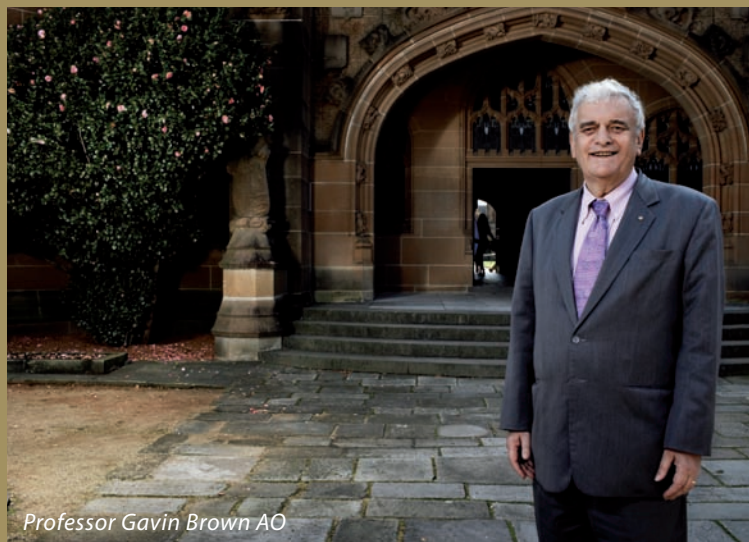


## Farewell Professor Gavin Brown

The Group of Eight Vice-Chancellors and staff of the Go8 secretariat were deeply saddened to hear of the recent passing of Professor Gavin Brown, AO FAA CorrFRSE.



Professor Gavin Brown AO

Professor Brown held leadership positions in three of the Go8 member universities:

- At The University of New South Wales he held the Chair of Pure Mathematics (1975-1992) and was Dean of the Faculty of Science (1989-1992);
- At The University of Adelaide he was Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Research (1992-1993) and Vice-Chancellor (1994-1996);
- At The University of Sydney he was Vice-Chancellor and Principal (1996-2008).

He was the inaugural Chairman of the Go8 and an active advocate for research and research-led teaching. In his "post-retirement" role as foundation Director of the Royal Institution Australia he continued to communicate about science and maths to the community.

In 2009 the Go8 commissioned Professor Brown to review Education in Mathematics, Data Science and Quantitative Disciplines—an issue about which he held strong views. The opening sentence of the review said "the state of the mathematical sciences and related quantitative disciplines in Australia has deteriorated to a dangerous level, and continues to deteriorate."

The Go8 Board accepted all of his recommendations and Go8 member universities are now actively responding to them. In this way, restoring "the state of mathematical sciences... in Australia" will be one small part of Professor Brown's rich legacy. We express our sincere sympathy to Professor Brown's family.

## Group of Eight research world class

The large majority of research at Group of Eight universities has been assessed as world standard or above by the Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) results.

ERA assesses research quality within Australia's universities using expert review by committees of experienced, internationally-recognised experts.

Go8 Chair, Professor Paul Greenfield, said the ERA results, announced on 31 January, provide peer reviewed and metrics based evidence that Go8 universities are making very good use of the public investment in research.

"ERA has assessed 94 per cent of research undertaken at Go8 universities as world standard or above," said Professor Greenfield.

"While overall these results are promising they need to be viewed in the context of rising investment in research capacity in emerging economies in Asia. The results are certainly no cause for complacency.

"The Go8 welcomes the Government's focus on internationally benchmarked quality of research and looks forward to working with the Australian Research Council to improve the reliability of the data over time."

For more information visit: [www.arc.gov.au](http://www.arc.gov.au)

## Go8 Medical Deans call for action to establish academic health science centres

Medical leaders at Go8 universities have called for a change that would revolutionise medical education, research and patient care.

In an editorial published in January's *Medical Journal of Australia* (17 January 2011), the Go8 Deans of Medicine call for the establishment of Academic Health Science Centres (AHSCs).

