

# UTS Council meeting report

19 April 2023

This report covers some of the non-confidential matters considered by UTS Council at its 19 April 2023 meeting.

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

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## Strategic items of business

### Report from 2023 UTS Council Retreat

Over the two days of the Retreat, consideration was given to the consequence of the refinement of the UTS 2027 strategy and what the areas of focus should be for Council, and the University more broadly, over the second three-year phase of the Strategy.

The insights contained in the Report were well received and helpful for framing the strategic items for further by Council at future meetings in 2023 and reflected in the revised Forward Plan. Further consideration will be given to the monitoring and measurement of key aspects of the Strategy.

The Vice-Chancellor noted that the Council Retreat had served as a very helpful and instructive backdrop to the University Leadership Team's Retreat that was held at the end of March.

### Culture and People

Council received a paper that explored UTS' culture through the lens of the McKinsey 7S framework and highlights how the People Strategy seeks to develop the right culture. While difficult to measure and hence describe, UTS has a highly engaged and collegiate workforce with a great sense of professional and social purpose. To be able to adapt and scale efficiently for the future, UTS will require a culture that supports greater standardisation, collaboration and faster decision making.

Council acknowledged the coherent and integrated People Strategy incorporating the key elements discussed at Council meetings in 2022.

The tension between the strengths in UTS culture versus the elements and attributes required to achieve the Strategy were discussed. Identifying culture constraint attributes that impede the delivery of the Strategy is a priority.

The purpose of a written Values statement was discussed. Values are intrinsically linked to UTS identity and useful for anchoring behaviours, particularly in the context of change. Council also discussed the link between the University's Values and the Employee Value Proposition more broadly.

In summarising the discussion, the Chancellor observed that values are an important underpinning of culture. Therefore, it is critical to ensure that Values are clearly

articulated and integrated across the University's operations, noting that there are a number of interdependencies including with leadership, recognition programmes and onboarding processes for new staff.

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## 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 updated Council on the Enterprise Bargaining Process which is nearing finalisation through the submission to Fair Work Australia.

The 'Accord' process was discussed, and Members were pleased to hear that the UTS submission had been favourably received. The Vice-Chancellor will keep Council up to date as progress is made.

The new State Government had paused a number of activities initiated by the previous Government.

### Work Health and Safety Annual Report 2022

*Council monitors the University performance throughout the year. The Annual Work Health and Safety report provides valuable oversight on how well the University has performed.*

Each year the Council is provided with an annual report on UTS safety and wellbeing performance. The 2022 Annual Report included:

- A summary of incident and hazard experience (including serious incidents) with information about workers compensation insurance claims and premium management;
- An overview of performance and progress against the strategic plan 2020 - 2022;
- A review of consultation arrangements and health and safety planning and auditing; and
- An overview of training compliance for mandatory safety training.

The Annual Report is submitted in addition to the Standing Reports provided to every meeting. The Annual Report, Standing Reports and reporting from Audit & Risk Committee during the year when appropriate, forms the complete cycle of reporting to Council on health and safety matters.

Council thanked the team for providing reports throughout the year that enable Council to exercise due diligence and allow for interrogation of data to support the University's commitment to health and safety.

## **Social Justice report 2022**

UTS has been producing an annual Social Justice Report since 2011.

The report illustrates the breadth of work being undertaken across the university to promote equity, diversity and social justice in accordance with the objectives of UTS2027 and the UTS Social Impact Framework (SIF).

UTS has collectively agreed to put social justice at the heart of our strategic and operational priorities, and to commit to institution-wide areas of focus that maximise our capacity to deliver social change. Almost every university makes this claim. UTS's point of uniqueness is the UTS SIF which guides our social justice agenda, and our ability to demonstrate our impact through data and story in the Social Impact Dashboards.

The Social Impact Dashboards collate indicator evidence and key stakeholder perspectives from across the university, mapped against the six domains of change outlined in the SIF. The dashboards demonstrate the extent to which UTS has made progress in relation to the social justice outcomes articulated in the Framework, and offer insight into which areas require improvement.

The projects facilitated by the Social Justice and Inclusion Unit were discussed and Members were encouraged by the breadth of activities that connect different areas of the University. Work will continue to through research partnerships and in particular: thought leadership. Noting that the Human Technology Institute (HTI) had been launched.

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## **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.*

The role of Council and its Committees in the approval process for the annual UTS Financial Statements is prescribed in section 41C of the Public Finance and Audit Act 2083 as well as Council's Delegations and the Terms of Reference and Charters for its Committees.

The UTS 2022 Financial Statements were discussed and Council agreed that based on the information contained in the Financial Statements, the Annual Engagement Plan and corresponding Annual Engagement Closing Report, and inquiries made of management and representatives of the Audit Office, the Audit and Risk Committee was satisfied that there were no apparent issues with the audit and reporting processes or the financial control environment with respect to the production of the Financial Statements. Council approved the Financial Statements. The Financial Statements will be submitted to the Audit Office of New South Wales and included in the UTS Annual Report for 2022.

### **Report from Governance Committee**

*To fulfil a strategic governance role, the Governance Committee undertakes specific functions in regard to policy and general governance matters, and advises Council on a number of matters.*

UTS has responsibilities for the management of controlled entities and commercial activities enshrined in the UTS Act (see sections [16A](#) and [Division 3](#) respectively). UTS has also adopted the [Voluntary Code for Best Practice for the Governance of Australian Public Universities](#) which also prescribes governance requirements Council need to implement, including for the management of controlled entities and commercial activities.

The Governance Committee proposed that the existing measures and protection contained in the Commercial Activities Policy remain unchanged, however that the functions previously performed by the Commercial Activities Committee be reassigned to other Committees and management. Importantly, oversight remains a responsibility of Council.

Council approved that the Commercial Activities Committee be disestablished, however all current controls and monitoring requirements are retained and redistributed to other Council Committees.

Council also approved the Conflicts of Interest Disclosure Policy.

### **Report from Student/Council Liaison Group**

The Deputy Chair, Student Council Liaison Group (SCLG), gave a verbal update on the recent meeting of the Group. The Student Forum will be held in the Autumn Session with the likely theme being 'what does education look like and more importantly what does education at UTS look like in the future'.

Council also acknowledged the SCLG will also consider embedding the monitoring of the Student Partnership Agreement into its terms of reference. The office of the DVC Education and Students has developed a Student Advisory Group to address student concerns and issues in a timely manner.

The SCLG also discussed the impact of Generative Artificial Intelligence, and a diverse range of views were expressed by student leaders. Council noted that Academic Board is also considering the impact of AI.

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## **Items for approval**

Appointment to the accessUTS 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

### **Dean's Briefing – UTS Business School**

The Dean, UTS Business School, Professor Carl Rhodes, gave a brief presentation on the School Strategy implementation. The addition of Social Purpose to the School's Strategic Position statement resulted in a broad review of the Bachelor of Business.

The curriculum overhaul for the Bachelor of Business was a significant undertaking and some of the themes that had been considered as part of the review will potentially have implications for other courses. The proposed curriculum changes were well received by alumni, students, business leaders, professional and accreditation bodies who had been consulted through the Review process.

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## Other reports

- Student Load Report
- Work Health and Safety Report
- Report from infrastructure Committee
- Report from Academic Board