



Queensland Australia

SPORTS STRATEGY

2024–2028



Danica Free

Bachelor of Engineering (Honours)
U23 Australian Rowing Team



Contents

Message from the Vice Chancellor	4
Strategy statements	5
Visions, missions and values	5
Strategic alignment	6
Background	7
Sports Engagement—at a glance	10
Sports Engagement—partnerships at a glance	11
The Griffith University Sports Strategy	12
Sports performance	15
Sports research	16
Sports education	19
Games engagement	20
Students and staff sport and wellbeing	23
Enablers	24
Facilities	27

On the cover:

Curtis McGrath

Bachelor of Aviation
2016, 2020 and 2024 Paralympian
(4 x Gold Medallist)

Message from the Vice Chancellor

As a leading sports university, Griffith University continues to strive for excellence in all sports-related initiatives, aiming to emerge as the premier sports university in the Asia-Pacific region. Our Sports Strategy stands as a roadmap, highlighting the significant role sports play in society and positioning Griffith University as a leading contributor to the global sports arena. As Vice-Chancellor, I am proud that this strategy embodies our unwavering commitment to excellence and impact.

Our Sports Strategy will build on our commitment to athletic excellence and the outstanding performances of our student athletes, who continue to achieve remarkable success on national and international stages. It also ensures that all members of the Griffith community, whatever their level of experience or ability, have opportunities to participate in sport and fitness activities.

Sport fosters physical and mental wellbeing, instils values such as teamwork, and has the power to unite communities. Our Sports Strategy is crafted to magnify the positive impact sports can have for our students, staff and communities alike. By championing inclusivity, we endeavour to cultivate a sports culture that embraces diversity and provides opportunities for all to actively participate.

Our dedication to sports research is another hallmark of Griffith's commitment to excellence. We envision our research playing a pivotal role in advancing sports science, enhancing performance, and preventing injuries.

We take pride in its legacy of excellence in sports education. Our programs nurture the next generation of sports leaders, coaches and professionals, ensuring they are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to drive positive change in the sporting landscape.

Looking ahead, the impending Brisbane 2032 Olympics and Paralympics present a significant opportunity for Griffith University. This global sporting event will serve as a catalyst for collaboration, innovation and community engagement. We are already actively contributing to the success of the Games through research partnerships, athlete support, community outreach initiatives and Games legacy outcomes.

Griffith University's Sports Strategy epitomises our commitment to excellence, inclusivity and impactful contributions to the world of sports. I encourage every member of our community to embrace this exciting journey, as we collectively shape a future where sports not only thrive but also serve as a catalyst for positive societal change.



Professor Carolyn Evans

Vice Chancellor



Strategy statements

Vision, mission and values



VISION

To be the leading sports university in the Asia-Pacific region, renowned for excellence and inclusion.



MISSION

To make important contributions and impact to sport, athletes and our communities through performance excellence, innovative research, teaching and engagement.



STATEMENT OF VALUES

In pursuit of our vision and mission we commit to:

- Positively influence our communities through sports engagement, teaching and research.
- Ensure excellence drives all we do in people, sport and high-performance athletes.
- Grow opportunities for all women in sport and further recognise, and value diversity, equity and inclusion in sport.
- Embrace First Nations learners, athletes and the broader First Nations communities.



AIMS

- Use sport to inspire, grow and change individuals to drive positive social change.
- Enrich student experience via active lifestyle and sporting related opportunities with deliberate partnerships.
- Build the Griffith brand through excellence in sports across high performance, education and research.
- Capitalise on the social, community and reputational benefits of the 2032 Olympics and Paralympics.
- Deepen our engagement with the Asia Pacific region through teaching, research and sustainable practice in sport.

Strategic alignment

The strategy is multi-faceted including a) sporting excellence through our elite athletes and high-performance results, our values, global rankings, learning and teaching, research, partnerships, student experience and wellbeing, b) strong sports industry engagement, and c) enhancing engagement in sport, recreation, wellbeing and active living for staff, students and the wider community.

The Strategy has been created to work alongside other initiatives from Griffith Sport, the Griffith Women in Sport Strategy and Griffith Games Engagement and Partnerships Strategy for 2032.

