

**McMaster University**  
**Strategic Mandate Agreement Annual Report 2017-18**  
**Part 1. Overview**

**Introduction**

The 2017-20 Strategic Mandate Agreements (SMAs) between individual universities and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities outline the role universities perform in Ontario's postsecondary education system and how they will build on institutional strengths to fulfil their mandate and help support system-wide objectives and government priorities.

Each priority area in 2017-20 SMAs includes system-wide and institution-specific metrics and targets.

The SMA Annual Report is used by the ministry to track progress on metric performance on an annual basis. The SMA Annual Report is also an opportunity for institutions to provide contextual information and a narrative associated with performance in the shared priority areas. **Part 1. Overview** introduces the institutional context for metrics performance, overall and by priority area. **Part 2. Data Workbook** includes historical data and most recently available values for both system-wide and institution-specific metrics.

The ministry requests that you submit your completed 2017-18 SMA Annual Report by January 16, 2019. Please submit your institution's documents to the following ministry email: [SMAreporting@ontario.ca](mailto:SMAreporting@ontario.ca).

For more information on the Strategic Mandate Agreements, please visit the Ontario Government webpage [here](#).

# McMaster University

## Strategic Mandate Agreement Annual Report 2017-18

### Part 1. Overview

#### Institutional Narrative

Provide a brief description of the overall institutional context for the 2017-18 Strategic Mandate Agreement metric results. **(max. 600 words)**

Charts, graphics and hyperlinks are allowed and should meet accessibility standards.

At McMaster, we strive to foster the creative and intellectual potential of our students, while at the same time preparing our graduates to build successful careers. We develop innovative and entrepreneurial graduates, undertake cutting-edge research, and serve our community by leading and partnering on a variety of local and global initiatives. McMaster also has a strong track record of working with industry, successfully outpacing our peers over the last five years in industry-sponsored research. Such industrial collaborations act as magnets, attracting businesses to our region, allowing for the incubation of new companies, the fostering and mentoring of new entrepreneurs, and creating jobs for Canada's next generation of leaders – our students.

The University has achieved an international reputation as a centre of excellence for research and innovation, teaching and learning, and creativity. This year, McMaster was again ranked one of only two universities in Ontario among the world's top 100 universities, and one of only four in Canada. *Research Infosource 2017* ranked McMaster as Canada's *most* research-intensive university, with a total research income of \$354.6M, averaging \$405,300 per faculty member – more than double the national average.

Alongside McMaster's achievements in research, the University's institution-wide commitment to promoting and supporting teaching excellence and pedagogical innovation was recognized this year when McMaster was awarded the 2018 Global Teaching Excellence Award by the Higher Education Academy, in partnership with Times Higher Education, UK.

McMaster continually strives to improve access to underrepresented groups through pathway programs and initiatives. For the second consecutive year, McMaster saw the enrolment of both first generation and students with disabilities rise to more than 6,700 and 1,800 students, respectively. The University is equally committed to its recruitment and access strategies targeted at Indigenous communities, and has more than 400 full-time Indigenous students currently enrolled.

McMaster's dedication to student success and development, both before and after graduation, is evidenced by the institution's stellar performance in the retention and employability metrics. McMaster's first to second year retention rate reached 91.0% in 2017-18. In addition, McMaster's employability metrics have also consistently remained above 91.0% within 2 years of graduation. Our alumni have transformed their educational experiences into meaningful career opportunities, with 94.5% of our graduates securing full-time employment. Furthermore, 91.3% of our graduates have found full-time employment in a field related to their studies. This is indicative of McMaster's strength in preparing students for the job market and to be engaged and successful members of society.

McMaster also places a great deal of focus on the health and well-being of our faculty, staff and students. With growing societal pressures and the associated increased prevalence of mental illness, the University has been proactive in dedicating significant resources to support and assist staff as well as students. In addition to hiring more counsellors, the University has opened wellness centres and provided/promoted wellness resources across campus. This is reflected in the fact that the proportion of operating expenditures spent on student services by the University rose from 4.38% to 5.84% in 2016-17 alone.

