

Transport and Access Action Plan

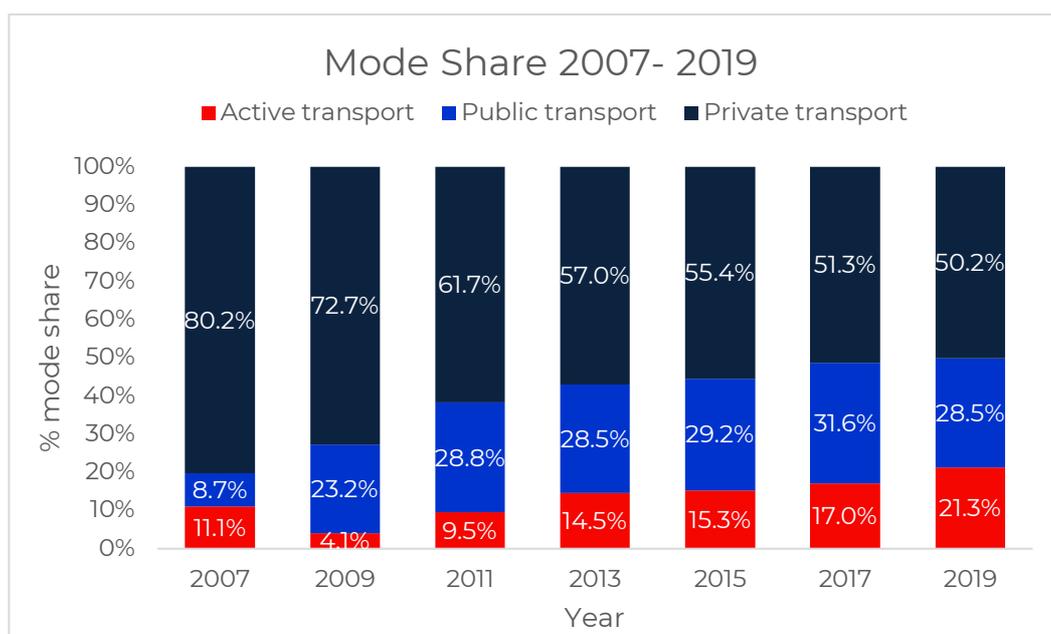
Progress Report 2020

FEBRUARY 2021 – FACILITIES MANAGEMENT DIVISION

1 BACKGROUND

UOW's Transport and Access Action Plan established priorities and tasks to be actioned over 2019-2021 specific to transport, parking and access to the Wollongong Campus. These actions support modal shift of commuters to the Wollongong Campus from private transport to active and public transport. 2019 modal shift results (Figure 1) showed that nearly 50% of staff and students used public and active transport to get to the campus.

Figure 1: UOW Mode Share Comparison 2007 - 2019



2 COVID-19 PANDEMIC IMPACTS

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, attendance at the campus diminished greatly from March 2020 when remote working, teaching and learning arrangements were implemented.

Paid parking was suspended in March, providing free parking for those who needed to continue working or studying on the campus.

Due to reduced travel requirements to the campus, the GK Shuttle was suspended at the end of March. This service is not expected to operate in 2021. The NG Shuttle has operated to the reduced timetable since the end of March.

In line with the Australian Government and NSW Government restrictions, plans were established to support social and physical distancing requirements. These included signage, implementing bus capacity limitations, continuous monitoring of demand for parking and bus services, sharing of travel

advice and information, and availability of hand sanitiser for UOW Shuttle passengers. These initiatives have continued in early 2021.

As restrictions eased, return to campus plans were put in place to provide a phased return for staff and students to the campus. While there was a gradual return of some staff and students over the rest of the year, on campus attendance did not return to previous numbers. Over the Spring Session it was estimated that up to 5000 students were on campus each week.

Data was gathered from available sources to understand the change in on campus attendance and travel modes as follows:

- Bike base entries declined from an average of 650 entries per month in 2019, to an average of 330 entries per month in 2020 (refer to figure 2).
- In April, only 18% of ticket and permit parking spaces were occupied on average each week. Towards the end of 2020, this figure increased to a maximum of 69% of ticket and permit spaces being occupied on average each week (refer to Figure 3).
- In week 2 of Autumn Session, an average of 3,500 passenger trips were made each day on the NG Shuttle. This declined to an average of 176 passenger trips each day for the rest of Autumn and Spring Sessions (refer to Figure 4).
- Parking surveys were carried out to understand the number of cars parked in streets surrounding the campus. There were about 20% fewer cars parked in the study area between the February and April survey periods.