This strategy is intentionally aligned with the United Nations global impact of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): #3 Good Health and Wellbeing, #4 Quality Education, #5 Gender Equity, #10 Reduced Inequalities and #17 Partnerships for the Goals.

KEY DRIVERS

1. Our student and alumni athletes' performances on the world stage (consistently top 10 university globally)
2. Core principles of excellence, ethical behaviour and engagement
3. Our student, staff, alumni and communities' active living experience, and their health and wellbeing
4. Commitment to First Peoples, sustainability, diversity and inclusion and a focus on social justice
5. Research excellence in sport
6. Continued growth of strong industry partners
7. Sport as a local and global connector (enhancing sports diplomacy)
8. Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games
9. Advancement in sports technology
10. Catering for a growing sports industry by creating graduates of choice and influence

Liz Clay

Bachelor of Business Alumni
2020 and 2024 Olympian

Background

Griffith University's vision and mission is to transform lives and add to human knowledge and understanding in a way that creates a future that benefits all. As we celebrate our 50th anniversary in 2025, we remain steadfast in our aim to be the leading university of influence and impact in Australia and across Asia-Pacific. This includes influence, impact and expertise across all aspects of sport, from performance and excellence to knowledge creation, and community health and wellbeing.

Griffith University has a long and proud history with sport and supports some of the best local and global athletes through the Griffith Sports College and our high-performance programs. Student and athlete results at Olympic and Paralympic Games, and the Commonwealth Games continually see Griffith students excel on the world stage, becoming #1 in Australia, #1 in the Commonwealth and top 2 globally for student athlete representation and results.



The Sports College supports over 500 student athletes with some of the biggest names in Australian sport, Olympic, Paralympic, and professional sport. It is well noted that Griffith's elite athletes are above average within their educational performance, largely due to the support provided by Griffith University through the Sports College.

The success rate of our Sports College students is, on average, higher than all student average completions. Universities in Australia play a significant role in the realm of sports and have a profound impact on society. First, Griffith actively engages in fostering sporting excellence by providing state-of-the-art facilities, coaching expertise, and scholarships for talented athletes. We offer student athletes a unique environment conducive to balancing academic pursuits with sports, enabling them to reach their full athletic and academic potential.

Second, Griffith contributes to the development of sports science and research, leading to advancements in training techniques, injury prevention and performance enhancement. These innovations benefit not only the athletes but also the broader sporting community, including professional teams and grassroots organisations. Griffith researchers and experts create impactful and industry relevant applied research and consultancies across all academic disciplines. We have developed research projects that have resulted in improved knowledge in three broad areas of sport, namely participation, performance and production. These include women in sport, sports science and performance, sports technology, injury and rehabilitation, volunteerism, sports mega events (e.g. Olympic/Paralympic Games), talent identification, gender in sport, community sport and sport for people with a disability.

Third, we design academic programs that progressively build employability, professional capability and career readiness for the changing world of work. Many of our

disciplines operate at a world-class level providing students with work-integrated learning opportunities resulting in greater employability, experience in industry and increased student satisfaction. Griffith offers academic pathways through both undergraduate and postgraduate programs that are well connected with the sports industry.

Furthermore, Griffith promotes the values of equity, inclusion and diversity, teamwork, leadership, discipline and fair play through sport with a focus on the student experience. These experiences help shape students into well-rounded individuals who can contribute positively to society.

Griffith places great value and emphasis on our purposeful engagement with the sports industry including key sporting bodies and agencies such as the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) and Queensland Academy of Sport (QAS), national sporting organisations, professional clubs, all levels of government, grass roots at the local and state levels and other industry partners. Griffith collaborates with local communities, schools, and sporting organisations to promote sports participation and outreach programs, including parasport and women in sport. Griffith hosts sports events, provides clinics, and offers expertise to enhance the sporting experiences of the wider public. This engagement helps foster community cohesion, health and wellbeing, including a diverse engagement with First Nations peoples and in the Oceania and Asia-Pacific region.



