



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

Part of the Sydney in
2032
Strategy



School of Psychology

Strategy 2024-28

Acknowledgement of Country

The School of Psychology acknowledges the Gadigal of the Eora Nation as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which the School is situated. The School also recognises that across this continent, the School's staff and students learn about and engage in professional practice on the ancestral lands and places of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who have founding and ongoing connections, and continued responsibilities for Country, Culture, and Community. The School also pays respect to Elders both past and present, recognising them as knowledge holders for their lands.

School of Psychology Strategy

Contents

Introductions

Head of School foreword	2
About the School of Psychology	4
Strategy overview	6

Strategy

Focus 1: Education	8
Focus 2: Research	12
Focus 3: Culture	14
How this strategy was developed	16



Dale Harding, Spine 3 (radiance), 2018.

Head of School foreword

I am delighted to present the School's 2024-2028 Strategy.

The School of Psychology was established on the lands of the Gadigal of the Eora Nation in 1929, almost 100 years ago. We are very proud of our tradition as the first School of Psychology in Australia and the many successes our staff and students have achieved in this time. In the past five years alone, we have graduated over 1,100 undergraduate students majoring in Psychology, 350 Psychology Honours students, 97 postgraduate Clinical Psychology students, 171 postgraduate Coaching Psychology students, and 133 PhD and Masters by Research students. To address issues of under-representation we have also established dedicated undergraduate scholarships and pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, including for entry into the Masters of Clinical Psychology, which now exceeds parity.



In the same period, we have also been awarded over \$58 million in competitive research funding, attracted \$40 million in industry and philanthropic funding, produced 2,818 peer-reviewed publications that have attracted over 72,000 citations, and developed 16 patents and records of invention. Our staff and students have won many prestigious accolades, including the Prime Minister's Prizes for Science, Prize for New Innovators, the Young Tall Poppy Science Awards, and the Australian Academy of Science STEM Women Changemakers Awards.

While proudly celebrating these achievements, it is equally important that we look to the future and are responsive to the many changes around us. Advances in technology mean that how we teach, learn, and research has changed dramatically over the past 100 years. Classroom and laboratory walls have expanded enormously. Students engage in more online learning than ever before and researchers now have easy access to new technologies and global collaboration networks that facilitate research in a way that has never previously been possible. And, there is currently enormous excitement – and trepidation – about the emerging potential for generative AI to shape not just how we teach, learn, and research, but also how society functions as a whole.

To continue to be a global leader in psychology education and research, we must adapt to and capitalise on these developments. This includes looking beyond the University to engage and collaborate with stakeholders across our community, in industry, and in government.

Equally, being located on Gadigal lands and close to Redfern, the site of the first Aboriginal Medical Service and other vital community organisations, it is a pivotal time for the School to expand its commitment to partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders. By respectfully incorporating diverse knowledge systems in teaching, learning, and research, the experience and practices of all students and staff in the School are enriched. I take this opportunity to acknowledge the past and current contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our field and in the work of the School.

It is also a pivotal time for us to renew and expand our commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion. The School thrives through diversity and aspires to serve all people. People are at the centre of everything the School does, whether staff, students, partners, or stakeholders. We aspire to be a leader in equity, diversity, and inclusion to support all of those people.

The goal of this Strategy is to provide the School with the foundations to innovate and evolve in ways that ensure we continue to serve society and its changing needs long into the future. I would like to thank the many people – both within and beyond the School – who contributed to the development of the Strategy. I very much look forward to working with you to deliver on this goal.



