

UTS Council meeting report

11 October 2023

This report covers some of the non-confidential matters considered by UTS Council at its 11 October 2023 meeting.

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

Strategic items of business

Strategic Briefing – Precincts

Council was provided with an update on the Precinct Strategy and the impact of the change in State Government earlier this year. The University remains committed to both Tech Central and Western Sydney noting the need to further articulate and leverage the benefits for UTS stakeholders beyond a governance framework.

Both the Commonwealth and State Governments are committing resources to the Creative Industries and there are potential opportunities to leverage this commitment as part of the Tech Central Precinct.

Whilst the University will continue to monitor the opportunities for engagement in Western Sydney, it has become clear that Tech Lab has become a distinctive point of identity for UTS. The need to ensure effective space utilisation to maximise the University's investment in the facility is a point of focus for Management. This will include building upon existing industry partnerships and exploring opportunities to engage with new partners.

UTS will continue to engage with industry in Western Sydney through knowledge transfer, collaborative research, internships, and potential clinical placements and ensure that our investments in Western Sydney generate an appropriate return.

Strategic briefing – Pathways

The models for International pathways were discussed, and noting that they are well established and becoming further diversified. Whilst caution remains in some international markets, Council agreed that the established models are essential for International Student pathways, therefore most of the discussion centred around Domestic Student pathways where there are opportunities and challenges.

The focus of discussion centred upon the development of a more clearly articulated strategy for domestic student pathways to UTS. Historically, the need for diversification of domestic student pathways was not as evident, given the high demand from high school leavers.

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 provided an update on the Universities Accord process.

The university rankings were discussed and the need for the University to focus on the Strategy execution rather than being too focused on ranking outcomes.

Council noted the achievements and progress made as reported in the UTS 2027 Strategy Update Report. Council will receive further updates on the progress of the implementation of the People Strategy and the Learning and Development Strategy.

Work Health and Safety Standing Report

UTS Council has a proactive duty to exercise due diligence in the Work Health and Safety of the staff, visitors and students of UTS, under the Work Health and Safety Act. Council receive a standing report at every Council Meeting as well as an Annual Report and various other sources to enable due diligence.

Council discussed elements of the report including staff and student mental health and wellbeing. The results, including incidents reported to Safe Work NSW and the investigations and mitigations as a result, were also discussed.

The recent reporting, through the media, regarding sexual assault was discussed. All universities have examined their practices for reporting and awareness raising. Work continues to identify and remove any real or perceived barriers to reporting.

Reports from committees

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

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 2013 Council approved a health and safety compliance reporting framework, the "UTS Council Health and Safety Responsibilities". The Committee monitors activities, and receives a number of reports against the framework, in order to assure itself and subsequently Council. Council was provided an assurance statement as to the effectiveness and completeness of the University's actions with regards to health and safety.

Academic Board Report

The Chair of Academic Board provided a summary of the Report. This included the Board receiving an update on the University's approach to generative AI and noting that the Board is working through the implications for teaching and student assessment. Next year the Board will consider GenAI in context of the impact upon the achievement of the UTS Strategy and aspirations to be a leader in technology.

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.

A revised Constitution for Insearch was considered and approved, including approved to formalise the name change to UTS College. Council discussed the rationale for the constitutional changes. The revised changes to the Constitution will come into effect 1 January 2024.

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
- Final Council and Committee Meeting Dates for 2024

Items of General Business

Creative Industries Presentation

Professor Elizabeth Mossop, Creative Industries Strategic Lead, provided an overview of the approach to the development of the UTS Creative Industries vision and strategy.

Council discussed the Tech Central Precinct in context of the Creative Industries. The synergies between UTS, the Precinct and Industry partnerships provide a unique opportunity to capitalise on the benefit of being in close proximity to such a large concentration of creative industry organisations.

The draft vision and strategy are currently in development and will be available in 2024.

Other reports

- Student Load Forecast
- Finance Committee Report
- Infrastructure Committee Report