



The University of Queensland  
**Age Friendly Action Plan**  
**2023–2025**

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## From the Vice-Chancellor

The University of Queensland (UQ) is very proud to have been the first university in the Southern Hemisphere to join the Age Friendly University Global Network (AFU-GN). This network of nearly 90 universities committed to a set of 10 age-inclusive principles guiding their functioning as part of the World Health Organization's Age Friendly World Initiative.

This Age Friendly Action Plan, compiled by UQ's Age Friendly Steering Committee (AFSC), complements other Action Plans in striving for diversity, equity and inclusion in all we do. But it also has a particular focus on ensuring that we recognise the role of combatting ageism in achieving true diversity, equity and inclusion, for all people who interact with the UQ community, wherever they might be in terms of their own lifespan trajectory. This plan aligns directly with UQ's Strategic Plan 2022-2025 and its stated objective to *nurture a supportive and inclusive culture that aligns with the University's values, celebrates diversity and drives excellence.*

This Age Friendly Action Plan 2023–2025 is a first iteration by the AFSC, with input from a variety of key stakeholders including UQ alumni, industry and research partners, and students and staff.

I would like to thank those from across UQ who have played a role in developing and drafting this document, the first Action Plan of its kind for an Australian university. It is my privilege to endorse it.

Professor Deborah Terry AO  
Vice-Chancellor and President

## Overview

The University of Queensland (UQ) is committed to working proactively to develop an organisation of students, educators, researchers and professional staff who are respectful of diversity in all its forms. Age is sometimes neglected as a form of diversity, and yet the ageing process – moving through various ages and stages of life – is one that all people everywhere take part in from the moment they are born.

Unfortunately, as with other “isms” (e.g. racist, sexism, ableism), age has often been used to define and limit the potential of individuals. In this, the Decade of Healthy Ageing, the World Health Organization (WHO) is putting combatting ageism front and centre<sup>1</sup>. The WHO defines ageism as the stereotypes (how we think), prejudice (how we feel) and discrimination (how we act) towards others or oneself based on chronological age<sup>2</sup>. Ageism has been observed everywhere – from our institutions to our relationships to ourselves – in fact, research demonstrates that one in two individuals globally hold moderately to severely ageist attitudes<sup>3</sup>.

In 2020, UQ became the first university in the Southern Hemisphere to join the Age Friendly University Global Network (AFU-GN). In that same year, the Age Friendly Steering Committee at UQ was formed, with representation from students, academic faculty (current and emeriti), staff, alumni, and community stakeholders, from all Faculties and several institutes, across multiple campuses. This committee worked to develop this first iteration of the Age Friendly Action Plan, based on wide consultation, lived experience, and with reference to the *10 Principles of an Age Friendly University* put forth by the AFU-GN.

At the same time, this Age Friendly Action Plan explicitly references UQ’s current Strategic Plan to ensure alignment and harmony between this and other strategic efforts of the University. It focuses on reframing age and ageing as positive and bringing value to the individual, the institution, and society as a whole.

At UQ we believe that we can raise awareness of the deleterious effects of ageism, and the positive benefits of an age-inclusive way of being as a university, supported by this Action Plan. We know that this Action Plan is the first of its kind put forward by an Australian university, and we have aspired to be thoughtful and firm in our commitment to embrace the inherent value of each individual at any age.

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<sup>1</sup> World Health Organization. (2021). *Global report on ageism*. Geneva: World Health Organization.

<sup>2</sup> World Health Organization (2018). Ageing and

life-course. Geneva: World Health Organization.

<sup>3</sup> Officer, A. et al. (2020). Ageism, healthy life expectancy and population ageing: How are they

related? *Int J Environ Res Public Health* 17, 9, 3159. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17093159>

## Age-Friendly University Principles

1. To encourage the participation of older adults in all the core activities of the university, including educational and research programs
2. To promote personal and career development in the second half of life and to support those who wish to pursue second careers
3. To recognise the range of educational needs of older adults (from those who were early school-leavers through to those who wish to pursue Master's or PhD qualifications)
4. To promote intergenerational learning to facilitate the reciprocal sharing of expertise between learners of all ages
5. To widen access to online educational opportunities for older adults to ensure a diversity of routes to participation
6. To ensure that the university's research agenda is informed by the needs of an ageing society and to promote public discourse on how higher education can better respond to the varied interests and needs of older adults
7. To increase understanding of students of the longevity dividend and the increasing complexity and richness that ageing brings to our society
8. To enhance access for older adults to the university's range of health and wellness programs and its arts and cultural activities
9. To engage actively with the university's own retired community
10. To ensure regular dialogue with organisations representing the interests of the ageing population