Professor Ben Colagiuri, FRSN MAPS

Head of School

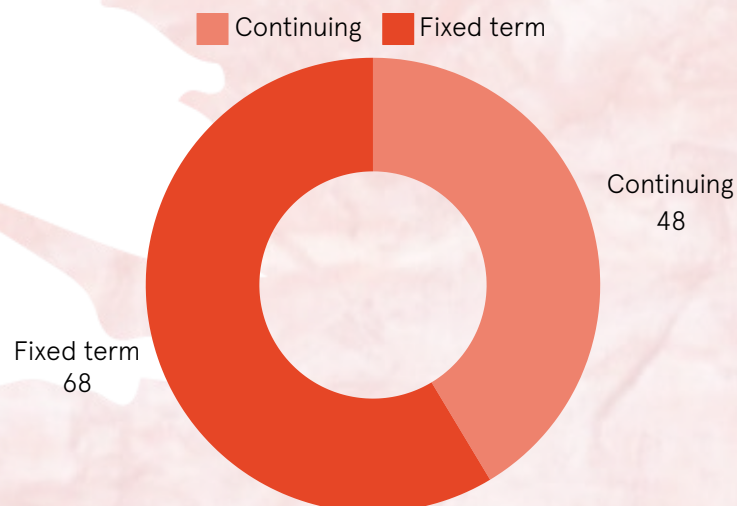


School of Psychology Executive Committee, 2023–2024

About the School



Our people



4,113

Domestic

47

Aboriginal and/or
Torres Strait Islander

2,568

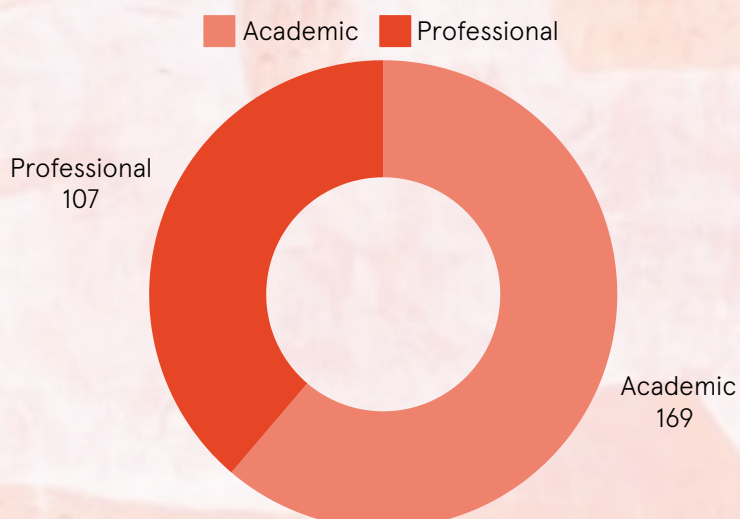
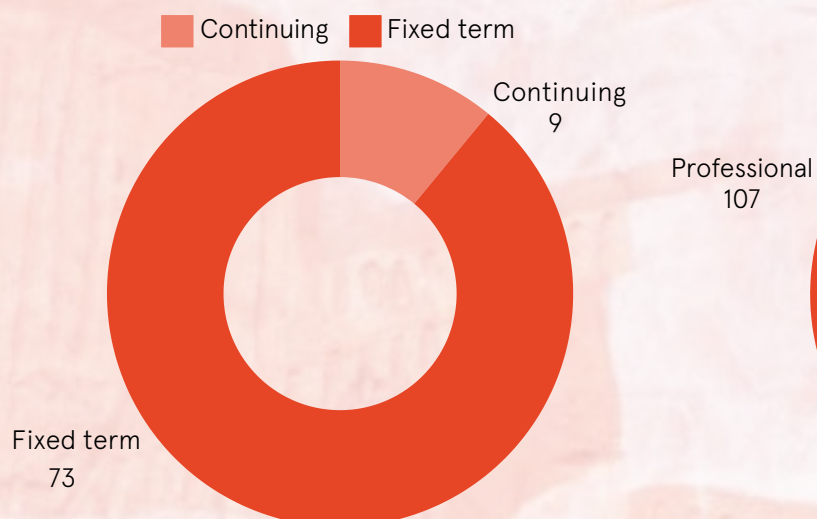
International

657

First in family

Academic staff

Students



Professional staff

Casual staff

Our Education

Units and students

Units of study delivered per year	76
Unit of Study enrolments per year	12,370
New Honours enrolments per year	100
New PG coursework enrolments per year	109
New HDR enrolments per year	25



Our degrees

Bachelor of Psychology
Bachelor of Psychology Honours
Graduate Diploma of Psychology
Master of Clinical Psychology
Master of Clinical Psychology/PhD
Graduate Certificate Coaching Psychology
Graduate Diploma Coaching Psychology
Master of Science in Coaching Psychology

Our graduates *(Past five years)*

Undergraduate	1,100
Honours	350
M Clinical Psychology	97
M Coaching Psychology	171
PhD and Masters	133

Our Research *(Past five years)*



\$58,000,000

Competitive research funding
(NHMRC/ARC)

\$40,000,000

Industry and philanthropy

72,000

Citations

2,818

Peer-reviewed publications

16

Patents and records
of invention

Strategy overview

Education, research, and culture

The School of Psychology is one of eight Schools in the Faculty of Science at the University of Sydney. The University's 'Sydney in 2032 Strategy' and the Faculty's 'Strategic Plan 2024-2025' provide a framework for the School's Strategy and ways in which the School can contribute to both the University and society more broadly.