1982

Commonwealth Games
hosted in Nathan,
Queensland

1998

Athletics track on
the Gold Coast campus
opened

—
First medal won at
the Winter Olympics
by a student:

Zali Steggall
Bronze, Alpine Skiing Slalom

1992

First student competes
in the Olympics:

Simon McCormack
Diving

—
First student competes
in the Winter Olympics:

Zali Steggall
Alpine Skiing Slalom

1996

First medal won at the
Olympics by a student:

Katrin Borchert
Bronze, Kayaking

Duncan Free
Bronze, Rowing

2000

First Olympic Gold medal
won by a student:

Naomi McCarthy
(nee Castle)
Water Polo

2004

Griffith Sports College
established

2006

First Commonwealth
Games Gold medals won
by students:

Robert Newbery
Diving

Libby Trickett
Swimming

Angela Lambert
Hockey

Joshua Jefferies
Gymnast

Damian Iстриa
Gymnast

Caitlin Willis
Track and Field

—
First student to compete
in Winter Paralympics:

Marty Mayberry
Alpine Downhill Standing

1990

First students compete in
Commonwealth Games:

Walter Lancaster
Cycling

Simon McCormack
Diving

—
First medal won at the
Commonwealth Games
by a student:

Simon McCormack
Silver, Diving



2008

First Paralympic Gold medal:

Michael Anderson
Swimming

2010

First medal won at the Winter Paralympics by a student:

Marty Mayberry
Silver, Alpine Downhill Standing

2016

Number one university in Australia for students and alumni competing at the Rio Olympics

GAPS Program (Gather, Adjust, Prepare, Sustain) developed for Oceania sport development and engagement in lead up to 2018 Commonwealth Games

2017

Aquatic Centre opened on the Gold Coast

High performance swim program established

2018

Partnership with Gold Coast Commonwealth Games Gold Coast campus. Swimming pool and athletics track utilised as training facility

Number one university in Australia for students and alumni competing at the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games

2019

Partnership formed with Surfing Australia

2021

Number one university in Australia for students and alumni competing at the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics

Griffith Alumnus Emma McKeon (Swimming) becomes Australia's most successful Olympian at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games

Griffith University Sporting Hall of Fame announced and inaugural athletes inducted

Partnership formed with Gold Coast Titans NRLW and Titans Inaugural Netball Team

2022

Women in Sport Strategy launched

2023

Partnership formed with Swimming Australia

2024

Number one in the world for athlete representation at the Olympics with 38 athletes winning 10 Gold, 8 Silver and 6 Bronze medals across 18 events

Number one in Australia for student athlete representation at the Paralympics, winning 2 Gold, 3 Silver and 7 Bronze medals

Emma McKeon



Griffith alumnus,
Bachelor of Public Health—Health
Promotion and Nutrition
2016, 2020 and 2024 Olympian



Young Australian of the Year 2024

Australia's most successful
Olympian



Griffith Swim Club member



Sports Engagement—at a glance



2024 PARIS OLYMPICS AND PARALYMPICS

50
ATHLETES

38 OLYMPIC
ATHLETES



12 PARALYMPIC
ATHLETES



GRIFFITH STUDENT ATHLETES AT THE GAMES

Griffith is the #1 university in Australia for students and alumni competing

112
Olympians

22
Paralympians

90+
Commonwealth
Games athletes



GRIFFITH
CURRENTLY
SUPPORTS **500+**

student athletes represented in over
45 different sports

SPORT SCHOLARSHIPS HOLDERS IN 2024

74
athletes

70%
female

30%
male

GRIFFITH ATHLETES ON THE WORLD STAGE



#1 in Australia



#1 in the
Commonwealth



Top 2 Globally



Griffith University is a part of the
Australian Institute of Sport's (AIS)
Elite Athlete University Network



#1 university in Australia for athletes competing at the 2016 Olympics, 2020 and 2024 Olympics and Paralympics and the 2018 and 2022 Commonwealth Games

Sports Engagement—partnerships at a glance

University-wide partnerships



The Griffith University Sports Strategy

SPORTS STRATEGY PRIORITIES

Excellence and inclusion

The Griffith University Sports Strategy is composed of Strategic Priorities and Key Enablers

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. Sports performance
2. Sports research
3. Sports education
4. Games engagement
5. Student and staff sport and wellbeing

Key enablers of the strategy include our sporting facilities and the partnerships we broker in the delivery of our strategic priorities for the Griffith University Sports Strategy.