Figure 2: Bike Base entries for 2020 - Wollongong Campus

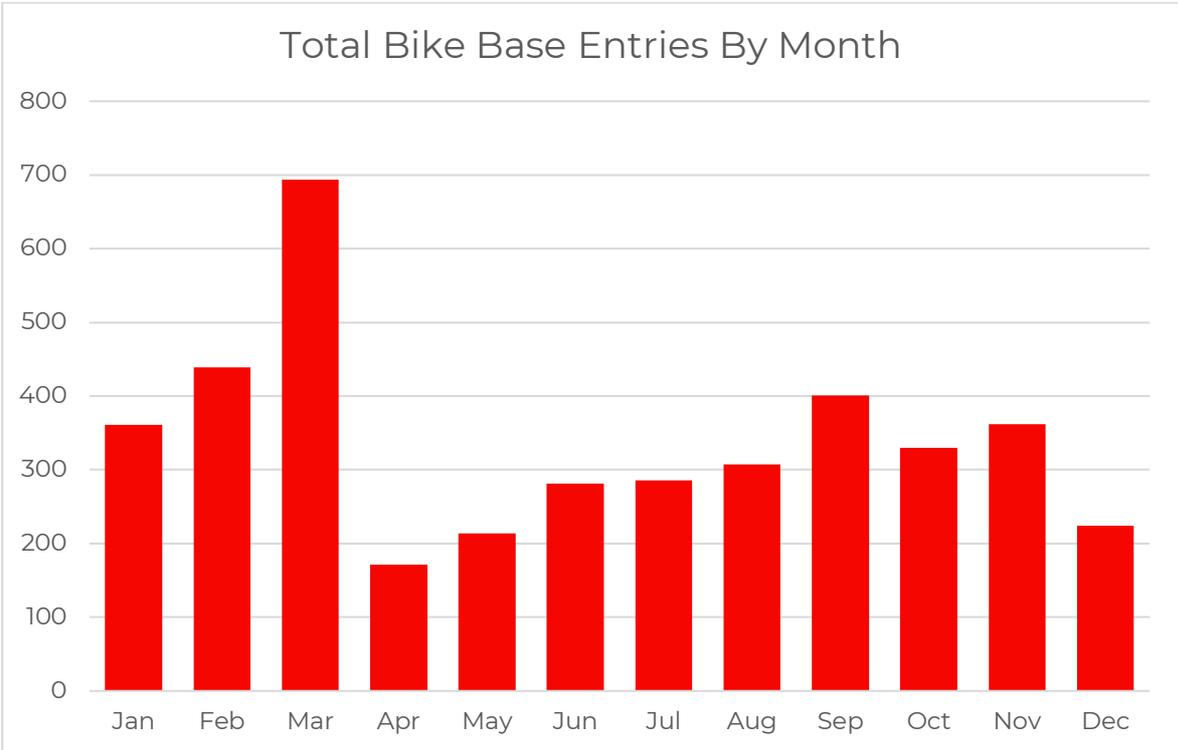


Figure 3: Occupied parking spaces on the Wollongong Campus – Autumn and Spring Sessions

