

# PSP REVIEW

External review of the Australian National University's  
Planning and Service Performance Division (PSP)

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Australian  
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University

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# Introduction

In 2021, the University's Planning and Performance Measurement Division (PPM) and the Service Improvement Group (SIG) were amalgamated into a new Division called the Planning and Service Performance Division (PSP), aimed at improving performance and delivery of service to the University.

Three years after the creation of PSP, this review serves as an opportunity to assess and improve on the impact and value that PSP bring to the University.

The review comprised of interviews with 25 divisional staff and 22 stakeholders from across the University. Each interviewee was asked to consider what works well, what doesn't work, and what could we do differently with the PSP Division.

In addition, information was provided by the division on their organisational structure, relationships and interdependencies, planning framework, current and planned activity, and staff engagement survey results.

# Executive Summary

The purpose of this review was to evaluate PSP's operational efficiency, strategic alignment, and future readiness in terms of organisational structure, resource allocation, and workforce capabilities. In doing this, stakeholder expectations and interrelationships with other areas of the University were considered.

The review has highlighted significant strategic and operational deficiencies that require immediate attention.

The division lacks a clear vision and strategy, which has resulted in misalignment of priorities. Scope creep in the remit of the division further exacerbates these issues, diverting focus and resources from critical objectives.

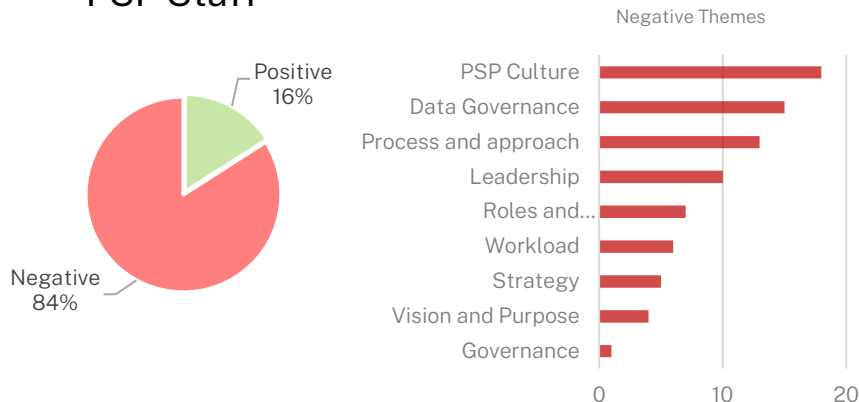
There are a variety of operational inefficiencies present due to conflicts between systems, lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities (both within the division and between PSP and ITS), further, misalignment of resources are being seen as resource constraints and hindering the ability for PSP to function effectively.

To address these challenges, it is recommended to establish a coherent strategic vision, clarify the remit of the division and the roles and responsibilities within it, streamline the technology infrastructure, and realign resources with the core remit of the division.

# Culture and Stakeholder Relations

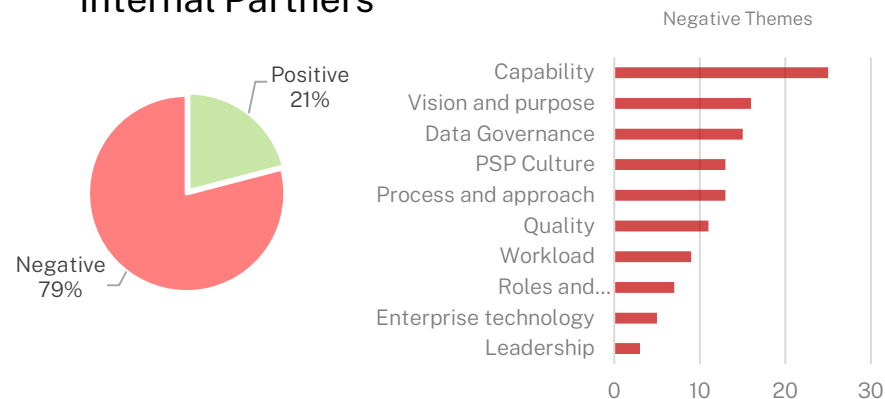
Sentiment from both PSP staff and Internal Partners is negatively skewed, although the reasons vary.

