



Implementation Plan: Change Principles

As at 16 APRIL 2025

1. Introduction

On 6 March 2025 the University released the [Renew ANU 2025 Change Principles Consultation Paper](#) ("Change Principles Consultation Paper") to all university staff. The formal consultation period in respect of the Change Principles Consultation Paper ran from 6 to 21 March 2025. There is also an ongoing opportunity to provide feedback.

The University continued to utilise the [‘Renew ANU’ website](#) established in 2024 as a central point of information to maintain clear and open communications. The website includes released change proposals, recordings of townhalls, links to employee support, all-staff communications and a list of regularly updated [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#) that reflect feedback received during consultation.

During the consultation period, senior university leaders held five (5) townhalls. At the townhalls, staff were given the opportunity to have their questions answered and seek further clarification on the proposal. A recording of the online townhall was made available on the University’s ‘Renew ANU’ website.

The University received 145 individual pieces of feedback, an open letter signed by 434 staff and feedback from the NTEU on the Change Principles Consultation Paper. The University has reviewed and genuinely considered all feedback.

This implementation plan sets out the University’s consideration and response to the consultation feedback, confirmation of decisions, and next steps for the University.

Staff have the opportunity to consult and comment on this implementation plan in accordance with clause 70.13 of the Enterprise Agreement.

To address one of the key concerns/feedback and to provide clarity for staff, the University confirms that there are no positions identified as surplus to requirements nor

creation of new positions as a part of the Change Principles Consultation Paper and the decisions set out in this implementation plan.

Given the requests for further information as part of the feedback, the University will proceed to prioritise developing particular proposals for change underpinned by the principles referred to below and has provided an indication of broad timeframes for when it is anticipated that this will occur, in Section 4 below.

As confirmed below in Section 4, where a specific proposal for change is developed for a particular portfolio(s) or organisational unit to support an improved operating model and/or to assist in achieving a financially sustainable position, and that proposal may significantly impact staff, a change proposal will be developed and provided for consultation in accordance with the Enterprise Agreement.

2. Background to the Change Principles Consultation

In 2024, the University launched the Renew ANU initiative and identified a target to achieve a break-even financial operating result (where expenses do not exceed revenue) in 2026 and thereafter producing a small operating surplus.

The financial outlook for 2025 and beyond remains challenging, and there continues to be an urgent need to make the necessary savings to achieve financial sustainability. Continued uncertainty including overseas student enrolments and related visa issues has potential to exacerbate the financial challenges.

The Change Principles Consultation Paper provided a high-level, early opportunity for feedback on the proposed overall approach and principles to inform development of an improved operating model and approach to development of further specific changes. This would then be the subject of any further change proposals and consultation with affected staff.

The University's performance: our challenge

The Change Principles Consultation Paper outlined:

- ANU has consistently ranked the lowest in the national benchmark for overall satisfaction and efficiency across all services, including HR, IT, student support, research support, and more;
- Staff feedback has consistently demonstrated the lack of satisfaction with the quality and delivery of services across the University; and

- the decline in the University's international academic ranking performance as evidenced in the [QS World University Rankings](#) and [the Times Higher Education \(THE\) World University Rankings](#). In the latest THE rankings, ANU was ranked 73rd in the world, down from 67th in 2023, and continues a downward trend since our high point at number 47 as a THE top 50 university in 2017. Our QS rankings have also fallen from 19th to 30th in the world between 2016 and 2025;
- the financial position of the University and challenges faced by the University to achieve financial sustainability, so that it can continue to support our staff and students and support the University's mission.

The University's operating model: our opportunity

The University is committed to achieving academic and research excellence in a financially sustainable manner by ensuring that ANU Colleges are focused on teaching and research with a College-specific professional workforce; with central portfolios that deliver high quality, efficient and effective services that operate at the University-wide scale.

The University's operating model needs to transform from a diverse, disaggregated and decentralised model to a cohesive, strategic and centralised model that delivers high quality services in a financially sustainable way.

The decision to propose principles for a new operating model was driven not just by the need for financial sustainability. Our goal is to reposition the University for both operational excellence and financial sustainability, to ensure the continued achievement of our mission and overall long-term sustainability of the University. This is important for the University as a whole and for our staff and students.

