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TASMANIA

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## **Stronger Cradle Coast focus on graduates to support the future regional economy and workforce**

The University of Tasmania today announced a series of strategic initiatives to support the new campus on the Cradle Coast through greater student support and a research focus sharpened to leverage the competitive advantages of the region.

“Our University strategy commits us to operate in a regionally networked way, supporting access and quality wherever it is that we operate,” Vice-Chancellor Professor Rufus Black said.

“This means more students able to access quality teaching, closer to home and across the breadth of our curriculum, along with relevant, industry-linked research that supports regional business, industry and economy.”

Professor Black said to do so, the University needed to address its hub-and-spoke model, in which much of the institution and the majority of its leaders are in Hobart supporting operations in Launceston and the Cradle Coast.

“This has historically been an impediment to growth and opportunity outside of Hobart and we need to change it if we are to fulfill our vision of being a truly island campus,” he said.

Next year will see the opening of the \$50 million West Park campus, delivered through the \$300 million redevelopment of Launceston and Cradle Coast campuses, with support from Federal, State and local governments.

Announcements regarding the regionally networked approach today include a strengthening of agricultural teaching and research in Launceston, with a view that over time the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture (TIA) will be led from the north of the State. TIA will continue to be an important part of the University’s presence at the Cradle Coast and its strong industry engagement would remain.

Plans for the Cradle Coast include teaching and research strengths across a range of human services, engineering and technology (with a focus on agriculture, advanced manufacturing, and sensing technologies) and fast-track business offerings.

“We are going to double down on those fields which form the foundation of Cradle Coast’s future economy and jobs market,” Professor Black said.

Under the model:

- Students across the human services – medicine, nursing, teaching, social work – will be taught in cross- and interdisciplinary ways, producing graduates with a whole-of-system view on how to address health and social challenges in regional settings.
- New learning facilitator roles will be introduced at the Cradle Coast to support students in various learning modes, including on campus, online and distance.
- The focus on engineering and technology will be strengthened, given so much of the region’s competitive advantage and workforce relies on increased capability in the field.
- The push on engineering and technology at the Cradle Coast will also leverage the University’s state-of-the-art Original Equipment Manufacturing (OEM) facility in Wellington Street.

“The ideas we announce today have been created and shaped by Cradle Coast staff, based on learnings and experience in the region,” Professor Black said.

“We now look forward to working directly with community and industry to implement these plans in coming years.”

**Media contact:** Ben Wild – 0438 510 616

Information released by:

Communications Office  
University of Tasmania  
+61 3 6226 2124

[Communications.Office@utas.edu.au](mailto:Communications.Office@utas.edu.au)

[Twitter.com/utas\\_](https://twitter.com/utas_)