## PSP Staff



- Uneven workload distribution across the division undermines morale and productivity. Leadership does not work together to resolve.
- The volume of data that is captured at ANU is immense, with significant potential to better assist university wide decision making under the right circumstances.
- Challenges with data sources (upstream, prior to being received by PSP) are leading to inconsistencies in reporting. There is a lack of documentation, and difficulties with data interpretation leading to duplication of work, inefficiencies, and errors.
- Siloed data access, lack of communication, changing priorities, a blame culture, and misaligned leadership are impacting both productivity and morale.

## Internal Partners



- The division's potential to access and leverage data for insightful reporting and informed decision-making is highly regarded. Specific individuals were highlighted as being capable in their respective areas.
- The division fails to collaborate effectively within the university and within the division, with instances of poor communication and a sense of rigidity in addressing stakeholders' needs.
- Data integration, quality, and governance, impacting the division's ability to provide reliable insights and reports.
- The division is perceived as under-resourced with burnout amongst staff, lacking clarity in roles and responsibilities, and struggling to meet the demands for timely and accurate reporting.

# Culture and Stakeholder Relations

## Stakeholder Expectations

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PSP should:

- Clearly define and communicate the University's strategic goals and how data can be leveraged to achieve them.
- Pro-actively provide insights into assumptions to support better University planning and forecasting, facilitating planning across the institution, and ensuring alignment with strategic goals.
- Work in partnership with local areas to develop useful tools to leverage analytics for strategic priorities.
- Be the single source of truth for accurate, clean, and ready to use data.
- Empower stakeholders by providing data-driven insights to inform decisions, with the capacity to provide a mix of standard and curated data sets.
- Be responsive in supporting stakeholders, particularly regarding student load forecasts.
- Have an established service culture with effective two-way communication, understanding stakeholder needs and goals.
- Foster a community of practice focused on impact rather than enforcing boundaries.

# Resourcing Alignment

Roles within the Division are not organised to meet stakeholder expectations or develop capabilities necessary to support the university

Aligned to stakeholder expectations

Needs investigation

Not aligned to stakeholder expectations

Function	Sub-function	Specialists / Admin
Director PSP	Manager Operations Manager Capability Development (vacant)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Executive Assistant</li> <li>Student Engagement Manager</li> </ul>
Deputy Director, Digital Engagement	AD, Digital Solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technical Developers (x7)</li> <li>Intern (x1)</li> </ul>
	AD, Business Intelligence & Analytics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Various BI and DW developer roles (x6)</li> <li>Cadet (x1)</li> </ul>
	Manager Planning Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning System Analyst</li> <li>Planning Analytics Developer</li> </ul>
Deputy Director, Service Solutions	Lead, Service Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Various Business Analyst roles (x4)</li> <li>Cadets (x2)</li> </ul>
	Program Manager, Service Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Various Project Roles (x4)</li> <li>Intern (x1)</li> </ul>
	Senior Project Manager	
Deputy Director, Planning, Performance & Institutional Research	Associate Director, Planning and Reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senior Planning Analyst (x2)</li> <li>Planning Officer (x1)</li> </ul>
	Manager University Performance (vacant)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Various Performance Analyst (x4)</li> <li>Intern (x1)</li> </ul>
	Manager Institutional Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Institutional Research Analyst (x2)</li> <li>Institutional Research Administrator</li> <li>Institutional Research Cadet (x2)</li> </ul>
<b>4 Director/Deputy</b>	<b>11 Managers</b>	<b>35 Specialists, 8 Interns/Cadets = 43 pax</b>

Whilst PSP appears to have a headcount of 58 staff, deeper analysis of the sub-functions and roles suggest:

- Interns represent nearly 15% of the specialists available to meet needs. In the current context this is likely to be impacting productivity of skilled staff.
- Only ~30%, or 16 specialist roles align well to stakeholder expectations.
- 26 of the roles (45%) could be repurposed to better meet the needs of internal partners.
- The current functional alignment does not align well to specialist technical roles to deliver data and analytics services.
- The function does not align well to stakeholder groups to deep understanding of needs and delivery of relevant and impactful products.

# Recommendations

Options to consider include restructuring, establishing a new division, and dissolving the Division.

