

WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Minutes of meeting 2019/4 of the Board of Trustees of Western Sydney University, held at 8.30am on Wednesday 7 August 2019, Building EB, Boardroom, Parramatta South campus.

Present: Board of Trustees
Professor Peter Shergold AC (Chair and Chancellor)
Professor Barney Glover AO (Vice-Chancellor and President)
Ms Elizabeth Dibbs (Deputy Chancellor)
Ms Kerry Stubbs (Deputy Chancellor)
Ms Carmel Hourigan (Deputy Chancellor) (*via Zoom at 11.51am*)
Mr Joseph Carrozzi
Ms Gabrielle Trainor AO
Emeritus Professor MaryAnn Bin-Sallik AO
Mr Bob Sahota
Dr Linda O'Brien AM
Ms Holly Kramer
Dr Ben Etherington
Ms Naomi Hastings
Ms Nicole Gismondo
Dr David Harland
Associate Professor Alpha Possamai-Inesedy (Chair of Academic Senate) (*via Zoom from 9.35am*)

Apologies: Mr Peeyush Gupta AM
Ms Georgia Lee

In Attendance: Western Sydney University
Ms Helen Fleming (University Secretary and General Counsel)
Professor Denise Kirkpatrick (Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic)
Professor Scott Holmes (Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor)
Mr Peter Pickering (Vice-President, Finance and Resources)
Professor Sharon Bell AM (Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Strategy and Planning)
Professor Deborah Sweeney (Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research and Innovation)
Mr Angelo Kourtis (Vice-President, People and Advancement)
Ms Sophie Buck (Director, Office of Governance Services)
Ms Christine Sharpe (Executive Governance Officer) (Minutes)
Ms Narelle Vance (Administration Officer) (Meeting Support)

(For Item 4.1 only)

Professor Kevin Dunn (Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research)
Professor Brian Stout (Deputy Dean, School of Social Sciences and Psychology)

1. OPENING AND PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1.1 Welcome

The Chair welcomed members and observers, declared the meeting open and confirmed that there was a quorum present.

1.2 Apologies

The Board noted apologies from Mr Peeyush Gupta and Ms Georgia Lee.

1.3 Declarations of Material Interests

The Chair invited Board members to declare any new material interests in relation to any matters on the agenda or their role on the Board more generally.

The Chancellor noted that he has accepted a position as Chair of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Review of Senior Secondary Pathways.

The Vice-Chancellor noted that he has accepted a position on the Westpac Foundation Trust Board.

1.4 Confirmation of Minutes

The Board requested a minor amendment to the wording in the open session minutes on item 2.2 (Vice-Chancellor's Report), requesting the inclusion of the words "the University engaged external consultants to review the University's cyber security framework and a risk and issues register has been created alongside other work by ITDS" in the last paragraph.

Resolution

That, subject to the minor amendment of item 2.2, the Board of Trustees approved the minutes and confidential minutes of its 12 June 2019 meeting and 13 June 2019 strategy day.

[07/8/2019:1]

1.5 Action Sheets from Previous Meetings

The Board noted the actions taken on items listed.

1.6 Starring of Items

Resolution

The Board of Trustees approved all unstarred items as having been considered and noted, and their respective recommendations as adopted.

[07/8/2019:2]

1.7 Arrangement of Business

The following items were identified as being considered in closed session: 3.2, 3.2.1, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5.

2. CHANCELLOR'S AND VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORTS

2.1 Chancellor's Report [Open Session Item]

The Chancellor highlighted aspects of his written report, including:

Donor Thank You Function

The Chancellor mentioned the annual Donor Thank You Function which was attended by Deputy Chancellors Dibbs and Hourigan.

Giving Day

The University will hold its first Giving Day event on 4 September 2019, as part of its 30th birthday celebrations. This event will be an opportunity to increase the number of philanthropic donors and give more public visibility to the University, such as opportunities for students who normally would not have access to the University and impactful research.

The Chancellor advised the Board that, as part of the Giving Day events, he will be abseiling down the Peter Shergold Building for his chosen cause, BabyLab at the MARCS Institute. The Chancellor encouraged Board Members to attend the event and engage stakeholders to fund raise for the University.

2.1.1 Model Code for the Protection of Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom in Australian Higher Education Providers [Open Session Item]

The Chancellor spoke to the draft *Model Code for the Protection of Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom in Australian Higher Education Providers*. He noted that this University already has in place an Ethical Framework for decision-making that specifically references academic freedom. He also noted the relevance of the Securing Success Strategic Plan. He emphasised that the key issue is how universities can be at the forefront of defending freedom of speech, intellectual inquiry and expression and how this is best articulated.

The Academic Senate is currently working on a draft Charter on Academic Freedom and a review of the Staff Code of Conduct policy for consideration by the Board of Trustees at a later date. These documents will help frame the University's commitment to the Model Code. It was noted that further work is needed to ensure that relevant clauses on intellectual freedom in the Academic and Professional Staff Agreements are reviewed during the next round of enterprise bargaining negotiations.

The Board discussed the value of using practical examples to contextualise academic freedom.

The Chancellor anticipated the Board would have the opportunity to finalise its response to the model by the end of the year.

2.2 Vice-Chancellor's Report [Open Session Item]

The Vice-Chancellor presented his report and highlighted a number of aspects, including:

Africa trip

This was the first trip to Africa as Vice-Chancellor of Western Sydney University. The visit was important for a number of reasons, including fostering the current positive set of partnerships and collaborations and student mobility opportunities. The University currently recruits about 500 students per year from Africa, primarily East Africa and Nigeria.