Matt Hauser

Bachelor of Business Alumni
2020 and 2024 Olympian



SPORTS PERFORMANCE

Provide athletic performance and support to enhance outcomes for athletes, students and partners.

Griffith is ranked #1 in Australia, #1 in the Commonwealth and top 2 in the world for student athlete representation and results at global sporting events. This is thanks to our results in fields such as the Olympic, Paralympic and Commonwealth Games, as well as professional sporting codes. We have seen our athletes represent themselves, their families, their country, their states, their towns, their schools, and their university with the highest of standards. They have become role models of their communities and their communities have responded with admiration, respect, joy and a desire to connect.

The Griffith Sports College supports over 500 student athletes and plays a vital role in fostering students who are elite athletes, helping them devote time to training and competition while they complete their tertiary studies. As part of the Australian Institute of Sport's Elite Athlete Education Network, the Sports College integrates sporting and academic aspirations.



KEY ACTIONS

- **Student athletes**—Recruit, support and retain student athletes while building the awareness of study opportunities and support available to elite athletes.
- **Performance**—Grow on-campus high-performance programs and support services for athletes including facilities usage and sports science/sports medicine services.
- **Equity**—Create, grow and support a number of high-performance opportunities and programs for under-represented groups.
- **Support**—Increase financial support available to athletes through the sports scholarship program, including partner and donor-funded scholarships.
- **Oceania**—Drive participation, pathway and performance outcomes for the Oceania region for athletes, coaches and support staff.

SPORTS RESEARCH

Enhance capability and support Griffith researchers to revolutionise impactful research in all sport related matters.

Griffith research covers all aspects of sport, from performance to participation, wellbeing, equity, and sports diplomacy. Our world-leading scientists work within cutting-edge technology and facilities to develop new knowledge that benefits sportspeople and the general public.

Griffith partners with Olympic and Paralympic sports, Commonwealth sports, professional sporting codes and reputable industry partners while supporting the organisations priorities through research in performance, technology, skill acquisition, injury prevention and management, sustainability, community and social impacts.

Guided and driven by Griffith's Women in Sport Strategy Griffith is known for its world-leading research in women in sport and gender equity with Griffith's research hub SAGE (Sport and Gender Equity).

Additionally, Griffith Business School is globally ranked for its work and expertise with understanding sports management, events and tourism and the role these industries play in our lives.



KEY ACTIONS

- **Partnerships**—Work closely with industry partners, sports and key peak bodies of the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) and QAS to further advance impactful research, innovation and technology across all areas of sport.
- **Inclusivity**—Ensure that sports-related research is inclusive, and strive for gender balance, where appropriate, across HDR students and academic staff.
- **Synergy**—Encourage greater cross-disciplinary research in sports management, sports science, sports medicine, sports technology, inclusiveness, sport in society and Griffith's Advanced Design and Prototyping Technologies Institute (ADaPT).
- **Collaboration**—Create strong connections and opportunities in the Gold Coast Health and Knowledge Precinct with partners.
- **Empowerment**—Support Griffith researchers with grants and funding, international opportunities for staff and HDR students, and commercialisation opportunities.





Ellie Beer

Bachelor of Sport Development
2020 and 2024 Olympian



SPORTS EDUCATION

To provide industry relevant academic programs to support graduate attributes across sport and related areas, locally, regionally and internationally.

Griffith offers a range of academic programs in sports at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. We have gained national and international recognition for many of our programs and attract thousands of students each year into programs across all academic groups, delivered in state-of-the-art facilities and taught by outstanding teachers with a wealth of industry knowledge.

Work-integrated learning (WIL) is a feature in many programs at Griffith and students report positively on the value of being exposed to the sports industry and to real work experiences during their degrees. Our partnerships with leading sporting clubs and organisations offer a range of opportunities for students including internships, professional development with proven career outcomes and employment.

Careers in sport are diverse and our academic programs need to meet this diversity and remain relevant in the face of changing context and industry needs.



