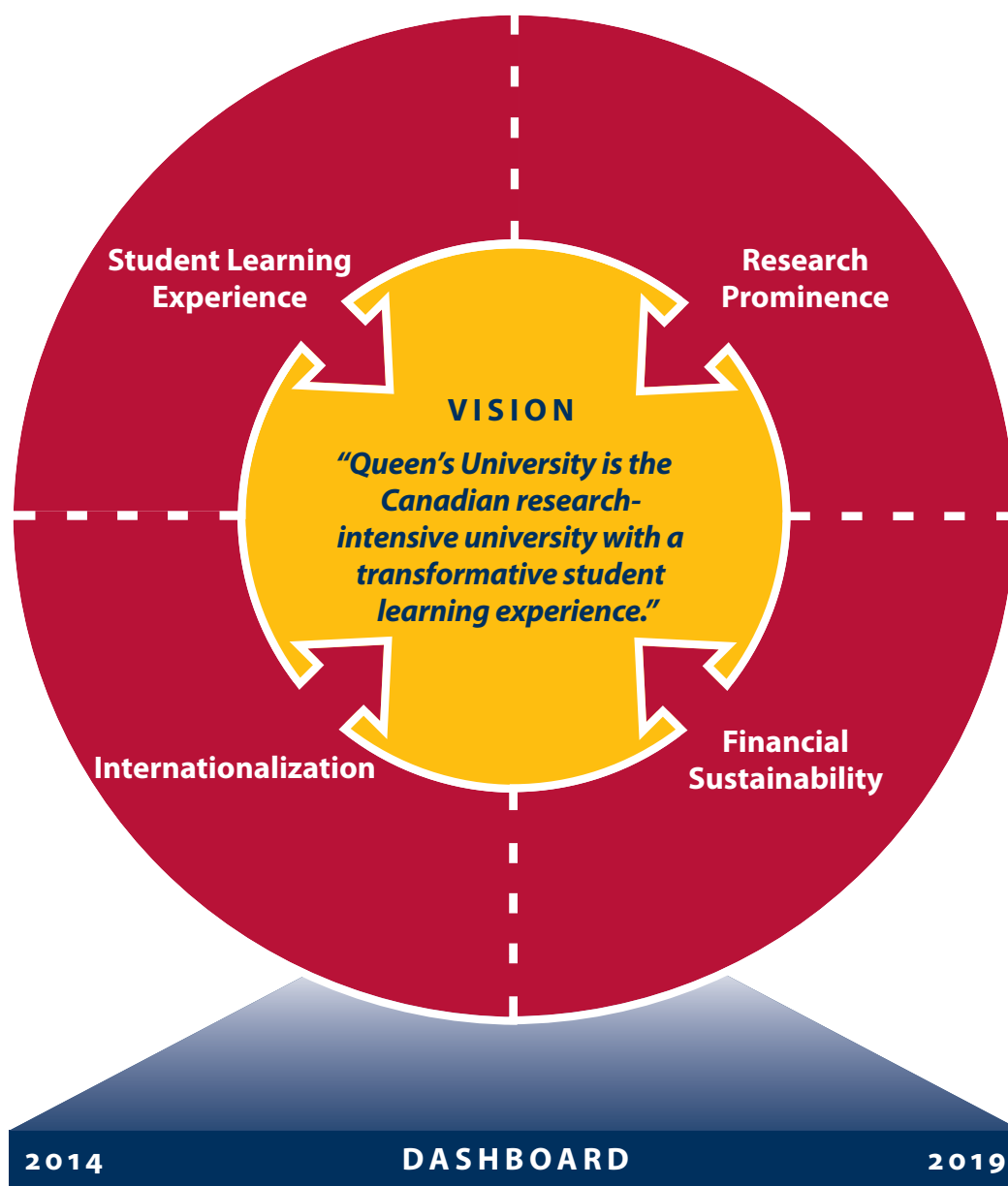
The university operates in a difficult environment and many challenges lie ahead. Yet, through more than 170 years of history, Queen's has never shied away from taking the hard path. Our collective determination has allowed the university to grow from its humble origin as a Presbyterian college, into a dynamic national institution.

Today, Queen's staff, faculty, students and alumni show that same determination. Our vision and our hard work will allow us to face today's challenges and succeed as a balanced academy in a globalized world.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel R. Wolf". The signature is written in a cursive style.

