



Queen's  
UNIVERSITY

# Strategic Framework

2014-2019





# Strengthening our balanced academy



Queen's is uniquely positioned among Canada's universities. No other institution combines our quality and intensity of research with our excellence in undergraduate and graduate education. It is this "balanced academy" that has built our reputation as one of Canada's leading universities.

Our success is due in large measure to the exceptional faculty, staff and students who choose to work and study at Queen's. However, all organizations are affected by their environment. As I suggested in *The Third Juncture*, we cannot simply take our success for granted in these times of economic change, technological advance, and the globalization of education and knowledge. Increased competition and significant financial challenges threaten to erode our ability to achieve our vision of being the quintessential balanced academy.

Already, the university faces significant cost pressures and restricted revenue growth due to constraints on tuition, static or declining government grants, and demographics that are not in our favour. Now, and over the coming years, we must act carefully and deliberately to ensure that we remain financially sustainable while at the same time staying true to our vision. With tighter limits on resources, this will mean difficult tradeoffs, and, as a result, commensurately difficult decisions (e.g., with respect to faculty renewal), but it will also mean new opportunities.

This strategic framework serves as a capstone to a number of years of strategic planning at Queen's and its purpose is to help the university achieve its vision. It does this by identifying four **strategic drivers** as the priorities that will guide our decision making over the next five years, to 2019. Each of these drivers – the student learning experience, research prominence, financial sustainability and internationalization – directly supports the success of our balanced academy.

The framework does not attempt to answer fundamental questions about what Queen's might look like in 15 or 20 years; rather, it is meant to strengthen the university and make it more resilient in the turbulent times ahead. We expect that Queen's will continue to be a publicly assisted university, and a genuinely balanced academy, one that takes equal pride in the quality of the education we provide and the strength of our commitment to research intensity, and we shall continue to be reliant (albeit to a lesser extent than currently) on provincial government grants and government controlled tuition fees. The framework will guide us as we collectively build a foundation that will ensure Queen's remains a university where exceptional people continue to thrive in a dynamic and innovative academic community.

Many people have contributed to the development of this framework, including those who participated in the preparation of the planning documents that underpin the framework. There are too many to single out, but I want to express my thanks to them all for their hard work, which is very much appreciated.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel R. Woolf". The signature is fluid and cursive.

**Daniel Woolf**  
Principal and Vice-Chancellor

# Queen's vision

Queen's has a longstanding reputation for offering its students an exceptional educational and extra-curricular learning experience. Today we are as well known for our excellence in research and graduate and professional programs as for the quality of our student learning experience.

Our Academic Plan's vision statement says it best "*Queen's is the Canadian research-intensive university with a transformative student learning experience.*"

# Our framework

The overarching goal of the strategic framework is to strengthen Queen's vision as Canada's quintessential balanced academy, ensuring we remain a university recognized equally for its research excellence and its transformative student learning experience.

The framework, developed in close consultation with, and approved by, our Board of Trustees, builds upon strategic planning exercises undertaken over the past few years, and is aligned with our institutional planning tools, including the Academic Plan and the Strategic Research Plan (both approved by Senate), the Proposed Mandate Statement, and the newly implemented activity-based budget model.