KEY ACTIONS

- **Student experience**—Utilise Griffith's high-level sporting partnerships and high-performance sporting programs to provide student opportunities, including growing pathways for women in leadership.
- **Global opportunities**—Leverage international partnerships and programs to include options for exchange, short-term placements and internships with global partners.
- **Innovative programs**—Work within the academic groups to design, promote, deliver, and review quality sports-related programs for students and graduates, including interdisciplinary design supporting industry needs and career ready graduates.
- **Career readiness**—Ensure student engagement opportunities, including Work Integrated Learning, internships and other qualifications and accreditations (e.g. ASCA, ESSA, SMAANZ) are a part of programs enhancing employability outcomes
- **Academic support**—Work with the academic groups to provide expertise and support across programs and create practical student opportunities.

GAMES ENGAGEMENT

Griffith is committed to leveraging the once-in-a-generation opportunity presented by the hosting of the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Queensland, Australia. We are working with our partners and communities to deliver strong legacies for the region, including new opportunities for Griffith students and staff. We aim to retain our number one position as the leading sport university in the Asia-Pacific region, and extend our track record in elite athlete sport performance at the Games in 2032.

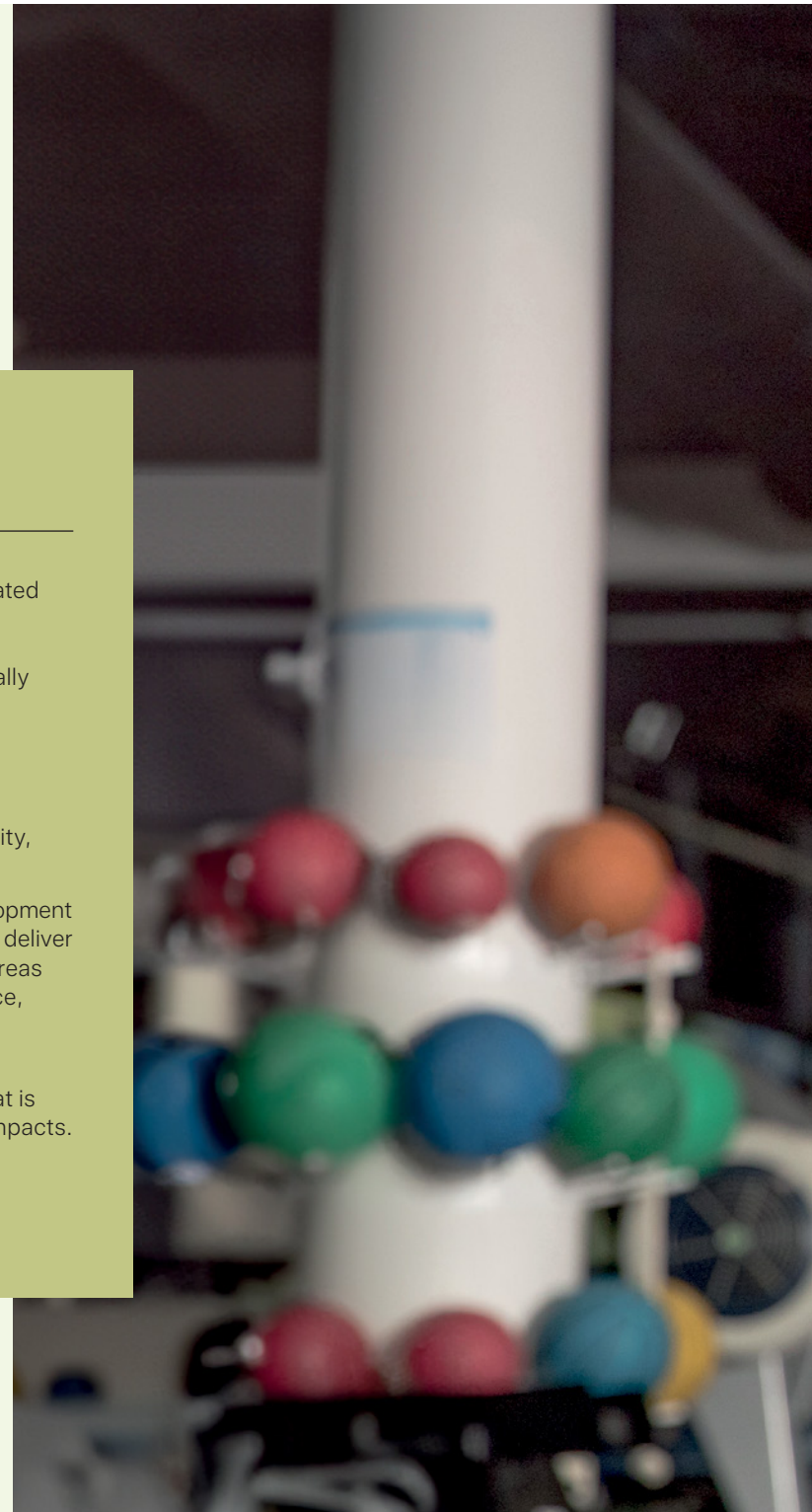
The Games Engagement and Partnership portfolio is aligned with industry and government to “make the Games matter” by disrupting some of the most acute and critical issues of our time, that are drawn to attention by the hosting of the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Through our research expertise, place-based community engagement, and excellence in education, the Games Engagement and Partnership team is looking at Brisbane 2032 as a once-in-a-lifetime platform to amplify, accelerate and transform the region’s future on a global stage and an opportunity to highlight the incredible work being done at Griffith. The University played a key role as a partner in the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games and will use those mega event learnings and experiences, among others, to help plan for the future opportunities that Brisbane 2032 represents. Griffith University has expertise in multi-sport events including: social impact and legacy; tourism; sustainability and environment; mega event planning and community impact and infrastructure; transport; sports diplomacy; high-performance sport and performance; and much more.



