Hot off the presses: Deakin plan

Description

[box]**This is the media release in full just issued by Deakin University:[/box]**

Warrnmabool Deakin Campus: Image, Deakin University.

DEAKIN WARRNAMBOOL HERE TO STAY

Monday, 3 October 2016

[dropcap style="color: #a5cecd;"]D[/dropcap]eakin University has today announced a proposed ongoing, long-term and more sustainable model for its Warrnambool Campus that will see it continue its role as the region's higher education provider.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Jane den Hollander said it was not possible for Deakin to remain in Warrnambool on a business as usual basis, in the face of declining enrolments and increasing annual losses.

"If something does not change these losses are predicted to rise and the campus is increasingly unsustainable," Professor den Hollander said.

Professor den Hollander today met with Warrnambool Campus staff and students to confirm the University's commitment to the region and discuss proposed key changes to the current Campus model which will:

- ensure a student experience at Warrnambool consistent with Deakin's LIVE the future strategy and equivalent in quality to student learning outcomes at other Deakin campuses;
- fulfil Deakin's public purpose; and
- address the financial losses of the Campus.

Deakin will continue to explore opportunities to grow and sustain the campus into the future, including the consideration of a new Bachelor of Agribusiness unique to the Warrnambool Campus.

Professor den Hollander said Agribusiness could be an exciting new course that plays to the region's

agricultural strengths.

“We will work with the community to explore whether there is sufficient demand to get this new Bachelor of Agribusiness up and running,” she said.

Deakin Pro Vice Chancellor Jane Den Hollander. Image: Deakin University.

Deakin will continue to identify other opportunities and create strategies for new and expanded offerings at the Warrnambool Campus, including increased work integrated learning and internships, expanded use of Trimester 3, exploring the international markets, both for in-bound students and on

campus international programs, potential expansion of Associate Degrees, maximisation of pathways with South-West TAFE, VCE extension studies and potential opportunities for development of Deakin's Institute of Koorie Education programs.

"Deakin will further consult with the Victorian Government, SW TAFE and regional schools to ensure community and industry support for higher education and Deakin University in South West Victoria," Professor den Hollander said.

"We will focus on the courses for which there is demonstrated demand and strong graduate employment outcomes," Professor den Hollander said.

Under the proposal, Deakin will continue to offer Nursing, Midwifery, Health Sciences, Psychological Sciences, Education (Primary), Commerce, Environmental Science (Marine Biology), Law and Commerce/Law at the Warrnambool Campus. Deakin will also continue to offer the Associate Degree of Education and several PhD courses.

Professor den Hollander emphasised that all students currently enrolled in non-ongoing courses at the Warrnambool Campus will be able to complete their studies at the Campus.

"A reduction in staff numbers as a result of the proposed decreased course offering would be necessary, but this will be worked through compassionately and via a period of consultation with staff, beginning today, Professor den Hollander said.

The consultation process will help to determine how the reduction in staff numbers will occur, including the option for a voluntary separation process.

Other aspects of the proposed model include closure of the Warrnambool Corporate Centre and rezoning of parts of the Campus that the University does not require. Professor den Hollander said Deakin acknowledged the State Government for its support of the proposed rezoning.

In addition to its Warrnambool Campus, Deakin's strong presence in the South West region will continue, including through the School of Medicine's Clinical School at South West Healthcare, Deakin Rural Health's integrated program of research, education, the Centre for Farmer Health and the Centre for Rural Emergency Medicine.

Professor den Hollander acknowledged the financial support promised by the Federal Government to support Deakin's transition to the proposed new Campus model.

"Deakin appreciates the work of the Member for Wannon, the Hon Dan Tehan, who has facilitated this support," she said.

"We look forward to the active support of local industry, education institutions and the community in general to help ensure the success of the proposed new Campus model. Support will hopefully include provision of student work placements, internships and scholarships.

We look forward to working with the community to grow a new model that better suits the current era and the growing knowledge economy. This model will include both face to face and digital learning experiences so that those who study at Warrnambool receive an education that enables them for the jobs of the future. That is our focus.”

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Date Created
2016/10/03
Author
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