Option	Implications	Considerations
1. Restructure PSP Division.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PSP remains an “analytics and data” function.</li><li>• Realignment of roles to better utilise existing resources.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Current state issues with leadership and culture are unlikely to be resolved.</li><li>• Timeline for change may be too long given rapidly evolving Commonwealth Government policy.</li><li>• Low levels of confidence in leadership capability to implement change required.</li><li>• Significant change risk due to single points of failure with SMEs.</li></ul>
<b>Recommended option</b> 2. Establish a new division – approach through incremental change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Define new function that aligns to stakeholder needs.</li><li>• Appoint leader to design and implement change.</li><li>• Engage short term consulting support to resolve immediate issues in planning and data management.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Has potential to expand remit and scope of new division to support coordinated strategic planning and implementation at an institutional level.</li><li>• Mitigates Leadership risk, allows for a change management approach to implement change in a sequenced and targeted manner.</li><li>• Resolve immediate issues related to student load planning through consulting support.</li><li>• Consider consolidation of other data functions to resolve issues regarding quality and access.</li></ul>
3. Dissolve PSP, redistribute sub-functions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Functions re-distributed to other university divisions.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Will exacerbate existing issues relating to data quality, data governance, roles and responsibilities.</li><li>• Will not establish the scale necessary to build capability to support data driven insights and actions.</li><li>• Leaves existing issues unresolved regarding a coordinated approach to institutional strategy and planning.</li></ul>