The 'School of Psychology 2024-2028 Strategy' focuses on three key focus areas: education, research, and culture. The School's overarching strategic vision across these focus areas is to:

- Deliver dynamic teaching that produces exceptional psychology graduates who go on to lead their professions.
- Conduct world-leading psychology research that advances knowledge, improves society, and enhances people's lives.
- Create a positive culture of shared success and lead progress in equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Within each of these focus areas, a set of priorities with accompanying initiatives is defined. These provide the roadmap to achieve our strategic vision and are designed to maximise our national and global impact and engagement across all sectors of society, including community, industry, and government.





Focus 1: Education

Context

The School of Psychology offers high quality undergraduate and postgraduate training in Psychology. Following the Scientist-Practitioner model, the School strives to excel in education by using research-led and evidence-based teaching delivered by academics who are at the nexus of teaching and research.

At the undergraduate level, the School offers an in-demand Bachelor of Psychology (Honours), which is accredited by the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC). In addition, our accredited undergraduate program can be studied via multiple degrees and in combination with other majors in Science, Arts, and beyond. The goal of the undergraduate program is to foster both a profound depth of disciplinary expertise as well as a breadth of interdisciplinary experience.

Our undergraduate offerings culminate with the 4th year Honours program, for which entry is highly competitive. Honours provides students with the opportunity to conduct their first research project with one-on-one supervision, as well as to learn specialised academic and professional skills, allowing them to obtain provisional registration as a psychologist.

At the postgraduate level, the School offers a highly sought-after accredited Master in Clinical Psychology, which provides graduates with the skills, knowledge, and values that they need to thrive and lead in psychological practice. Postgraduate coursework offerings in Coaching Psychology provide opportunities to develop skills in applied positive psychology at the intersection of counselling and organisational psychology.

Furthermore, the School offers excellent opportunities for research training across our areas of research strength via our Higher Degree Research (PhD, MPhil) program, which currently has over 100 students.

In looking to the future, the School seeks to build on its reputation for educational excellence to create a modern and inclusive curriculum that provides exceptional undergraduate and postgraduate training for students seeking both traditional and non-traditional career paths in Psychology.



Strategic vision

Deliver dynamic teaching that produces exceptional psychology graduates who go on to lead in their professions

Strategic priorities and initiatives

1.1 Ensure an intuitive and future-focused curriculum that prepares students for tomorrow's challenges

To achieve this, the School will:

- Regularly review the curriculum to ensure that it is intuitive, evidence-based, and future-focused
- Develop a modern suite of assessment methods that foster student curiosity and allow students to exhibit diverse outcomes of learning
- Capitalise on AI and other technologies as tools to enhance education and learning while maintaining academic integrity
- Explore non-traditional teaching opportunities to provide lifelong learning

1.2 Develop innovative ways to engage students and staff in education that are responsive to student needs and embrace culturally responsive pedagogies

To achieve this, the School will:

- Create pathways for student co-design of the curriculum for a diverse range of students
- Facilitate staff to lead effective teaching innovations that enhance student learning and engagement
- Expand support for diverse student groups to engage and excel in education
- Establish a community of learning for staff and students

1.3 Respect and embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge systems and ways of knowing, being, and doing

To achieve this, the School will:

- Develop and review the curriculum with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges are embedded throughout
- Ensure all students gain the knowledge and skills towards working in a culturally safe manner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities
- Support the enrolment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and establish an environment of cultural safety
- Facilitate opportunities for students for relationship building with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities

1.4 Increase industry, government, and community engagement opportunities

To achieve this, the School will:

- Engage with stakeholders to bring industry, government, and community perspectives into the curriculum
- Create work-integrated learning opportunities that connect students with industry, government, and community
- Develop initiatives that foster students' leadership and practical skills
- Establish and promote outreach opportunities





Focus 2: Research

Context

The School of Psychology prides itself on conducting innovative and impactful research spanning a broad array of psychological domains, ranging from perception, learning, cognition, neuroscience, and social psychology to clinical, health, forensic, and coaching psychology.