The University has also worked hard to be responsive to issues facing our local Hamilton community, as well as broader societal concerns, and has developed strong community and research partnerships, as well as continuing to promote our longstanding commitment to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly. Throughout the history of our University, McMaster has advanced the boundaries of knowledge and learning through critical enquiry, discussion and debate, and this freedom to question, research and explore continues to be fundamental to the discovery, communication and preservation of knowledge that is at the heart of our mission.

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**Priority Areas**

Provide trends and key outcomes for the 2017-18 Strategic Mandate Agreement metrics included within each of the five priority areas. **(max. 200 words per priority area).**

**1. Student Experience**

*This priority area captures institutional strengths in improving student experience, outcomes and success, and recognizes institutions for measuring the broader learning environment, such as continuity of learning pathways, retention, student satisfaction, co-curricular activities and records, career preparedness and student services and supports.*

Overall, McMaster has exceeded the 2019-20 target for all the system-wide and institution-specific metrics related to this priority area. McMaster's continued efforts to support and enhance the student experience are reflected in the University's rising achievement indicators. McMaster's student experience metrics rank among the top in system-wide comparisons, and have all shown steady growth since 2014, with the first to second year retention rate reaching 91.0% in 2017-18. The University has allocated additional resources to further improve these historically high retention rates and has introduced statistical modelling, counselling and intervention methods intended to help predict those students who may be at risk and ensure that they have the opportunity to receive appropriate guidance and supports. McMaster has also allocated additional resources to the Student Wellness Centre to provide a wide range of counselling options, medical services and wellness programs, supporting students to be successful both academically and personally. The enrichment of the student experience is further demonstrated by the increasing number of High Impact Practices (HIPs) our students are engaging in, and the innovative learning pathways available through our unique partnership with Mohawk College, for example, which is one of the strongest in the province.

**2. Innovation in Teaching and Learning Excellence**

*This priority area focuses on innovative efforts including pedagogical approaches, program delivery and student services that contribute to a highly skilled workforce and ensure positive student outcomes. It captures institutional strengths in delivering high-quality learning experiences such as experiential, entrepreneurial, personalized and digital learning, and student competencies that improve employability.*

Innovation is another area where McMaster leads, having met or exceeded the 2019-20 target for all the system-wide and institution-specific metrics related to this priority area. McMaster was awarded the 2018 Global Teaching Excellence Award by the Higher Education Academy, in partnership with Times Higher Education, in recognition of our innovative pedagogy. The success of our graduates also evidences the quality of our teaching excellence: Donna Strickland, a McMaster alumna, was recently awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics. McMaster leads all universities in the sector on curriculum mapping, with a score of 100%. Across the University, students are offered opportunities to engage in work-integrated learning, both within Canada and overseas. We have a strong record of working with local small and medium sized businesses and large manufacturers, offering our students an exceptional work integrated experience, but also bringing the innovations of our students and researchers to industry. McMaster's FORGE provides students interested in entrepreneurship with training resources and a network of alumni and mentors. New blended learning programs continue to be developed, combining online and in-class modules plus work-integrated assignments. McMaster's normalized score for instructor effectiveness has reached an all-time high, further solidifying our commitment to innovative teaching practices.