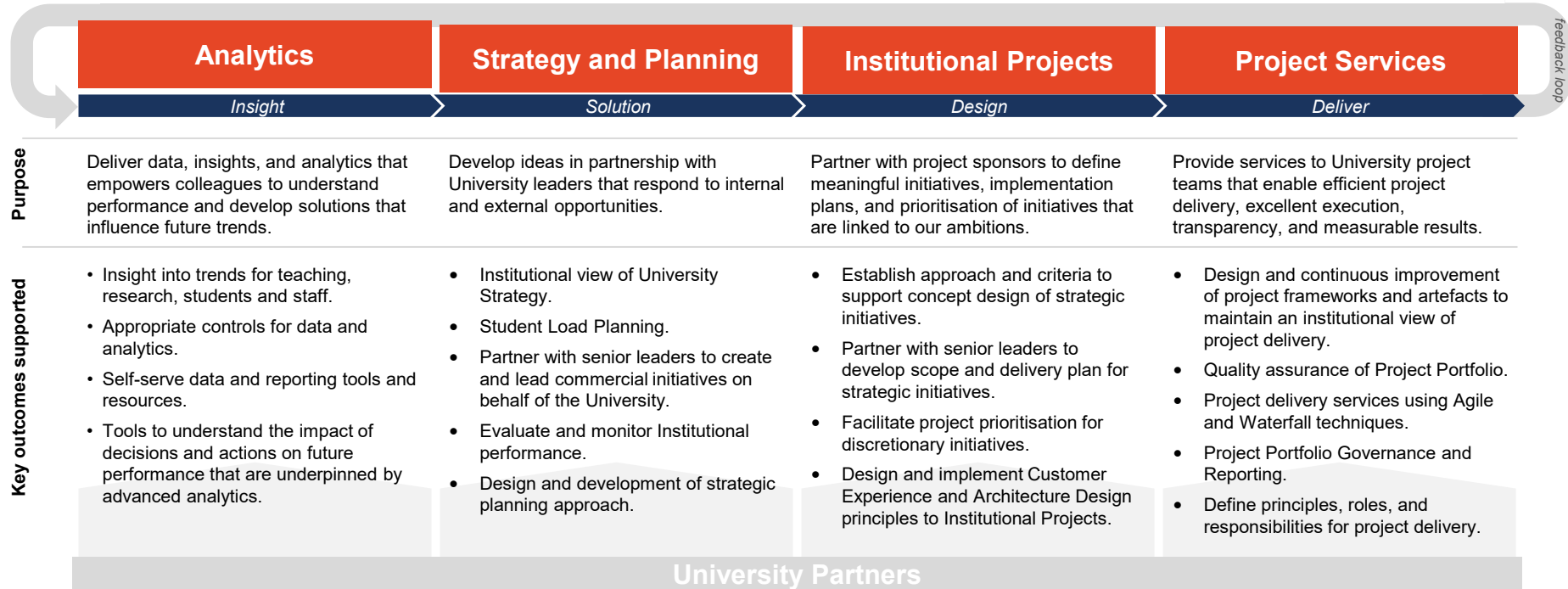


# A New Division

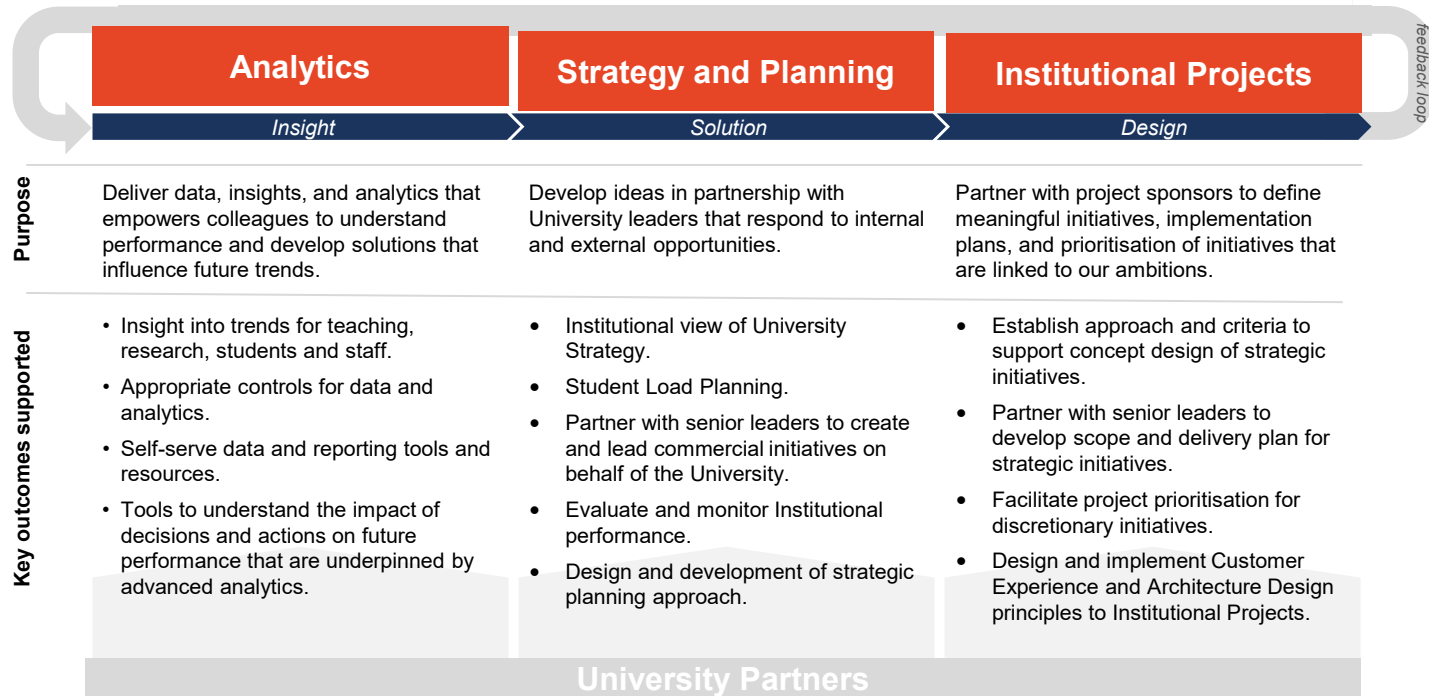
## What could it look like?

Draft Vision: Deliver insight, strategic advice, (and project support) that empowers university colleagues to fulfil the aspirations the ANU Strategy.

# Example | Option A



# Example | Option B



# Appendix



# Terms of reference

1. Assess whether the identified functions and goals of the Service Division are consistent with the ANU Strategic Plan, and relevant Executive Plans.
2. Assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the Service Division in meeting its identified functions and goals, whether the organisational structure, profile, resourcing, and skill base of the current staff can achieve those functions and goals into the future, including workforce planning and staff turnover.
3. Assess the functions or Service Division's customer service expectations (including requirements related to legal and external compliance and the validity of those expectations with reference to the division's business plan).
4. Review the interrelationships of the function or Service Division with Colleges, Schools, and other Service Divisions (including specific division function(s) delivered outside the division's responsibility).
5. Seek and evaluate customer views of the function or Service Division's culture and performance and identify strengths and opportunities for continuous improvement.
6. Consider the function or Service Division's future directions and plans and strategies for development and continuous improvement.