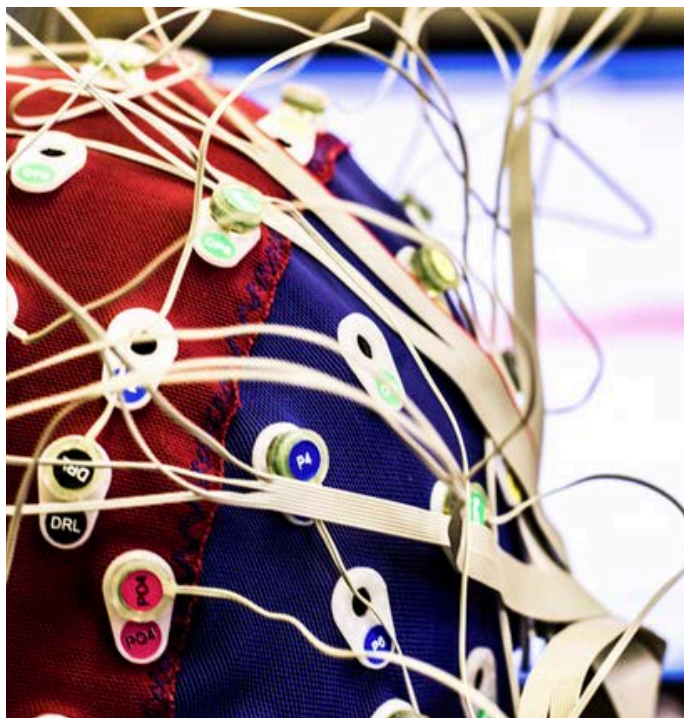
A central aim of our research is not only to advance the knowledge base but also to translate new discoveries into evidence-based practices and products with real-world implications. Additionally, the School seeks to engage in co-designed research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to reflect community priorities.

In the past five years the School has secured over \$58 million in competitive research funding, including several prestigious NHMRC and ARC research fellowships. We have also had major successes in securing large industry and philanthropic partnerships, which have provided over \$40 million in research funding over the past five years. The quality of our research has been recognised through numerous prestigious national and international scientific prizes and honours.

Our staff members have also received an array of research mentoring and supervision awards, reflecting our commitment to training the next generation of research leaders.

A key component to our success in research is our multidisciplinary approach. The School has many staff contributing to the Brain and Mind Centre – a multidisciplinary research initiative that tackles some of society's greatest health challenges across childhood development and behaviour, youth mental health and addiction, and ageing and neurodegeneration. The School also contributes to the Charles Perkins Centre – a multidisciplinary research centre committed to improving global health.

In looking to the future, the School strives to build on its reputation for research excellence to advance knowledge and deliver solutions for some of the most pressing societal problems in order to improve the wellbeing of individuals and communities.



Strategic vision

Conduct world-leading psychological research that advances knowledge, improves society, and enhances people's lives

Strategic priorities and initiatives

2.1 Excel in research quality and significance nationally and globally

To achieve this, the School will:

- Develop strategic research themes focused on key local, national, and global challenges
- Value the contributions of different types of research, from fundamental to applied contexts
- Cultivate multidisciplinary research collaborations across the University, nationally, and globally
- Ensure openness, integrity, ethical conduct, and cultural responsiveness in all our research endeavours

2.2 Increase capacity in research and research training

To achieve this, the School will:

- Increase external funding through targeted grant support for staff
- Invest in resources that support research and research training
- Attract and retain outstanding staff and students whose research enhances our strategic objectives
- Facilitate knowledge exchange and skills development across staff and students

2.3 Expand community, industry, and government engagement in research

To achieve this, the School will:

- Establish an external advisory board including community, industry, and government
- Increase the visibility of the School's research excellence beyond the University
- Identify strategic areas to develop successful research partnerships with key stakeholders informed by their needs
- Create opportunities for stakeholder engagement and partnerships in HDR programs

2.4 Translate our research excellence into real-world impact on practice and policy

To achieve this, the School will:

- Support co-design, co-research, and co-implementation to maximise impact and engagement and ensure our research is culturally responsive
- Facilitate research translation and commercialisation opportunities for research that has direct industry, government, and community applications
- Promote research dissemination beyond traditional academic outputs
- Create pathways for communication with key decision-makers

Focus 3: Culture

Context

The School of Psychology recognises that people are at the heart of every initiative. The School is committed to creating a positive and inclusive culture to create an environment of cultural safety, mutual respect, collegiality, and shared success among all staff and students.