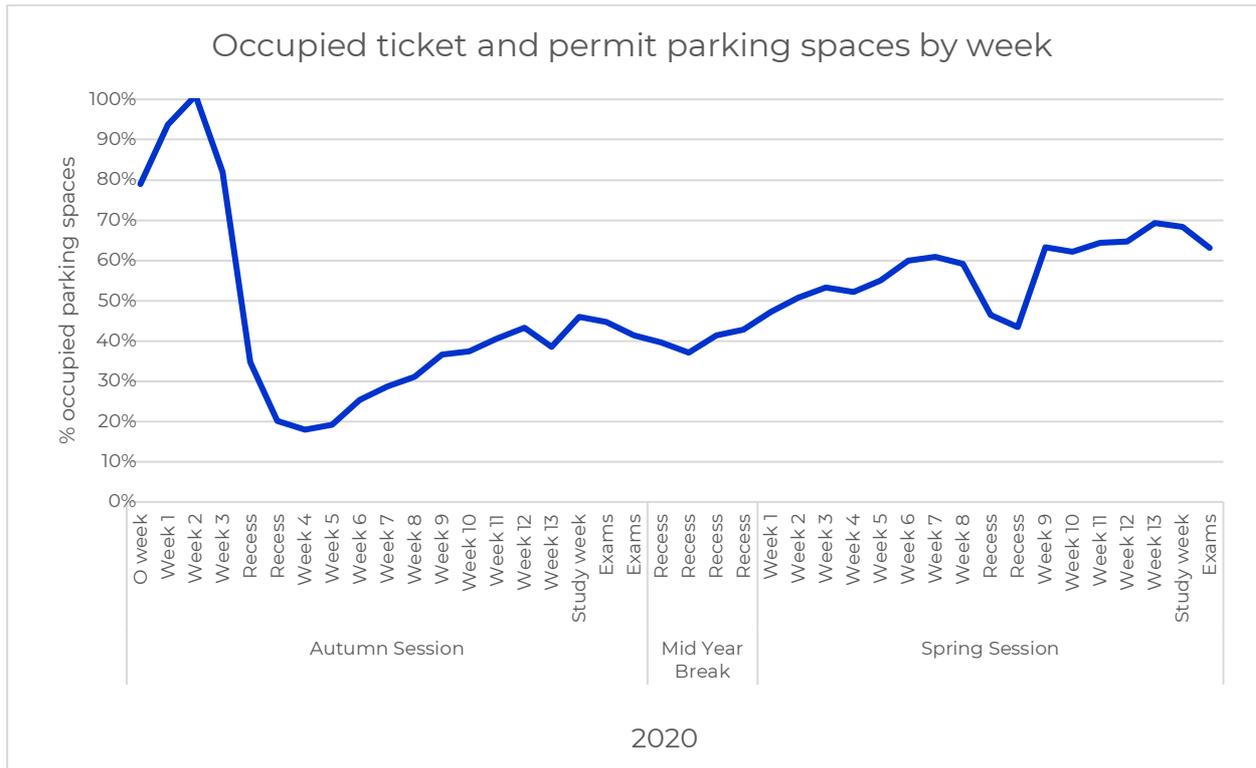
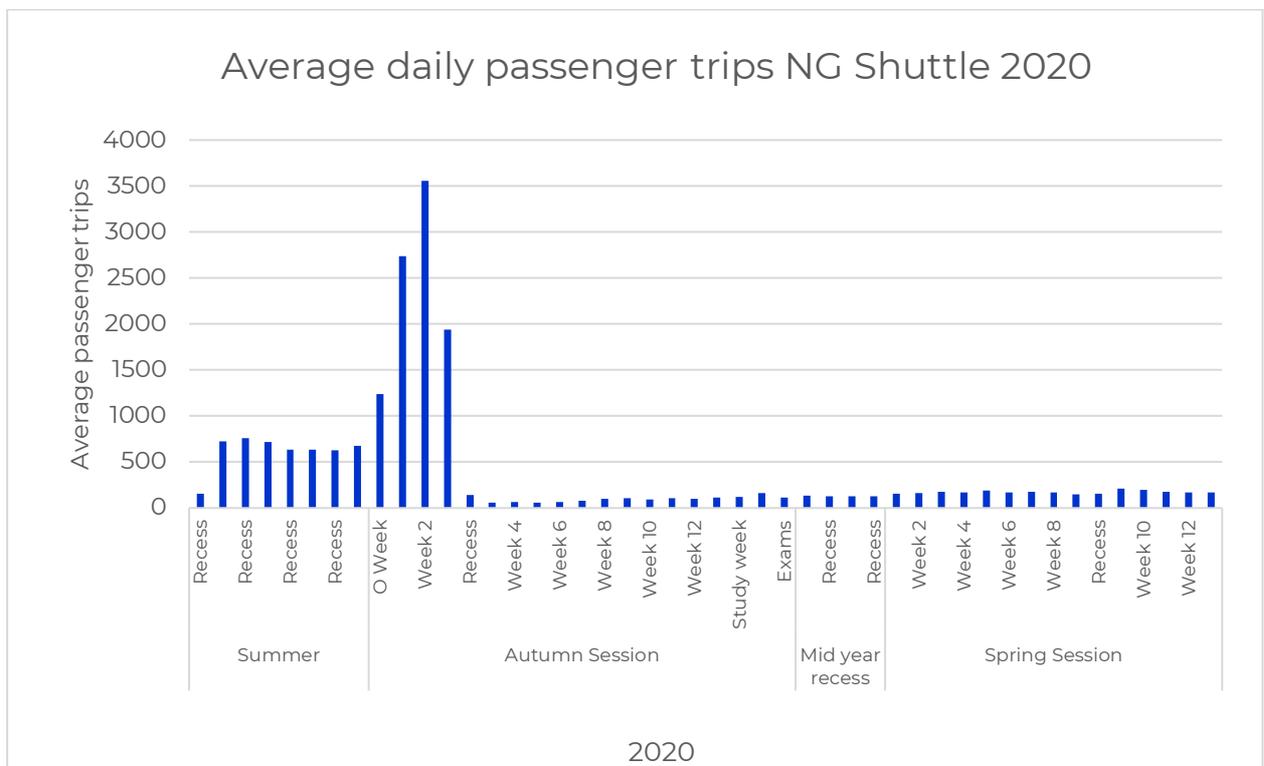