KEY ACTIONS

- **Sport excellence**—Griffith has strong demonstrated capabilities in sport performance of our athletes. The Games provide the opportunity to showcase and extend our track record for sport both nationally and internationally.
- **Inclusion, diversity and equity**—Griffith is well positioned to address issues that are critical to the communities we serve by using sport and the mega-event narrative to address inclusion, diversity, equity and belonging.
- **Oceania**—Sport is an enabler of sustainable development throughout the region. Griffith is well positioned to deliver significant legacy across the Asia-Pacific in the areas of performance pathways, diplomacy, social justice, and environmental sustainability.
- **Climate**—We will contribute to Brisbane 2032’s commitment to delivering on a climate agenda that is focused on positive, long-term and sustainable impacts.
- **Workforce and talent**—The Games will be an opportunity for student recruitment, career readiness, and creating workforce legacies.





Madison de Rozario

Bachelor of Business Alumni
2008, 2012, 2016, 2020 and 2024
Paralympian (dual Gold Medalist)



STUDENTS AND STAFF SPORT AND WELLBEING

Sport at Griffith is focused on enhancing engagement in sport and recreation for those connected with Griffith University by providing a wide range of activities, programs and events. Griffith will pursue this through our principles of engagement, excellent and inclusion.

Griffith aims to have a positive impact on the university community focusing on the link between active lifestyles and overall health outcomes for all individuals—students, staff and the wider community. Through our service provision, Griffith promotes the benefits of sport and recreation for all individuals' physical, emotional, social and mental health. Griffith is committed to providing excellence to sport and recreation programs through creating a positive participant experience and utilisation of our renowned facilities.



KEY ACTIONS

Sport and wellbeing for students, staff and the wider community will be delivered via six key pillars:

- **Profile**—To be a leader in sport provision with a positive reputation in the community.
- **Engagement**—To provide pathways for participation in sport and recreation from a social to competitive level, with the focus on overall health and wellbeing.
- **People**—To foster a positive culture within Griffith and provide education, training and leadership to staff, students and volunteers, enabling personal and professional development through sport and recreation opportunities.
- **Inclusion**—To deliver safe and inclusive service provision for all individuals regardless of race, gender, sexuality, culture or physical ability.
- **Excellence**—To ensure we deliver high-quality venues, programs and events with high-quality staff performance and customer satisfaction rates.
- **Sustainability**—To ensure both financial and environmental sustainability as well as continuing to maintain and upgrade sport and recreation infrastructure.