The Change Principles Consultation Paper included a three-part approach to change, three principles to guide academic and research activities and eight principles to guide the transformation of the University's Operating Model ([Part D](#)).

The proposed approach and principles as articulated in the Change Principles Consultation Paper and University decisions in respect of those matters taking into account the feedback received are set out in Section 4 of this implementation plan below.

3. Overview of consultation process

The formal consultation period in respect of the Change Principles Consultation Paper commenced on 6 March and closed on 21 March 2025 with feedback submitted to Organisational Change (org.change@anu.edu.au) directly or via an e-form.

This consultation was undertaken to gather feedback, comments and perspectives from key stakeholders, including staff, students, union representatives and other members of the University community.

Five all-staff town halls were conducted in person and online, providing opportunities for direct dialogue and real-time feedback on the proposal. The townhalls were convened by the Provost and Senior Vice-President, and Chief Operating Officer as follows:

- Wednesday 12 March 2025, 10am
- Wednesday 12 March 2025, 3.30pm
- Friday 14 March 2025, 10am
- Monday 17 March 2025, 10am
- Thursday 20 March 2025, 10am (online)

The townhalls were attended by 833 staff (323 in person and 510 online) and the Change Principles Consultation Paper was opened more than 4,000 times on the Renew ANU page. In addition to the Change Principles Consultation Paper, FAQ's, information on wellbeing and support and other relevant information was also provided on the [Renew ANU website](#). During the consultation period, and in response to feedback received and questions, additional material was made available.

The University continues to engage with the NTEU and has maintained open lines of communication through regular meetings, providing updates, information and copies of the consultation plans. The University has also engaged with the University's Health and Safety Representative community to provide feedback on a risk assessment.

Individual organisational units also engaged with their staff through local townhalls, meetings and targeted emails.

4. Overview of feedback received in response to the Consultation Paper

In response to the proposals outlined in the Change Principles Consultation Paper, the University received a wide body of feedback from staff, stakeholders and the Union.

The [Renew ANU 2025 Change Principles: Initial Feedback Summary](#) summarised this feedback and provided the University's initial response to the matters raised in the feedback about the proposed change. This document was released to all staff on Thursday 10 April 2025.

In addition to that document (Renew ANU 2025 Change Principles: Initial Feedback Summary), the University prepared a formal response to an open letter it received from a collection of staff members

The University's response to the open letter, which can be found [here](#), provided further relevant information and response on the matters raised particularly those about:

- the University's finances and sustainability; and
- clarity on the scope of the actual change in the Change Principles Consultation Paper, providing confirmation that the change referenced in the Change Principles Consultation Paper is not specific, detailed change to organisational units, individual roles or staff positions.

The University has reviewed and meaningfully considered the feedback it has received. Details about the impact of this feedback on the proposed approach to change, principles for academic and research activities and operating model principles are articulated in relevant sections below.

The University acknowledges, with thanks, the genuine interest of staff and stakeholders in meaningfully engaging with this change process by providing feedback on the Change Principles Consultation Paper.

5. Consideration of feedback and impact on proposed approach, academic principles and operating model principles.

The University has given genuine consideration to the feedback received through this consultation, and outlines below the decisions of the University and the implementation approach.

In response to the feedback the University has decided to substantially adopt the approach and principles proposed (with some refinement). This will underpin and inform the development of changes to improve the operating model and support a financially sustainable university, including seeking achievement of the target savings. Further details are set out below.

Renew ANU 2025 Change Approach:

There was clear agreement on the need to reduce duplication and continuing to identify non-salary cost savings. Much helpful advice and articulation of matters to address this were raised regarding developing specific proposals for change.

The table below sets out the proposed approaches as initially set out in the Change Principles Consultation Paper and the University's confirmed approaches, including identifying any changes to the approach as a result of feedback during the consultation process.