**Daniel Woolf**  
**Principal and Vice-Chancellor**

# Queen's University Strategic Framework



# Measuring our strategic drivers

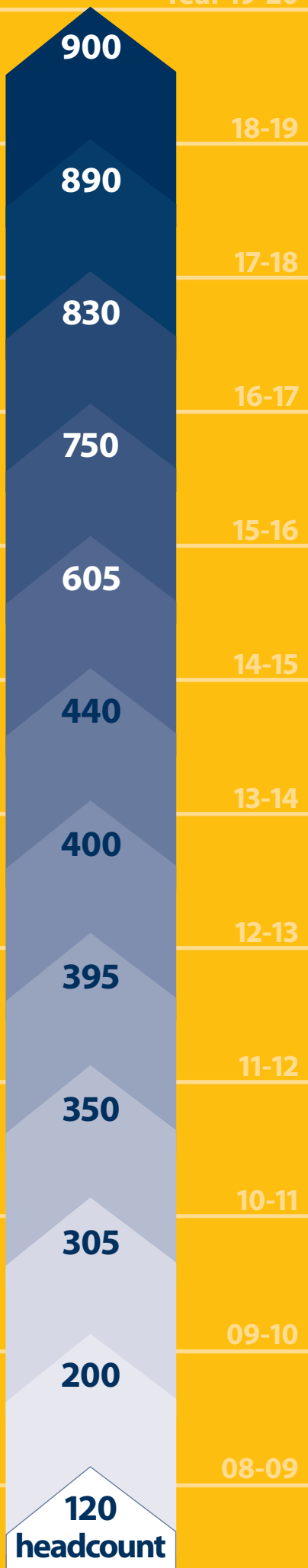
## **Student Learning Experience:** Student Engagement

At the undergraduate level, the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is the primary metric for student engagement. Henceforth, we shall administer the survey annually, rather than every three years. The three-year cycle called for NSSE to be administered in spring 2014 in any event. The survey instrument was modified this year, but the modifications do not invalidate comparisons of NSSE results through time. The early indication from our 2014 results is that, overall, our NSSE scores have not changed significantly from 2011, which means our primary focus for new initiatives will continue to be on student-faculty interaction and active and collaborative learning.

The Division of Student Affairs is proposing to use enhanced orientation and learning community programs in the residences to improve engagement in these areas. Faculties and schools will be concentrating their efforts on the enhanced use of learning management systems, the introduction of e-portfolios linked to professional standards of practice, the continued adoption of blended learning in large introductory courses, improvements in clinical, laboratory and professional course-level engagement, increased exposure to research in introductory courses, and a focus on cyclical program reviews as a vehicle for identifying engagement and learning experience opportunities.

It is important to remember that the mix of strategies employed in different parts of the university will vary to reflect differences across the university in engagement scores.

At the graduate level, our primary metric is the Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey (CGPSS). This too will henceforth be administered annually. CGPSS was not administered in 2014, so there are no new results to include in this report. There are, however, initiatives underway to enhance graduate student engagement. For example, graduate student supervision will be addressed through faculty development workshops. Career and employment issues for graduate students are being addressed through improved internship and international work opportunities, other professionally-focused learning opportunities and courses, and the provision of information on employment in non-academic fields. Improvements resulting from these and other initiatives will be closely monitored through the annual administration of the CGPSS, and the results from program-specific exit surveys.



## Student Learning Experience: Skill Development

The goal of increased experiential learning in undergraduate programs is reflected in faculty and School plans for internships, which will be formally incorporated into academic programs. In addition, units offering programs that currently include clinical and practicum activity have plans to expand and enhance experiential learning, including international placements, service learning and volunteer work. There are also plans for new courses in professional skills, a summer employment program, and professionally-focused research with faculty members. Supporting initiatives in the Division of Student Affairs include a recently implemented experiential learning map and toolkit, and a co-curricular opportunities directory.

At the graduate level, experiential learning is a priority in many research master's and doctoral programs as well as in professional programs. The immediate focus of these efforts is to increase the quantity and quality of clinical, practicum and experiential activity in professional programs, and to review the barriers to experiential learning in doctoral-stream programs.