Figure 4: Average daily passenger trips for the NG Shuttle – Autumn and Spring Sessions



3 2020 PROGRESS

The following tables summarise progress made in 2020 towards implementing actions in these strategic areas. The 2019 progress report outlines previously completed actions.

Table 1: Strategic Area: Active Transport

ACTION	2020 STATUS	COMMENTS
Investigate bike share schemes and feasibility for the Wollongong Campus, including potential expansion of existing accommodation bike share scheme, staff bike share scheme, or salary sacrificed bikes.	Deferred	Deferred due to COVID-19 pandemic and reduced on campus attendance.
Encourage local and state government to improve bike/walking routes, crossing and general connectivity/amenity between Wollongong Campus and CBD, and Wollongong Campus and Innovation Campus.	Completed	<p>Discussed active transport needs with members of the Wollongong Campus cycling community.</p> <p>Participated in discussions to improve active transport links including the Keiraville Gwynneville Access and Movement Study.</p> <p>Promoted Wollongong City Council's draft cycling strategy to the campus community during the community consultation period to encourage staff and students to provide input. UOW also provided feedback on the Strategy to Council. The Strategy has now been adopted by Council.</p> <p>Provided feedback on Council's pop up cycle ways planned for Wollongong CBD, Thirroul and Port Kembla. These will be rolled out in early 2021.</p>
Review bike rack locations and suitability	Completed	<p>The location of bike racks and their condition was assessed in early 2020 through a campus wide asset survey.</p> <p>Additional bike racks were installed in 2020 through building 29 and Molecular Horizons projects. This included installing racks outside both buildings, a new bike base for building 29, as well as upgrading the racks in the building 32 bike base.</p>
Participate in investigations into improvements to on campus paths, ring road, and pedestrian crossings to ensure cyclist and pedestrian safety and access.	Completed	Participated in discussions about pedestrian and cyclist safety improvements for various locations across the campus. This included wayfinding, signage and barriers to support the return to campus and COVID-19 physical distancing practices.
Engage with the campus community regarding major changes to active transport routes e.g. new cycle ways.	Completed	Discussed with the UOW bicycle users group access to the campus by bike and encouraged input into Wollongong City Council's draft cycling strategy. Established a UOW cyclist mailing list to communicate directly with cyclists. Discussed end of trip facilities and bike racks with members of UOW's cycling community.
Provide input into investigations for new bike bases and end of trip facilities at key locations on campus and at student accommodation sites.	Completed	<p>An additional bike base was constructed in building 29. Lockers and change rooms are available within the building, and the bike base includes charging points for electric bikes. The bike base at building 32 was upgraded to include new bike racks as part of the works for the Molecular Horizons project.</p> <p>The Environment team have also contributed to discussions about bike storage and end of trip facilities as part of the Innovation Campus health precinct project.</p>
Participate in local, regional, and national cycling events to raise awareness (such as Ride to Work Day).	Completed	Due to COVID-19, limited events have been held. UOW participated in the NSW Government's Biketober Business Challenge in October. This was a month long challenge to encourage staff to ride. 44 staff members and students participated in the online challenge.
Participate in and promote cycling skills and bike maintenance workshops (in conjunction with UOW Wellbeing and Wollongong City Council).	Deferred	Due to COVID-19, in person cycling events were not organised by UOW in 2020. The Getting to Campus cycling webpage was updated with links on basic bike maintenance and safety checks.
Explore a bike donation program or formalise bike repair for abandoned bikes.	Completed	Abandoned bikes on campus have been collected by UOW Security. Following Security's unclaimed property procedures, the unclaimed bikes have been donated. They are expected to be repaired and provided to charities and people in need in the community.

