



UOW COUNCIL MEETING SUMMARY

The following matters, which may be of interest to the staff and students of the University, were considered by the University Council at its meeting of 8 April 2022.

Vice-Chancellor's Report / Strategic Update

The Vice-Chancellor highlighted the following issues in her report:

- The Illawarra and South Coast of NSW had experienced unprecedented rain and flash flooding causing dangerous and damaging conditions across our region. The University was responding well, rectifying leaks and controlling traffic in difficult conditions.
- Staff and students are back on campus and productivity is high with a focus on student enrolments and a range of new projects including digitalisation, workforce planning and exploring new revenue opportunities.
- UOW has performed strongly in the latest 2022 QS World University Rankings by Subject with Engineering and Technology ranked 147th globally, a result achieved collectively due to exceptional rankings in Minerals and Mining Engineering (30th globally), and Civil and Structural Engineering (in the top 100 globally and equal 6th in Australia). Materials Science performed exceptionally well, achieving 78th rank globally / 5th in Australia. The University's Australian Institute for Innovative Materials and recent breakthroughs in hydrogen technologies have our research a global success. The success of UOW's Molecular Horizons was reflected in Chemistry's ranking (143rd globally / 8th in Australia). Our Nursing program, a major UOW focus to produce world-class healthcare professionals and address future workforce shortages, was ranked in the top 100 globally. We also have strengths in Archaeology, Law, Philosophy and Statistics & Operational Research (all top 150 globally and SOR 7th in Australia).
- Noting the Ukrainian conflict, the VC advised that all Ukrainian students who receive an offer to study an eligible UOW course in 2022 will have the International Student Bursary applied, which giving them a 20% tuition fee reduction.
- The VC noted the resignation of Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation), Professor Jennie Martin, thanking her for her service to UOW and wishing her all the best for the future.
- Domestic and international enrolment updates were provided to Council.

National Student Safety Survey (NSSS) Results

The VC advised that, since the first national survey in 2016 resulting in the Change the Course Report, UOW and the HE sector in general has made significant improvements in responding to sexual assault and harassment, our policies and processes, and our training and awareness programs. She noted that the [Safe and Respectful Communities \(SARC\) team](#) had been expanded and moved to sit independently from student operational areas. SARC is now located in the library and has an increased focus on intersectionality and working collaboratively with our internal and external community stakeholders. The Co-Chairs of the SARC Advisory Group summarised the [NSSS results](#), the immediate actions being taken, and the new action plan which is under development in consultation with students staff and community partners. The Co-Chairs noted the results are consistent with rates of sexual harassment and sexual assault in wider society and the persistence of these issues stemming from underlying gender inequalities which we all need to address. Students with disabilities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and gender, sex and sexuality diverse students were more likely to have been sexually harassed or sexually assaulted than the wider student community. Therefore, it is important to work with our diverse student population to tackle issues of intersectionality which compound vulnerabilities. The VC noted concern that some students don't know how to access support or reporting assistance and advised that she was providing additional support for student co-designed communications to raise awareness levels. She thanked the Chancellor and Council's focus on this important issue.

Uluru Statement from the Heart

Council received a presentation by the Executive Director (Indigenous Strategy) about the [Uluru Statement from the Heart](#) and its creation from the largest of consultation processes. The Executive Director noted that the Statement directly and deliberately addresses the Australian people rather than the Government and calls for Treaty making, a Truth Commission and a Voice to Parliament. It was noted that UOW is ready to lead on this

important issue which is aligned with UOW's revised [Reconciliation Action Plan](#). The Chancellor, on behalf of Council, noted the importance of this work. [Strong endorsement of the Statement was provided by the Council](#).

IHRA Definition of Anti-Semitism

The Vice-Chancellor advised that the University has received a request from the Minister of Education to adopt the IHRA's non-legally binding [definition of anti-semitism](#). This issue had been discussed at the People and Culture Committee and had been recommended to Council for approval by way of a statement of adoption. The VC commented that adopting the definition would further demonstrate our commitment to equity and diversity. The Chancellor thanked the VC and Chair of Senate for their work on this matter and adopted the definition.

UOW Group 2021 Modern Slavery Statement

Council approved the [2021 Modern Slavery Statement](#), noting important work including the development of Modern Slavery awareness training and the Supplier Code of Conduct which enshrines a commitment to eliminating modern slavery from supply chains.

Faculty of Business and Law Presentation

Professor Colin Picker, Executive Dean of the [Faculty of Business and Law](#) presented to Council about his faculty, including current challenges and initiatives. He advised that the ethos and goals of the faculty – of social justice and responsible leadership – underpin all activities and initiatives.

Annual Financial Statements 2021

The 2021 Annual Financial Statements were approved by Council. Council was advised that the NSW Audit Office would be issuing an unmodified report and that its view was that the statements presented a true and fair view of the University's financial position. There were no high-risk issues identified and UOW Pulse and UOWGE's statements were also approved by their respective Boards. The Financial Statements are available in the [2021 Annual Report](#).

Governance Compliance Assessment

Council considered the University's 2021-2022 compliance self-assessments against the [Voluntary Code of Best Practice Governance for Australian Public Universities](#) and the [Higher Education Standards Framework: Corporate and Academic Governance Standards](#).

Council Committee Business

- Council approved the revised terms of reference for the Academic Senate and noted the minutes of its 9 March meeting.
- Council also noted the minutes of
 - (i) Finance and Infrastructure Committee meeting held on 9 March 2022;
 - (ii) Risk, Audit and Compliance Committee meeting held on 15 March 2022; and
 - (iii) People and Culture Committee meeting held on 24 March 2022.

For more information about Council Committees: <https://www.uow.edu.au/about/governance/governance-structure/university-council/>

Student Association Reports: WUSA & WUPA

Council received a financial report and report on activities from the Wollongong Undergraduate Student Association (WUSA) and a financial summary and report on activities from the Wollongong University Postgraduate Student Association.

Reports to Council

Council received the following reports and updates:

- Economic Update
- Collaborative Delivery Summary Report 2021
- Workplace Health and Safety Report
- Use of the UOW Common Seal

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The next meeting of Council is scheduled for Friday, 1 July 2022.