A particular focus in graduate programs is growth in non-traditional graduate credential opportunities. Nearly 400 students are currently enrolled in more than 20 such programs, some of which are delivered at a distance, online or through joint or collaborative arrangements, some with other institutions. Another 20 programs are currently in development, are being assessed, or are under consideration. If all these come to fruition, the number of students in non-traditional graduate programs will more than double in five years

← (see Figure 1).

## Research Prominence

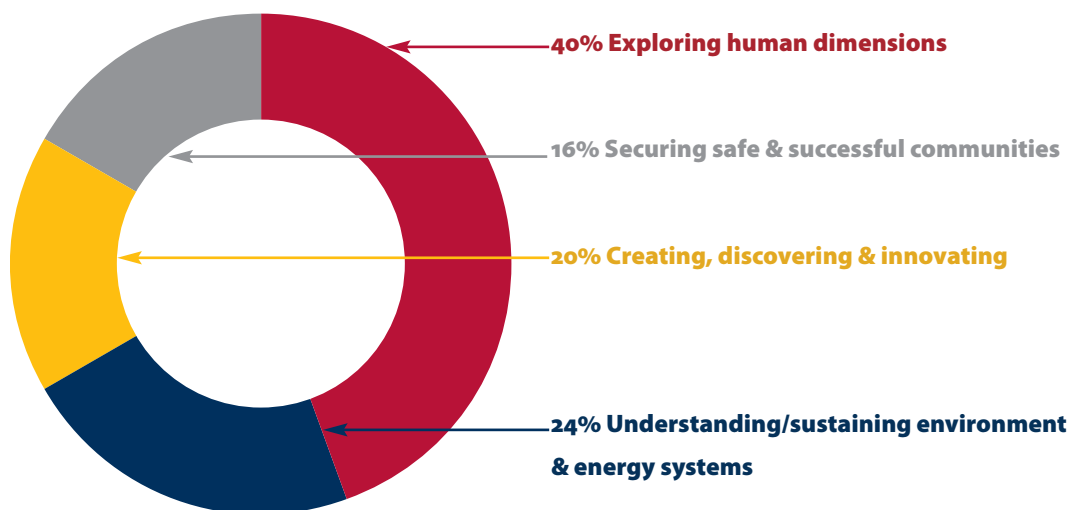
The research landscape in Canada is changing, particularly with respect to the three federal granting councils. Council budgets are stable or declining, applications are increasing, and grant approval criteria are becoming ever more prescriptive. All limit success rates and total research award amounts.

Overall, Faculties and schools are planning for maintenance of, or modest increases in, overall research funding over the next several years. This will probably require greater diversification of research funding sources. Strategies to support this include industry outreach and exploration of international funding sources. Faculties and schools are also proposing to improve recognition of research accomplishments, and enhance internal peer review of grant proposals and research infrastructure improvements.

All recruitment to Canada Excellence Research Chairs, Canada Research Chairs, and the Queen's National Scholar program is already aligned with the thematic areas of the Strategic Research Plan. Planning for research chairs indicates a commitment to the thematic areas and a fairly even distribution across the four themes (see Figure 2). ↓

Additionally, priorities often address more than one theme, demonstrating the increasingly interdisciplinary nature of the research enterprise.