ACTION	2020 STATUS	COMMENTS
Contribute to discussions on improvements to wayfinding on and around campus.	Completed	Participated in discussions about wayfinding to the campus, and on the campus. FMD installed new wayfinding plinths for building 29, and external building signage was updated. Additional building, major access pathways and other wayfinding improvements were implemented on the interactive and printed campus maps.

Table 2: Strategic Area: Private Transport and Parking

ACTION	2020 STATUS	COMMENTS
Investigate new schemes to incentivise and encourage greater carpool take up and increase compliance with carpooling policies, including new carpooling technologies for connecting users.	Completed	During the first two weeks of Autumn Session, there were on average nearly 400 carpooling cars each day. Due to COVID-19, the carpooling carpark was not operational from April 2020. An initiative was set up in 2020 to provide access for Kids Uni parents and carers who are travelling with three or more people to access the carpooling carpark.
Investigate options to reduce reliance on cars (distance based permits, reduced availability of on street parking).	Completed	Contributed to discussions for the Keiraville Gwynneville Access and Movement Study, which includes actions for Wollongong City Council to review on street parking. The Study also outlines actions to improve active transport links and public transport access. The Study was endorsed by Council.
Review existing parking operations, fee structures and allocations and investigate alternative parking systems (i.e. electronic permits/tickets).	In progress	Investigations are underway for new parking system technologies. Contributed to the development of a tender for parking management services for the Wollongong and Innovation campuses.
Participate in investigations into optimisation of the Ring Road and Northfields Ave including crossing points, possible northern entry, congestion issues, and drop off/pick up zones.	Completed	Participated in discussions for potential improvements for key crossing points across the campus.
Investigate options for electric or hybrid fleet vehicles and charge points.	Completed	Completed a review of local electric vehicle charging station providers.
Review and update existing parking guidelines, procedures and policies.	Completed	Updated parking forms and various parking documents. These will be used for parking operations in 2021.
Investigate feasibility of pool cars/ car share for the general campus community or expansion of current accommodation scheme.	Deferred	Deferred due to COVID-19 pandemic and reduction of on campus attendance.

Table 3: Strategic Area: Public Transport

ACTION	2020 STATUS	COMMENTS
Investigate inclusion of all low floor wheelchair accessible buses on UOW Shuttle bus services as part of future shuttle bus contracts.	Completed	All buses used for UOW services are low floor wheelchair accessible. This will continue to be a requirement for all future potential contracts.
Explore “park and ride” options.	Deferred	Not required in 2020 due to reduced campus attendance.
Participate in investigations into expanding bus stops/ bus interchange to meet demand, and improvements to infrastructure at bus stops outside Botanic Gardens and the Ring Road.	Completed	Contributed to discussions about bus stops and the Northfields Ave bus interchange. Additional bus layover parking was installed outside the Botanic Gardens on Northfields Ave by City of Wollongong Traffic Committee.
Explore incentivising public transport for commuters and prepare recommendations.	Completed	Transport for NSW implemented an off-peak incentive for public transport users during the pandemic. This was established to spread demand from peak to non-peak periods. The discount was extended to bus services, previously only available for metro and train services.

ACTION	2020 STATUS	COMMENTS
Review public transport services and capacity, frequency and alignment to class/work times.	Completed	A review was carried out of public transport options to the Shoalhaven Campus. FMD liaised with Transport for NSW to improve bus services to the campus. Through these discussions Transport for NSW, under their 16 Regional Cities Program, added an additional bus service to the campus in the late afternoon to support transport requirements.