The School aspires to create an environment where all individuals have equity of opportunity to thrive and contribute to the School. While this is a whole-of-School effort, two key committees in the School are responsible for leading this – the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Committee and the recently established Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategy Committee.

The EDI Committee aims to identify systemic barriers and biases and advocate for policies, strategies, and practices that promote equity, diversity, and inclusion. Paramount to this is creating a positive School culture with unwavering commitment to cultural and psychological safety.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategy Committee aims to elevate cultural narratives and governance within the School in alignment with principles of self-determination. Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, being, and doing across the School will be a feature of the agency of the Committee, including enhanced representation of knowledges, histories, and cultures in the curriculum. Other key aspects include increasing the enrolment and employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, relationship building with community, and establishing an environment of cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, students, and community involved with the School.

In looking to the future, the School aims to create and maintain a positive culture where all staff and students are supported to excel by expanding our commitment to cultural responsiveness and to diversity, equity, and inclusion.



Strategic vision

Create a positive culture of shared success and lead progress in equity, diversity, and inclusion

Strategic priorities and initiatives

3.1 Create a culture of shared purpose, collegiality, and community

To achieve this, the School will:

- Increase the visibility of the School's strategic vision and the benefit it provides to society
- Develop a diverse program of activities that provides opportunities for interaction and collaboration among staff and students
- Increase communications about School activities and opportunities to engage with the School
- Celebrate successes, contributions, and collegiality while ensuring cultural and psychological safety for staff, students, and stakeholders

3.2 Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation in staffing and School processes

To achieve this, the School will:

- Increase the equitable employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, being, and doing in School processes
- Establish an environment of cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, students, and community involved with the School
- Enhance relationship-building opportunities for staff with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

3.3 Improve equity, diversity, and inclusion for staff, students, and community

To achieve this, the School will:

- Value diversity and cultural expression and have pathways for addressing and supporting cultural safety
- Develop initiatives that facilitate cultural and psychological responsiveness and encourage understanding and acceptance
- Respect work-life balance and support staff and student wellbeing
- Monitor anti-racism strategies and other mechanisms for addressing discrimination

3.4 Mentor and develop leadership capabilities across all levels of staff and students

To achieve this, the School will:

- Recognise that leadership occurs across all levels of staff and students
- Expand staff mentoring programs to support development
- Ensure diversity in leadership positions and committees across the School
- Create opportunities for students to develop leadership skills



How this strategy was developed

The School of Psychology Strategy was developed throughout 2023 in collaboration with staff, students, and stakeholders in community, government, and industry, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives.

With the support of Mary Haines Consulting, a Strategy Team was established, comprising Head of School, Deputy Head of School, and School Manager. From June to August, the Strategy Team conducted a series of discovery sessions with the School Executive Committee to define our overarching strategic vision. As part of this, we conducted a SWOT analysis and aligned our three focus areas of Education, Research, and Culture with the 'Sydney in 2032' Strategy. A set of draft strategic priorities within each focus area was then developed.

In September, we conducted a whole-of-school strategic planning day to further refine our strategic priorities, identify initiatives to encapsulate these, and consider tangible actions we could implement over the next 5 years to achieve our strategic vision. The day was very successful with many detailed and thoughtful comments and suggestions from our academic and professional staff.

Throughout September and October our draft objectives and initiatives were presented to a range of key stakeholder groups including the Faculty of Science Academic Leadership Team, student representatives, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students. The sessions were vital to ensuring our strategy keeps all staff and students front and centre of what we are trying to achieve.

The Strategy Team then met with groups of staff to review and incorporate this feedback within each focus area and to produce the final strategy, which was reviewed and endorsed by the School Executive Committee.

We would like to thank all those involved in the development of this strategy for their invaluable contributions. We look forward to working with you all to achieve our strategic vision over the next 5 years and beyond.

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