

UTS Council meeting report

15 June 2022

This report covers some of the non-confidential matters considered by UTS Council at its 15 June 2022 meeting. The meeting was held at the UTS School of Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation at Moore Park.

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

The Chair noted that this is Professor Shirley Alexander's last meeting of Council before her retirement, and acknowledged her enormous contribution as a longstanding senior leader in the University community. Professor Alexander was also congratulated for being made a Member of the Order of Australia announced in the Queen's Birthday Honours List.

Strategic items of business

Strategic Briefing - People and Culture

Council noted the significant disruption that occurred to the UTS staff profile, both academic and professional, largely as a consequence of the pandemic

UTS operates in a competitive labour market as its workforce adjusts to the post-pandemic environment with increased demands for individual flexibility and diversity. UTS' people capability has supported significant operational change to manage the impacts of the pandemic and is shifting its focus and investment to develop, retain and attract high performing academic and professional staff to increasingly operate in an industry-focused digital future.

The importance of building and retaining leadership capability across all levels of the organisation, supported by systems and processes that maximise and optimise agility to support the delivery and achievement of the University's strategic objectives will be crucial. The University will need to further enhance the depth of leadership capability, (including translation and interpretation attributes), across the organisation.

A People Strategy is under development to prioritise and integrate UTS' investment in the workforce.

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 spoke to his report and highlighted various matters.

The UTS Annual Report was tabled in the New South Wales Parliament alongside those of other tertiary institutions on May 23.

The Annual Report also includes the university's audited financial results for 2021 and we shared a copy of this report with our staff with some additional context.

The onset of the global pandemic from early 2020 was forecast to impact UTS revenue by in excess of \$400m over the period 2020 to 2025. Notably, the most significant reductions in international student revenue were forecast to occur from 2022 onwards as a result of the reduced commencing student numbers and the completion of studies by continuing students, many of whom have continued to study remotely from overseas. The assumptions underpinning that forecast continue to hold.

In terms of the future, the next three years are likely to be our most difficult from a financial perspective but the mitigations we delivered in 2020 and 2021 will no doubt support us during this period.

Council also noted: staff movements at UTS and across the Sector; engagement with the NSW and Federal Governments; the 2022 Times Higher Education Impact Rankings; and student achievements.

An update on the UTS Strategy was also provided.

UTS Sustainability Report 2021

The Chief Operating Officer highlighted aspects of the report and the achievements and awards achieved over the past year. Council appreciated the new format consistent with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) framework and the measurable nature of the SDG's.

The University commitment to the UN SDGs, which affirms the University's intention to support and promote the SDGs through its research, education and operations, as well as report on activities in support of the goals was clear.

Council would like to see a shift to a prospective focus on particular SDG's to drive intent towards those goals.

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.

Report from Audit and Risk Committee

The primary responsibility of the Audit and Risk Committee is to assist Council in overseeing the activities undertaken by the UTS body corporate and, from time to time, other related entities as requested by Council.

In accordance with the University's Risk Management Framework, strategic risk assessment reports are provided bi-annually to inform Council, through its Audit and Risk Committee of the current risk profile of the university. These reports detail the current major strategic and operational risks faced by the University resulting from risks in the environment in which the University operates. The Key Strategic and Operational Risks were discussed.

Council discussed implementation of the Risk Appetite Statement including establishing clearer linkages between the Risk Appetite Statement and the Key Strategic and Operational Risks and identification of key controls required to ensure that risk appetite statements are met (particularly for those risks where the appetite is very low or zero). Strategies for informing Council of significant deviations from the risk appetite statement were also discussed.

Council approved the Risk Management Policy to strengthen and improve the risk management framework of the university to support the business deliver both its strategic requirements for the future and its current core operational activities, Council was advised that a supporting procedure has also been developed.

Physical Infrastructure Committee

The Physical Infrastructure Committee provides advice to Council regarding matters concerning UTS Buildings and the built environment surrounding UTS.

The Physical Infrastructure Committee was established by Council in 2007 to provide oversight of the then planned billion-dollar investment in new buildings. The University undertook a physical transformation in the ensuing 12 years to build a world-class campus to provide buildings and spaces for the best student and researcher experience.

The Committee oversaw the extensive program of work to develop the campus which was encapsulated in the Campus Masterplan and concluded with the finalisation of UTS Central (Building 2).

The focus for the University (and the committee) then shifted to develop or better utilise professional space and learning and teaching space in line with the UTS 2027 Strategy. The Committee also played an important role to help guide the University through the space and financial challenges presented by pandemic.

The shift in focus provides an opportunity for the current governance structure to be reviewed and the Committee's terms of reference widened. The Committee will continue

to provide oversight of building development, maintenance and provide a new lens on Precincts surrounding UTS.

Council approved amended Terms of Reference for the Physical Infrastructure Committee to incorporate oversight of information technology infrastructure. The Committee's name was also changed to the Infrastructure Committee.

Academic Board Report

Council received a report on: Enhancing Student Participation on Academic Board; an update on the Future of Assessment; an update from the Courses Accreditation Committee; and the Higher Degree Research Board. Council also approved amendments to Section 12 of the Student Rules.

Items for approval

- Council Committee Meeting Dates for 2023
 - Appointment to Activate UTS Board
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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
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Items of General Business

- Presentation by the Dean of Health and Acting Head of School Sport and Exercise Science on the research, teaching and learning conducted at the Moore Park Campus

Other reports

- Work Health and Safety Report
- Commercial Activities Committee Report
- Governance Committee Report
- Honorary Awards Committee Report
- Finance Committee Report