**Figure 2**  
**Faculty/school priorities for research chairs aligned with strategic research plan themes**



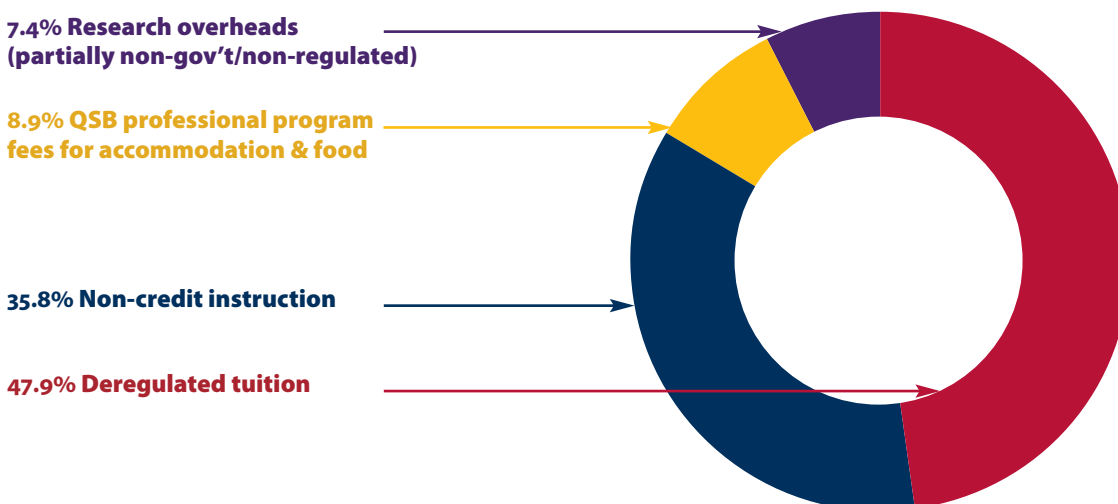
## Financial Sustainability

Financial sustainability requires that we generate additional revenue while diversifying our sources of revenue and constraining costs. Currently about 85 percent of Queen's operating revenue comes from the provincial government directly, or from a source that is regulated by the provincial government. The remaining 15 percent comes from four primary sources (see Figure 3). ↓

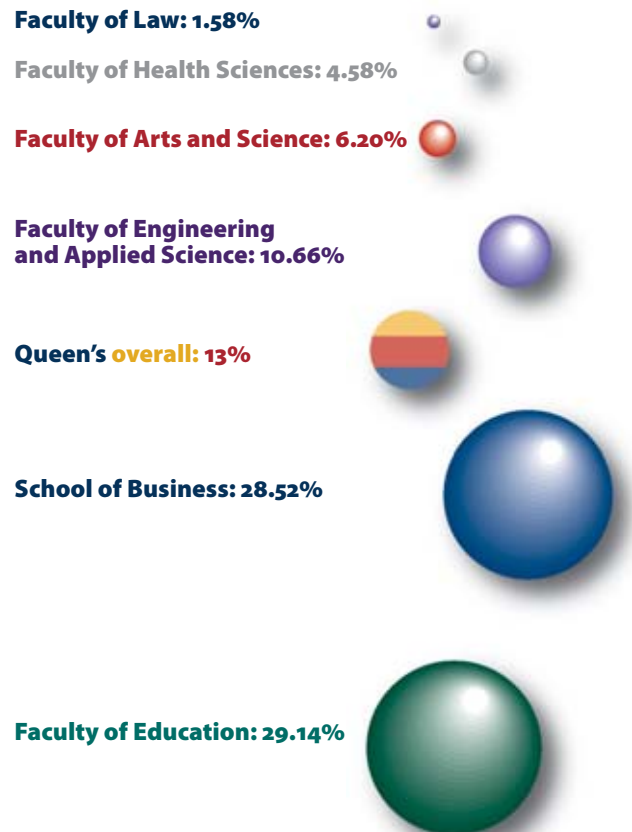
Reliance on government funds and funds that are government-regulated varies considerably by faculty (see Figure 4). →  
For this reason, strategies for financial sustainability will also vary faculty by faculty.

Faculties and schools have identified a number of opportunities for revenue generation from traditional sources. These include additional enrolments in new online programs and course offerings, collaborative programs, graduate-level certificates and diplomas, and conventional programs. Revenue generation that will also diversify revenue sources will result from expanded non-credit offerings, corporate training, clinic services and conference fees. The University is also expecting additional revenue from residences and food services.