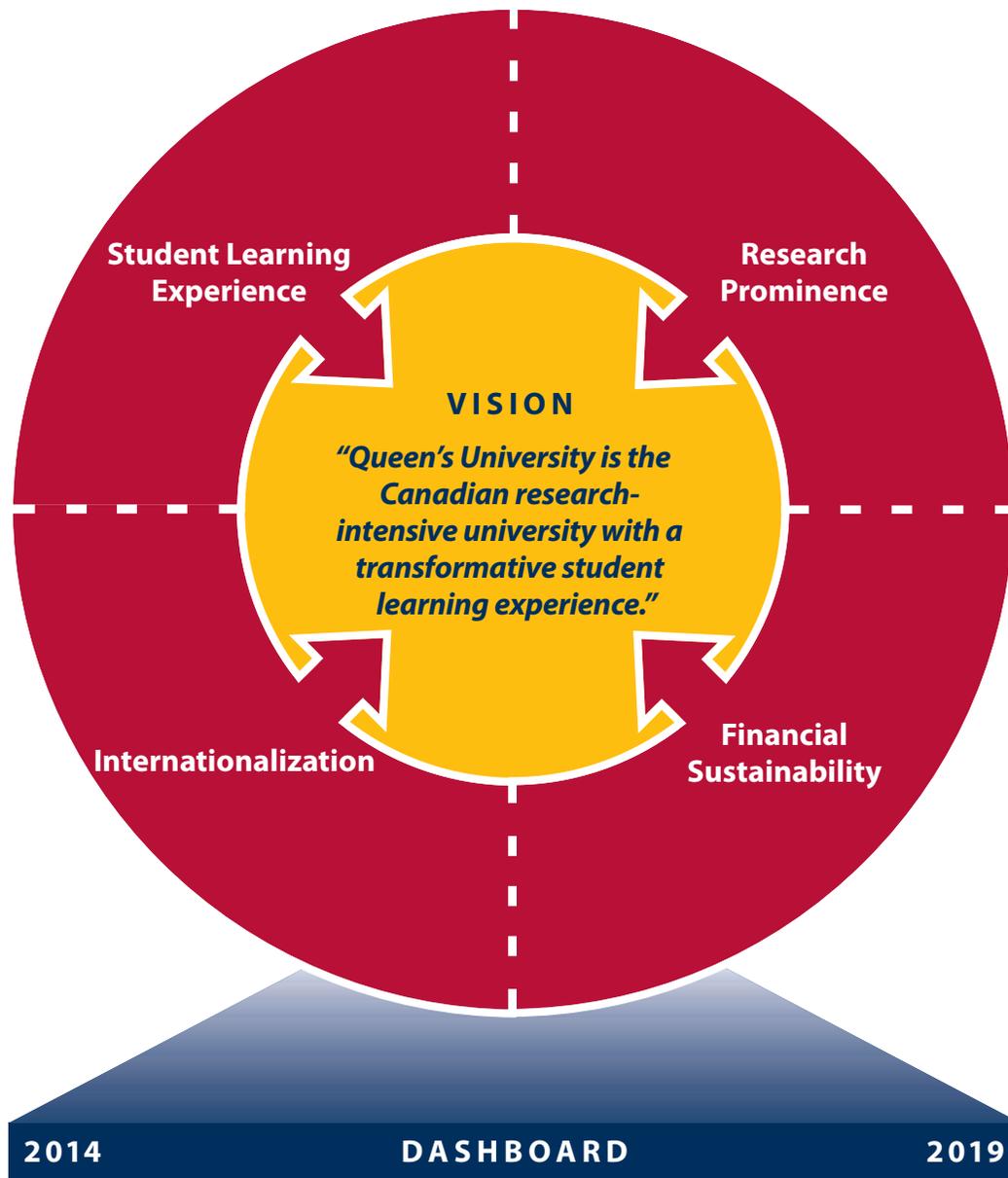
At the framework's core are four interconnected strategic drivers, **the student learning experience, research prominence, financial sustainability** and **internationalization**, all of which are appropriately aligned with our planning tools. Each of these drivers, described below, underpins the success of our vision.

We have identified university-wide objectives that the university will work to achieve over the next five years. Individual faculties and schools, the academic core of the university (and also its primary revenue generating units), as well as administrative support units, will align their initiatives with these drivers and undertake specific coherent actions to advance them. The university-wide objectives were developed in consultation with all units and will accommodate the changes from year to year in any unit's specific annual goals. The units' planning and actions will be incorporated into ongoing university-wide budget and staffing plans, which are also informed by our integrated planning tools.

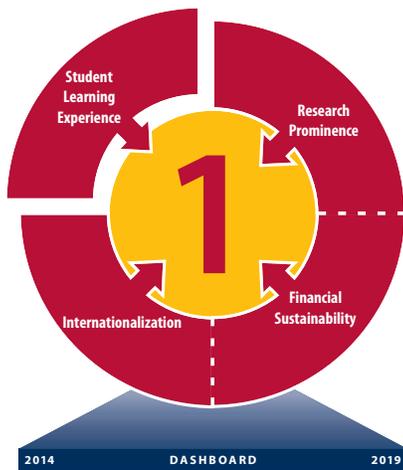
As we advance the strategic drivers in support of our vision we will carefully track our progress. A set of preliminary performance metrics for each driver are outlined below. These performance metrics will form the basis of progress reports that we will share annually with the Board of Trustees, the Senate and the Queen's community. We have tried to keep our measurements simple, and we are, wherever possible, using existing metrics. It is important to note that not all of the metrics may count equally, and the importance of an individual metric may vary through time. The weight associated with each metric is very much dependent on external factors, which will also influence which objectives we need to pay close attention to for any given period.



# Queen's University Strategic Framework



# Our strategic drivers



## Enhancing our Student Learning Experience: Student Engagement and Skill Development

Our fundamental mandate is to exemplify the quintessential balanced academy, which is characterized by an exceptional student learning experience and outstanding student engagement within a research intensive environment.