# What is working well?

	From Divisional Staff	From University Stakeholders
Collegiality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good motivation to do good work.</li> <li>• Hard working group.</li> <li>• Team is nice / Everyone is lovely.</li> <li>• Not a bad environment to work in.</li> <li>• Shared goal to meet requirements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent colleagues.</li> <li>• Have University's best interest in mind.</li> <li>• People in PSP are great people.</li> <li>• There is some good knowledge and people who are not being treated well.</li> </ul>
Data potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data - we have a lot of data.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to the information is very powerful.</li> <li>• Values data / bespoke data requests.</li> <li>• Values reporting and analysis to support decisions.</li> <li>• Have delivered insights to ensure ANU makes the right decisions.</li> </ul>
Skills and capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good blend of people and skills.</li> <li>• Very creative team.</li> <li>• Student cadets are useful in providing student perspective in survey design/comms.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School reviews have worked well in the past.</li> <li>• Bring a lot of value in surveys and analysis of QILT.</li> <li>• Analytics side of PSP has good analysts.</li> <li>• Reports have improved over the last few years.</li> <li>• When something is delivered it is usually high quality.</li> </ul>
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excited about technology being used, especially open AI models.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sector insights from Richelle have been valuable.</li> </ul>

# What is not working?

From Divisional Staff		From University Stakeholders
Resourcing / Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding cuts without cut to ambition and work</li> <li>Teams are so busy, they don't have the energy to collaborate.</li> <li>Blame culture.</li> <li>Limited opportunity to progress within PSP.</li> <li>Limited technical capability in the team. Probably 10 people are really striving to innovate out of 60 people.</li> <li>People are constrained by manual work.</li> <li>Frustrating that you can't get a break to do valuable work.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spread way to thin, trying to provide too many services without sufficient capacity/capability to provide support.</li> <li>Culture is bad. Seems like team blocks instead of enables.</li> <li>Lots of staff turnover, and significant quality issues.</li> <li>Lack of focus, currently running IT projects.</li> <li>University blame culture is compounding burn out within PSP.</li> <li>Operating model is not designed to achieve results quickly. Build for the 80%, focus seems disproportionately focused on the 20%.</li> </ul>
Communication & Stakeholder Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People underestimate the effort required to deliver solutions - think we are a "google campus".</li> <li>Original intent was for PSP to be a delivery partner supporting business areas, have not achieved that - left holding lots of business processes that might be better sitting in business.</li> <li>There is a disconnect between expectations and processes.</li> <li>Multiple channels to engage team for work.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholder management is not effective, resulting in inefficiency and lost productivity.</li> <li>Lack of discussion with key stakeholders to prepare reports. Leading to confusion in ability to interpret information.</li> <li>Not customer focused. "We will tell you what you need". Too rigid to meet my needs.</li> <li>Not proactive in understanding local areas needs.</li> <li>Some projects have been overly ambitious and doomed from start.</li> <li>Sometimes provides reports at a local level with colleges, instead of adopting an "Institutional" approach to be more efficient.</li> </ul>
Data Integration & Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data comes in from sources with issues.</li> <li>A lot of work required to correct problems with interpretation.</li> <li>Data Warehouse is garbage. Missing information like "Plans".</li> <li>Need to request special bespoke datasets to do work.</li> <li>Requests for same information result in different data.</li> <li>ANU doesn't have any decent dashboards.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Needs a data policy to ensure data is in the data warehouse.</li> <li>Need to make data available to people for use.</li> <li>Business rules in reports are not clear. Lots of assumptions need to be made, things can be taken out of context.</li> <li>Manipulate data at front end instead of resolving core issues.</li> <li>Data integration between systems does not exist, so manual workarounds required.</li> </ul>