Proposed approach	Confirmed approach
Remove duplication in service delivery: to identify and eliminate duplication across services by streamlining functions where overlap exists and creating greater role clarity and accountability, to ensure that services are better aligned with the University's core mission.	Remove duplication in service delivery - No change – this will be a focus in developing change to improve the operating model and support financial sustainability.
Identify non-salary cost savings: Continuing the Expenditure Taskforce to ensure resources are allocated efficiently, improving cost-effectiveness while maintaining the high-quality services required to support teaching and research	Identify non-salary cost savings - No change – the University will continue to identify non-salary costs savings, including to minimise extent of salary cost savings and impact on staff.
Develop specific proposals for change: the University will adopt a phased approach to developing specific change proposals to support the improved operating model and College activities. These individual proposals will be developed and led at the local level and in close consultation with relevant stakeholders.	Develop specific proposals for change: the University will adopt a phased approach to developing specific change proposals to support the improved operating model and College activities. These individual proposals will be developed and led at the local level and in close consultation with relevant stakeholders. Specific change proposals will give consideration to the importance of preserving ANU's research and teaching excellence and change processes will have appropriate governance and accountability

	<p>to ensure the success of the new operating model.</p> <p>In response to feedback and requests for more information and specific details of individual areas or positions, that detail is to be developed and provided for consultation and, to provide some guidance to staff, the University has provided overview of indicative timings on developments of proposals for change in a number of areas are set out below.</p>
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Principles for Academic and Research Activities

There was support of these principles, and much helpful advice on considerations for how these principles should be implemented in practice.

The table below sets out the proposed principles as initially set out in the Change Principles Consultation Paper and the University's confirmed principles, including identifying any changes to the principles as a result of feedback during the consultation process. The proposed principles will guide any changes to the University's organisational units and functions, where relevant.

Proposed Principle	Confirmed Principle
National Mission and Academic Excellence: Academic structures and pursuits are continuously reviewed to align with the University's national mission, research goals, and global rankings. This ensures ANU maximises its capabilities and strengths while maintaining a strong reputation for excellence	No change
Strategic Alignment and Financial Sustainability: The academic strategy and operating model must support research priorities, teaching excellence, and financial viability. Resources, funding, and	No change

workforce planning will be data-driven to align with student demand, research funding, and strategic priorities.	
Regular Program and Delivery Review: Academic programs and delivery methods will be assessed to ensure they remain relevant, innovative, and aligned with student needs, industry expectations, and global best practices. Digital and technological integration will enhance learning and research outcomes.	No change

Principles for new ANU operating model

There was clear agreement that a set of principles to help frame the ANU Operating Model were necessary and much helpful advice on considerations for how these principles should be implemented in practise were received.

Of the eight (8) proposed principles, five (5) have been confirmed without change, and three (3) required changes based upon the feedback. The table below sets out the proposed principles as initially set out in the Change Principles Consultation Paper and the University's confirmed principles, including identifying any changes to the principles as a result of feedback during the consultation process. The confirmed principles (tabulated below) will guide improvements for the new ANU Operating Model, where relevant.

Proposed Principle	Confirmed Principle
1. Mission-focused transition Changes to operating models should minimise disruption on educational programs and research and align with our national mission, institutional commitments, values and purpose.	1. Mission-focused transition No change
2. Role Clarity Academic leaders will focus on teaching, research, and policy development, while professional leaders will manage and oversee services. This separation ensures	2. Leadership Role Clarity Academic leaders will focus on teaching and research, while professional leaders will focus on services. This ensures clear separation of leadership accountabilities.

that academic staff focus on core academic activities, with administrative and operational support provided by professional staff.	Leaders should recognise the value of collaboration between the academic and professional workforce and those staff who bridge academic and professional responsibilities in enhancing learning, teaching and research.
3. Consistency across functions Standardised leadership roles, consistent support models and equitable and effective service delivery across the University to promote clear expectations, support and governance. This ensures fair and consistent experiences for all staff and students	3. Consistency across functions No change
4. Collaboration and shared governance Academic and professional leadership roles and the professional workforce within colleges and schools will be aligned at the college level, creating centres of excellence that foster collaboration and shared decision-making.	4. Collaboration and shared governance Academic and professional leadership roles and the professional workforce residing within colleges and schools will be aligned to the college level, creating hubs of professional expertise that foster collaboration, shared college level decision-making and governance.
5. University wide services will have a central functional owner Each service will have a functional owner accountable for an end-to-end, ANU-wide service model, and all aspects of service delivery and service performance.	5. University wide services will have a central functional owner Each service will have a functional owner accountable for an end-to-end, ANU-wide service model, and all aspects of service delivery and service performance. Service ownership operates irrespective of the service model design.
6. Data-driven resource allocation The workforce composition will be tied to key drivers such as the number of students, research funding, teaching	6. Data-driven resource allocation No change

