

UTS Council meeting report

19 June 2024

This report covers some of the non-confidential matters considered by UTS Council at its 19 June 2024 meeting.

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

Strategic items of business

Strategic Briefing – Foundations for 2030

Council discussed the expanded horizon of UTS 2027 to 2030. This considers the changed circumstances of the past four years and the current environment that is impacting the University.

As an outcome of the 2024 Retreat, Council confirmed a number of pillars that will contribute to the framing and prioritisation of strategic initiatives through to 2030.

Going forward the University will be deliberate in its points of focus to support not only its strategic objectives but also its financial and operational sustainability. Noting that whilst the University remains committed to its Strategy, there is an increasing imperative to identify areas of focus given resource constraints and an uncertain external policy environment.

The Vice-Chancellor outlined the five streams of Sustainability Strategy work underway. These include consideration of the following: the operating model; sustainable learning and teaching model; research investment; building revenue growth; and cost management.

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 gave a brief overview of his report and highlighted the UTS ranking results and the University's increasing reputation.

Council discussed proposed reforms to Australia's International Education Sector and Government proposals to cap student numbers. Management will seek to influence this policy where possible, and work is already underway to understand the budgetary implications.

The Staff Survey results were discussed, and Council noted the increase in scores for wellbeing and for cultural aspects of safety, trust and respect. The pulse survey will be undertaken annually which will provide not only year to year comparisons but also insights to the sentiment of the University's staff.

UTS Sustainability Report 2023

Council receives the UTS Sustainability Report annually. The Chief Operating Officer provided an overview of the highlights contained in the Report. UTS was commended for the work to further its goal towards the 2026 sustainability commitment.

It was noted that the University's commitment to sustainability, and the way this is evidenced through a range of initiatives, contributes to the University's ranking outcomes. Given the University's sustainability performance there is an opportunity to leverage this strength further.

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 Chair, Audit and Risk Committee, highlighted aspects of the report. Council noted that the Committee had been provided with a report and assurance statement from the Chief Operating Officer (COO), regarding the Commercial Activities 2023 review. The summary report was provided to Council.

Council noted that the 2024 audit program had been refined and consolidated and also noted that some audits from 2023 were still in the process of being finalised. The Audit Office of NSW report on engagement with the University was positive.

Infrastructure Committee

The Infrastructure Committee provides advice to Council on physical infrastructure, information technology infrastructure and precinct matters in the context of the UTS 2027 strategy, the budget and the Medium-Term Finance Plan.

The Chair of the Infrastructure Committee provided Council with an update on status of various completed and ongoing information technology projects.

Council was also advised that the Committee is provided with a comprehensive risk matrix and analysis that identifies a range of elements that impact on the program schedule of key projects. The Committee continues to monitor the impact of implementing a new Information Technology operating model.

The importance of the infrastructure projects currently being undertaken and how they will provide the opportunity to support transformation of the University's operations was

discussed. Given the scale of the projects the need for continuing coordination will be critical to their successful delivery.

The project to construct a new entrance to Building 6 from The Goods Line is expected to be completed by the start of the 2025 Academic Year.

Report from Governance Committee

Council noted that the proposed revisions to the Child Protection Policy were based upon a review undertaken by UTS Legal in the context of the increasing number of minors coming onto Campus through various outreach programs and UTS College.

In approving the 2023 UTS Modern Slavery Statement, Council noted the revised format more clearly identifies how the University meets its compliance obligations.

Annual Academic Board Report

The Chair, Academic Board, gave a brief overview of the Report, highlighting the role of Academic Board in the life of the University. The important role of Academic Board sub-committees in supporting the remit of Academic Board was also acknowledged.

Council was advised that the impact of Artificial Intelligence is an increasing point of focus for Academic Board.

Student/Council Liaison Group Report

Council noted that the review of the Student Partnership Agreement is progressing and is expected to be finalised in September.

Council was advised that student members had raised a number of matters at recent meetings including ethical partnerships, and the intersection of the University's Student Rules with the University's commitment to Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression.

Dean's Presentation – FEIT

The Council Meeting was held at UTS TechLab, enabling a tour of the facility at the conclusion of the meeting.

The Dean outlined the growth in industry partnerships and the way in which the Faculty continues to identify opportunities to further leverage its partnerships, including expanding opportunities to support work integrated learning for students.

Council discussed two major programs that have contributed to the work integrated learning strategy's success

The strategic priorities to deepen research impact include: research clusters and networks to elevate flagship research; a focus on processes and activities to support large strategic research bids; and developing research impact pathways.

Items for approval

- Council Meeting Dates for 2025
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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

- Council Reviews the Meeting and Reports at each Meeting
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Other reports

- Work Health and Safety Report