



Government of Western Australia
Department of Training
and Workforce Development

MURESK
INSTITUTE
CULTIVATING MODERN AGRICULTURE



Muresk Institute

BUSINESS REVIEW EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OCTOBER 2025





Acknowledgement of Country

The Government of Western Australia acknowledges the traditional custodians throughout Western Australia and their continuing connection to the land, waters and community. We pay our respects to all members of the Aboriginal communities and their cultures; and to Elders both past and present.

THE MURESK INSTITUTE

Located approximately 13 kilometres south of the township of Northam and 100 kilometres east of Perth, Western Australia, the Muresk Institute (formerly the Muresk Agricultural College) has been a hallmark of agricultural training, education and research for close to a century – in 2026 it will celebrate its 100th anniversary.

Muresk has been continually evolving to meet the training, education and research needs of the Western Australian agricultural industry.

The agricultural industry has also continually changed as both consolidation and innovation across this industry occurs in seeking the productivity growth to remain competitive in both domestic and international markets.

This includes a skilled workforce that evolves to meet ongoing changes throughout this industry.

The agricultural training and education sector has been particularly challenged over the past couple of decades.

Pervasiveness of ICT enabled remote delivery, changing economics and responding business models of vocational education and training (VET) and higher education institutions, shifts in student studying preferences and career pathways, increasing urbanisation of education and training, and changes in the social and environmental expectations of the agricultural industry have combined to place considerable pressure on rural training and education facilities across Australia, including Muresk.



Purpose of the Review

Ensuring the industry has access to a skilled workforce and suitable training facilities, is of vital importance to WA's agricultural industry development strategy. In recognition of this, a review of Muresk Institute's Business Model was undertaken in 2024 to identify future opportunities to complement the continued delivery of agriculture and agriculture-related training programs at Muresk.

Approach to the Review

The review included desktop research and consultation across the agricultural industry, agricultural training and higher education sectors, traditional owners and other key stakeholders through direct engagement and six stakeholder workshops.