**Figure 3**  
**Sources of non-government & non-regulated revenue, Queen's overall**



**Figure 4**  
**Percentage of faculty/school revenue from non-government & non-regulated sources**

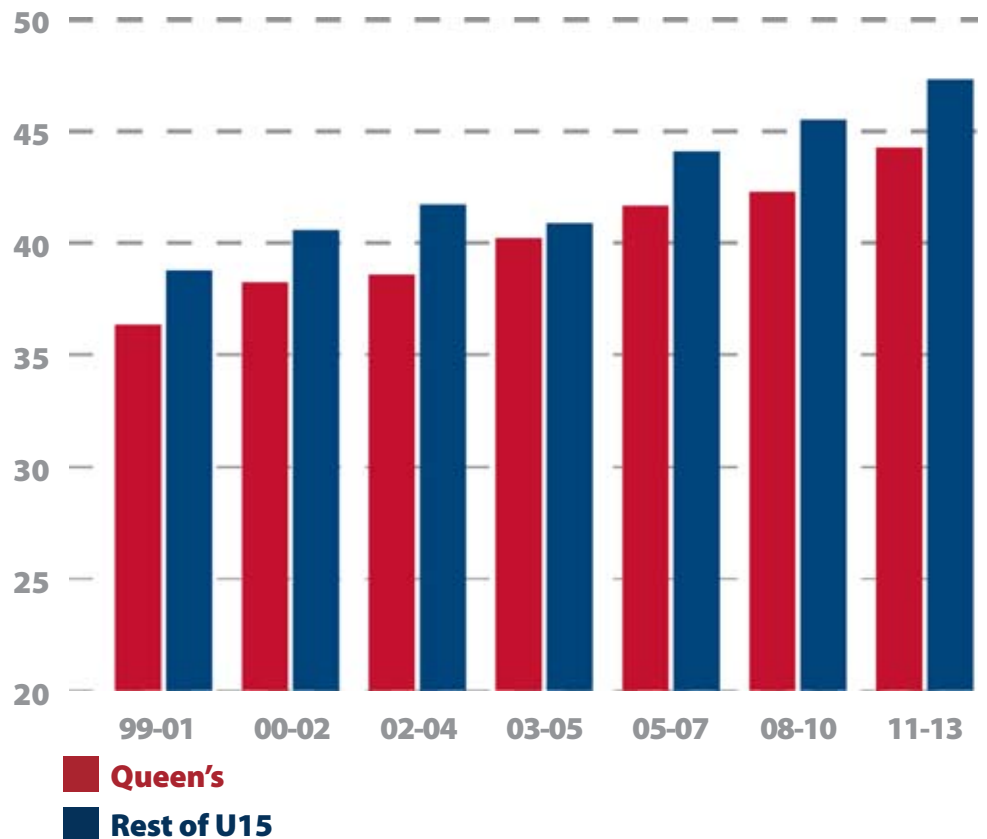


## Internationalization

Over the past 10 years, international collaboration (measured as the percentage of refereed journal articles with at least one Queen's author that also have at least one international author) has increased from 27 percent to 40 percent at Queen's. This increase notwithstanding, we still lag a little behind the average figure for the other U15 universities (see Figure 5). ↓

A number of factors have been identified that will increase international collaboration and raise our international profile. These include the establishment of a centralized database of international research exchanges and partnerships, more programs to attract visiting researchers, and the continued development of dual degrees with universities outside Canada.

**Figure 5**  
**International collaboration index: Queen's vs other u15 institutions**  
**(2000-02 and 2003-05 data are not directly comparable)**