Enablers

Partnerships

Partnerships play a crucial role as enablers of Griffith's Sports Strategy by bringing additional expertise, resources, and support to enhance the overall effectiveness and impact of sports initiatives.

Both industry partnerships and community engagement play a pivotal role in the success of Griffith by bridging the gap between academia and the real world. Collaboration with industry offers valuable benefits such as impactful research, internships and employment opportunities for students. By engaging with industry, we can stay updated on the latest trends and demands, ensuring curriculum remains relevant and producing graduates equipped with practical skills. Industry partnerships also foster innovation, enabling joint research and development projects that tackle real-world challenges. Partnerships also enhance Griffith's reputation, attract top academics, researchers, and students, while contributing to regional economic growth through knowledge transfer and entrepreneurship.



KEY ACTIONS

- **Partner with sports organisations**—Collaborate with organisations that share values to deliver programs and achieve results in sports performance, wellbeing, inclusivity, and social impact.
- **Strategic industry collaborations**—Foster strategic partnerships with industry leaders to provide students with real-world experience, internships and employment opportunities. This action ensures that academic programs remain relevant and responsive to industry needs while supporting students' career development.
- **Research and innovation initiatives**—Establish collaborative research and development projects with industry partners to address real-world challenges. These promote innovation, knowledge transfer, and valuable contributions to the community, enhancing our reputation and impact.
- **Community engagement**—Engage with the community to bridge the gap between academia and the real world. This can involve organising community sports events, workshops, and outreach programs, creating a strong bond between the University, its students while promoting a culture of inclusivity and shared benefits.
- **Talent attraction**—Leverage partnerships to enhance our reputation and attractiveness. Showcase partnerships to attract top athletes, academics, researchers and students who want to be part of an institution that values connection and impact.





Griffith has a deep and long-standing partnership with the Gold Coast Titans.



Facilities

Sports facilities are of paramount importance as they contribute to the holistic development of students and the overall campus community in areas such as learning and teaching, research, engagement and partnerships, and performance programs. Quality sporting facilities can be managed in a way that integrates all users offering opportunities for high-performance programs, physical fitness, wellbeing, and fostering a healthy lifestyle for students, staff and community. Sporting venues also serve as a social hub, promoting a sense of belonging while attracting campus activations. Sporting facilities and activations also bolster the University's reputation via connection to students, staff and the community, and can add great value to sporting partnerships, research, and high-performance programs.

Exceptional sporting facilities not only serve as a catalyst for sport, physical activity and student wellbeing but also become a focal point for community engagement. These facilities act as a magnet, drawing in not just students and athletes but also local residents, families, clubs, industry and sports enthusiasts. They provide a venue for community events, tournaments and fitness programs, fostering a spirit of inclusivity and collaboration. The presence of great sports facilities creates opportunities for partnerships between the University and local organisations, promoting a shared commitment to health, recreation and community development. In this way, exceptional sporting facilities extend their impact beyond the campus borders, actively contributing to the overall wellbeing and unity of the broader community.



KEY ACTIONS

- **Integrated facility management**—Facilities that support high-performance standards, anchored in a commitment to excellence, inclusivity and student, staff and community sport, health and wellbeing.
- **Philanthropic funding**—Drive philanthropic funding initiatives for facility development.
- **Sporting hub**—Explore a dedicated sport hub on the Gold Coast campus that can centrally deliver and coordinate key sporting research and innovation, performance programs and other related priorities. This compliments and supports facility development at Nathan campus, allowing the GC campus to capitalise on its sporting infrastructure, growth and reputation.
- **Logan campus**—Work with stakeholders including government and industry to expand Logan campus's sporting facilities and offerings.
- **Social hub and campus activations**—Utilise sporting venues as social hubs, fostering a sense of belonging and camaraderie among students and staff.
- **Reputation enhancement**—Leverage the quality of sporting facilities and activations to enhance the University's reputation.



Griffith Sports Engagement

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  GriffithSportsCollege



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