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# UQ launches new agreement with aerospace company

The University of Queensland (UQ) and Brisbane-based aerospace company V-TOL Aerospace are joining forces to drive the future of Queensland's aerospace engineering teaching and research.

The Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) Collaborative, an agreement between UQ's School of Information Technology and Electrical Engineering (ITEE) and V-TOL aerospace, will drive a new level of education experience and industry collaboration in aerospace engineering.

UQ Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) Professor Max Lu and V-TOL Aerospace's Managing Director Mark Xavier signed the agreement recently at UQ.

The UAV Collaborative will give UQ Aerospace Engineering students and researchers the opportunity to work on real-world projects with V-TOL, helping to develop their skills and gain a unique insight into industry operations.

Senior lecturer in the School of ITEE Dr Adam Postula said the agreement would enable UQ to take a leading role in the future of UAV systems development.

"UAVs can perform activities without the need of human pilots and are quickly emerging as a technology that is revolutionising the way we operate," Dr Postula said.

"They are used in military operations for reconnaissance, surveillance and combat missions and are increasingly finding practical civilian uses in search and rescue operations, environmental management, agriculture and mining, and even traffic monitoring.

"V-TOL Aerospace is a dynamic company with interesting ideas for the future of the UAV industry and through this link we hope to capture new opportunities in both research and education."

The first project established by the collaboration is the Australian Unmanned Aircraft Systems Academy, where RAAF cadets and UQ students, working alongside V-TOL, will be involved in the operation, maintenance and development of UAVs from early 2010.

V-TOL Aerospace's Managing Director Mark Xavier said the collaboration would ensure that the industry benefited from a supply of high-quality specialist graduates and development of new technologies.

"Australia is at the leading edge of a new and emerging commercial robotics industry," Mr Xavier said.

"V-TOL believes this industry requires, for long-term sustainability, an immediate strategy that will deliver a new generation of engineers and pilots in the field of robotics.

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“We believe that by collaborating with UQ, it will result in better research and development, deliver business-ready graduates to industry, stimulate interest in V-TOL and the robotics industry and enable us to maintain a commercial lead on the rest of the world.”

Media: Alice Walker at the Faculty of Engineering, Architecture and Information Technology (a.walker1@uq.edu.au or 07 3346 7696)

Brisbane St Lucia, QLD 4072

+61 7 3365 1111

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