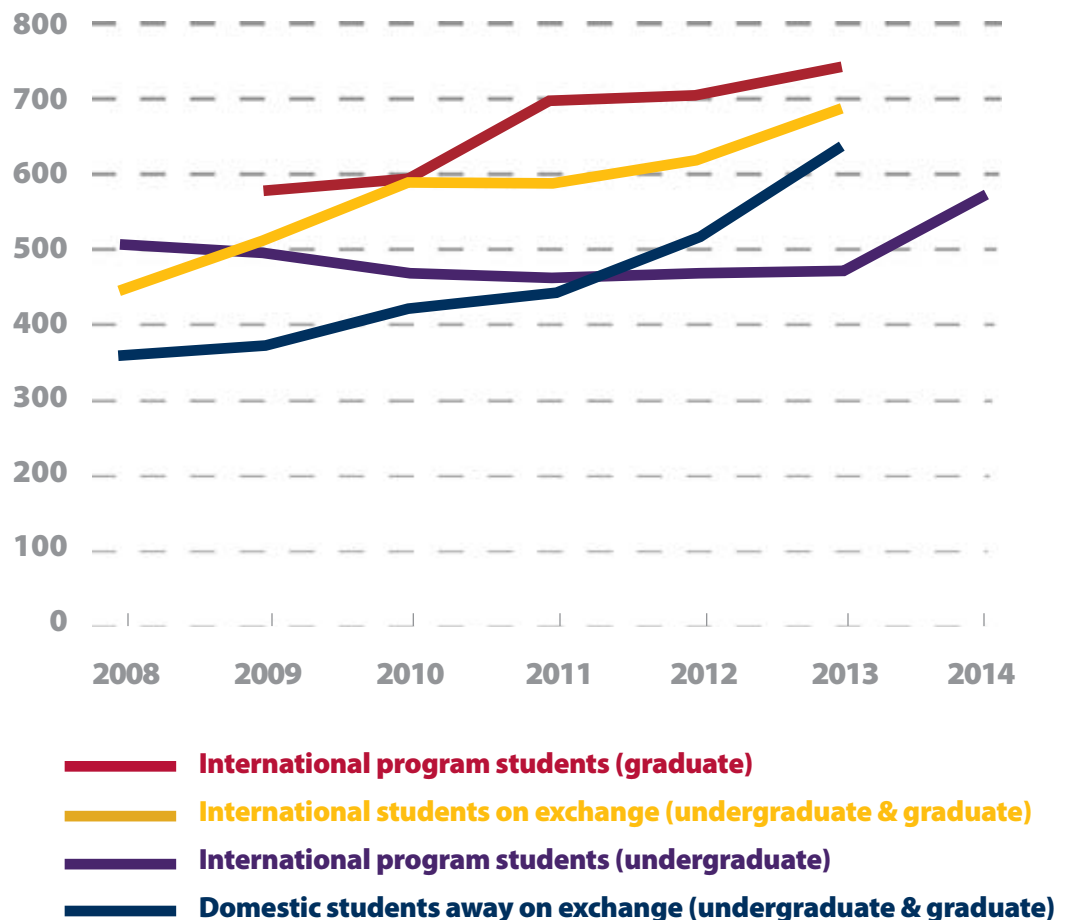




Preliminary fall 2014 data indicate a substantial increase in international undergraduate enrolment (see Figure 6)↓. For the future, we are broadening the number of ways in which international students might come to Queen's. Traditionally, most who attended Queen's pursued their entire program here, but program options will soon include 2+2 programs, dual-degree and jointly delivered programs with international partner institutions. International student recruitment strategies will continue to include participation in internationally focused organizations, the use of the Bader International Study Centre as a recruitment hub, and expanded recruitment activities in strategic regions.

Formal agreements with international universities will continue to support student exchanges. Our ability to create exchange opportunities across the academy's programs varies according to factors such as licensing and accreditation constraints.

**Figure 6**  
**International students and student experiences**



## Appendix I: Target Setting

We provided each Dean with a customized data package that showed recent values, disaggregated to the level of the Dean's unit or to its component departments, for each Strategic Framework metric that was relevant to that unit. For example, the institutional NSSE scores presented in this initial report and the Strategic Framework Summary represent survey responses for all responding undergraduate students, but the Deans received scores based on survey responses for the students in their unit (and sometimes for individual programs, where sample size warranted it).