# Objective 1

**Include age as part of the University’s equity, diversity and inclusion agenda.**

Action	Measures	Responsibility	Timeframe	AFP*
1.1 Executive sponsorship of the AFAP 2023-25 to demonstrate the endorsement and commitment of the University at an executive level	1.1.1 Establishment of an executive sponsor	Vice-Chancellor	Q4 2023	1
1.2 Incorporate AFAP into University governance structures at all levels to embed implementation and reporting as Business As Usual (BAU)	1.2.1 Key stakeholder senior leads are identified	Executive sponsor and Deputy Provost	Q4 2023	
	1.2.3 In consultation with staff and students of all ages, and with AFSC, each key stakeholder senior lead develops an implementation plan to deliver on their AFAP actions and reports on it annually	Key stakeholder senior leads	Q4 2023 and annually	
	1.2.4 A requirement is established for all new and amended policies and procedures to be reviewed, to ensure they do not discriminate on the basis of age	Governance and Risk	Q1 2024	

\*Age Friendly Principle

## Objective 1 continued

Action	Measures	Responsibility	Timeframe	AFP
1.3 Underpin AFU implementation with an intersectional approach	1.3.1 AFAP governance structures are reviewed every two years to ensure intersectionality is prioritised	Senate Committee on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion; Deputy Provost	Q4 2023	1
1.4 Benchmark UQ's progress and achievements against other universities and relevant organisations	1.4.1 Benchmarking is undertaken using the Age Friendly University Global Network by auditing of achievement in relation to implementation of AFU principles using key performance indicators	Deputy Provost, Age Friendly Steering Committee Chair	Q4 2023	
1.5 Ensure the UQ community is aware of and empowered to embed the AFU Principles across the University's operations	1.5.1 AFAP progress and outcomes are communicated to the UQ community	Deputy Provost, Age Friendly Steering Committee Chair	Q1 2024	

## Objective 2

**Promote increasing longevity as a benefit and dividend to society through attraction, teaching and career-support for all students and staff at UQ across the lifespan.**

Action	Measures	Responsibility	Timeframe	AFP
2.1 Monitor retention and success of our students across the lifespan	2.1.1 All reports generated report on all ages and are used to relevantly inform progress and enhancements at an institutional and organisational unit level	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)	Q3 2023 and annually	2,3,4,5,7
2.2 Foster means to welcome students of all ages	2.2.1 Ensure students of all ages feel welcome at UQ, particularly with respect to orientation experiences and activities	Faculty ADAs, AFSC Chair	Q3 2023	
	2.2.2 UQ communications, marketing and events are inclusive of all ages in their presentation and outreach, including inclusive language and photography	Chief Marketing and Communication Officer	Q4 2023	
2.3 Review recruitment processes to ensure they represent best practice for attracting diverse candidates and provide a positive experience irrespective of age	2.3.1 UQ recruitment processes are reviewed and recommendations made on enhancing diversity and inclusion so that such age-inclusive practice becomes BAU	Chief Human Resources Officer	Q3 2023	
	2.3.2 Plan for implementing recommendations established	Chief Human Resources Officer	Q4 2023	



## Objective 2 continued

Action	Measures	Responsibility	Timeframe	AFP
2.4 Audit learning opportunities for current staff as well as curricular offerings for UQ students to ensure that content is age-inclusive	2.4.1 Plan established to include a consideration of age-inclusive curriculum as part of the implementation of the new Graduate Attributes	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), AFSC Chair	Q4 2023	2,3,4,5,7
	2.4.2 Staff training reviewed to ensure age-inclusive practice becomes BAU	Chief Human Resources Officer, AFSC Chair	Q1 2024	
2.5 Ensure that age is no barrier to connecting people with supports, flexibility, relevant development opportunities and networks	2.5.1 Current supports, relevant development opportunities and networks (e.g. mentoring programs) are audited to provide an institutional understanding of age-related barriers to the availability and relevance of resources	Chief Human Resources Officer, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), AFSC Chair	Q4 2024	
2.6 Create a clear and effective mechanism for staff and students of all ages to access IT and IT support	2.6.1 The ongoing review of IT infrastructure and IT support to staff and students includes explicit checks for accessibility to people of all ages.	Chief Information Officer, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)	Q4 2023	
	2.6.2 User-friendly approach (mechanism) established for the UQ community to provide feedback on accessibility of the digital environment	Chief Marketing and Communication Officer	Q1 2024	
2.7 Ensure, as far as we are able, that targeted scholarships are not dependent on age	2.7.1 Scholarships are reviewed to identify and eliminate any age barriers	Vice President (Advancement and Community Engagement),	Q4 2023	

2.8 Conduct an ongoing scoping exercise and feasibility analysis to identify further opportunities, initiatives and activities related to Objective 2.	2.8.1 Measures of success to be determined in relation to further initiatives approved for action.	AFSC Chair and others as appropriate via sub-delegation.	Q4 2025	2,3,4,5,7
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## Objective 3

