



Academic restructuring: International case studies

Nous Group | July 2020

Executive Summary

In response to the recent Albertan Government's funding cuts, The University of Alberta (UofA) is considering revisions to its academic structure to drive improved efficiency in its operations. An Academic Restructuring Working Group (ARWG) has been established to consider possible models and make recommendations to the General Faculties Council and the Board of Governors.

To support this work, UofA has engaged Nous Group, to collect evidence and share insights on selected comparator universities academic structures. The objective is to document a suite of detailed case studies and provide the ARWG with the stimulus and evidence (data and insights) to make informed decisions about the structural options that would best enable UofA to deliver its strategic objectives.

CONTENTS:

1. REGIONAL ANALYSIS

2. DETAILED CASE STUDIES

3. FURTHER COMPARATOR STRUCTURES

COMPARATORS FROM:

CANADA

UNITED STATES

UNITED KINGDOM

AUSTRALIA

1. REGIONAL ANALYSIS

Our analysis focused on selected comparators.

Universities have increasingly considered different academic and professional delivery structures and models. This has often been in response to jurisdiction-specific funding and revenue challenges over the past two decades. As a result, different models have emerged across Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia in particular.

Nous took a sample of 17 institutions, many of whom Nous has had a relationship with during or following a major transformation, to explore regional and institutional differences. These institutions (listed below) were selected if they met one or more of the following characteristics:

- comprehensive and high-performing, research-intensive, publicly funded institutions
- similar student numbers and/or financial profile to UofA
- implemented a new academic structure.

CANADA

1. University of British Columbia
2. University of Toronto
3. University of Calgary
4. University of Alberta

UNITED STATES

1. University of Michigan
2. University of Washington

UNITED KINGDOM

1. King's College London
2. Queen Mary University of London
3. University College London
4. University of Exeter

AUSTRALIA

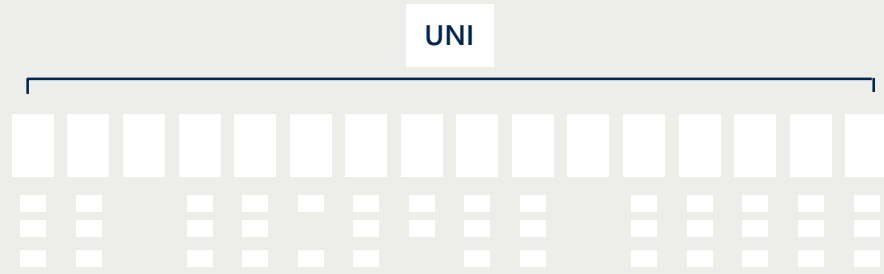
1. University of Melbourne
2. Monash University
3. University of Sydney
4. University of New South Wales
5. University of Western Australia
6. University of South Australia
7. University of Queensland

To identify possible trends across regions, we compared these institutions across a number of characteristics, including the number of faculties, financial position, student numbers, global ranking (THE) and research performance. Our case studies focused on the first two hierarchical layers within any given academic structure.

Please note that nomenclature and the application of layers within academic structures varies across regions and institutions, and therefore at the department and school level there may be occasional discrepancies.

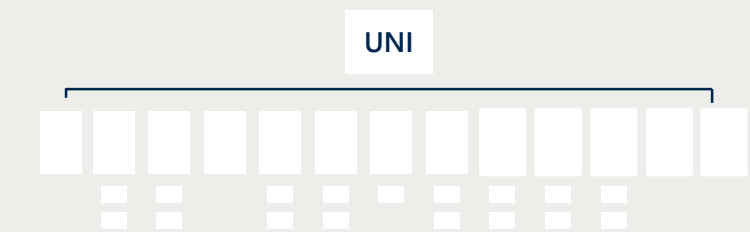
Three main archetypes of university academic structures.

A Large, diversified structure
 Between 14 -19 faculties, supported by >50 departments/schools. More common in Northern America.



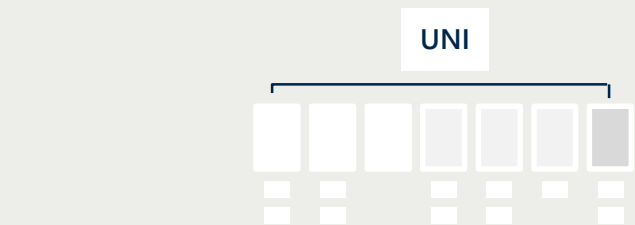
EXAMPLES INCLUDED:
 UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
 UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

B Diverse structure
 Faculties range between 8-13, supported by 30-40 departments.



EXAMPLES INCLUDED:
 UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE
 UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
 UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
 KING'S COLLEGE LONDON
 UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES
 MONASH UNIVERSITY

C Consolidated structure
 Between 3-7 faculties, supported by 22-38 departments. This model is adopted by a mix of Australian and UK universities



EXAMPLES INCLUDED:
 UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND
 UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA
 UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA
 QUEEN MARY UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
 UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON
 UNIVERSITY OF EXETER

There were common drivers behind the various academic restructures.

In our experience, there are four broad drivers for academic model restructures.



BETTER DELIVER ON UNIVERSITY MISSION

- Reinforce new strategic initiatives
- Support better external engagement with a clearer narrative about the institution's value proposition and/or specialization.



IMPROVE RESEARCH PERFORMANCE

- Strengthen interdisciplinary collaboration
- Streamline and reduce overlap in research (e.g. a large amount of Education research taking place outside the Faculty of Education).



IMPROVE GOVERNANCE AND DECISION-MAKING

- Streamline university decision-making
- Ensure equity of voice in governance (e.g. remedy disproportional 'voice' for small faculties having the same weighting as larger faculties when they may be smaller than some large departments).



REDUCE COSTS AND IMPROVE EFFICIENCY

- Streamline and reduce overlap / duplication of curriculum
- Support professional services realignment or new model.

The North American universities selected have the highest number of faculties.

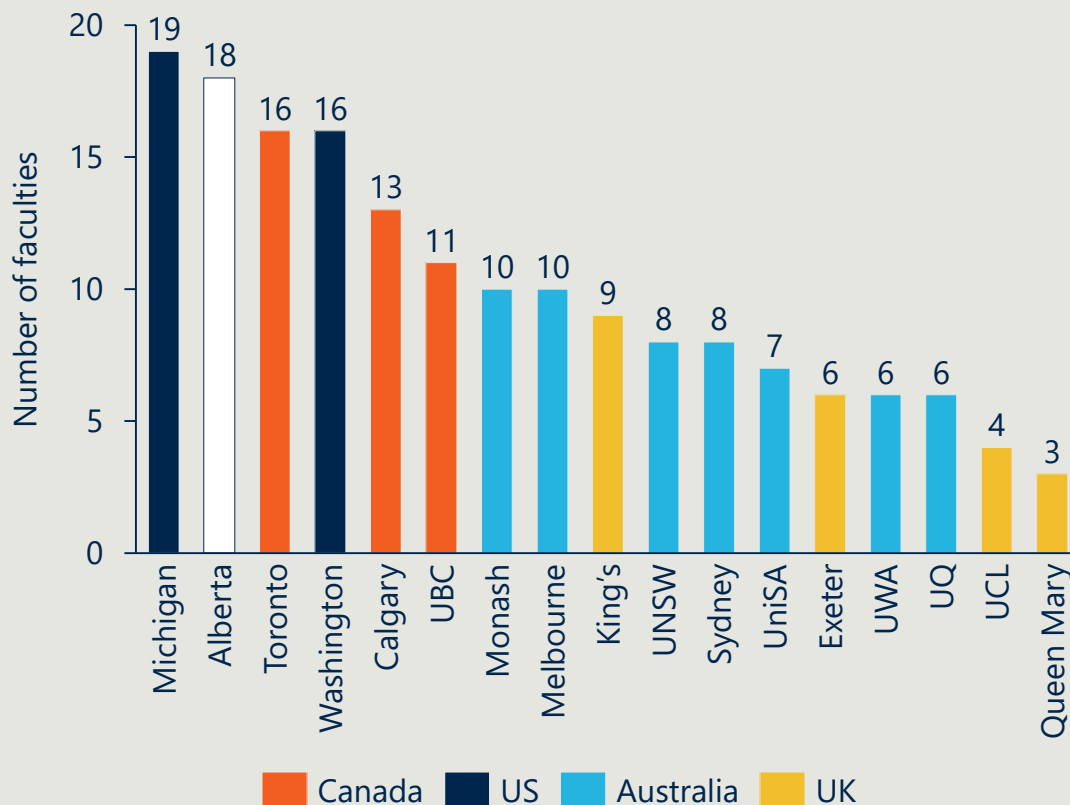
North American universities in our sample tend to have a higher number of faculties.

UofA, University of Michigan, University of Washington and the University of Toronto all have a total of 16 faculties or more. UK and Australian universities in this sample range from three to ten faculties.

In our sample, all but the University of Calgary have more than 58 departments. Some North American universities had over 90 departments, compared to other institutions that range from 10-39. Further details can be found in the detailed case studies.

While in part this trend may be due to what is considered conventional in North American publicly funded institutions, Australian and UK universities tend to operate more streamlined governance and management structures.

Number of faculties for sample of universities



Some disciplines more commonly stand-alone as faculties.

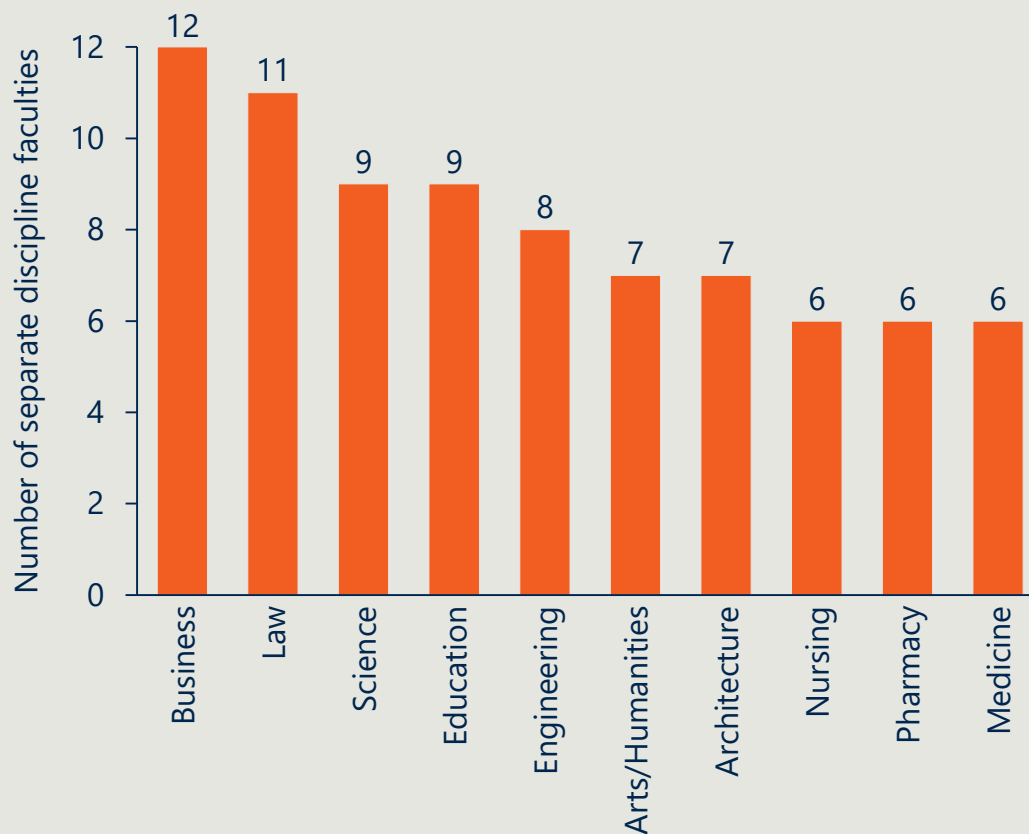
Faculty composition varies considerably amongst sample universities.

When considering whether universities have a stand-alone faculty for a specific discipline or not, certain disciplines are more likely to stand-alone than others. Business, Law, Science and Education were most commonly stand-alone among this sample.

Notable combinations include:

- **Medicine, nursing and health sciences** including allied and public health, psychiatry and biomedical (Monash).
- **Law, Arts, Humanities and Social and Historical Sciences** (King's College London).
- **Engineering and Mathematical Sciences** (University of Western Australia).
- **Health and Behavioural Sciences** including dentistry, pharmacy and nursing (University of Queensland).

Number of universities with stand-alone faculties for specific disciplines*



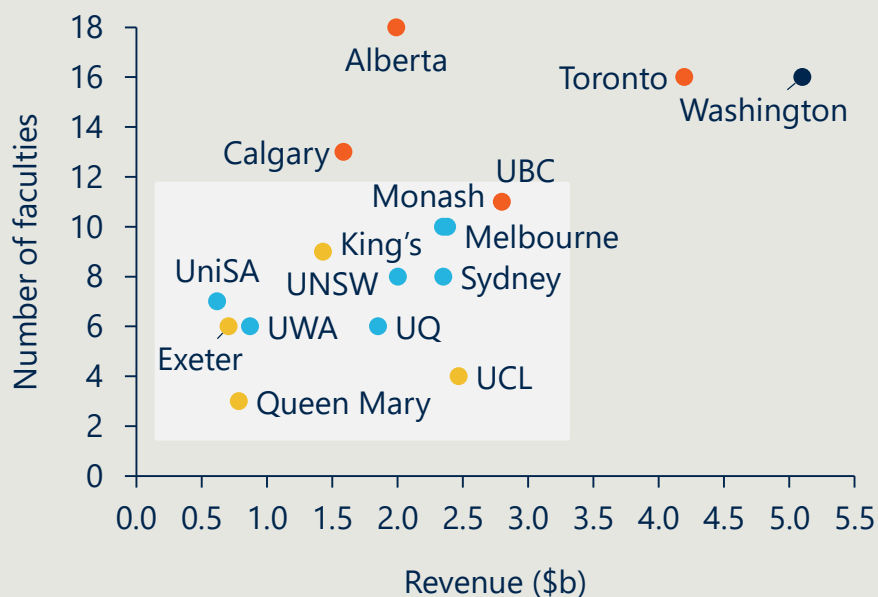
*Out of 17 sample universities.

UofA has more faculties than many peers in this sample.