As our Academic Plan highlights, a transformative student learning experience is central to Queen's identity and its vision. Our students and faculty are highly engaged and Queen's offers a wealth of resources to foster student success.

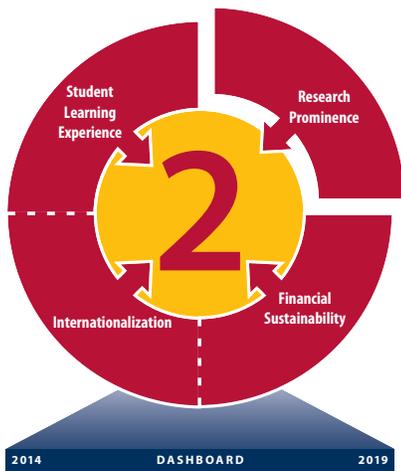
In this framework, the student learning experience is separated into two related, yet distinct, sub-categories of *student engagement* and *skill development*. Our Academic Plan identifies the centrality of Fundamental Academic Skills, and the University's Proposed Mandate Statement, submitted to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, commits to developing new opportunities for expanded credentials and increased opportunities for experiential and entrepreneurial learning. It is the combination of twenty-first century learning skills and experiential and entrepreneurial opportunities that our students need to be successful. If we help our students develop the general and specific skills that meet their needs, this will also help address society's needs by preparing them appropriately for careers or additional credentials they will pursue after leaving Queen's.

### University-wide Objectives

- Increase the number of new opportunities for expanded credentials and experiential and entrepreneurial learning.
- Further integrate technology into the delivery of course content where it enables improved learning.
- Strengthen the Queen's University Quality Assurance Processes.
- Foster improved relationships and cooperation with the Kingston community.
- Increase investment in faculty complement and renewal, to sustain the quality of existing programs and to develop new curricular initiatives.
- Develop strategic programs for teaching and learning based on student engagement and generic learning outcomes.
- Improve intra-university collaboration through new programs and curriculum innovation.
- Develop new programs and innovative ways to help students develop fundamental academic skills.
- Develop new programs that support an accessible learning environment and health and wellness.

### Performance Metrics

- Undergraduate and graduate student engagement as measured by the National Survey of Student Engagement and the Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey.
- Number of new expanded alternative credential opportunities developed or in development.
- Number of new professional masters programs.
- Number of new experiential education opportunities developed or in development.
- Identification and assessment of learning outcomes.
- Graduate outcomes: two year employment rate and average median income.



## Strengthening our Research Prominence: Guide and Support the Research Enterprise

Queen's is recognized as one of Canada's outstanding research institutions. To sustain and enhance our research prominence requires that we guide and support our research enterprise, including the continuation of our aggressive pursuit of research funding and re-alignment of university research services.

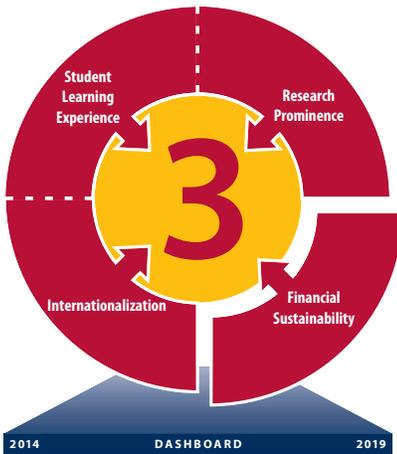
We must be guided by our Senate-approved Strategic Research Plan (SRP). The four thematic areas, exploring human dimensions, understanding and sustaining the environment and energy systems, creating, discovering and innovating, and securing safe and successful societies, and an underlying emphasis on research excellence, provide a long term focus on progress on the objectives and metrics identified below, to guide investments.

### University-wide Objectives

- Increase research support through increasing our research \$/faculty ratio by identifying sustainable funding sources for research and increasing faculty external grant applications.
- Improve intra- and inter-faculty and cross-university collaboration to support university research pillars nationally and internationally.
- Improve faculty support services to enhance faculty and staff productivity, research and retention.
- Integrate research to enable active learning and innovation.
- Develop new award programs to recognize faculty for outstanding research.
- Focus on increasing and improving our impact through high peer-reviewed publications, recognized scholarly books and creative activities, and knowledge translation and innovation.

### Performance Metrics

- Research intensity and national position.
- Queen's share of total Tri-council research funding.
- Number of applications to Tri-council and other external granting agencies, and diversity of external sources from which support is sought.
- Proportion of appointments to Canada Excellence Research Chairs, Canada Research Chairs, and Queen's National Scholars that are aligned with one or more of the SRP's thematic areas.