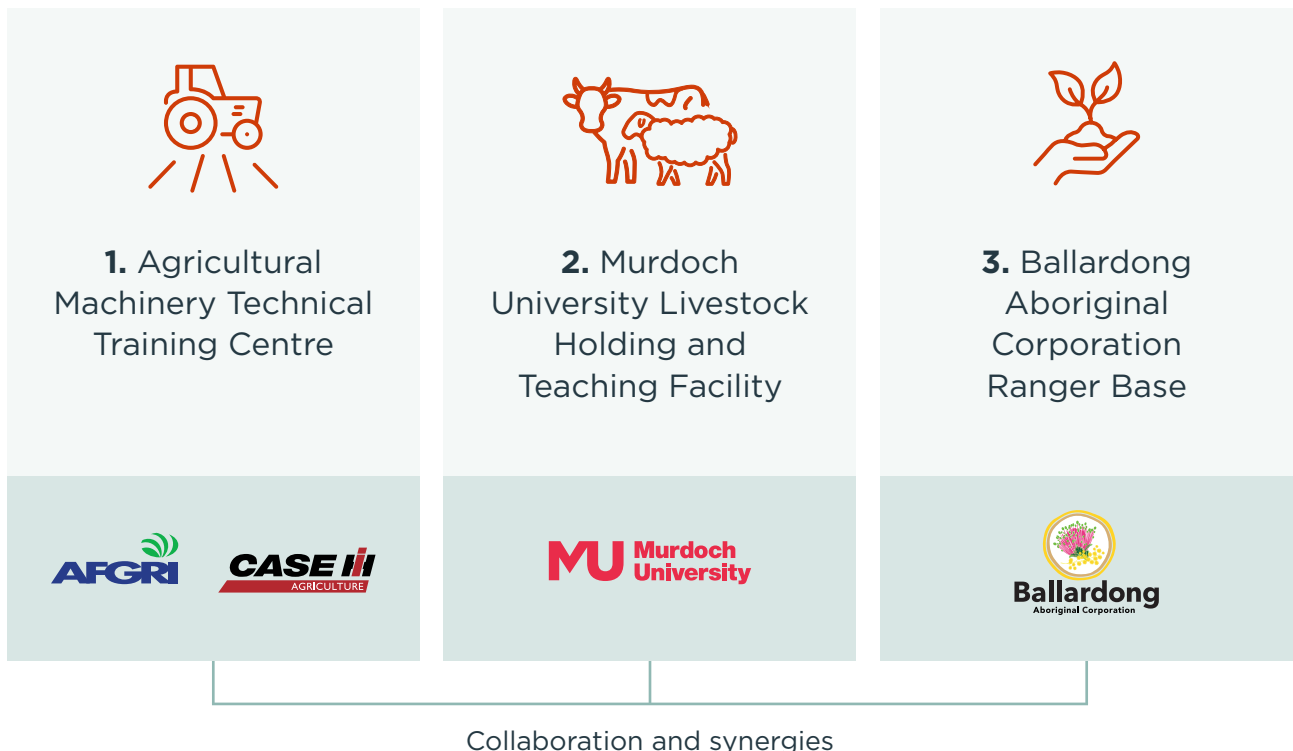
REVIEW OUTCOMES

The independent review was finalised at the end of 2024 with options for Muresk’s future direction provided to the State Government for its consideration.

The review and business case for its future has sought to address this by strategically matching aspects of Muresk’s infrastructure with the training and education needs of the modern agricultural industry via a demand-led process of opportunity identification, prioritisation and evidence-based assessment and implementation planning.

The review has identified three key synergistic pillars, as well as a suite of program delivery that is complementary to the training, education and operations under these pillars that are aligned with Muresk’s commercial activities and that would support industry, the economy and the community.

Pillars



PILLAR 1



Agricultural Machinery Technical Training Centre:

Work with industry to optimise delivery of agricultural mechanical training programs that meet the diverse workforce needs of WA's agriculture sector.

While improvement in the efficiency of agricultural machinery has been a continuous characteristic of the agricultural equipment industry since the mechanisation of agricultural machinery, the advances in commercially available agricultural equipment technology over the past decade has been nothing short of transformational.

Various field equipment such as tractors, combine harvesters, seeders and sprayers have transformed from primarily independent mechanical and hydraulic systems to complex, ICT and data intensive, networked and highly automated, and to some extent, remotely controlled systems. Further, the precision farming that these systems facilitate has become fundamental to driving productivity growth, a trend that is set to accelerate over the coming decades, particularly as rural data communications infrastructure continues to improve.

Almost all agricultural equipment (95 per cent) is imported to Australia, mainly from Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) located in the United States and Europe, and increasingly Asia.

Supporting both their sales and servicing functions, agricultural machinery dealerships maintain teams of technical specialists who typically have VET qualifications specific to agricultural machinery or at least heavy diesel and increasingly ICT VET qualifications.

Dealerships typically take responsibility for developing their skilled workforce through apprenticeship programs, as well as OEM product specific non-accredited training.

Extensive consultation with major agricultural machinery OEMs and their authorised dealerships in Western Australia has identified an opportunity to enhance the delivery of existing agricultural mechanical training program by including OEM training.

The addition of OEM training at the Agricultural Machinery Training Centre would ensure that Muresk's existing agricultural mechanical training programs continue to meet the changing workforce needs of WA's agriculture sector.



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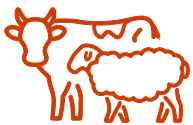
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PILLAR 2



Murdoch University Livestock Holding and Teaching Facility: Work with industry to optimise delivery of agricultural mechanical training programs that meet the diverse workforce needs of WA's agriculture sector.

In addition to Muresk being home to modern agricultural training facilities, the property is an operating farm, which has almost 900 hectares of land suitable for cropping, grazing, and live-stock handling.