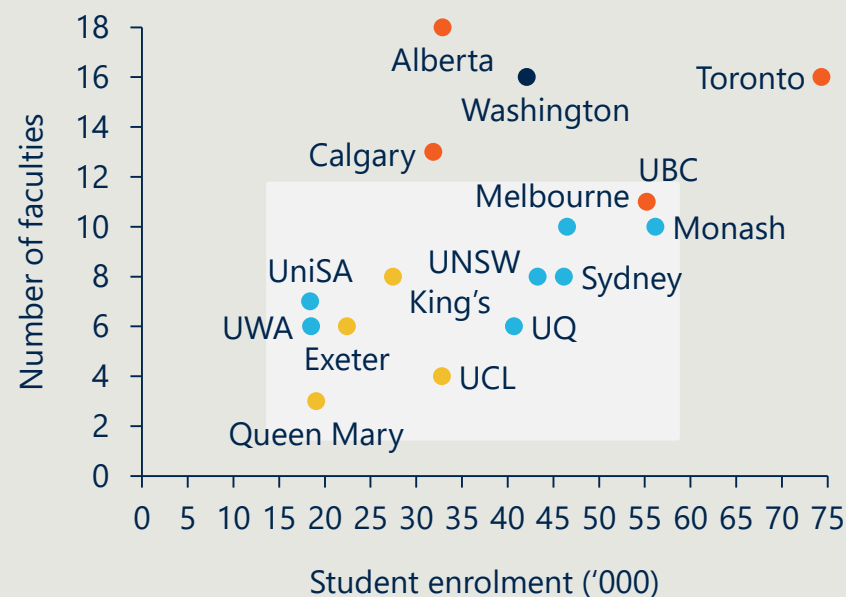
UofA has many more faculties than peers when considering both revenue and student enrolments. While there is some correlation between university enrolments and the number of faculties in the universities within this sample group, the institutions in our sample tend to cluster in regional groups. Institutions that have similar annual revenue to Alberta (e.g. UNSW, Monash, UQ) having substantially less faculties, as do many universities with similar student numbers (e.g. King's College London, UQ and UCL).

Note that we have removed the University of Michigan as annual revenue figures were significantly higher than other institutions (but also had the largest number of faculties with a total of 19).

Annual revenue (\$CAD), 2017-18) vs. number of faculties¹



Student enrolment ('000, 2020) vs. number of faculties²



● Canada ● USA ● Australia ● UK

¹ Revenue based on 2018 Annual Report data.

² Student numbers based on 2020 full-time equivalent students enrolled at the University.

Moving to fewer faculties did not compromise research in Australian universities.

In Australia, high-performing, research-intensive institutions with a smaller number of faculties frequently still perform well across a broad range of disciplines.

Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) evaluates institutions' performance across the full spectrum of research activities. ERA compares Australian institutions research effort across 22 disciplines against international benchmarks and awards - receiving a rating out of 5. This rating ranges from 'well above world standard' (5) to 'well below world standard' (1). Since 2012, all of the universities listed below have increased the number of disciplines they have performed well above, or above, world standard.

	Number of faculties	Number of disciplines rated "Above average"	Increase in # disciplines rated "Above average" 2012-2018
University of NSW	8	21	+3
Monash University	10	20	+7
University of Melbourne	10	22	+3
University of Sydney	8	22	+8
University of Queensland	6	22	+3
University of WA	6	17	+8

UK universities have maintained discipline breadth while consolidating their faculties.

In the UK, performance in the Research Excellence Framework (REF) also indicates that faculty size does not limit academic diversity.

The most recent Research Excellence Framework (2015) results indicate that some institutions with a very small number of faculties, for example Queen Mary and UCL, still produce a large amount of research across a wide range of disciplines.

	Number of faculties	Disciplines report against	Disciplines with the highest reports
King's College London	9	38	Clinical Medicine, Public Health, Psychology, Computer Science, Philosophy, English
University of Exeter	6	25	Clinical Medicine, History, Area Studies, Education
UCL	4	27	Clinical Medicine, Dentistry, Education, Medicine, Film, Communication and English
Queen Mary University of London	3	21	Clinical Medicine, Allied Health, Public Health, Engineering Linguistics, History, English, Music

2. DETAILED CASE STUDIES

Selected case studies

The following case studies serve as examples of similar universities to UofA that have undergone transformations – both academic and professional – from Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia.

CONTENTS:

1. UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

2. UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

3. QUEEN MARY UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

4. UNIVERSITY OF EXETER

5. UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

6. UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

7. MONASH UNIVERSITY

8. UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND

CASE STUDY 1: University of Michigan

A shared services model to support professional services across three campuses helps the University of Michigan be one of the foremost research institutions in the United States.

The University of Michigan is a publicly funded university primarily based in Ann-Arbor, Michigan. The University is considered one of the foremost research universities in the United States. Michigan has utilized a shared services model to support two additional campuses (Dearborn and Flint) from their primary campus (Ann Arbor).

These three campuses function independently with distinct missions and strategic priorities, separate budgets and individual institutional accreditation.

- **Ann Arbor** functions as the primary, research-intensive institution. This campus is much larger in terms of student number and research volume.
- **Dearborn** is a teaching-focused regional school with limited research functions (in Arts, Sciences and Engineering and Computer Science).
- **Flint** is a teaching-focused regional school with an even more narrow-scope research function (in Arts, Sciences, Nursing and Management).

These campuses have different entry requirements (14.5% (Dearborn) and 20.3% (Flint) less than Ann Arbor) with transfer pathways between institutions and a 50% acceptance rate into Ann Arbor from Dearborn and Flint.

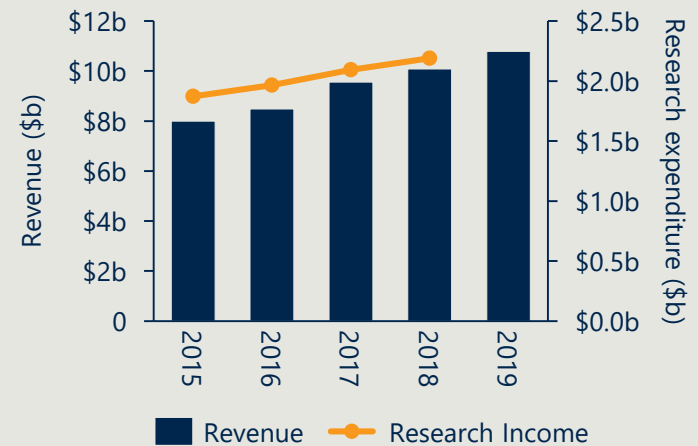
Dearborn and Flint are supported by a shared services operating model, with a reduced fee for services including financial services (payroll, procurement), research office support and library services. Ann Arbor also provides funding support for strategic initiatives at Dearborn and Flint as required.

INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

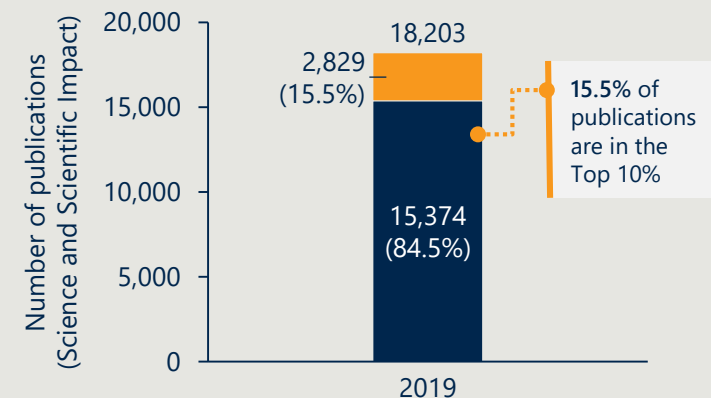
Jurisdiction: United States
Student number: 45,102 EFTSL
Income: ~ \$10 billion (\$CAD)
THE World University Ranking: 21
QS Ranking: 21
THE Research (2020):

- Research: 86.1
- Citations: 94.9

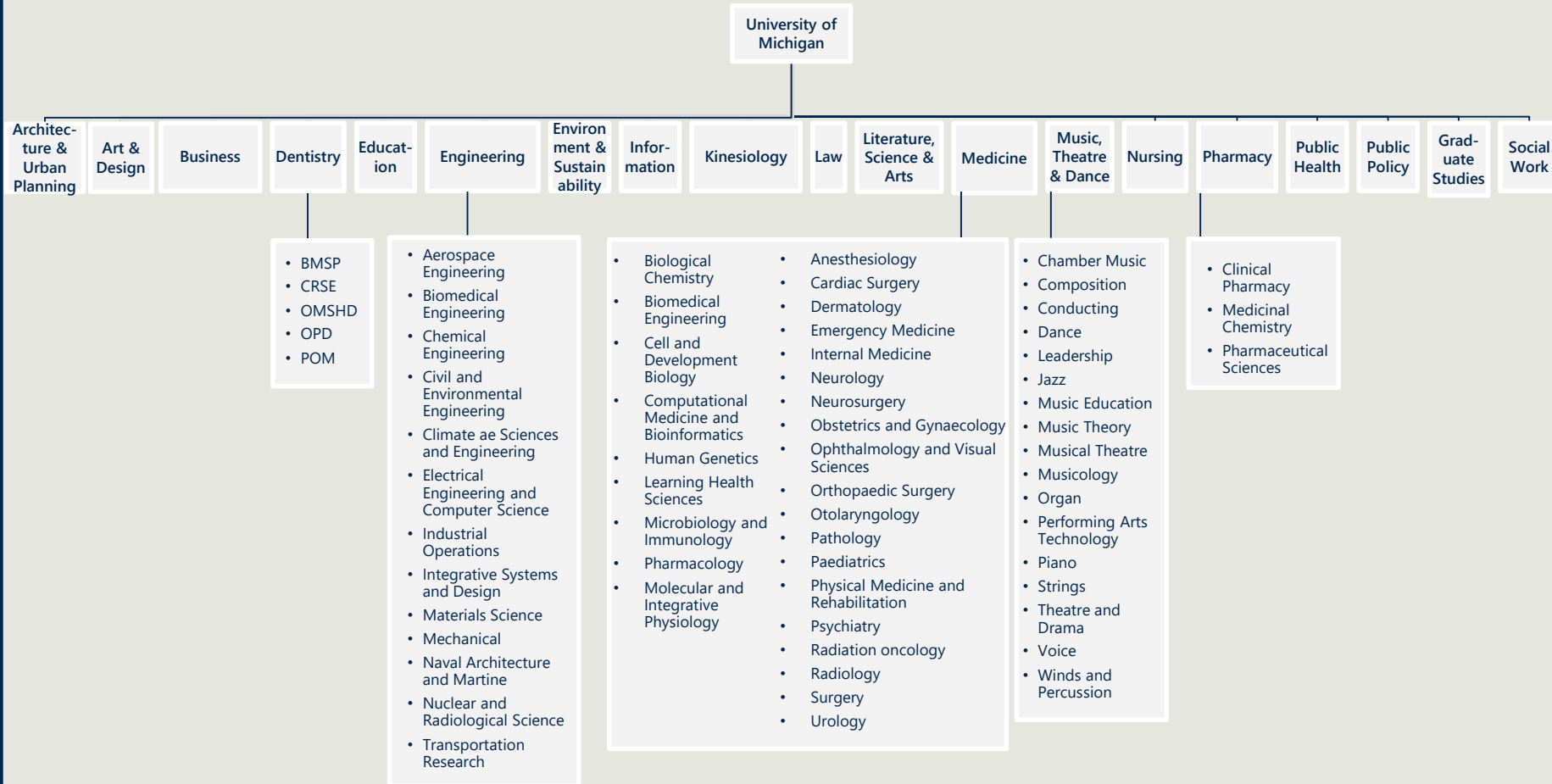
Revenue and research expenditure 2008-2018 (\$CAD)



Research performance



NINETEEN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES



CASE STUDY 2: University College London

University College London (UCL) is in the middle of a substantial professional services transformation, having doubled in size over the past decade. The 'Transforming Our Professional Services' (TOPS) is viewed as currently one of the most comprehensive and ambitious UK university transformation programs.

University College London has doubled in size over the last decade and maintains substantial administrative and structural complexity that is not suited to high performance at this size and scale.

The TOPS program commenced in 2016 and aims to provide more effective professional services, increased staff and student satisfaction, more fulfilling careers for professional staff and greater investment in the University's academic mission by improving the value for money and efficiency of professional services. Transactional processes should be simple and efficient and more specialist support should be focused on the staff and student experience. UCL have used the UniForum benchmarking as an input into this process.

The TOPS program is co-chaired by the Vice-Provost Education and Chief Operating Officer and is currently supporting cross-campus professional services reform. This program is centrally managed through a small Program Office and expanded 'Transformer' teams. These streams are tackling key elements of the University experience and seeks to make processes and policies, and the UCL experience, more efficient and consistent.

These Transformer teams include:

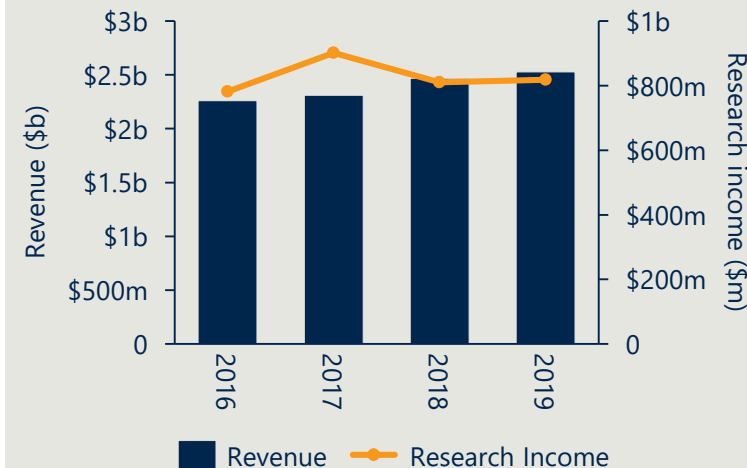
- **Student Experience Transformer**, seeking to ensure a consistently high-quality experience for all UCL students.
- **Research and Innovation Support Transformer**, seeking to change the way that research support and administration are delivered.
- **Faculty Futures**, seeking to reform Faculty-based professional services.

INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

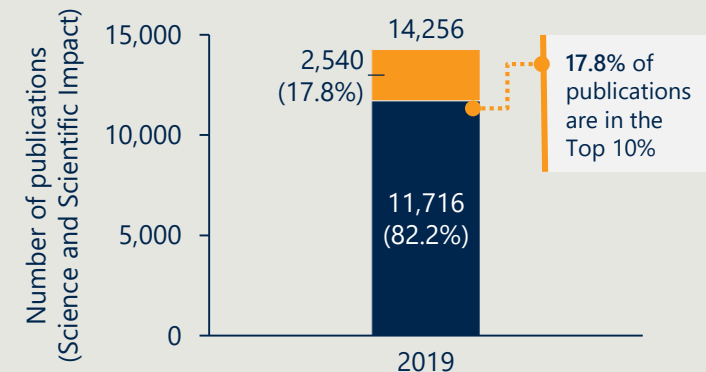
Jurisdiction: United Kingdom
Student number: 32,795 EFTSL
Income: ~ \$2.5 billion (\$CAD)
THE World University Ranking: 15
QS Ranking: 8
Research Performance (THE 2020):

- Research: 88.7
- Citations: 96.1

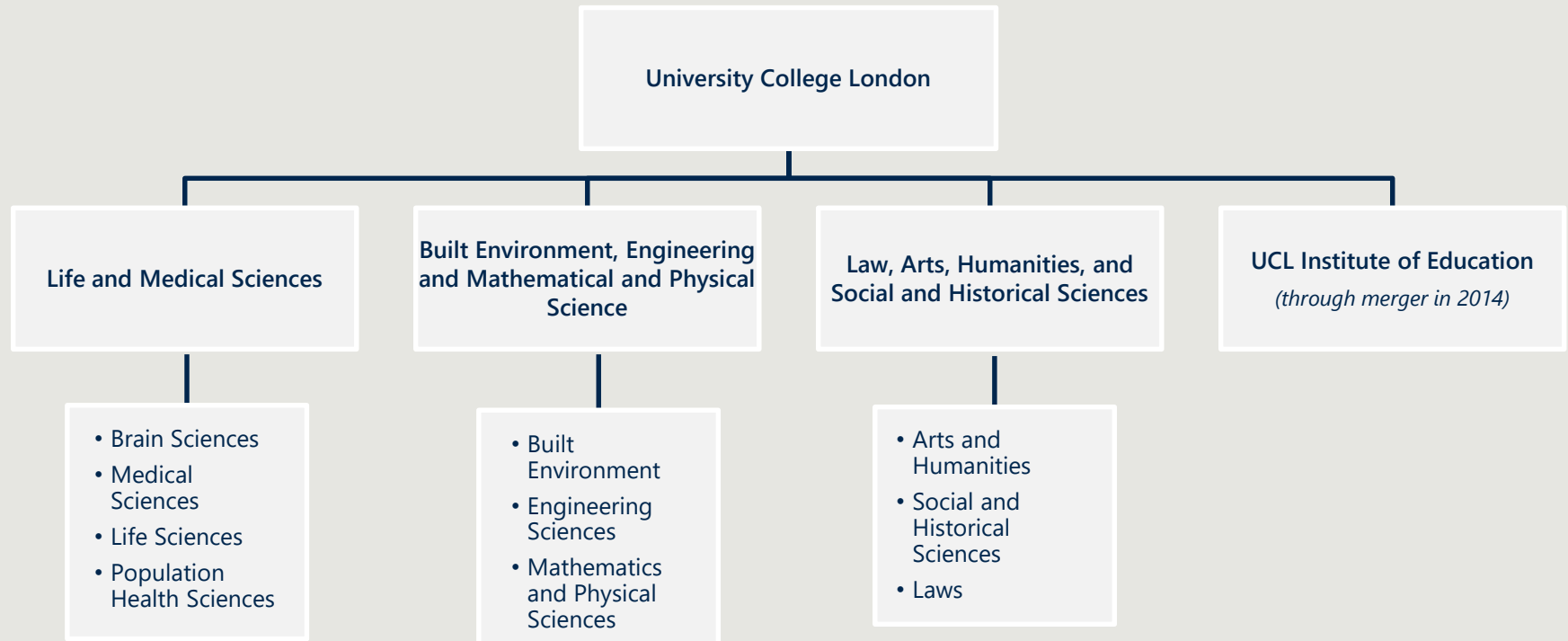
Revenue and research income 2016-2019 (\$CAD)



Research performance



THREE SCHOOLS AND ONE INSTITUTE



CASE STUDY 3: Queen Mary University of London

Queen Mary University of London (QMUL) have shifted from Colleges to fewer Faculties to allow increased focus on the university's academic mission, though power and resource allocation has not followed structural change.

Queen Mary University is a research-intensive university and a member of the Russell Group of Universities. The University ranks among the top universities in the UK according to the quality of research outputs across its three faculties.

In the early 2010s, the university shifted from a College structure to a Faculty structure following a series of historical mergers. The discipline domains remained the same but the intent of the structure changed. The purpose of the change was to create administrative efficiencies to allow greater focus on academic mission. In the decade since, the structural modification has been in name only. The power and resource allocation continues to sit in the schools.

Queen Mary is part of the Uniform data set and their results showed that whilst they operated one of the more devolved administrative structures, they were also low cost. University management are very aware that this low cost/low quality dynamic has evolved across their three faculties.

QMUL's rankings performance has oscillated throughout the past ten years, between 145 (2013) and 98 (2015), the University is currently ranked 110 in the THE World Rankings (2020). Research income has remained consistent over the past four years, while revenue has increased (19% 2016-2019).

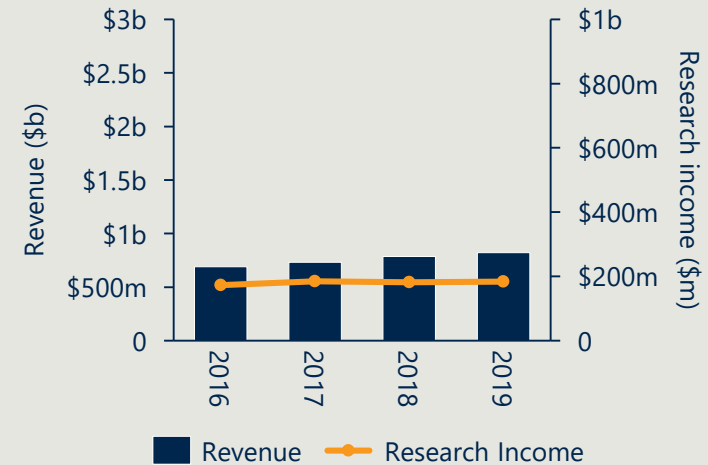
QMUL's latest strategic vision (out to 2030) includes deliberate prioritization of administrative transformation to ensure that Faculties are better resourced to support schools, and that career pathways are developed for administrative staff. These changes are to ensure that QMUL can move into the top 100 research intensive universities globally. Work is currently underway to properly structure the faculty model. They have also standardised the names of the faculties, including the Barts Medical School.

INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

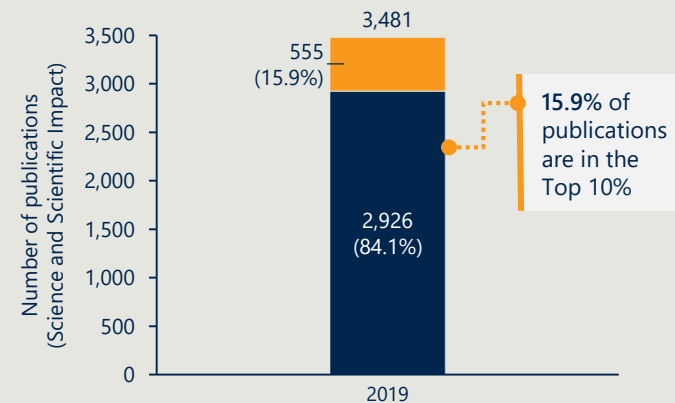
Jurisdiction: United Kingdom
Student number: 19,040 EFTSL
Income: ~ 822 million (\$CAD)
THE World University Ranking: 110
QS Ranking: 126
Research Performance (THE 2020):

- Research: 43.1
- Citations: 98

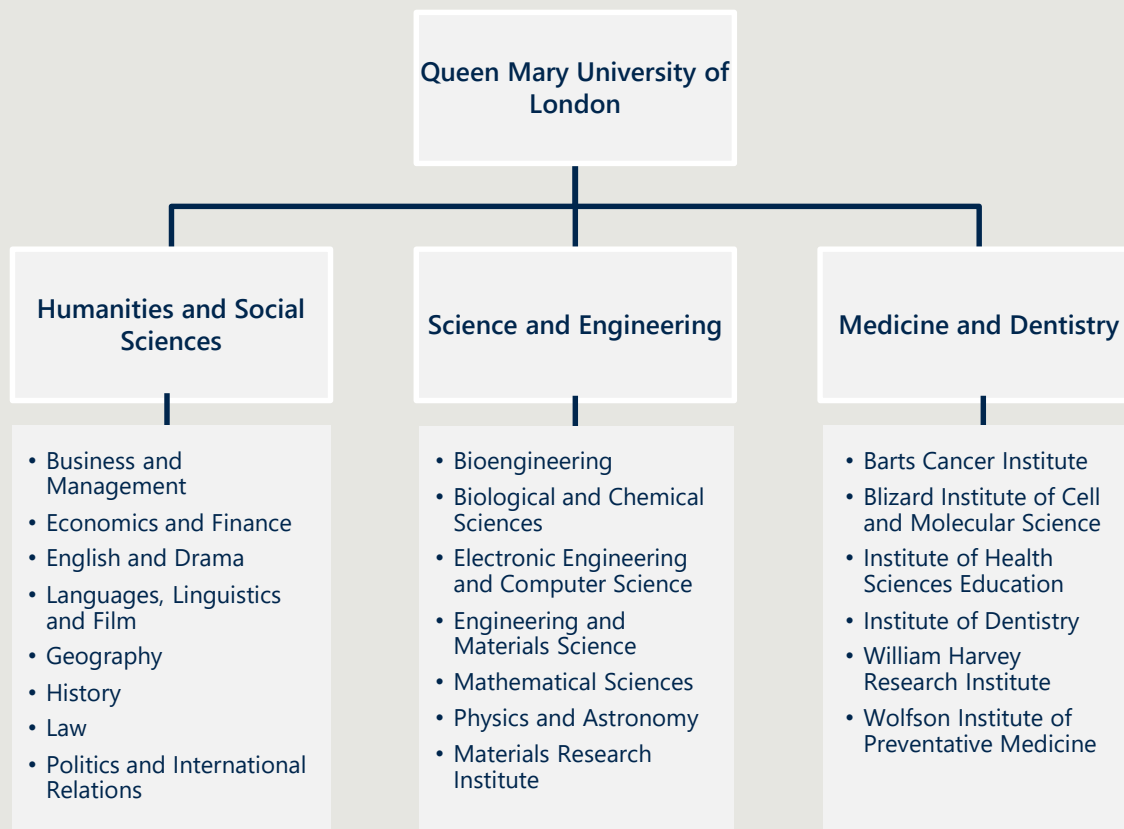
Revenue and research income 2016-2019 (\$CAD)



Research performance



THREE FACULTIES



CASE STUDY 4: University of Exeter

The University of Exeter has implemented a College Operations Directorate to support a unified service of administrative staff to faculty across all colleges/faculties, disciplines and research groups.

INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

Jurisdiction: United Kingdom
Student number: 22,391 EFTSL
Income: ~ 763 million (\$CAD)
THE World University Ranking: 146
QS Ranking: 162
Research Performance (THE 2020):

- Research: 38.9
- Citations: 92.4

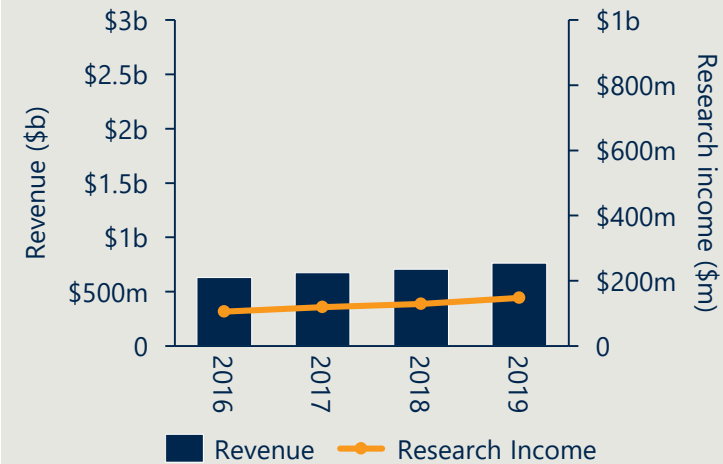
The University of Exeter is a research-intensive university in South West England, with four campuses – two in Exeter (primary location) and two in Cornwall. The University is the principal institution in Exeter.

The University supports its six Colleges (faculties) and Cornwall campuses through embedded Directors of College Operations who report to the Chief College Operations Officer, but also sit on College Executive Teams.

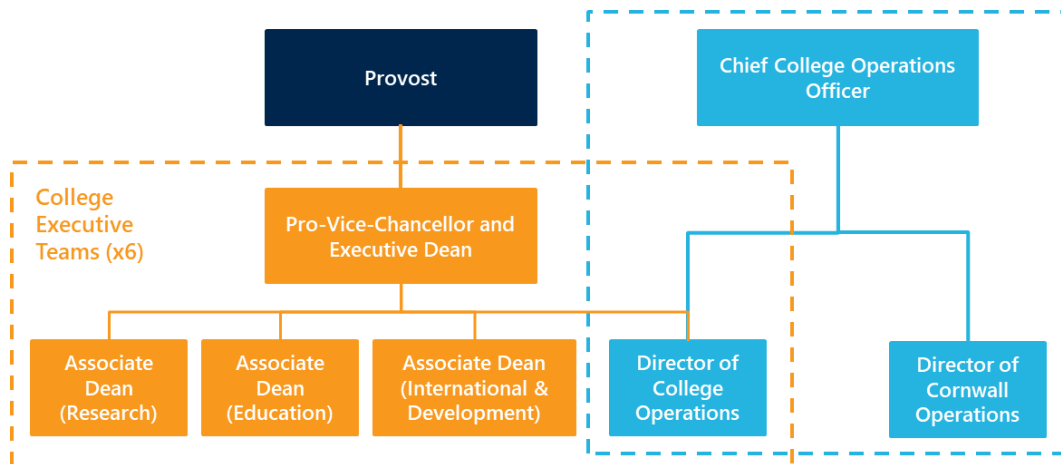
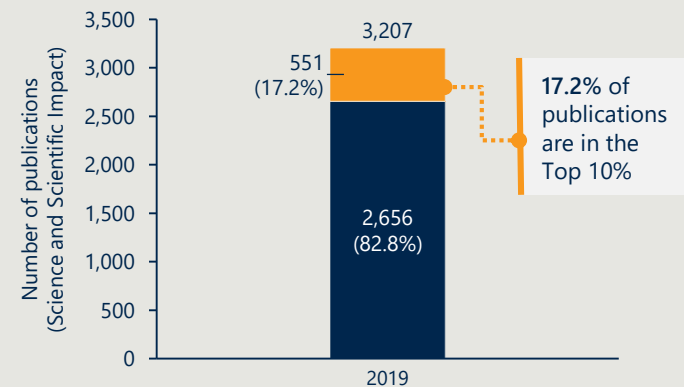
The broader Executive team is made up of 18 members including six PVC / Executive Deans for Colleges, and the PVC Cornwall. Each College has a PVC / Executive Dean, reporting to the Provost, with a consistent College Executive Team structure.

The **College Operations Directorate** combines a unified service of administrative staff providing direct support across the University. Directors of College/Campus Operations are members of College Executive Teams.

