

Financial review

The University continued to strengthen its financial position this year as a solid base for continued growth in all aspects of its operations.

Results for the year included an operating surplus of \$13.32 million, with an operating margin of 14 percent. The University is thus well-placed to pursue plans to:

- increase emphasis on research performance on the research themes of (1) regional engagement and (2) sustainability; and
- diversify revenue sources through growth in fee-paying international and domestic students.

Income and expenditure

Total income for the year was \$95.02 million—an increase of \$16.59 million on the previous year. The increase was driven primarily by strong growth in Commonwealth-funded student places and fee-paying international students. Funds derived from government sources totalled \$69.47 million or 73 percent of revenue, an increase from the \$10.83 (18 percent) received in the previous year.

Expenses for the year totalled \$81.69 million—an increase of \$11.4 million on the previous year. This was due in part to a 16 percent (\$6.77 million) increase in employee benefits, mainly related to greater provision for long service leave due to staff retention.

Asset growth

At year's end, the University's net assets totalled \$139.66 million—\$22.26 million (19 percent) more than in the previous year. This reflected the revaluation of existing buildings and major building activity completed during the year.

The University spent \$17.90 million on capital projects during the year and \$1.89 million on building maintenance and minor works.



The year 2009

During 2009 the University will continue its development of the Triennium Budget in accordance with the University Planning Framework. The Triennium Budget will include greater linkages of forward budget estimates based on load modelling, workforce planning and space management in advancing the University's strategic objectives.

The completion of the Administrative Productivity Improvement Project will also be a major focus. Partly funded by a \$3.22 million grant under the Commonwealth Government's Workplace Productivity Program, it will boost administrative capacity and services for staff, students and linked external organisations through the re-engineering of business processes and functions.

The introduction of key financial indicators to assess the University's financial performance and benchmarking against the higher education sector will continue in 2009 as a part of regular financial reviews, and other priorities will include:

- a review of the University's cost structures, including faculty work load policy; and
- a review of course offerings and staffing of courses.