loads and strategic priorities, ensuring that resources are fairly aligned.	
7. Operational efficiency and effectiveness People, processes, technology, information and decision-making will be aligned to be efficient, effective and sustainable	7. Operational efficiency and effectiveness No change
8. Clear workforce development pathways There will be clear career development pathways for professional staff	8. Clear workforce development pathways No change

It is recognised that these are principles and not rules or decisions on specific changes, and in applying the principles it will be important to consider the principles holistically and to exercise judgement in their application.

The New ANU Operating Model

There is agreement that University wide improvement of services and service delivery requires consideration of each service, academic and research activity. To address this, Colleges, Portfolios and Divisions and their functional areas will identify new operating models based on relevant and applicable approaches and principles articulated in this implementation plan.

Therefore, individual change plans at the College, Portfolio and Division or area may be developed and consulted upon. The University will continue to work collaboratively and proactively to successfully embed all future changes at the College, Portfolio and Division and the University level in line with the Enterprise Agreement.

6. Outlook for Change in 2025 and 2026

All areas of ANU continue to work hard to achieve financial sustainability in line with Renew ANU objectives with significant change and commitments delivered to date. The approach, academic principles and operating model principles set out in **Section 5.0** of this implementation paper will provide a framework to guide future organisational changes to put ANU on the pathway of operational excellence and financial sustainability. This will include changes from the less formal through to major change that will be consulted upon through formal change proposals.

As previously highlighted in the Change Principles Consultation Paper, the financial operating target for professional staff services is benchmarked to the Go8 median for achieving cost efficiency. It is anticipated that areas currently operating at or very near this benchmark will continue to develop their services without the need for major change. However, areas that are not cost efficient or meeting the benchmark may require a major change in 2025 or 2026, guided by the approaches and principles set out in Section 5.0 of this implementation paper.

Portfolios and Divisions

The central functional owner for services delivered through Portfolios and Divisions will identify the preferred service model for each service (e.g. consolidated, business partner, hub and spoke, devolved). Where a wholesale change is proposed of the existing service model (such as changing from a devolved model to a consolidated model) change proposals will include the rationale for the structural change and implications for potentially impacted staff across the institution.

The following Portfolios have been undertaking preliminary reviewing of opportunities for potential consolidation and functional alignment of services. The University will progress reviewing those matters in accordance with the Operating Model principles and consultation feedback. The following Portfolios are anticipated for potential major change proposals to be developed in Q2, 2025:

- Academic Services:
 - Student services and support: the delivery of student facing services including enrolment, finance, student academic support, orientation, progressions, completion and retention activities where academic decisions are not required
 - Learning and Teaching support: facilitating teaching communities of practice to support teaching, curriculum design and academic advancement of teaching staff, and incorporating student careers and employability support
 - International & Future Students: student recruitment, admissions, external pathways, articulation and transnational arrangements.
 - University Experience: providing student support services for well-being, prevention, safety and inclusion.
- Research & Innovation Services:
 - Graduate research: establishing a graduate research school that consolidates HDR administration and support across the university

- Research services: consolidating research management across the university, including pre- and post-award support, contracting and support of research assurance and compliance activities
- Research partnerships and translation: improving integration of research partnerships, engagement and translation across the university, together with new capability to manage strategic grants and major initiatives
- Research infrastructure: reviewing opportunities for consolidating research infrastructure support across the University
- Marketing & Communications.
 - Marketing and brand: brand strategy and management, marketing for student recruitment, market research and analysis, digital marketing, web and social media
 - Events management: flagship events and conferences
 - Engagement: external engagement, government relations
 - Communications: corporate communications and media
- Information Technology Services, Information Security Office and Planning and Service Performance. It is anticipated that ITS, PSP and ISO will be proposed to remain distinct divisions.
- Campus Environments: are continuing the second phase of their work (as presented in the [Campus Environments Implementation Plan 2024](#)) reviewing opportunities to consolidate remaining devolved services and operational arrangements.

