

UTS Council meeting report

16 February 2022

This report covers some of the non-confidential matters considered by UTS Council at its 16 February 2022 meeting. The meeting was held at the UTS HR Training Rooms in Building 1.

**The Report structure replicates the flow of the agenda.*

Strategic items of business

UTS Advancement

UTS Council received a report in relation to the activities of UTS Advancement. Philanthropic fundraising is guided by the University's strategic goals. Research, student learning, social justice and Indigenous priorities are supported through philanthropy. Additionally, lifelong learning, partnerships and international activities are enhanced through Advancement's work.

The University of Technology Sydney Foundation, established by the UTS Council in 2008, forms part of UTS and is not a separate legal entity. The UTS Foundation Board, in operation since August 2020 and in partnership with the Office of the Vice-President (Advancement), acts in an advisory capacity to the University. The Board may provide advice on the management and investment of donations, however it is not responsible for the management of funds. All funds are accepted and managed by the University in line with UTS Delegations, the Philanthropic Fundraising Policy and other relevant procedures.

Workplace giving provides an opportunity for staff to direct their donations to scholarships for students facing financial hardship; Indigenous student support services or Thesis completion equity grants for research students. From 2006 – 2019, staff donated close to \$1M through the program. All gifts were matched by the University.

Operations and performance

Report from the Vice-Chancellor

The Vice-Chancellor provides a report to each Council meeting containing updates on key developments and events that have occurred since Council's last meeting. Updates include; the implementation progress of the UTS 2027 Strategy, State and Federal Government issues, updates regarding the university sector and internal matters, particularly achievements and awards.

The Vice-Chancellor noted that in the most recent Times Higher Education Rankings for Young Universities, the University had improved its international ranking by one place, (now ranked 8th in the World in the 2022 Survey), and continues to rank number one in Australia.

Council was advised that the volume of international students returning to Australia was slowly increasing. Based upon current available data, the University is optimistic that it will achieve load targets for 2022.

The alignment between government priorities and UTS Research strengths was discussed, noting that this will be monitored by the DVC Research and the Commercial Activities Committee. Council was advised that, whilst the University's trailblazer bid had been unsuccessful in securing Government funding, the work undertaken would be leveraged to secure future opportunities.

UTS Corporate Plan 2021 - End of Year Performance Report

Council monitors the University performance throughout the year. The end of year performance report provides valuable oversight on how well the University has performed against the targets set.

In November 2020 Council approved the UTS Corporate Plan 2021, which outlines our strategic priorities for 2021 and the associated performance indicator targets to track progress against these priorities. The plan also outlined a range of initiatives demonstrating a commitment to achieving our institutional goals consistent with the UTS2027 Strategic Plan.

Council commended the results overall, particularly during difficult and complex circumstances as a result of the pandemic. Specific elements of the report were discussed, with particular focus on where there are opportunities for improvement.

The new Corporate Plan was discussed including reflecting on the first three years of the UTS 2027 Strategy and how this will impact priorities going forward.

Reports from committees

Council has a number of committees, whose membership have particular expertise, to provide assistance and advice to Council on matters for Council consideration. These committees report back to Council.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee advises Council on matters relating to the distribution and supervision of university finances, and acts on behalf of Council in areas of delegated authority.

Council discussed the end of year results as presented to the Audit and Risk Committee in conjunction with the Finance Committee, through the draft parent accounts. Whilst 2021 was a challenging year, the final result was better than anticipated due to the actions taken to restrain expenditure and improve revenue streams from new business lines, and to enhance opportunities to commence courses in the Summer session.

Council acknowledged the effort, from the entire University, and success in achieving the results, which will provide a buffer to manage the significant financial challenges expected through 2022/2023.

Items for approval

Appointments to the Insearch Limited Board

Appointment of Nominations Committee Member

Items for noting

Council are provided papers for noting and include activity that has occurred between Council meetings.

- Chancellor's Report
 - Use of Power of Attorney, University Seal and Executive Action
 - Annual Declarations of Interest
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Items of General Business

Dean's Presentation

The Dean, Faculty of Health provided a briefing on the Faculty's profile and performance. Among other achievements, Council was advised of the Faculty's success in capitalising on the opportunity provided by the Online Programme Management (OPM) platform.

The risks confronting the Faculty over the next three years were discussed. Key challenges for the Faculty include: maintaining current high rankings; achieving PGx targets outside of OPM; and the increased costs and diminishing opportunities for clinical placements.

The Faculty's risk mitigation strategies were also discussed. These include: continuing to develop strong partnerships with health providers; and developing and supporting the careers of emerging successful research academics.

The Faculty is developing its strategy consistent with the objectives of UTS 2027. A key element of this will be to leverage external engagement to include the expansion of joint positions with health agencies. There is also an opportunity for Faculty academics to increase their participation in public discourse, supported by evidence based research, to influence policy makers.

Other reports

- Interim Student Admission and Enrolment Report 2022
- Work Health and Safety Report
- Audit and Risk Committee Report
- Governance Committee Report