

# Responding to the Government Department of Education and Training

How Pilbara Group helped Central Queensland University respond to "Transparency in Higher Education" submissions using their Executive Cost Model.

In 2018, CQU had 6 weeks to comply with the new DET funding agreements mandatory reporting on the cost of teaching and scholarships. The funding agreement stated data must be provided in a form and at times required to support the national submissions platform.

CENTRAL QUEENSLAND UNIVERSITY



Central Queensland University is an Australian public university based in central Queensland. CQUniversity is the only Australian university with a campus presence in every mainland state with the main campus in Rockhampton. The Tertiary Education Division is led by the university's Provost and oversees the delivery of higher education and vocational education through the university's schools. CQUniversity has six schools, each of which are managed by specialist Deans. The Research Division is responsible for shaping and implementing the university's research strategy.

# The Challenge

CQUniversity had to work within a 6-week timeframe to comply with their Government funding agreement. At this time the university was using IBM Cognos and had limited resources and skillset to complete the DET costing exercise.

The short term goal was to comply with the DET submission requirement but the university also wanted a long term solution to empower finance and academic users to understand the university cost model by starting with a simpler methodology and evolving the complexity overtime to give greater financial transparency and support leadership decisions.



With 20 years of experience in developing cost models in the Higher Education industry the Pilbara team began a rapid implementation of their Executive Cost Model.

1. Define the project purpose and processes to minimise manual intervention.
2. Communicate to the University Executive and key stakeholders to avoid any confusion as to the models use.
3. Build the model to normalize data and determined cost of teaching and scholarship to complete the DET submission.

"Pilbara's demonstrated higher education sector knowledge has provided CQU with a model derived from granular-level data, whilst also being timely, transparent, accurate and flexible for any future CQU or sector changes. The Pilbara team are always professional and flexible, and in constant contact as to more innovative costing approaches and sector updates".

**Anita Anderson, Deputy Director - Corporate Budget at Central Queensland University.**

## The Outcome

Through their partnership with Pilbara Group, CQUniversity was able to:

- Rapidly implement an Executive Cost Model to comply with DET submissions.
- Minimise the impact on staffing resources.
- Minimise error and manual intervention.
- Begin data transformation across the institution with a robust and scalable cost model.
- Allow finance and academic staff to focus on the outputs and interpretation of the results rather than the actual build process.
- Access Industry Benchmarking.