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### **3. Access and Equity**

*This priority area recognizes institutions for their efforts in improving postsecondary education equity and access, and for creating opportunities that can include multiple entrance pathways and flexible policies and programming, with the focus on students who, without interventions and support, might not otherwise participate in postsecondary education.*

Overall McMaster is within or above the 2019-20 target or target range for all the system-wide and institution-specific metrics related to this priority area. The University strives to create new pathways to support those groups who would not be able to attend postsecondary education otherwise. McMaster's strong commitment to access and equity is reflected in our ongoing improvement in access measures and metrics. In line with this commitment, the University has developed various pathway programs: the McMaster Discovery program offered to Hamilton residents who have experienced barriers to postsecondary education; the Indigenous Pathway through the McMaster Bachelor of Social Work program; and a number of collaborative programs with Mohawk College that allow Mohawk students to receive a McMaster degree. The University's Graduat Survey asks students from historically marginalized groups to rate their satisfaction with services provided at McMaster. The latest survey results show that 96.6% (up from 88.3% in 2016) of students from marginalized groups provided positive feedback regarding the services which the university offered/provided to them. As an institution McMaster works hard to promote equity, diversity and inclusivity and has a dedicated Equity and Inclusion Office which proactively supports and promotes equity across all areas of the McMaster community.

### **4. Research Excellence and Impact**

*This priority area captures institutional strengths in producing high-quality research on the continuum of fundamental and applied research through activity that further raises Ontario's profile as a globally recognized research and innovation hub. It also acknowledges that research capacity is strongly linked with graduate education.*

Overall McMaster has exceeded the 2019-20 target for all but one system-wide and institution-specific metric, and is just 0.15% below target on the share of Ontario CIHR funding metric. McMaster's commitment to fostering and supporting high quality fundamental research is embedded in McMaster's Strategic Plan for Research, *Research for a Brighter World*. The Plan outlines key areas where our researchers are delivering solutions to meet pressing global challenges, and articulates our commitment to support diverse and talented graduate students, and use our research platforms and strengths to raise the profile of Ontario and Canada as globally recognized research and innovation hubs. McMaster has again been recognized as Canada's most research intensive university by *Research InfoSource 2017*, with a total research income of \$354.6M, averaging \$405,300 per faculty member, more than double the national average. In Health Sciences, McMaster ranks 23<sup>rd</sup> in the world and 2<sup>nd</sup> in Canada in the Times Higher Education's Subject Rankings in 2017-18. The institution secured \$136.9M in research funding from industrial sources in 2017-18, doubling the amount that was secured in 2013-14 (\$67.8M). Moreover, McMaster continues to increase graduate enrolment and provide enhanced opportunities for graduate students to work with our world-class researchers in their laboratories.

### **5. Innovation, Economic Development and Community Engagement**

*This priority area recognizes the unique role institutions play in contributing to their communities and to economic development, as well as to building dynamic partnerships with business, industry, community members and other colleges and universities. It focuses on regional clusters, customized training, entrepreneurial activities, jobs, community revitalization efforts, international collaborations, students, partnerships with Indigenous Institutes and a program mix that meets needs locally, regionally and beyond.*

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Overall McMaster has exceeded the 2019-20 target for all the system-wide and institution-specific metrics related to this priority area. McMaster engages with our local communities in a variety of innovative ways. McMaster Innovation Park (MIP) provides office, lab, and specialized facilities to more than 65 companies; the FORGE, the University's accelerator, provides early stage entrepreneurs and rapid growth technology companies with incubation space; and the McMaster Industry Liaison Office (MILO), supports commercialization of the cutting-edge work undertaken by our researchers, enabling them to bridge the gap from research to commercial application and/or develop positive and productive collaborations with other researchers or industry. In June 2018, the University and the Six Nations of the Grand River hosted more than 350 researchers and stakeholders at the Global Water Futures Program, intended to deliver risk management solutions to manage water futures in Canada and other cold regions around the globe. In 2017-18, McMaster broke into the top 100 in QS's Graduate Employability rankings and ranks 93<sup>rd</sup> in the world, demonstrating that McMaster's graduates become successful and contributing members to both the local and global economy. Furthermore, in 2017-18, 94.5% of McMaster's graduates secured full-time work within 2 years of graduation.

**Attestation**

**McMaster University confirms that all information being submitted to the ministry as part of the 2017-18 SMA annual report is accurate and has received approval from the University President.**

Please complete the contact information below.

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