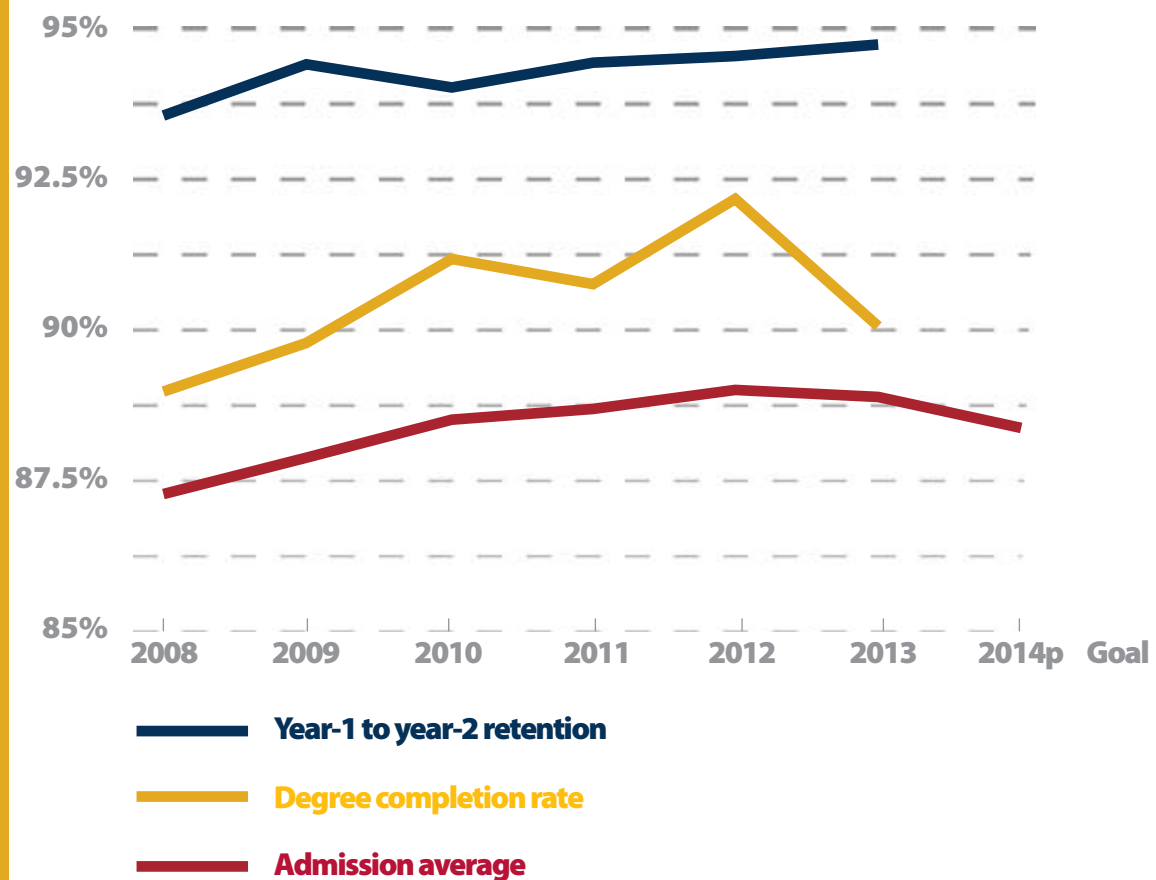
Each Dean has been asked to indicate his/her unit's preliminary two-year and five-year targets for each Strategic Framework metric. For each metric, the units' targets will be aggregated to establish initial University-wide targets. These will be discussed and evaluated collectively. Any suggested changes to the university-wide targets will have implications for units' targets, and vice-versa. An iterative process will lead the group to a set of unit targets that are appropriate and feasible from the unit's perspective and that aggregate to institutional targets that are collectively deemed to be appropriate and feasible. These institutional targets will then be reviewed by members of the university's senior administration before being recommended to the Board of Trustees for consideration at its December meeting.

Each Dean has also been asked to identify the key elements of the strategies his/her unit will employ to reach the targets. Further consideration of these strategies will form an integral part of the management of the Deans' performance by the Provost. In particular, this process will constitute an additional layer of rigour to the preparation by each Dean of his/her priority tactics. These priority tactics are submitted as part of each individual's X-matrix, which demonstrates the strategic driver(s) each tactic supports and the metric(s) each tactic is intended to improve. The Deans will submit their 2015-2016 X-matrices to the Provost in the spring of 2015.