AHSCs are created by joining up a leading university, a major tertiary hospital and other key partners, such as research institutes. More than 30 such centres have already been established in Canada, Holland, the UK, USA and Singapore, with growing evidence that patient care and cost efficiencies are improved.

The paper "Academic Health Science Centres in Australia: let's get competitive", claims strong advocacy for AHSCs in Australia has been ignored at the political level. It identifies several barriers to such developments in Australia but says that the introduction of Local Hospital Networks in Australia offer 'a pivotal opportunity' to introduce AHSCs.

The paper is co-authored by Professor Nicholas Fisk (UQ), Professor Steven Wesselingh (Monash), Professor Justin Beilby (Adelaide), Professor Nicholas Glasgow (ANU), Professor Ian Puddey (UWA), Professor Bruce Robinson (Sydney), Professor Jim Angus (UniMelb) and Professor Peter Smith (UNSW).

# International student satisfaction



In 2009-10, Australian Education International (AEI) commissioned research into the overall satisfaction of international students studying in Australia.

Higher education students identified the top four factors influencing their choice of study destination as: *Quality of teaching* (with 94% of respondents identifying this factor as important or very important); *Reputation of a qualification from the institution* (93%); *Personal safety* (92%); and *Reputation of the institution* (91%).

For more information on the survey results visit: [www.deewr.gov.au/International/Pages/news\\_studentsurvey.aspx](http://www.deewr.gov.au/International/Pages/news_studentsurvey.aspx)

For the same time period the Go8's own survey of international research students showed similarly positive results.

In 2009 the Go8 commissioned research to examine the attitudes, perceptions and experiences of Australia as a destination for study at the Higher Research Degree level.

The research found that the top five strengths of Australia as a research destination were: Australia's multicultural society, the friendly and welcoming nature of Australian society, the quality of Australia's universities, the safe environment and the research culture.

In addition it found very high levels of satisfaction with the quality of academic supervision amongst current and former research students.

For more information see [Backgrounder 11 on the publications section of the Go8 website](#).

## Conference support

Staff of Go8 universities will receive a 10% discount on registration for the upcoming higher education conferences.

### Australian Higher Education Congress 7-9 March 2011, Sydney

Download conference brochure at: [www.acevents.com.au/higheredu2011/pdf/Higher\\_Education\\_Congress\\_2011.pdf](http://www.acevents.com.au/higheredu2011/pdf/Higher_Education_Congress_2011.pdf)

Quote code: Go8 to claim the discount.

### Research Workforce 17-18 March, Melbourne

Email [executive.director@go8.edu.au](mailto:executive.director@go8.edu.au) to receive the Go8 registration form.  
[www.informa.com.au/conferences/human-resources-skilling/training/research-workforce-forum](http://www.informa.com.au/conferences/human-resources-skilling/training/research-workforce-forum)

### Interconnected Tertiary Education Conference 30-31 March 2011, Melbourne

[www.interconnectededucation.com](http://www.interconnectededucation.com)

Quote code: CC\*GO8 to claim the discount.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- Go8 Deans of Engineering Climate Change Workshop in Adelaide on 10-11 February
- Go8 Deans of Arts meet in Canberra on 17 February
- Go8 Deans of Medicine meet in Canberra on 22 February
- Go8 research training scholarships workshop in Melbourne on 23 February
- Go8 Vice-Chancellors meet in Canberra on 24 February
- Go8 Human Resources Directors meet in Canberra on 24 February
- Go8 Communications Directors meet in Canberra on 1 March
- Go8 Academic Policy Committee meets in Melbourne on 4 March
- China 9 Provosts meet with Go8 in Melbourne on 3-4 March
- Go8 Deans of Graduate Studies meet in Canberra on 11 March
- Go8 International DVCs and Directors meet in Adelaide on 15 March
- Go8 Chief Financial Officers meet in Melbourne on 1 April

## ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

The *Go8 Update* is published online to keep the Go8 network of committees and staff at Go8 universities informed about the organisation's activities.

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