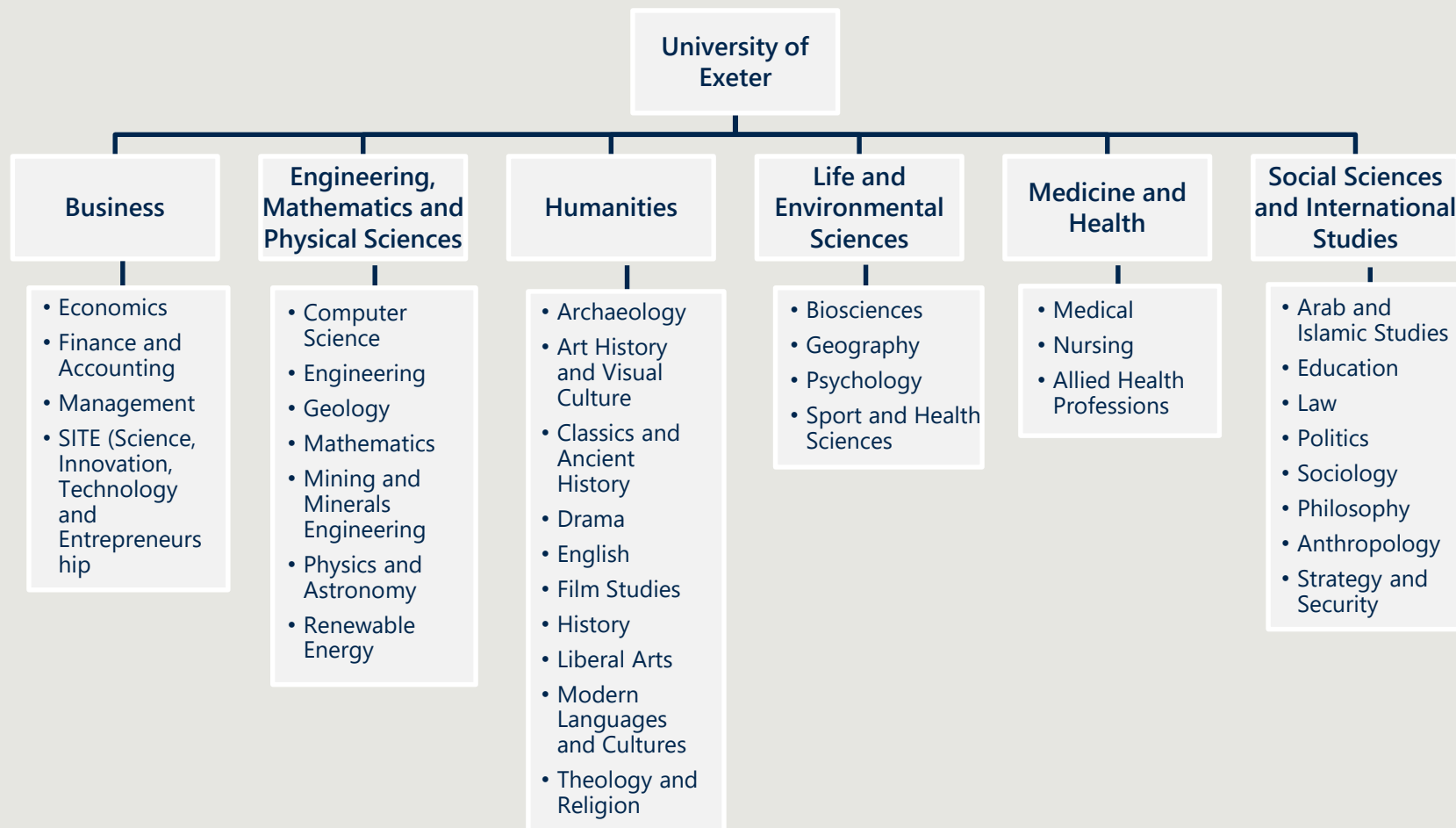
Revenue and research income 2016-2019 (\$CAD)



Research performance



SIX COLLEGES (FACULTIES)



CASE STUDY 5: University of Sydney

In 2016, the University of Sydney restructured its academic faculties from 16 faculties to 5 (plus 3 University schools) whilst also undergoing a restructure of their professional services operating model.

University of Sydney is a high-performing, comprehensive research-intensive university. Previously operating a large number of faculties supported by a complex professional services model, the University reorganized its academic structure into five faculties and three University Schools.

The University of Sydney did not set a target per se, but targeted a range of six to ten faculties. The key arguments for the restructure being:

- Equity of voice in governance fora, given that some faculties were smaller than some large schools, but had the same vote as larger faculties.
- Overlap and duplication of curriculum (e.g. 9 basic cell biology modules).
- Substantial overlap in research (e.g. 55% of Education research was done outside the Faculty of Education, and 29% of Nursing research was done outside the Faculty of Nursing).
- Only three faculties emerged as not overlapping: law, architecture and music, and so they became "University schools" – i.e. not a faculty and hence not a vote in governance fora, but not part of another faculty. That they did not merge these faculties but made them schools demonstrated the integrity of the process.
- Administrative duplication and inefficiency was a key driver.
- The most compelling arguments were academically based (research and teaching) supported by the administrative efficiency arguments.

Since then, the university has continued to experience success in maintaining its international research reputation, growing student numbers and improving research and financial performance.

INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

Jurisdiction: Australia

Student number: 46,145 EFTSL

Income: ~ \$2.3 billion (\$CAD)

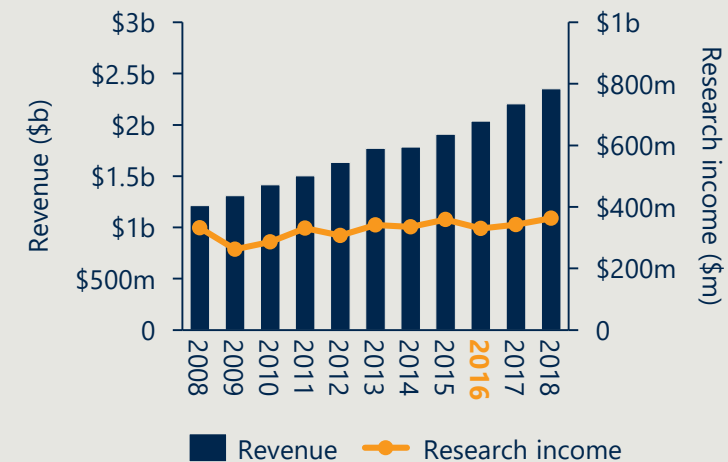
THE World University Ranking: 60

QS Ranking: 42

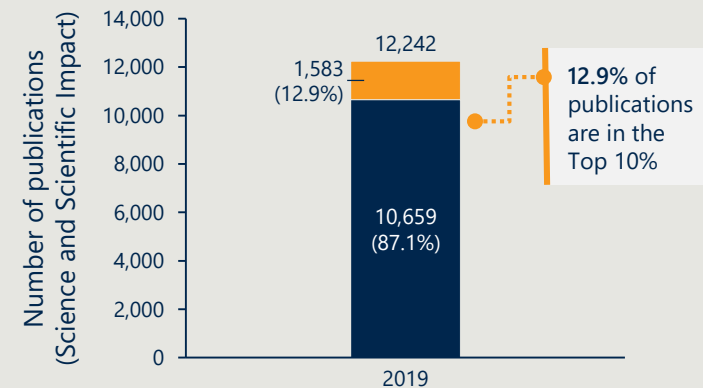
THE Research (2020):

- Research: 61.5
- Citations: 90.7

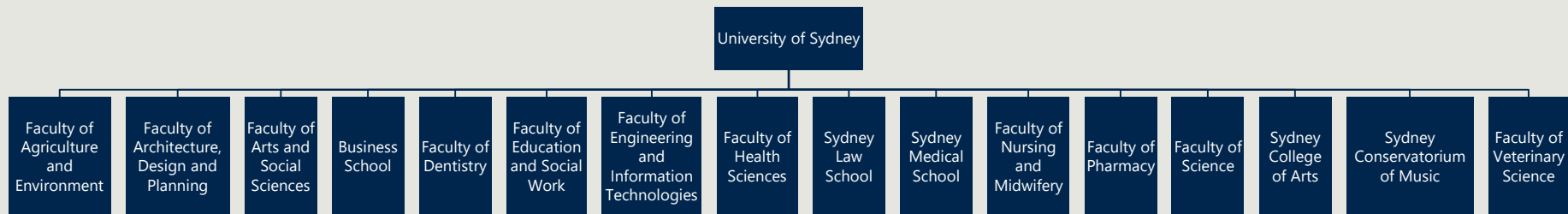
Revenue and research income 2008-2018 (\$CAD)



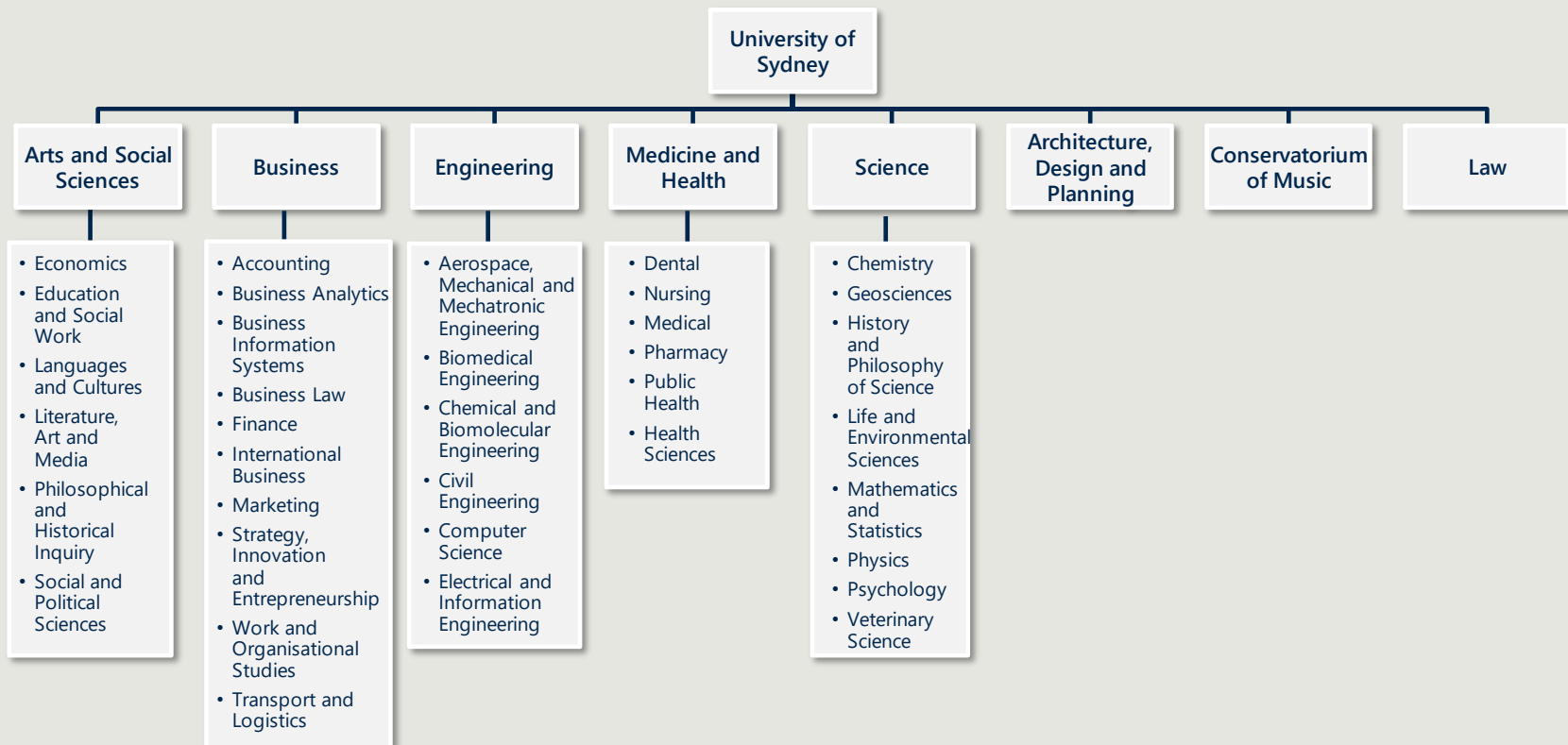
Research performance



PREVIOUS: SIXTEEN FACULTIES OR EQUIVALENT



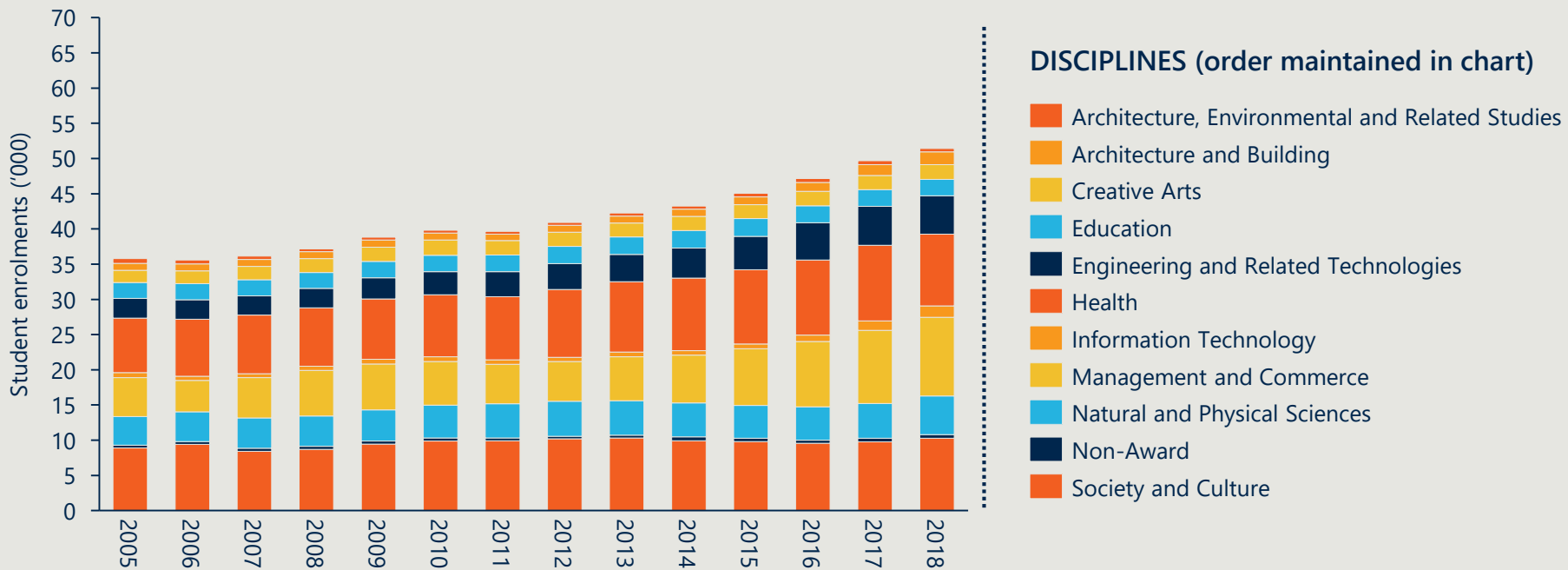
CURRENT: FIVE FACULTIES AND THREE SCHOOLS



University of Sydney has maintained discipline diversity despite reducing its number of faculties.

In 2016-17, the University of Sydney went through a significant transformation program to reduce its number of faculties. Since then, it has continued to offer programs across the same number of fields and increased student numbers.