## Ensuring Financial Sustainability: Growth and Diversification of Revenue

Our emphasis on maintaining Queen's as the balanced academy must be matched by our commitment to achieving financial sustainability. With the activity-based budget now in place, giving units incentives to grow revenues and reduce costs, we are better positioned to make the university more resilient in difficult economic times.

Over the next five years we will pursue both revenue generation and revenue diversification, while also focusing on cost containment. Diversification will come from new programs that fall outside those supported by provincial funds, as well as from increased philanthropic support, especially through growth of our endowment fund, and increased external support for the indirect costs of research. Our ability to increase revenue is dependent on our ability to diversify revenue sources, which is why we will measure our share of revenue that comes from sources other than those regulated by the government.

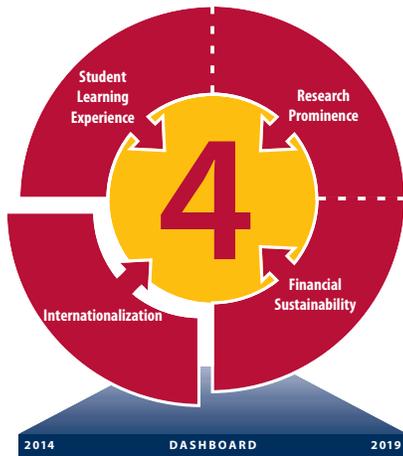
Our commitment to financial sustainability reinforces the need to make difficult choices and, accordingly, we will also focus on containing costs, including those associated with shared services, which represent a major component of the indirect costs charged to Faculties and Schools. The new budget model is designed to provide faculties and schools with incentives for revenue growth and diversification, and a focus on cost containment across the institution will ensure that a high proportion of new revenue stays within these revenue generating units.

### University-wide Objectives

- Design and execute campaign plans that align to the Queen's Initiative Campaign to meet fundraising targets.
- Implement cost containment initiatives and process efficiencies across the academy.
- Grow ancillary revenue to support the university's priorities.
- Expand our online and distance efforts through better coordination.
- Improve internal and external communication strategies.
- Provide support as required for new program development and net revenue growth.
- Enhance and improve learning and research resources, services, technology and facilities.

### Performance Metrics

- Revenue generation and diversification: the percentage growth in net budgets in Faculties and Schools and the proportion of operating revenue from sources other than government grants or government-regulated tuition.
- Cost containment: the growth in the cost of discretionary expenditures on shared services.



## Raising our International Profile: Internationalization

We will strengthen our international reputation by emphasizing what has built Queen's enviable national reputation, namely the transformative student learning experience in a research intensive environment. Focused and sustained international student recruitment will be supported by an equally focused and sustained international marketing and communications strategy. Because our transformative learning experience is so inextricably linked to our research prominence, we will at the same time strive to strengthen our international research collaborations, in part through our membership of the Matariki Network of Universities.

### University-wide Objectives

- Develop an international recruitment strategy that will increase the number, proportion and diversity of our undergraduate student population.
- Increase our international research collaboration and research funding from international sources.
- Develop an integrated international marketing and communications plan for the University that supports our international recruiting plan.
- Strengthen our international reputation, while continuing to develop our national profile.
- Promote Queen's internationally in terms of what we are known for nationally.
- Develop a small number of regional hubs in countries that align well with our international priorities.

### Performance Metrics

- International student engagement: international students as a proportion of the total student body; proportion of students participating in an international educational experience.
- International research engagement: international collaboration index (percent of research publications with at least one international author).



# The road ahead

The success of our strategic framework is dependent on all members of the university community and will be the responsibility of academic and administrative leaders at all levels. The framework will ensure that the University as a whole is working as a cohesive unit towards a common goal. The Principal, supported by the University's leadership team, will lead the implementation of our strategic framework over the next five years.

Work is already underway to develop coherent actions that will contribute to the achievement of our university-wide objectives, and, ultimately, our vision. The Vice-Principals are working closely with their teams to identify annual coherent actions that align with, and support, our objectives.

The framework is not meant to be prescriptive. It is designed to be responsive to a dynamic and changing environment and enable the University to adapt to changes over time. With this in mind, we recognize that the landscape for post-secondary education will shift in the next five years, and that our objectives and metrics will need to be modified or updated to capitalize on new opportunities when they arise. The Principal and Vice-Principals will review the strategic framework regularly in the context of the external environment and the government.

The Principal and Vice-Principals are accountable for ensuring that progress is made on the university-wide objectives. Starting in 2014-2015, the senior leadership team will prepare progress reports on the strategic framework that will be shared on an annual basis with the Board of Trustees, the Senate and the Queen's community.







OFFICE OF THE  
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