

**Big Picture**  
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It has been good to see UTAS' progress recognised in national and global ranking systems in recent weeks. The Good Universities Guide rating of UTAS teaching and research was very sound. Indeed in research the University was compared favourably with major interstate institutions, especially when we are normalised for scale. The highest star rating was also given for equity and access and indigenous performance during 2007/2008 and this strongly supports the EDGE #1 agenda to lift participation generally by Tasmanians and to improve the number of graduates in the State. Achieving this, whilst maintaining our strength in research and scoring well on teaching scales, is most gratifying.

In the Jiao Tong global rankings, UTAS went up a full category on global, Asia Pacific, and national scales. This ranking reflects the soundness of our scholarship and our general research performance.

EDGE #2 with its program of investment in New Stars and Rising Stars, should lift us further in these important rankings, but I am concerned that more fundamental shifts in our modus operandi, our organisational structure and our culture may be needed if we are to properly realise the University's potential.

I have written previously of the need for more interdisciplinary and intellectually collaborative approaches to both the UTAS curriculum and degree structure and to our scholarship and research if we are to more appropriately address the complexities of our contemporary world. Climate change, and eco-sustainability, human rights and poverty, human health issues, the challenges of better understanding our heritage, new and alternative technologies and a plethora of other issues mean that we cannot prepare our graduates or direct our research interests and ideas in the same way that we have in the past.

This is why I am beginning a conversation about how we address what is a tipping point in society and in universities generally. At such points, those who cling to the past and reflect on golden days gone by, run the risk of sliding into oblivion. Rather, such points in general and institutional history must be tackled head on.

Are we well enough structured, academically and administratively, to deal with what is rapidly becoming a new world? Do we have the right structures to encourage and facilitate the levels of collaboration among and between our disciplines? Surely we need, at UTAS, a stronger sense of collegiality, reflected in different ways of collaborating and moving across our heavily compartmentalised boundaries.

Definitely we need more team based approaches to our course development and our teaching and unit delivery. But we also need to ensure that our common course structure is streamlined and super efficient and that key units are supported by teams of academics and support staff, so that we have extra capacity to innovate and offer students better levels of learning services.

Certainly we need team approaches to research and development, especially in our key areas of strength. Core groups of UTAS highly cited academics, supported by post doctoral fellows, surrounded by doctoral students, with regular visiting scholars, adjunct scholars and professionals – all working with external partners would produce critical mass and a dominate presence in national research. With the Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) exercise coming on, this point is crucial.

So, colleagues, it is time that we took a long hard look at the way in which we do things and the structures within which we teach, research and administer. I will be working with Council and the Executive and with Deans, Heads of Schools and Divisions and Directors of Institutes and with the University Community generally to take a health check as we move forward with EDGE #2.

Regards  
Daryl Le Grew