University of Sydney student enrolments by discipline ('000) from 2005-2018



CASE STUDY 6: University of Melbourne

In 2008, the University of Melbourne adopted a new model for degree programs with a shift away from traditional, specialized undergraduate degrees to generalized three-year undergraduate degrees and specialized postgraduate programs.

In 2008, the University of Melbourne moved to the 'Melbourne Model', which saw it adopt a curriculum (based on the Bologna model) of a three-year generalised undergraduate program followed by a two-year specialised postgraduate program that was unique in Australia.

The change saw it move from offering 96 undergraduate programs to only 6 generalist undergraduate degrees (Arts, Science, Environment, Biomedicine, Engineering, and Commerce, plus a Bachelor of Music). Many previously offered undergraduate professional programs such as Law, Medicine, Education and Engineering became post-graduate only. This change was not static, with further programs added subsequently including Agriculture, Design and Fine Arts.

The accompanying faculty restructure saw the university move to ten faculties, with some small changes since. This also aimed to encourage increased research collaboration and the capacity to attract larger research grants. The University experienced substantial improvement in research performance in the subsequent years, moving, for example, from 90 to 40 in the Academic Ranking of World Universities (Shanghai Ranking) to become the No.1 ranked university in Australia.

Significant investment was needed for the shift: including drawing down ~\$80M (in 2008 dollars) to fund curriculum writing, transition work, an advertising campaign, new student services and student advice centres.

In 2015, it also undertook a major administrative restructure – moving to a shared service model and reducing administrative staff by 500 FTE. The intended savings were to be fully redistributed into research – achieving its target of an additional ~\$180M directly reinvested into research by 2017 through the restructure.

INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

Jurisdiction: Australia

Student number: 46,647 EFTSL

Income: ~ \$2.4 billion (\$CAD)

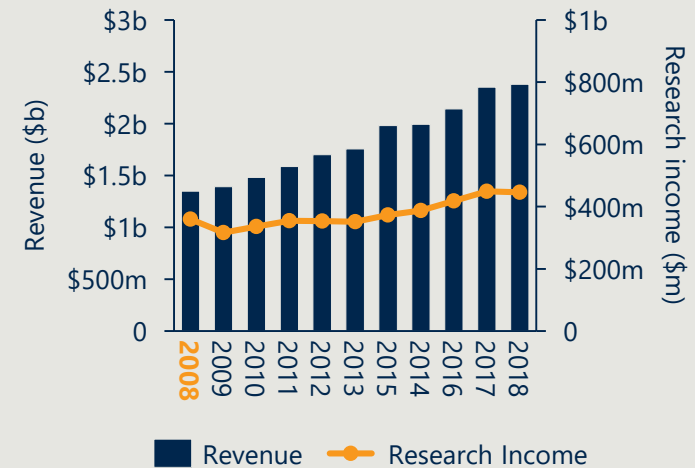
THE World University Ranking: 32

QS Ranking: 38

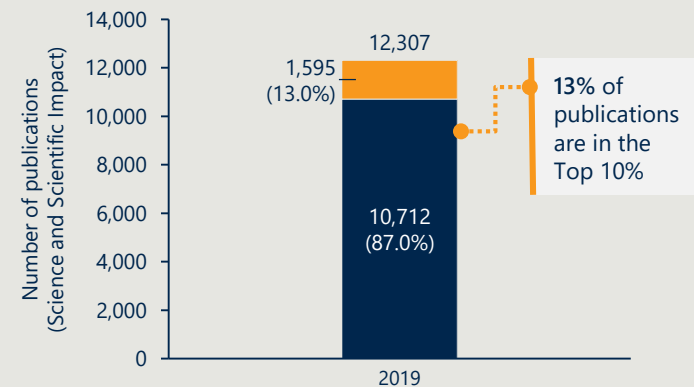
Research Performance (THE 2020):

- Research: 74.1
- Citations: 89.8

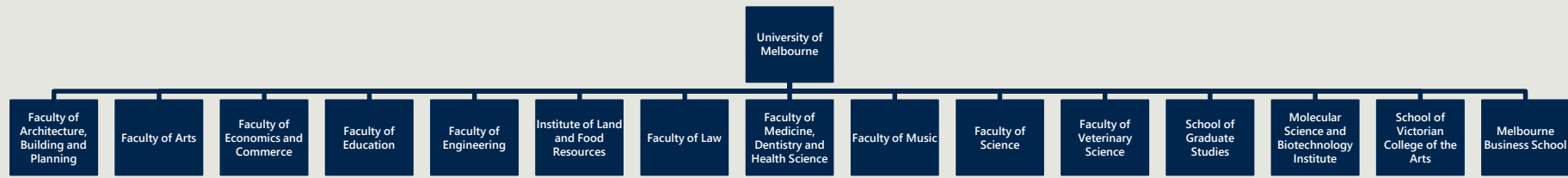
Revenue and research income 2008-2018 (\$CAD)



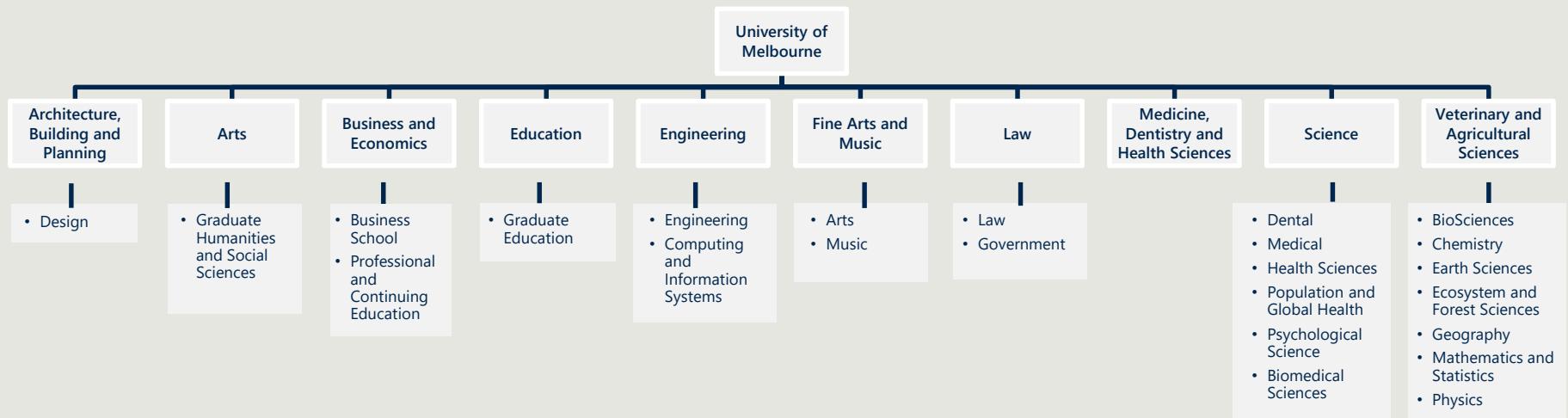
Research performance



PREVIOUS: 15 FACULTIES OR EQUIVALENT



CURRENT: SIX FACULTIES AND FOUR GRADUATE SCHOOLS



CASE STUDY 7: Monash University

Monash University has transformed faculty strength, curriculum and professional services, while maintaining the same overall faculty structure. These transformations over the past 8 years have resulted in significantly improved performance.

Monash University is the largest university in Australia and a member of the Group of Eight (Australia's eight leading research universities). Monash has maintained a consistent academic structure of 10 faculties in recent years, with minor changes at a department level.

Monash led a major faculty strengthening effort over several years: developing sharp performance metrics, investing in early and mid-career researchers and exiting under-performing faculty.

Program architecture transformation reduced 140 undergraduate programs to 40, and reduced modules by 400. This simplified program portfolio reduced costs by \$25m CAD, with two-third of savings coming from program architecture changes and efficiencies with the remaining third coming from module rationalization. Following these changes, Monash enjoyed student growth of 15,000 students, student revenue growth of >\$350m CAD p.a. and a rankings increase of 60 places in the THE rankings.

Monash simplified, centralized and streamlined its professional services over a 5-year period, realizing savings of around 25% of its professional services. It has moved from middle-of-the-pack performance in the UniForum to world-leading in efficiency and satisfaction.

INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

Jurisdiction: Australia

Student number: 56,144 EFTSL

Income: ~ \$2.3 billion (\$CAD)

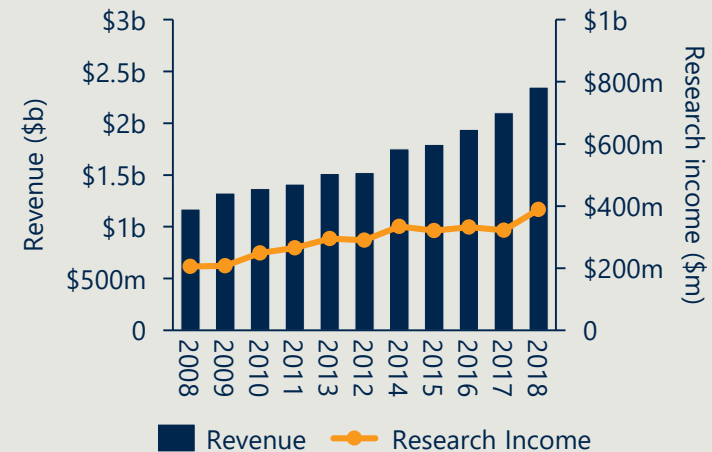
THE World University Ranking: 75

QS Ranking: 58

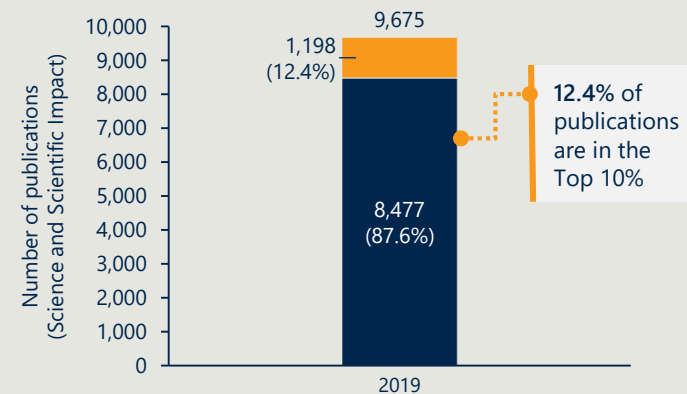
Research Performance (THE 2020):

- Research: 56.6
- Citations: 83.8

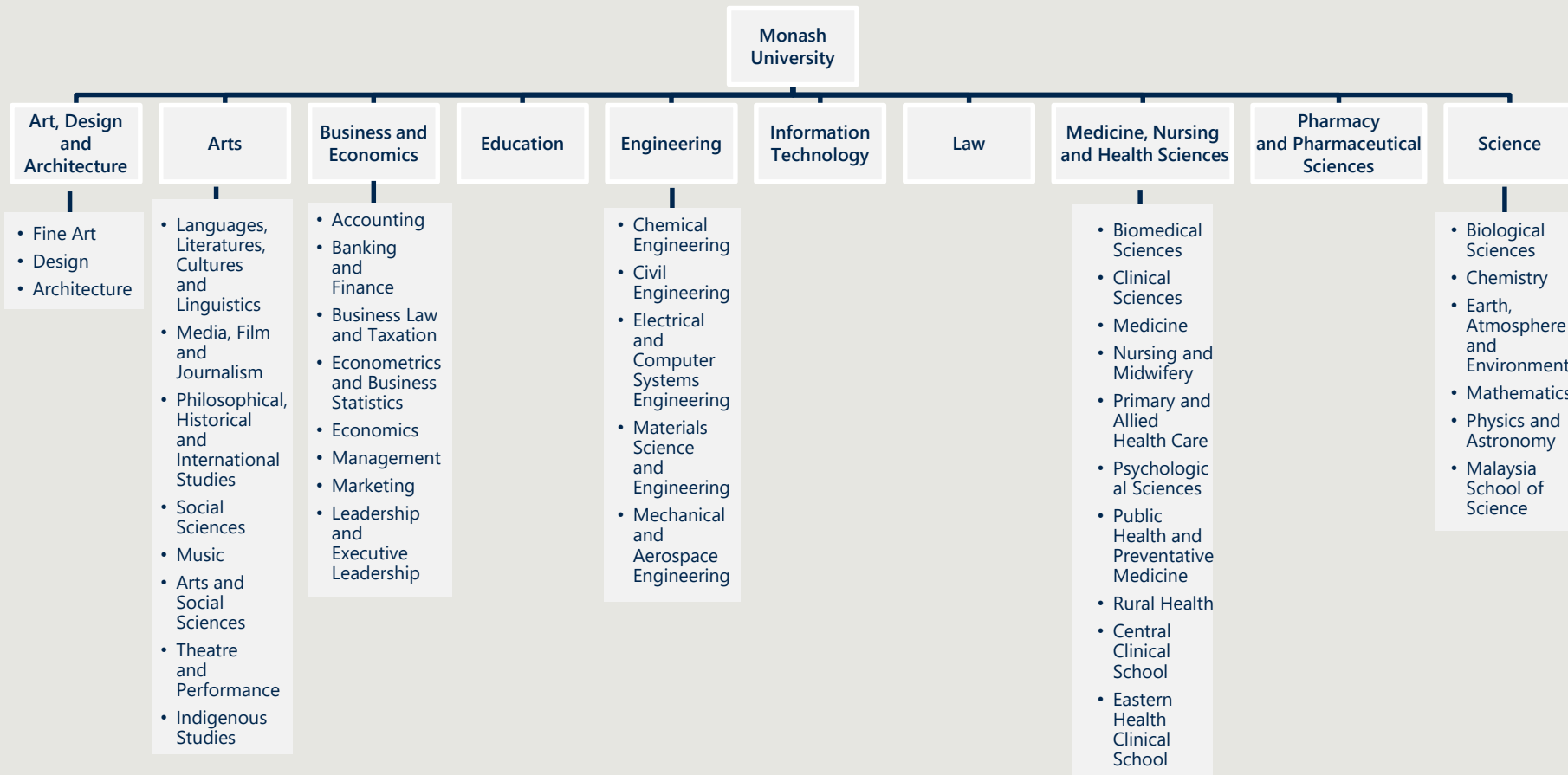
Revenue and research income 2008-2018 (\$CAD)



Research performance



TEN FACULTIES MAINTAINED THROUGH TRANSFORMATION



CASE STUDY 8: University of Queensland

The University of Queensland has six faculties to support both research and teaching activities, specializing in business administration, veterinary medicine and life sciences.

The University of Queensland (UQ) is a member of Australia's Group of Eight research-intensive universities and is ranked third in Australia based on the average of major global league tables. UQ has had a strong, positive trajectory over the last ten years – with steady increases in global rankings, student numbers and revenue.

In 2013, the UQ undertook a major faculty restructure, establishing three new faculties that aimed to strengthen research and teaching quality and create an effective structure for external partners to work with the University.