# What is not working? cont'

From Divisional Staff		From University Stakeholders
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Legacy systems require maintenance.</li><li>• Duplicating data as tech isn't aligned.</li><li>• Siloed access to data.</li><li>• Culture is impacted when teams try to share because technology ecosystem is fragment.</li><li>• There is high risk of duplication with ITS for applications developed in PowerApps.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• System integration is terrible, has direct impact on PSP's ability to deliver reporting and analytics.</li><li>• Lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities between IT and PSP to improve data ecosystem.</li><li>• PowerApps development has caused a lot of friction within the University. There is no governance on the development</li><li>• Serious problems with data warehouse.</li><li>• IT platforms should be managed by IT not PSP.</li></ul>
Other	<p>Governance and Leadership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lots of good ideas but no one coordinating the vision.</li><li>• Words don't match actions (both within PSP and broader university).</li><li>• Lack on alignment on priorities.</li><li>• Longer term plan from top often changes.</li><li>• Lack of cohesive planning for yearly initiatives.</li><li>• Combining teams have not delivered the proposed benefits.</li><li>• Requests come through without a lot of understanding of the capacity of PSP.</li><li>• ANU doesn't have a strategy, no KPIs, nothing to align people.</li><li>• Model for student load forecasting not documented.</li></ul>	<p>Inadequate Performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There is no strategy. Lack of clarity of mission and purpose.</li><li>• Not really an analytics team, more of a data provider.</li><li>• Getting things delivered is challenging.</li><li>• Strategic overlay is missing in interpreting reporting.</li><li>• Student load forecasts are slow &amp; not robust.</li><li>• Errors cause disruption and confusion. Impacts on confidence in reporting overall.</li><li>• Things feel very disjointed.</li><li>• TM1 support sits with PSP, cannot resolve issues for Finance which has direct impact on Finance ability to perform role.</li><li>• Management unwilling to lean in and resolve issues, improved with a change in Directors.</li><li>• Lack of clarity on roles and responsibilities mean multiple people need to be contacted within PSP to resolve issues.</li></ul>



# What can we do differently?

	From Divisional Staff	From University Stakeholders
Governance and Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Division would benefit from a yearly plan and review of progress against plan.</li> <li>• Improved workflow management. Teams all taking a different approach to managing workload.</li> <li>• Develop a planning framework.</li> <li>• Better prioritisation of quality over quantity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Narrow focus / Have a clear role.</li> <li>• Would be good to get a clarified remit for strategy and planning function.</li> <li>• Needs to be positioned alongside the strategic intent of the University.</li> <li>• Would be good to understand who they think their customer is.</li> <li>• Establish improved capacity to flex to meet increases in demand.</li> <li>• Effective implemented data governance approach.</li> </ul>
Data Quality and Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classify data that has been validated.</li> <li>• More documentation to help analysts and developers in curating data for use in reporting and insights.</li> <li>• Make data more easily available.</li> <li>• Improved knowledge sharing.</li> <li>• Data dictionary would be useful.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would finance benefit from its own BI capability?</li> <li>• Sort out the underlying data to make things easier and improve productivity</li> <li>• Ensure data reconciles with source systems.</li> <li>• Make dashboards and reports more interactive.</li> <li>• Need better business processes to help drive improved efficiency.</li> <li>• Data should be provided to show cost of delivering units alongside student load forecasts.</li> </ul>
Infrastructure and Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move to cloud solutions to scale more effectively. Architecture can be simplified</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure IT projects are done by ITS.</li> <li>• Squads for digital masterplan haven't included enough involvement from PSP due to insufficient capacity within PSP.</li> </ul>



# What can we do differently? cont'

	From Divisional Staff	From University Stakeholders
Roles and Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Need more people to deliver on the demand and commitments.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Resolve resourcing issues.</li><li>• Structure could change to be better aligned to needs.</li><li>• Lack of clarity within PSP on who does what.</li><li>• Trust SMEs to help manage assumptions and interpretation of key insights.</li><li>• Could be worthwhile to consider a ticketing system and triage to create some redundancy and make things easier to manage.</li></ul>
Communication and Stakeholder Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Better communication on the impact of PSP and showcasing success.</li><li>• Improving communication with the whole (internally and externally).</li><li>• Single point of contact for data requests.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A clear front door to raise requests.</li><li>• More focus on relationship management.</li><li>• Create more capacity to loop back and check in on engagement and results. Deliver things with the right context which is achieved through better communication.</li><li>• Train university colleagues on how to use self-service functionality.</li></ul>