**Ensure best practice in research on aspects of later life, for students and staff, including genuine partnerships with older adults and community organisations that represent older people.**

Action	Measures	Responsibility	Timeframe	AFP
3.1 Connect UQ staff and HDR students with expertise and experience in Age Friendly inclusion research	3.1.1 Community of practice is created	Age Friendly Steering Committee Chair	Q3 2023	6,7
	3.1.2 Strategic partnership goals with UQ's external partners (e.g. Council on the Ageing Queensland), internal partners (e.g. UQ Alumni Friends) and internal stakeholders (e.g. emeritus faculty) to set and advance mutual agendas	Age Friendly Steering Committee Chair	Q3 2023	
3.2 Support best age-inclusive research practice across UQ and foster a culture of inclusivity with respect to older adults	3.2.1 Include training for UQ Human Ethics Committee staff on age-inclusive ethics strategies and co-design principles with older adults	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), Age Friendly Steering Committee Chair	Q1 2024	
	3.2.1 Develop a website and resources for staff, students and external partners on best-practices for age-inclusive research	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), Age Friendly Steering Committee Chair	Q4 2024	
	3.2.2 Encourage partnerships between diverse community organisations and service providers representing older adults and researchers to foster increased collaboration with older people across a variety of contexts	Vice President (Advancement and Community Engagement), AFSC Chair	Q4 2024	
3.3 Conduct an ongoing scoping exercise and feasibility analysis to identify further	3.3.1 Measures of success to be determined in relation to further initiatives approved for action.	AFSC Chair and others as appropriate via sub-delegation.	Q4 2025	

opportunities, initiatives and activities related to Objective 3.				
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## Objective 4

**Nurture an inclusive, intergenerational culture with respect to all UQ learning, cultural and wellness activities through active promotion to our current staff and students, alumni, retired staff, and community organisations.**

Action	Measures	Responsibility	Timeframe	AFP
4.1 Ensure composition of AFSC is representative of stakeholders	4.1.1 AFSC membership includes UQ alumni, retired staff (academic and non-academic) and organisations representing the needs of older adults	AFSC Chair	Q1 2023	8,9,10
4.2 Our communications, marketing and events in the domains of teaching, culture and wellness activities are widely shared with our community partners COTA Queensland and U3A, as well as UQ alumni and retired UQ staff	4.2.1 Marketing and Communication have expanded contacts with our community partners COTA Queensland and U3A, as well as UQ alumni and retired staff	Chief Marketing and Communication Officer, AFSC Chair	Q1 2024	
	4.2.2 There is an increase in events promoted to our community partners, alumni and retired staff and an increased uptake of places among these groups, as well as more targeted events for these stakeholder groups	Chief Marketing and Communication Officer, AFSC Chair	Q1 2024	
	4.2.3 Wellbeing initiatives at UQ Healthy Living are regularly advertised with our community partners	CEO UQ Healthcare, UQHL Manager	Q3 2023	
	4.2.4 Cultural events at UQ are regularly advertised with our community partners	Chief Marketing and Communication Officer, Vice President (Advancement and Community Engagement)	Q3 2023	
	4.2.5 Older athletes and organisations representing older athletes are engaged in planning for the 2032 Olympics	Chair, UQ 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games Oversight Committee	Q1 2024	

4.3 Conduct an ongoing scoping exercise and feasibility analysis to identify further opportunities, initiatives and activities related to Objective 4.	4.3.1 Measures of success to be determined in relation to further initiatives approved for action.	AFSC Chair and others as appropriate via sub-delegation.	Q4 2025	
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# UQ Age Friendly Action Plan

## Top 2 Priorities

Objective	Action	Measure
<p><b>1. Include age as part of the aspects of equity, diversity and inclusion at UQ.</b></p>	<p>1.4 Benchmark UQ’s progress and achievements against other universities and relevant organisations to understand how age-inclusive UQ is currently</p>	<p>1.4.1 Benchmarking is undertaken using the Age Friendly University Global Network by auditing of achievement in relation to implementation of AFU principles using key performance indicators</p>
<p><b>4. Nurture an inclusive, intergenerational culture with respect to all UQ learning, cultural and wellness activities through active promotion to our alumni, retired staff, and community organisations.</b></p>	<p>4.2 Our communications, marketing and events in the domains of teaching, culture and wellness activities are widely shared with our community partners COTA Queensland and U3A, as well as UQ alumni and retired UQ staff</p>	<p>4.2.1 M&amp;C and have expanded contacts with our community partners COTA and U3A, as well as UQ alumni and retired staff</p> <p>4.2.2 There is an increase in events promoted to our community partners, alumni and retired staff and an increased uptake of places among these groups</p>