Table 4: Strategic Area: Strategy, Data Analysis and Reporting

ACTION	2020 STATUS	COMMENTS
Carry out the 2019 transport headcount and access survey and analyse data.	Completed in 2019	Headcount surveys are usually carried out every two years. An additional survey was planned for 2020, but due to the pandemic it was deferred. The next survey is planned for April 2021. The last headcount access survey was carried out in April 2019. The results from this survey were used in preparing the Transport and Access Action Plan 2019-2021 and the Transport and Access Performance Report 2019. The results demonstrated that almost 50% of commuters to the Wollongong Campus use public and active transport, continuing the decline of private vehicle use.
Monitor and report on progress towards mode share targets and KPIs.	Completed	The results from the transport headcount and access survey are used to measure progress towards mode share targets set in the Wollongong Campus Masterplan 2016-2036. Progress continues to be made towards these targets. Since 2007 there has been a decline in private vehicle use of 30%. These actions and strategies, among others, contribute to achieving this mode shift.
Review current processes for survey collection.	Completed	Survey processes were reviewed and consolidated to provide better value for money and simplify survey methodology. This allowed resourcing to be made available for proposed surveys in 2020. Unfortunately the headcount survey did not proceed in 2020, but similar methodology has been applied for the 2021 surveys.
Facilitate future transport surveys.	Completed	A headcount access survey was planned for March 2020 but was deferred due to the COVID-19 pandemic. At this stage it is proposed that this will take place in 2021. The annual neighbourhood parking surveys were carried out in 2020. As expected, this showed that parking on neighbourhood streets had declined.
Carry out annual neighbourhood parking surveys and analyse data.	Completed	Neighbourhood parking surveys are usually carried out annually in February, March and April. These surveys went ahead in 2020, and showed a reduction of around 20% in the number of cars parked in the whole study area between the February and April surveys. As expected, on streets adjacent to the campus there was a more substantial decrease in the number cars parked.
Provide data and reports as required for enquiries and business needs (e.g. NGER, TEFMA etc.)	Completed	Prepared data for TEFMA, NGER, business needs and decision making purposes for a variety of stakeholders. This included parking utilisation, bus patronage, pedestrian and cyclist movements, vehicle entries to the campus, fuel consumption figures etc.
Review inter-campus travel options – i.e. Liverpool, Shoalhaven, Loftus, iC commuters to Wollongong Campus.	Completed	Updated information made available on the <i>Getting to Campus</i> website. Inter-campus travel demand was greatly reduced in 2020.
Review transport options for staff and students at other UOW campuses and liaise with campus managers/relevant staff.	Completed	Participated in discussions with Transport for NSW and relevant stakeholders about additional bus services for the Shoalhaven Campus. An additional service has been added on early weekday evenings to provide an option for those travelling to the campus.
Review travel options for commuters from areas not well serviced by public transport and students in UOW accommodation.	Deferred	Deferred due to COVID-19 pandemic and reduction of on campus attendance. Remote teaching and learning capabilities have provided opportunities for staff and students to study and work in alternative locations.