The larger scale of the new faculties intended to open up opportunities for staff, research and engagement and increase collaboration. Key benefits included:

- Realizing sufficient 'scale' in its faculties, including capacity and headroom to build academic critical mass and leverage new opportunities;
- Establishing a Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences to enable benefits of disciplinary coherence, underpinned by strong teaching and research programs and collaborations;
- Establishing a Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences to promote a coherent focus on health and well-being, underpinned by a clear integrative theme related to preventative health and behaviour change;
- Establishing the Faculty of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences to position the University to compete effectively in the emerging 'translational environment' by co-locating schools and institutes from the pre-clinical sciences through to hospital-based research institutes and population and global health programs.

INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

Jurisdiction: Australia

Student number: 40,658 EFTSL

Income: ~ \$1.8 billion (\$CAD)

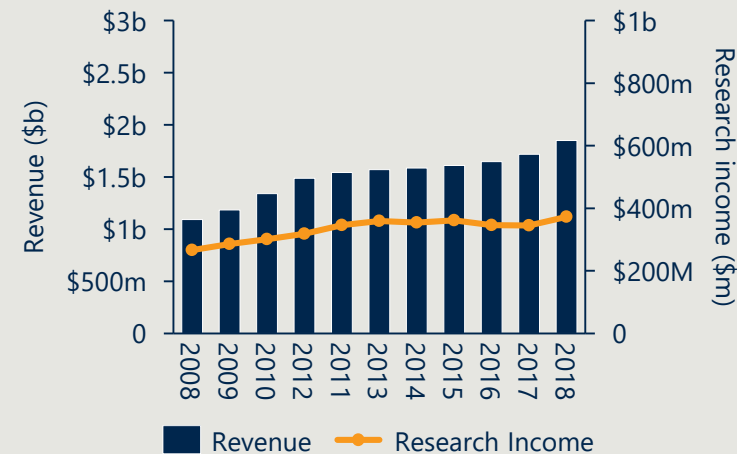
THE World University Ranking: 66

QS Ranking: 47

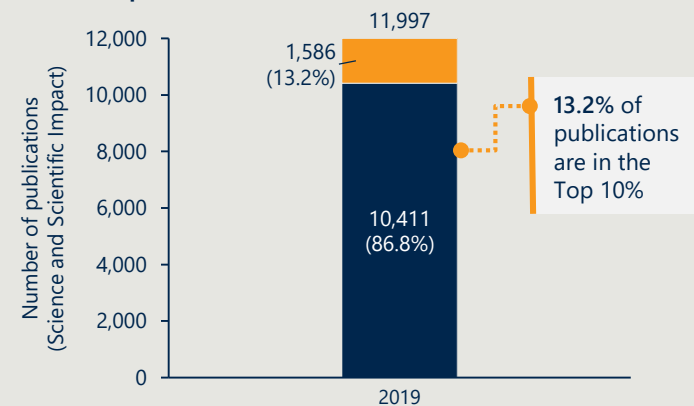
Research Performance (THE 2020):

- Research: 58.7
- Citations: 86.8

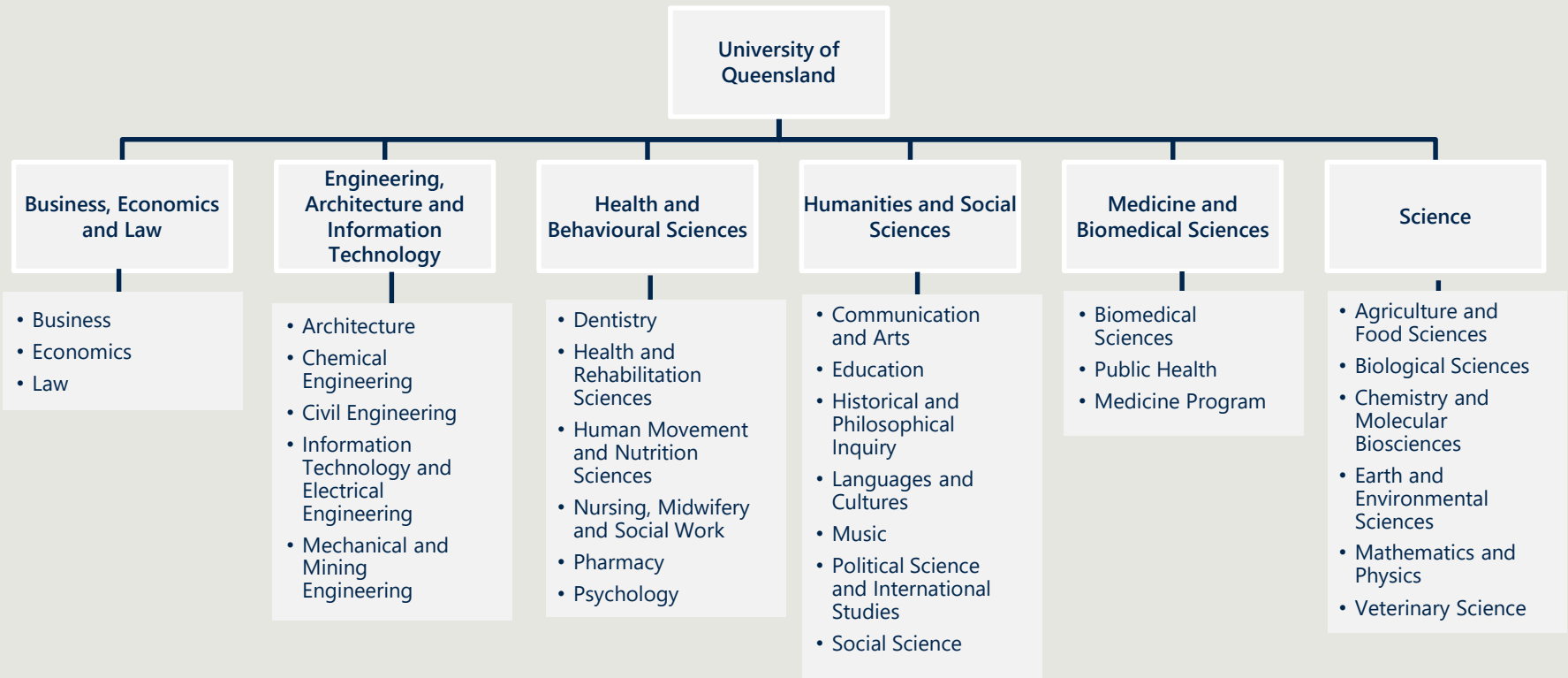
Revenue and research income 2008-2018 (\$CAD)



Research performance



SIX FACULTIES



3. FURTHER COMPARATOR STRUCTURES

Further comparator structures

This section outlines the faculty structures for the following universities:

CANADA:

- UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA – VANCOUVER CAMPUS
- UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
- UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
- UNIVERISTY OF ALBERTA

UNITED STATES:

- UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

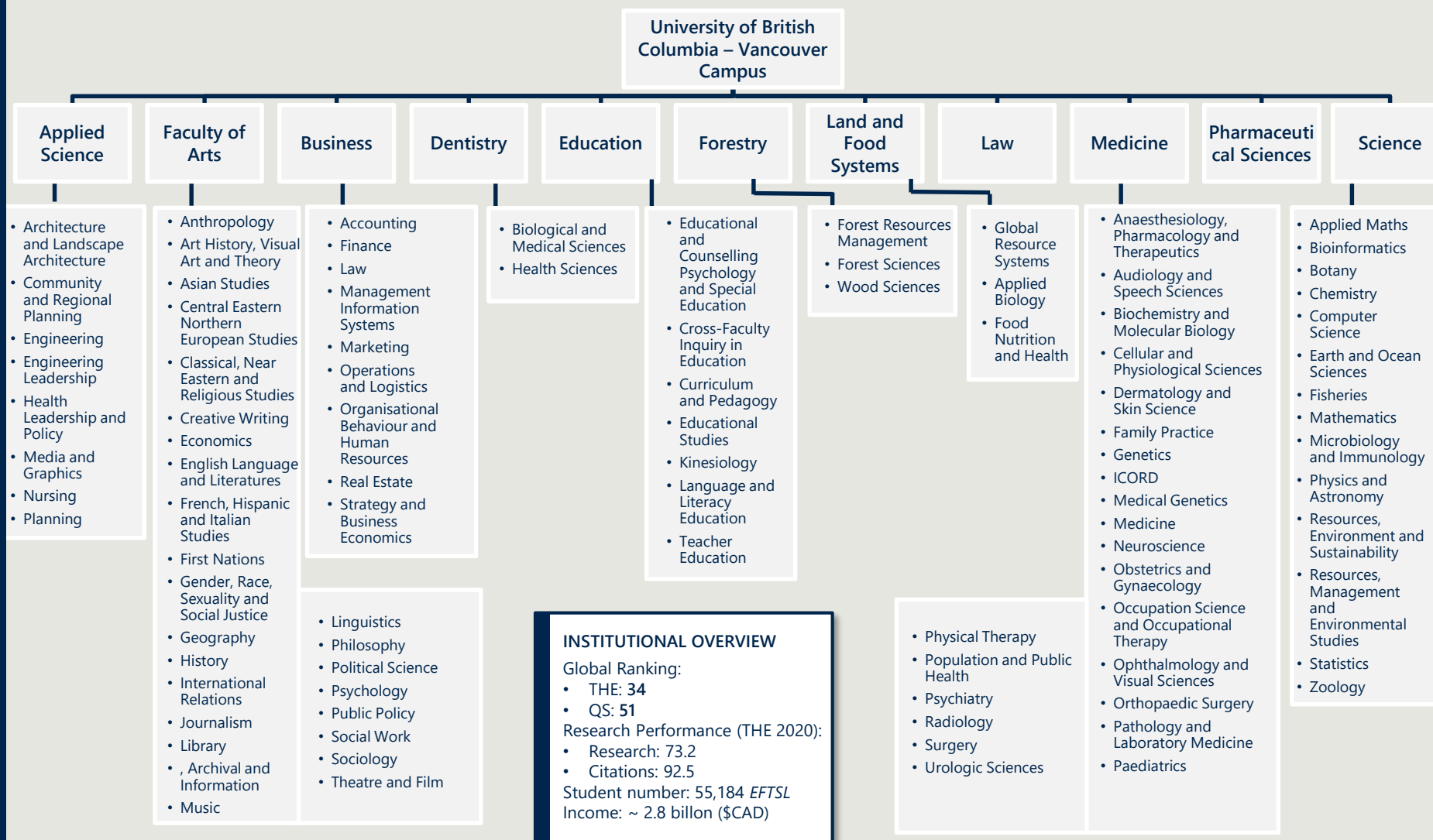
UK:

- KING'S COLLEGE LONDON

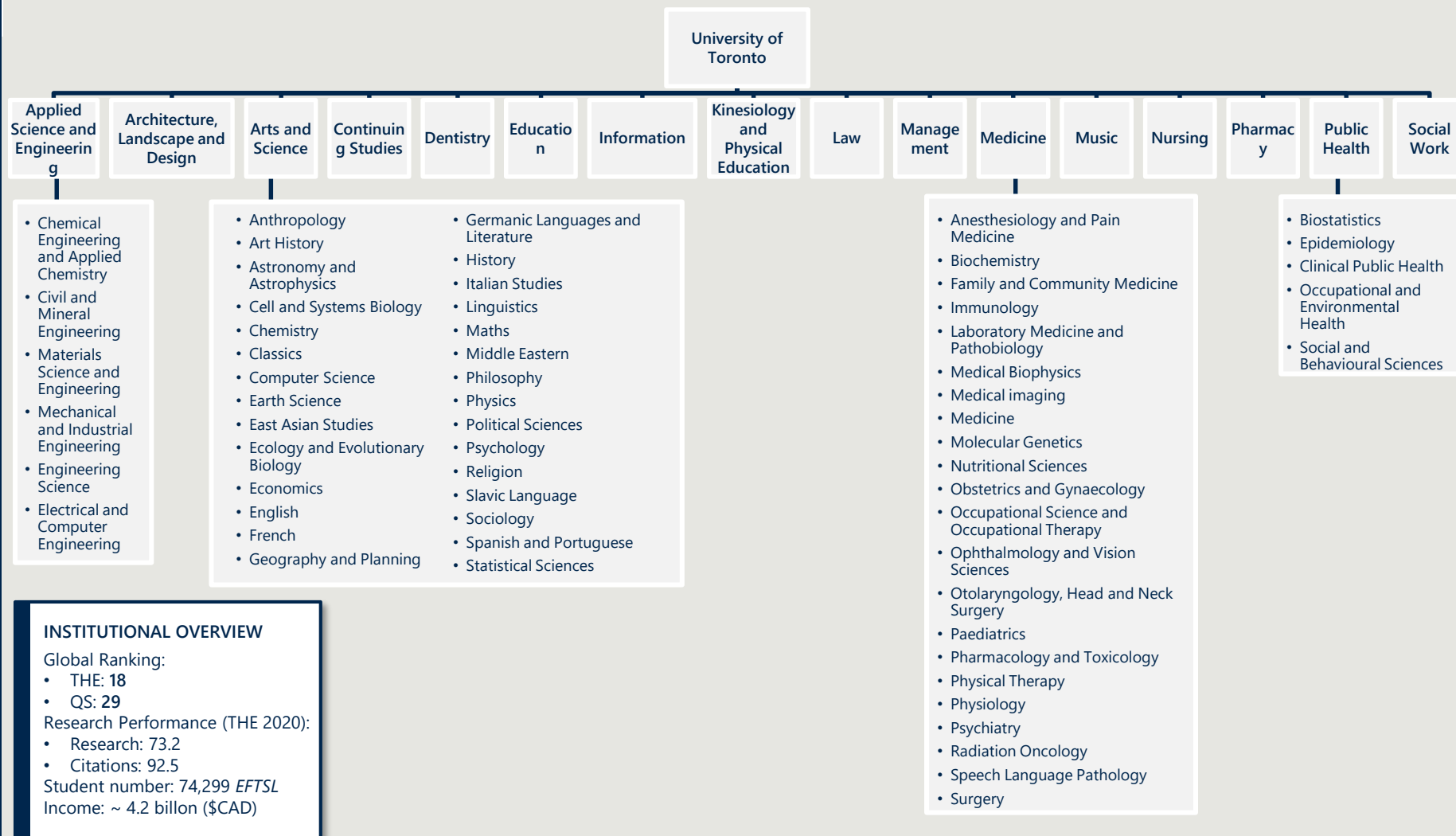
AUSTRALIA:

- UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA
- UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA
- UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA – VANCOUVER CAMPUS



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

Global Ranking:

- THE: 18
- QS: 29

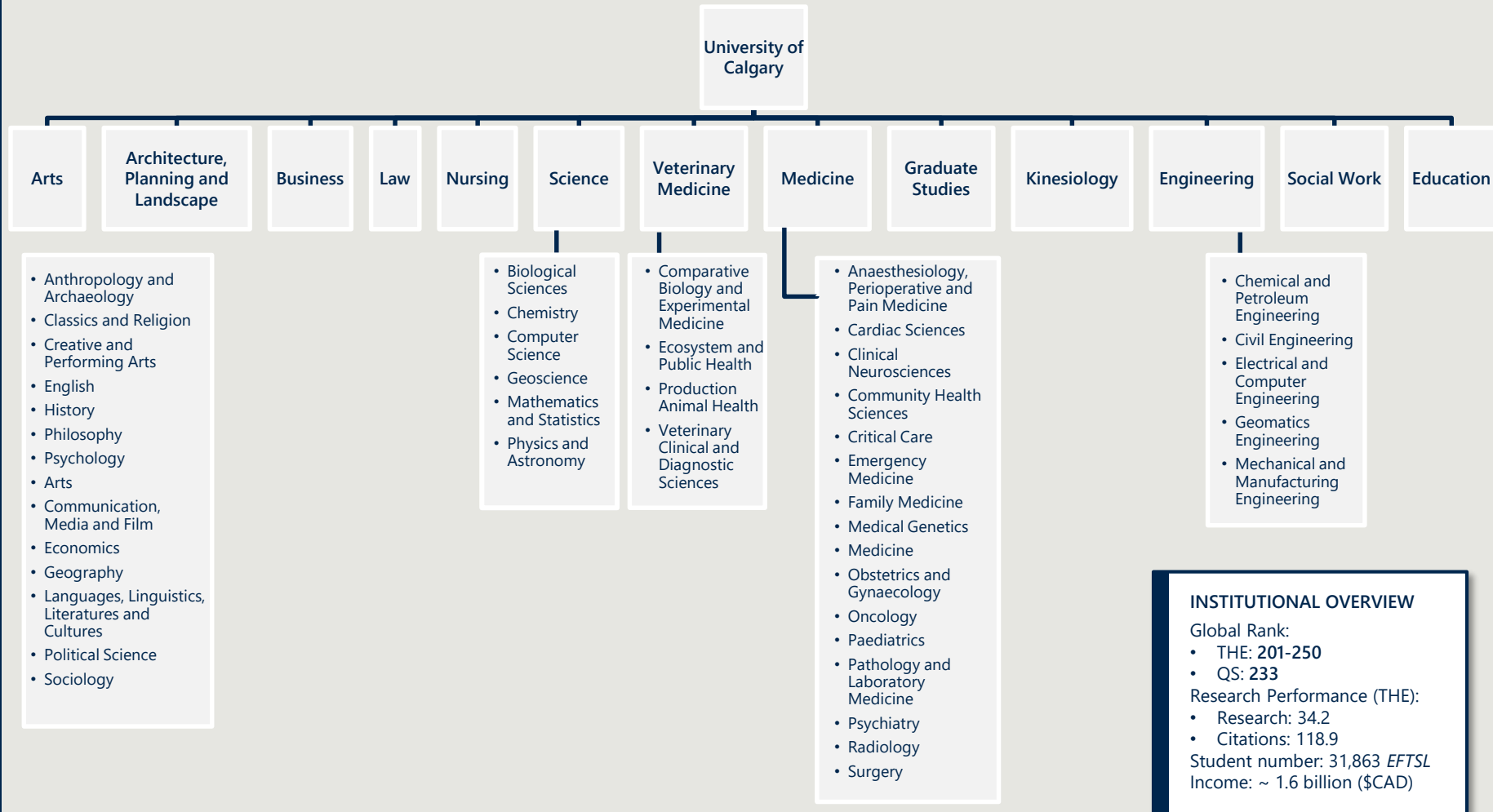
Research Performance (THE 2020):

- Research: 73.2
- Citations: 92.5

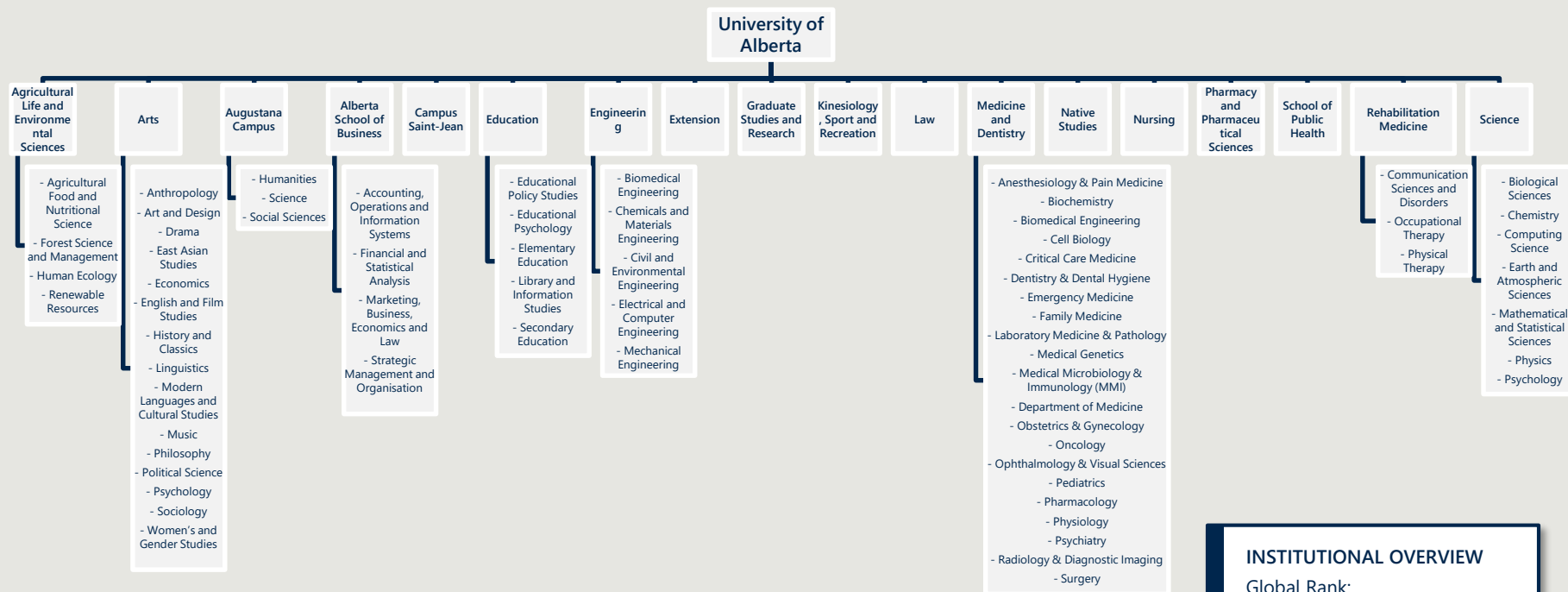
Student number: 74,299 *EFTSL*

Income: ~ 4.2 billion (\$CAD)

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA



INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

Global Rank:

- THE: 136
- QS: 113

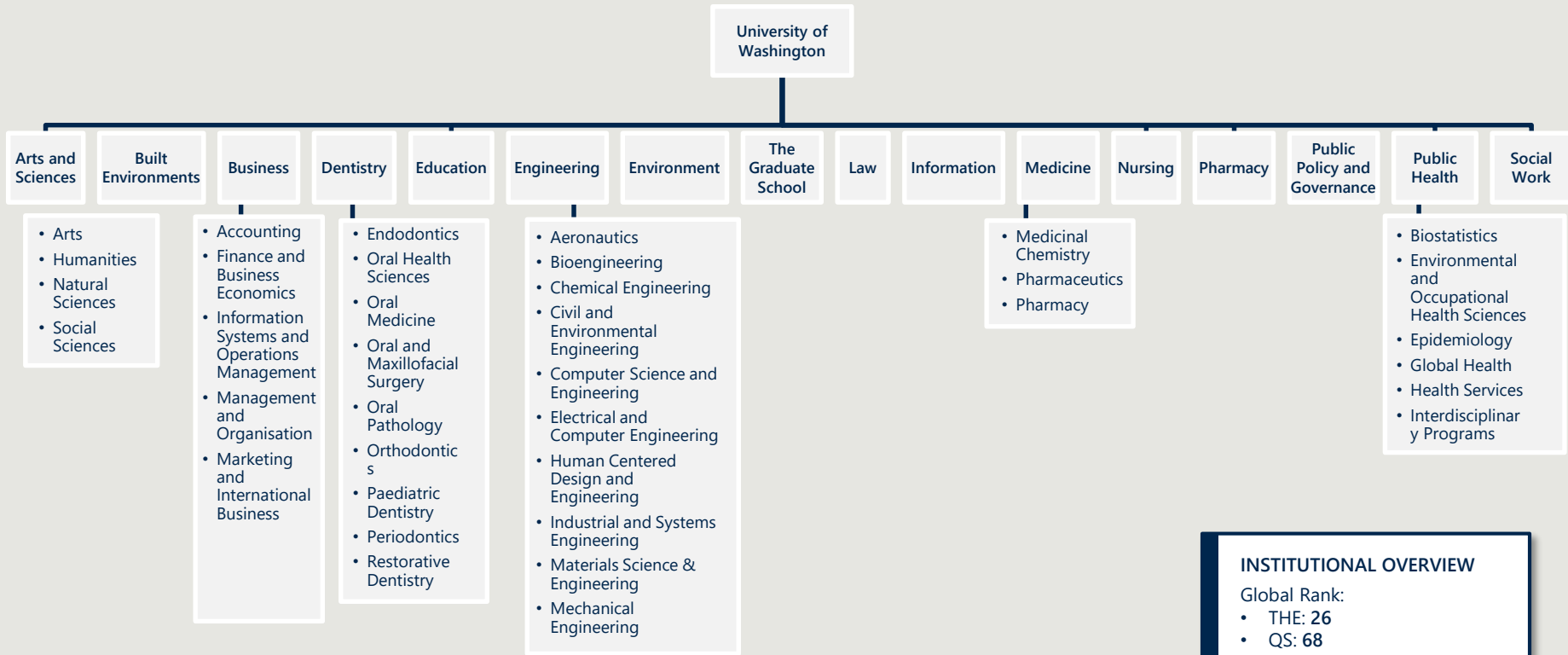
Research Performance (THE):

- Research: 48.8
- Citations: 70.3

Student number: 32,863 *EFTSL*

Income: ~ 2 billion (\$CAD)

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON



INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

Global Rank:

- THE: 26
- QS: 68

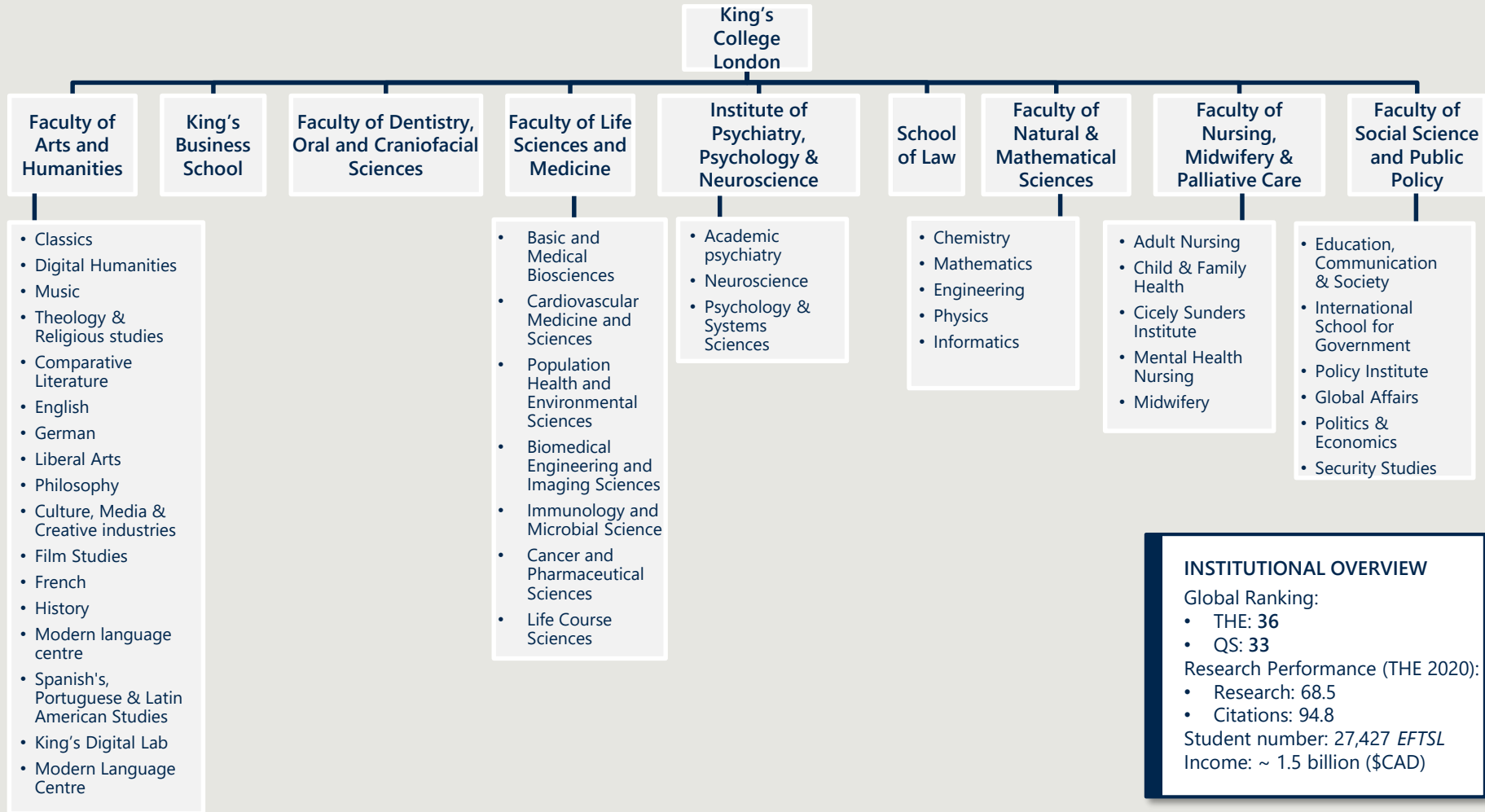
Research Performance (THE):

- Research: 82.2
- Citations: 98.6

Student number: 42,062 *EFTSL*

Income: ~ 6.7 billion (\$CAD)

KING'S COLLEGE LONDON



INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

Global Ranking:

- THE: 36
- QS: 33

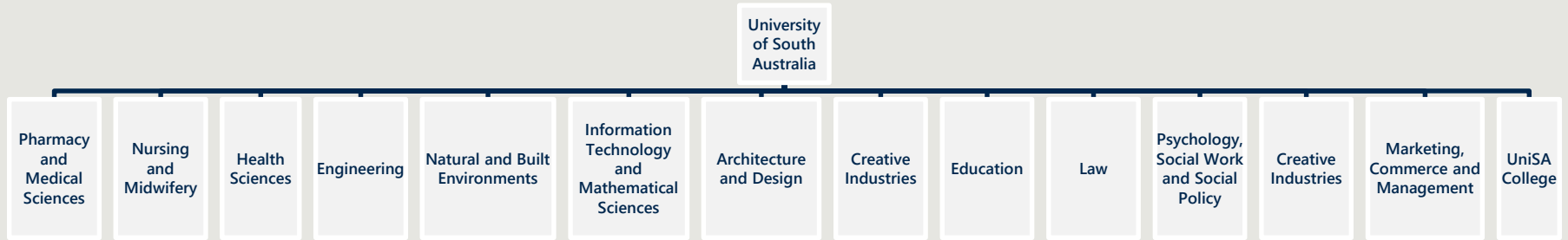
Research Performance (THE 2020):