The Portfolios of People & Culture and Residential Experience are continuing to review, and consider redesign and optimising existing services and if required, any change proposals are anticipated no earlier than Q4, 2025.

Colleges

All Colleges will consider the impacts of this implementation plan, including addressing potential duplication of services and change that may be needed to achieve financial sustainability. The implementation of the ANU operating model principles will likely include proposals for consolidating professional staff to the College level and new service and workforce structures between Colleges and Portfolios. This will likely require an assessment and realignment (if needed) of:

- professional services and workforce structures
- academic structures and pursuits with the national mission, research goals and global rankings.

- academic strategy and operating model for delivering research priorities, teaching excellence and financial viability. Data-driven approaches support allocation of resources, funding and workforce planning with student demand, research funding and strategic priorities.
- academic programs remaining relevant, innovative and aligned with student needs, industry expectations and global best practise, and the use of digital technologies for enhancing learning and research.

It is anticipated that Colleges that operated in a financial deficit in 2024 will develop formal change proposals in Q2, 2025. Other Colleges may identify the potential for major change later.

Governance, Monitoring and Communication

It is anticipated that the ANU Operating Model will require new forms of governance to be successful. Any consolidated service models require clarity on the 'catalogue' of services offered, defined metrics or KPIs that enable measurement of service performance, and accountability mechanisms to ensure that functional owners deliver service outcomes that meet College and university requirements. ANU will ensure that consolidated services have clear KPIs and transparent monitoring and communication about service performance to staff and students.

The University will continue to update staff and students quarterly with progress towards our financial targets, including releasing our 2024 before the end of April 2025.

7. Management of psychosocial risk, job losses and workloads

The University has engaged with staff through the [Renew ANU 2025 Change Principles: Consultation Paper – March 2025](#) and as well as the university Health and Safety Representatives (HSR) community in the development of the Psychosocial Risk Assessment. The consultation paper can be found [here](#).

The University will continue to engage in assessing and managing psychosocial and other WH&S related risks in respect of any proposed major changes and will help inform any potential individual change plans. Opportunities to provide feedback about WH&S, psychosocial risks, workloads and similar issues will also be provided to staff during the consultation period for the individual change plans.

Notwithstanding the above, the university welcomes ongoing feedback on any risks that may arise from this implementation and feedback can be directed to org.change@anu.edu.au

Potential change plans for Colleges, Portfolios and Divisions will apply the approach and principles in this implementation plan. Where those change proposals will impact staff (eg by changes in positions or changes in functions)

Staff will be consulted on any such changes consistent with our obligations under the Enterprise Agreement.

8. Consultation on the Implementation plan and other matters

Opportunity to provide feedback or comments on this implementation plan

This implementation plan identifies and articulates relevant decisions made by the University about proposed changes outlined in the Change Principles Consultation Paper. Consistent with our obligations under [clause 70.13 of the Enterprise Agreement](#), the University invites comment and feedback on this implementation plan. Staff, students, Unions and relevant stakeholders are provided until **Friday 2 May 2025** to make comments or submit feedback. The University will review and consider the comments and feedback it receives and make adjustments or amendments, to the extent appropriate, before finalising the implementation plan.

Review of the implementation plan

Consistent with our obligations under [clause 70.19 of the EA](#), the University will conduct a review on this implementation plan no later than 12 months after this implementation plan has been finalised. For the sake of clarity, the implementation plan will be considered final after feedback and comments received in the consultation period have been reviewed and meaningfully considered and appropriate amendments made.

8. Where can I seek support?

Staff seeking support or advice can reach out to our [Employee Assistance Provider \(EAP\) – Assure](#) - and can be contacted by calling 1800 808 374. Information about the available support and other information can be found by visiting the University's Employee Assistance Program webpage. For additional support from outside of the University, please contact relationships Australia on (02) 6122 7100.