ACTION	2020 STATUS	COMMENTS
Participate in local and state government discussions and projects (i.e. Keiraville Gwynneville study, Mt Ousley Interchange).	Completed	Participated in discussions about projects and transport services with Wollongong City Council and Transport for NSW. This included discussions around COVID safe practices and local area studies. Participated in discussions about start of session traffic control with Transport for NSW, and other local stakeholders such as TAFE, Police and bus operators.
Contribute to an accessible transport strategy review.	Completed	Participated in discussions within FMD as required, including for Universal Design guidelines. FMD rolled out some external wayfinding, and updated external building numbers across the campus. FMD worked with our shuttle bus contractor to include all low floor wheelchair accessible buses for all UOW shuttle services.
Network and liaise with other universities to understand common issues and opportunities.	Completed	Liaised with other Universities about environmental initiatives, parking arrangements and available technologies.
Develop and implement behavioural change and awareness programs for commuters.	Completed	UOW continued to provide free shuttle buses, end of trip cycling facilities and other initiatives to encourage commuters to travel sustainably when required to the campus. Bus marshals were engaged in Autumn Session to support safe boarding practices and etiquette for bus passengers on campus. An O week stall was hosted in March 2020 to improve awareness of transport options to the campus with new students. Videos were also prepared about available transport options, and these were used for online staff induction and student orientation events.
Monitor and update <i>Getting to Campus</i> website and transport information on UOW intranet.	Completed	The <i>Getting to Campus</i> website was updated in early 2020 with start of year transport advice. Once remote working arrangements were implemented, this changed to advice on travel arrangements that had changed on campus. This information was updated frequently and included bus service changes and capacity limitations, active transport options and Covid safe travel practices. The <i>Getting to Campus</i> site had over 58,000 page views between January-December 2020.
Provide transport information and promotion bus and train services, and active transport options through print and digital methods.	Completed	The <i>Getting to Campus</i> website was updated frequently in 2020 to reflect changes to transport and access arrangements on the campus. This was the main channel used for communicating to staff and students about changes to parking and transport on the campus. The Environment Unit also contributed to other UOW webpages to provide advice on changes. The Environment Unit also updated print and digital bus timetables, and contributed to staff and student handbooks, maps and guides prepared by other areas. The Unit also prepared flyers and brochures and these were shared to student facing help desks, staff office areas, student residences and other locations across campus. Information was provided to IMTS who made several updates to the interactive campus map as requested. This included adding accessible major pathways, bus route/stop changes, additional bike bases, electric bike charging points, Regular updates were also made to the interactive campus map as required.
Facilitate and attend events to provide information to future and current staff and students (e.g. Enrolments, O week).	Completed	Getting to Campus stalls were held at Enrolment and O week festivals for Autumn session. Attendance was greatly reduced in 2020. Transport information was given to students and prizes were awarded to students during these events to encourage engagement. Videos were prepared about available transport options, and these were used for online staff induction and student orientation events.

Table 5: Strategic Area: Monitoring Systems and Services

ACTION	2020 STATUS	COMMENTS
Monitor parking guidance system, infrastructure and carpark operations, and contract management of existing system.	Completed	The parking guidance system was monitored throughout 2020 to ensure accurate parking occupancies were displayed on the signs and parking app for drivers to the campus. This included monitoring infrastructure to ensure counts were accurate and liaising with contractors to ensure any system issues were addressed in a timely manner.
Review existing parking guidance system operation, infrastructure, and contract. Prepare tender for future parking guidance system contracts.	In progress	Investigations are underway for future parking guidance system operations.
Monitor and respond to feedback, enquiries and complaints.	Completed	A large number of enquiries were received about changes to transport and parking services relating to remote teaching, working and learning arrangements. This included changes to parking fees, availability of parking permits, bike bases applications, and changes to the NG and GK shuttle services.
Contact management for UOW Shuttle buses including optimising the existing services and preparing future contracts.	Completed	Due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, a reduced NG Shuttle service has operated since March. This is currently expected to continue at least until the start of Autumn Session 2021. No service has operated for the GK Shuttle due to reduced attendance at the campus. In line with restrictions on public bus services, UOW implemented passenger capacity limitations and signage. Hand sanitiser dispensers were also installed on UOW's buses, as well as at the Northfields Ave bus interchange.
Monitor and review bike base utilisation, condition for users, card and key access, lockers, DIY tools and pumps.	Completed	Periodic inspections of the bike bases and maintenance stations took place to ensure good condition was maintained. Over 60 new bike base applications were received in 2020. Bike base utilisation was reviewed, with nearly 250 users regularly accessing the campus bike bases. This is slightly reduced from 2019 numbers, as expected due to remote learning and working arrangements this year. Signage was installed in each of the bike bases to support social distancing requirements in line with communications rolled out across the campus.
Improve user experience and back end updating of UOW Shuttle and UOW Parking apps.	Completed in 2019	No action was required in 2020. IMTS progressed some updates to the shuttle and parking apps in 2019 to improve the user experience and address bugs.

Prepared by:

Anna Bell - Transport Project Officer, Facilities Management Division

Endorsed by:

David Low - Senior Manager Environment, Facilities Management Division

Kathleen Packer – Director, Facilities Management Division