- Research: 68.5
- Citations: 94.8

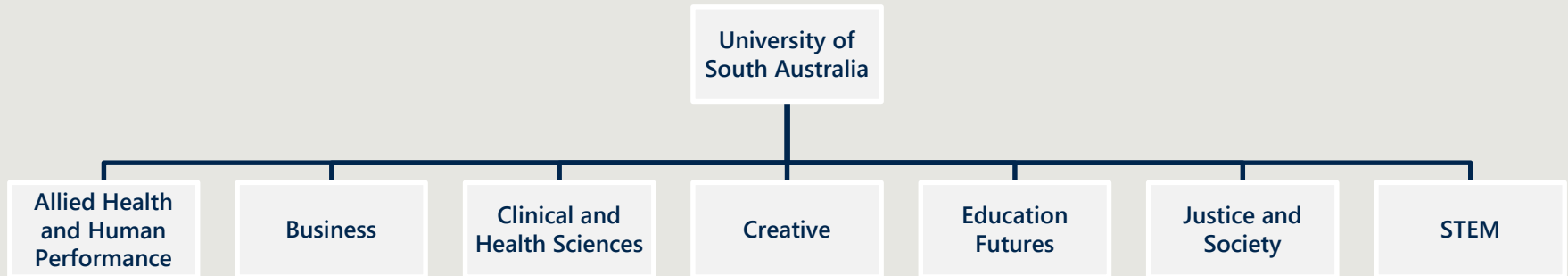
Student number: 27,427 *EFTSL*

Income: ~ 1.5 billion (\$CAD)

PREVIOUS STRUCTURE: UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA



CURRENT STRUCTURE: UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA



INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

Global Ranking:

- THE: 251-300
- QS: 274

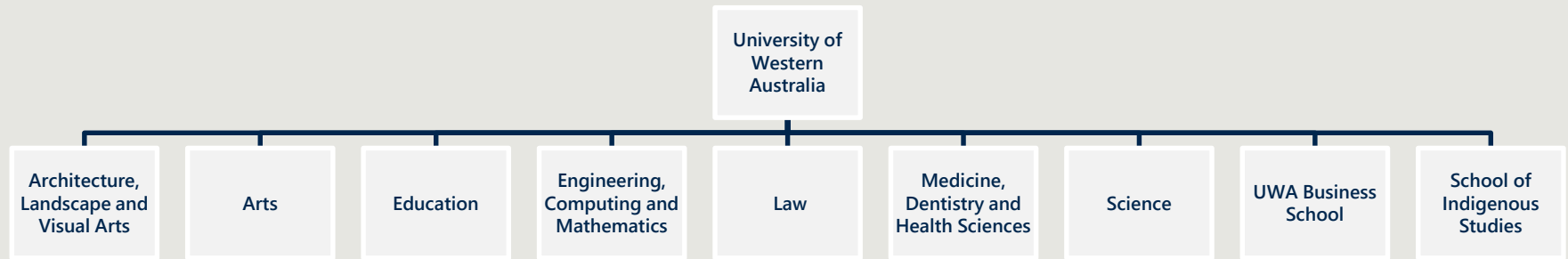
Research Performance (THE 2020):

- Research: 39.4
- Citations: 65.8

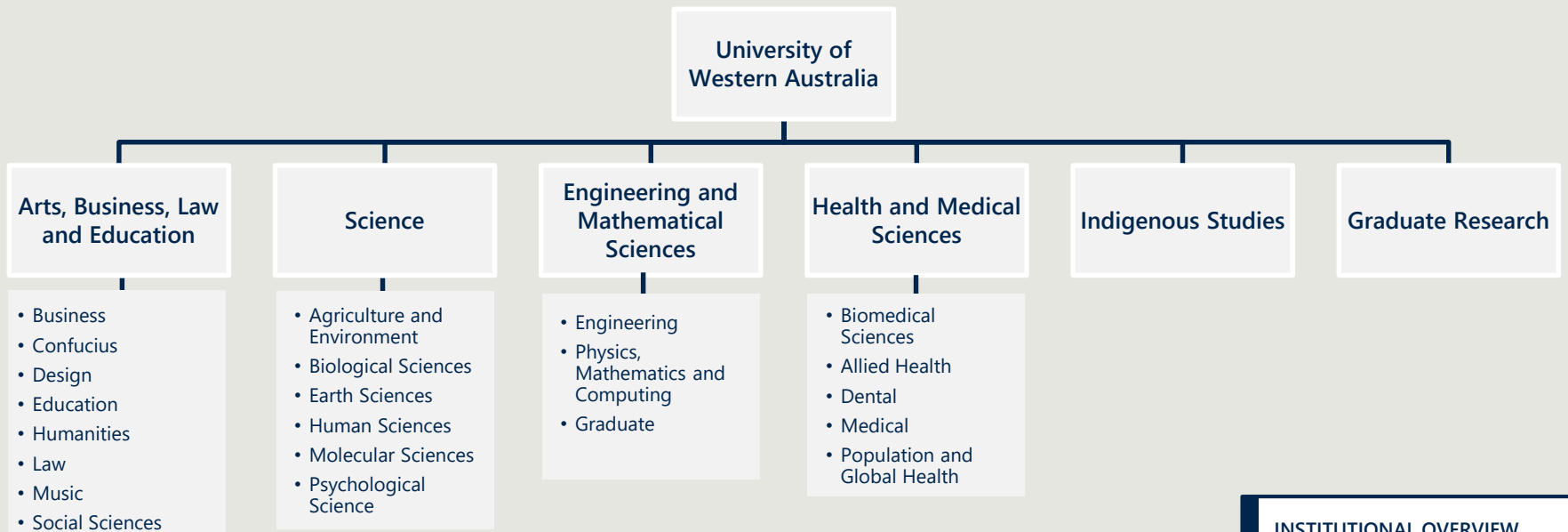
Student number: 18,386 *EFTSL*

Income: ~ 592 million (\$CAD)

PREVIOUS STRUCTURE: UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA



CURRENT STRUCTURE: UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA



INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

Global Ranking:

- THE: 131
- QS: 86

Research Performance (THE 2020):

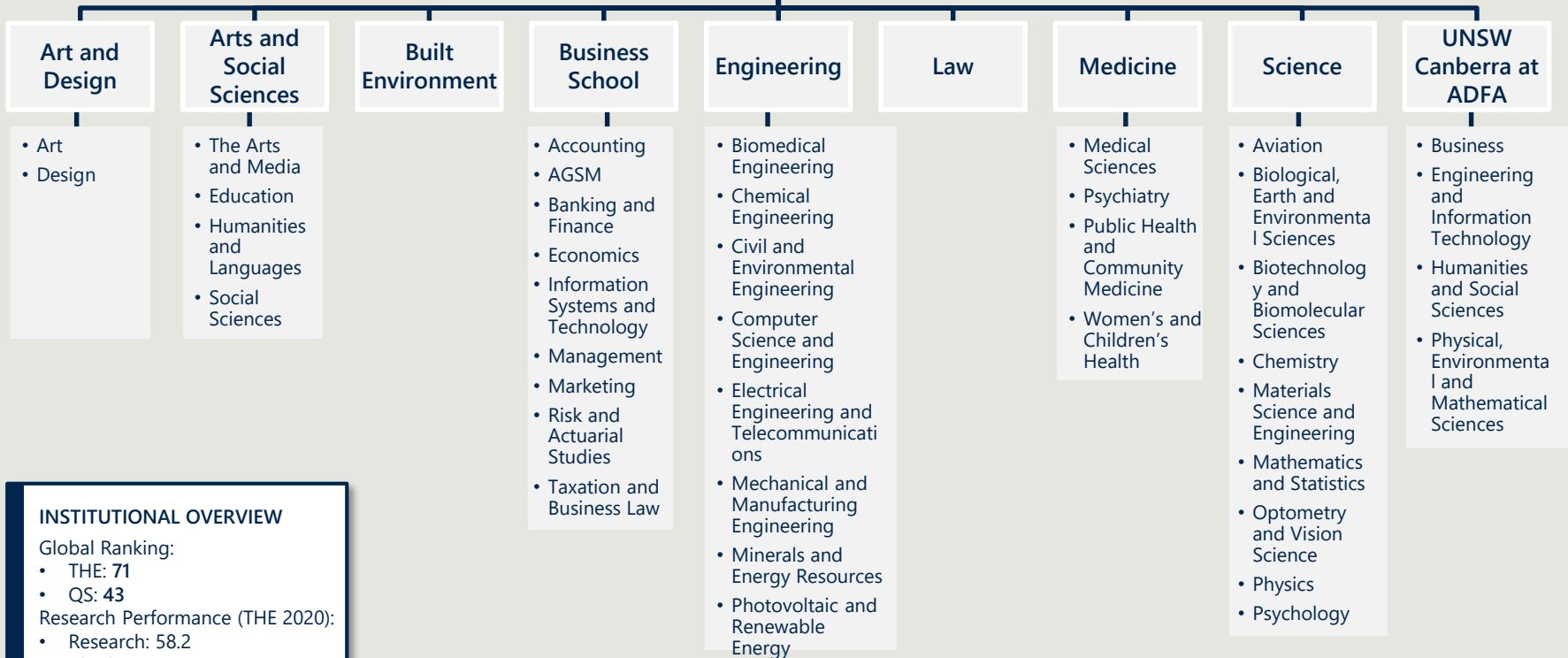
- Research: 43.9
- Citations: 91

Student number: 18,460 *EFTSL*

Income: ~ 844 million (\$CAD)

UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

University of New South Wales



INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

Global Ranking:

- THE: 71
- QS: 43

Research Performance (THE 2020):

- Research: 58.2
- Citations: 82.9

Student number: 43,275 EFTSL

Income: ~ 2 billion (\$CAD)

ADDENDUM: Response to Academic Working Group Questions

Responses to questions following report submission

1. How have research institutes been considered or leveraged in the restructuring examples that Nous has provided?

Research institutes have generally been included in the examples provided. Indeed, as universities have reviewed their research performance (typically led by the Provost's office), research institutes and research centres are regularly the first structures examined. Typically, the universities' intent has been to better align institutes and centres with:

- major cross-cutting themes (e.g. climate change, pandemics etc.)
- unique world leading capability within the university; and
- strategic direction.

With Australian universities examining how they respond to substantial reductions in funding due to international student reductions, a major focus is again on intensely reviewing institutes and centres.

2. Metrics on student experience - how the educational experience improved.

In general, metrics relating to the student experience are not particularly compelling when trying to measure the effectiveness of academic restructure. They do not consider the effect of faculty restructure alone – at least in our case studies. These metrics are often conflated with other associated changes, for example when universities have embarked on curriculum restructuring / redesign (or any number of other initiatives) at the same time.

In our experience, changes in student and educational experiences are more commonly linked to program portfolio redesign, and not specifically faculty restructuring. We can say that we've been told by university leaders that fewer programs improved cohort experiences, because students are more likely to spend far more time with a group of peers with whom they develop deeper relationships and therefore become co-operative learners. Associated administrative improvements, in particular consistency of policy and service between different academic divisions of the university, likely also improve the student experience. Equally, for universities we have worked with, fewer programs led to improved margins, which were invested in better education materials, although typically savings in teaching were reinvested in research.

The impact of academic restructure on the student experience, if any, is likely to be temporary. Students may not be as attached to the academic structures as expected. It is worth keeping a close eye on recruitment and perceptions of prospective students, and the University should be cautious of making changes that may result in prospective students perceiving a UofA degree as less valuable – but this is worth testing with prospective students and other stakeholders (e.g. industry) rather than making assumptions on this. It is likely to be more controversial to cut specific programs with strong attachments, or certain disciplines with particularly strong ties and sense of identity within the unit (e.g. music or drama schools with long histories).

Responses to questions following report submission

3. Cautionary tales and the big picture truths, general lessons, success factors.

Major restructures require watertight strategic logic, facts and clear intention

In our experience, any successful new faculty structure must be based on a compelling strategic logic. This logic must be tested and refined such that it is watertight. This is particularly important to get past the incredible inertia of the status quo in many universities. Typically, there is little logic for the existing organization of the university. It is generally historic. In this case, facts – linked to the current state, university vision and desired outcomes – are invaluable. Universities should be cautious to restructure without this logic.

There will likely be substantial opposition, which is not always a strong argument to stop

Major faculty restructures are not common because they typically provoke substantial resistance, independent of whether they have a good strategic and organizational logic. Universities are typically very cautious throughout the process and some have initiated the process then not proceeded, while those who have completed the process have been successful. For those who have had success, this has come through wide consultation, watertight logic and a very clear message (and understanding) on the intention of the restructure.

Universities can successfully transform, even with opposition

The University of Sydney had a compelling logic for their restructure, with researchers working substantially across existing faculty disciplines in the previous structure. The new faculty structure ensured much greater alignment between researchers within faculties. As our case studies showed however, University of Sydney had three schools that did not fit into any faculty (Law, Architecture and Conservatory of Music) and thus became “University Schools” – essentially exceptions that proved the rule.

In our experience, those universities that undertook academic restructure subsequently experienced rapid growth in students and improvements in research as measured by rankings (pre-COVID), although causation is very difficult to establish. Typically, there are numerous initiatives and factors at play that might have influenced this. Faculty restructures have often facilitated and led to program portfolio restructures, and vice versa.

Responses to questions following report submission

4. Faculty evaluation structures - how did these change in case studies?

The need to change faculty evaluation structures in the case studies we provided is not something that was raised. This is in part because most universities we have worked with undertake a standardized approach across all faculties to evaluation.

6. What were the impacts of these restructuring examples on teaching?

The impact of academic restructuring on teaching has, in our experience, tended to depend on the institutions in question and whether the restructure also included a restructure of the program portfolio. Restructure often made it possible to review programs, the quality of teaching and the level of investment allocated to this.

7. On the program restructuring, do we have data on how those program changes affected applications and enrolment?

The impact of program restructuring on applications and enrolment is difficult to analyze with confidence to link cause and effect, due to many other causes at play (as mentioned in response to question two). We have seen changes in application rates and enrolments increase, and while cannot precisely draw causation, we have not seen program restructuring hurt applications / enrolment. Qualitative feedback in our experience indicates that there has been a positive influence in recruitment figures and student enquiries, which suggests changes are positive, not just neutral.



About Nous

Nous is the largest Australian-founded management consulting firm with over 400 staff across Australia, the UK and Canada.

We partner with leaders to shape world-class businesses, effective government and empowered communities.

400

PEOPLE

20

YEARS

10

LOCATIONS