Murdoch University's (Murdoch) School of Veterinary and Animal Sciences (SVAS) maintains a considerable relationship within the agricultural sector.

Course offerings encompass livestock health, production and management with the aim of equipping students with the skills to address challenges in animal husbandry and modern farming systems within WA and globally.

To deliver these courses, Murdoch needs to access livestock, which it currently maintains at other property holdings.

The review identified a significant area of the Muresk farm and livestock handling facilities could be used by Murdoch to

maintain livestock, deliver teaching and undertake research activities of its SVAS.

Pillar 2 would provide Murdoch with a simpler, more fit-for-purpose and bio-secure solution to the livestock holding, management and instructional needs of its SVAS.

Pillar 2 would, over the next few years, see more instructional activity concentrated at the Muresk facility. This would be a return of a sustainable and growing level of agricultural higher education activity at Muresk.

Both Murdoch and Muresk could invest in various aspects of farm improvement to ensure optimal animal welfare and biosecurity outcomes.



Source: Murdoch University

PILLAR 3



Ballardong Aboriginal Corporation Ranger Base:

Enable Ballardong Aboriginal Corporation to use Muresk offices, sheds, and plant nursery infrastructure as an operations base and for their various training needs.

The Ballardong People of the Noongar Nation are the traditional owners of the lands where Muresk is located and they have lived, practiced their culture and traded across the lands for at least 45,000 years.

Ballardong Boodja (country) spans some 63,000 square kilometres, and accounts for a significant portion of the Wheatbelt. The Ballardong Aboriginal Corporation (BAC) represents the traditional owners of Ballardong Boodja.

BAC has established the Ballardong Ranger Group (Ranger Group) to provide a range of natural resource management and conservation services to Northam, York, and Quairading. The Ranger Group

is expanding its activities and needs an operational base on Ballardong Boodja.

Pillar 3 would enable BAC to establish a base at Muresk and make use of offices, sheds and plant nursery infrastructure for training and operational activities.

This provides a significant opportunity for Muresk and BAC in terms of synergies with the other pillars of the business model, asset utilisation and co-located users of the facility.

COMPLEMENTARY PROGRAMS

The operations of each suggested option may easily co-exist across the Muresk campus but would also increase efficient utilisation of shared assets and cost bases, such as administration, telecommunications and general grounds maintenance.

The continued delivery of agriculture and agriculture-related training programs at Muresk by Central Regional TAFE and other organisations, such as Australian Wool Innovation would complement and support the three pillars.

There is strong potential to create an interdisciplinary educational experience by cross-training students and sharing knowledge across programs. Machinery students could gain exposure to livestock handling and care practices, broadening their understanding of the agricultural environment in which their skills would be applied.

Likewise, veterinary and animal science students could learn about the machinery and technology used in modern farming, from precision agriculture tools to heavy machinery.

Increased visitation to the Muresk campus by Ballardong peoples and community members would likely foster interest in and take-up of potential future career pathways, as well as foster future collaborations with BAC; offering an opportunity to embed Aboriginal land management practices into agricultural and veterinary education.

Collaboration among these programs could foster and enhance a role for Muresk as a regional hub for community and economic development in addition to its agricultural remit.

By supporting programs that combine agricultural machinery, veterinary and animal science, and Aboriginal land care, Muresk can build a profile with a broader audience, including beyond traditional agricultural education ecosystems.

This fosters community involvement and builds local capacity. With a combination of technical training, livestock management, and culturally focused land care, success of the three-pillar model could collectively contribute to the local economy by creating employment opportunities, supporting local agriculture, and attracting students, visitors and industry partners.

It is envisaged that these synergies could create new opportunities for Muresk to leverage its future role in supporting Western Australia's industries, economy, and the community.

This links directly with the State Government's *Made in WA* plan to keep WA at the forefront of global market shifts through training, industry support and the infrastructure needed to grow.





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