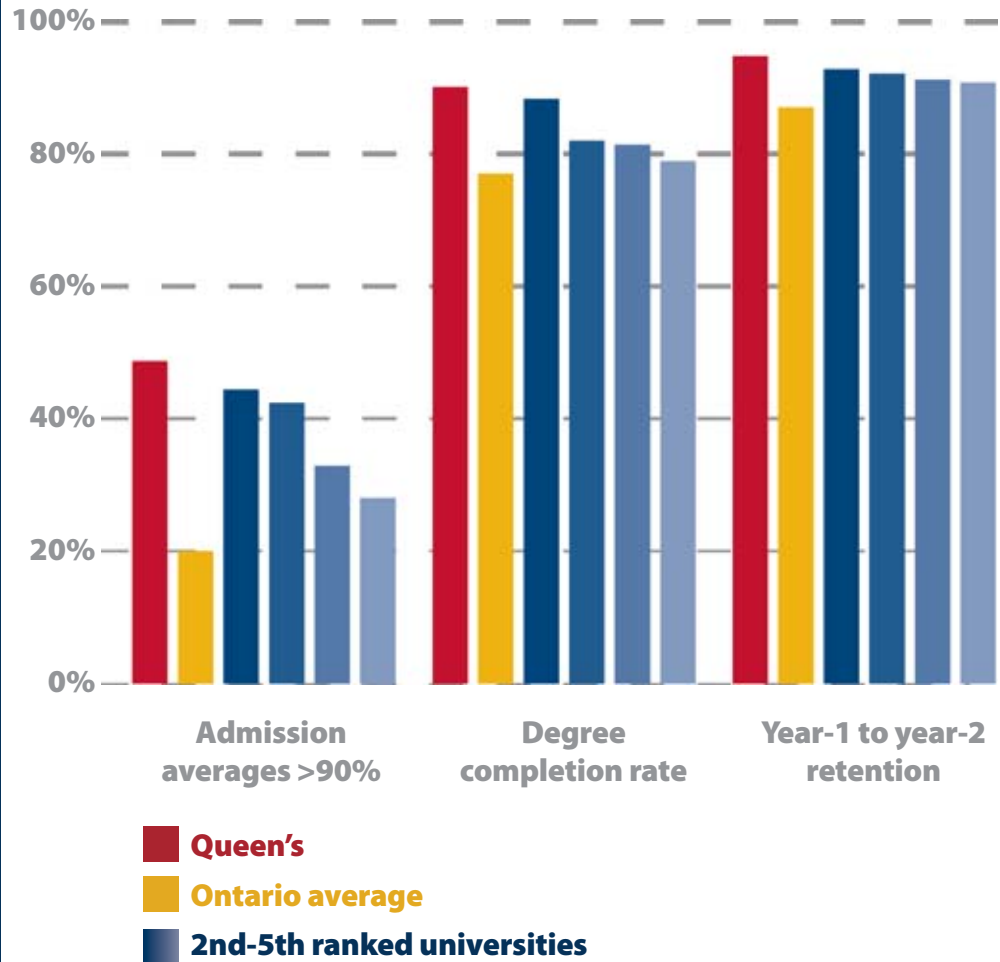
## Appendix II: Student Quality Indicators

Queen's is committed to ensuring that the implementation of our Strategic Framework does not negatively affect the high quality of students we recruit, retain and graduate. At the undergraduate level, the metrics we use to measure student quality are the average grade of admitted students, the student retention rate between first and second year, and the degree completion rate, all three of which are projected to be stable for fall 2014 (see Figure 7)↓, and the highest for any university in Ontario (see Figure 8). →

**Figure 7**  
**Queen's student quality:**  
**admission averages, degree completion and retention**



**Figure 8**  
**Queen's student quality: position within Ontario**



There is a small decline in the 2013 degree completion rate. This rate is a cohort-based calculation made seven years after the cohort entered Queen's, but the decline, as well as being small, will be reversed for 2014. We know this because the six-year degree completion rate, calculated in 2013 for the next cohort, is already higher than the 2013 seven-year rate.

In support of the maintenance of our student quality, we shall continue to offer our comprehensive suite of first-year experience programs, including QSuccess and Bounce Back. QSuccess is a nine-week transition program to help first-year students develop the knowledge, attitudes and skills that will support their personal and academic success at Queen's.

Students are coached in a small-group format. Last year, we had room in the program for 100 students. Retention in QSuccess was very high and participants reported significant improvements in their personal and academic adjustment by the second term of first year. This year, program capacity has been tripled to 300.

Bounce Back is a peer-focused support program offered in the winter term to any first-year undergraduate student in Arts and Science, Business, Engineering and Applied Science or Nursing with a GPA of less than 1.6 in his or her first term. Peer mentors coach students in goal-setting, time management, learning strategies and healthy life choices and encourage them to utilize academic resources and support services.

Bounce Back was offered in Arts and Science as a pilot program in 2013-2014. Participants reported greater levels of resilience and confidence after entering the program and recorded higher year-end GPAs and higher retention in second-year than a matched group of non-participants.

Graduate program completion rates at Queen's are 82 percent for research master's programs (third highest in the U15), and 78 percent for doctoral programs (second highest in the U15). The focus of future policy and support services will be on the time to completion, with the goal of having a greater proportion of students completing their graduate degrees within a specified number of terms.



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