The Vice-Chancellor signed a number of collaboration agreements with several universities, focusing on global health, chronic disease management, innovation in agriculture and student and staff exchange.

International Rankings

Western Sydney University now ranks 58th in the 2019 Times Higher Education Young University Rankings, improving 13 places from the 2018 rankings. The University's reputation ranking in the QS World University Rankings for 2020 has improved significantly in the 250-300 band due to being active internationally and encouraging partners to complete the reputation survey.

Collaboration with University of Canberra

Western Sydney University and the University of Canberra have reached in principle agreement for collaboration at Sydney Olympic Park with the New South Wales Institute of Sport.

Solar Car Launch

The new solar car will be launched at the conclusion of the Board of Trustees meeting.

Staff Awards

The Vice-Chancellor drew the Board's attention to a number of nationally and internationally recognised awards that have been received by Western Sydney University staff members.

Partnerships Strategy

After an extensive consultation, audit and review process, a new Western Partnerships Strategy has been developed. Appropriate processes and support will be rolled out to improve practice across the institution and improve visibility and accountability for partnerships. In particular, there will be focus on maintaining existing partnerships and being clearer about the University's expectations. There has been a big increase in Category 3 income over the last three years, which provides a good platform. The importance of matching industry needs to research capability was noted.

Load and mid-year intake

The Vice-Chancellor provided an update on student load and noted that student numbers had softened slightly during the mid-year intake, which may be attributed to a decline in the size of the overall mid-year student market across the NSW and ACT university sector. The University's performance in converting offers to enrolments has improved markedly from 2018 by 59%. There were also some slight changes in the number of courses offered as part of the mid-year intake, but this will be reviewed and benchmarked against what other universities are doing (for example, some universities have moved to a 3 term academic year model, which would involve adjustments to courses on offer). A more in-depth analysis of this will now be carried out.

Donor Thank You Function

The University held a very successful annual Donor Thank You Function. This event provides an opportunity to engage existing donors on campus, to thank them for their support and showcase the impact of their support. It also provides an opportunity for those donors to meet students, researchers and academics who have benefitted from their philanthropy.

Gender Equality at Western Sydney University

The Board noted the Gender Equality annual progress report, including initiatives undertaken across the University. The Vice-Chancellor advised that there will be an increased level of reporting to the Board which will include data. This is being monitored by

the Vice-Chancellor's Gender Equality Committee. In addition, the University's Breastfeeding on University Premises Policy was released in June 2019.

General Staffing Matters

Professor Heather Horst will commence her position as Director, Institute for Culture and Society in February 2020, replacing Professor Paul James.

The Hon. Pru Goward has joined the University as Professor of Social Interventions and Policy Stream and will lead the Social Interventions and Policy Stream of the Policy Evaluation and Assessment Hub.

Professor Michelle Trudgett commenced her role as Pro Vice-Chancellor, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, Strategy and Consultation on 8 July 2019.

[Alphia Possamai-Inesedy joined the meeting via Zoom at 9.35am]

Government Engagement

The Minister for Education, Mr Dan Tehan and Vice-Chancellors across the nation are meeting on 7 August 2019 to discuss the current funding model, the Model Code and cybersecurity issues. Professor Kirkpatrick advised the Board that University funding will be linked to a number of categories, including graduate outcomes, student success, student experience and enrolment of indigenous, disadvantaged and rural students. A report will be provided to the Board at the next meeting.

The Vice-Chancellor also advised of recent meetings with:

- the Premier and the Hon. Geoff Lee, Member for Parramatta and Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education to discuss TAFE and how it links with higher education;
- the Hon. Rob Stokes, Minister for Planning and Public Places to discuss public spaces in Parramatta;
- the Hon. Brad Hazzard, Minister for Health to discuss health workforce planning.

The University is working with the NSW Government on how the University can contribute to State priority areas.

2.3 Academic Senate Report and Academic Senate Review – Final Report [Open Session Item]

The Chair of Academic Senate spoke to aspects of the written report, outlining the three embedded themes which are the voice of students on committees, transparency of academic governance and issues of representation on Academic Senate and academic governance committees with the academic restructure. A working group has been formed to address the recommendation of representation and will provide an action plan to satisfy TEQSA requirements. It is expected that the action plan will be finalised by the end of the year.

The draft Charter of Academic Freedom will also be discussed at the August meeting of Academic Senate.

The Chair of Academic Senate advised the Board that the criteria for the University and Dean's Medals will be opened up to Masters of Research students. Changes to the Graduation Policy are currently going through the approval process in readiness for the 2020 academic year.

3. SIGNIFICANT MATTERS FOR DELIBERATION OR APPROVAL

3.1 2021-2026 Strategic Planning Framework [Open Session Item]

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Strategy and Planning) spoke to this item and advised the Board that, following the Board of Trustees Planning Day on 13 June 2019, she subsequently presented at each of the Board Sub-Committees, providing an opportunity for input to the framing of the planning process. During these presentations, Committee members discussed the background and context and emergent themes.

Emergent themes to frame the 2021-2026 planning process were discussed and tested in small groups at a recent Senior Management Group Conference.

A consultation process with staff has commenced to encourage input from stakeholders. Initial outcomes will be presented at the October 2019 Board of Trustees meeting. The draft Strategic Plan 2021 – 2026 will be presented for consideration at the April 2020 Board of Trustees meeting.

The Vice-Chancellor noted that the next planning phase for the University 2021-2026 will be both exciting and challenging for the University.

Resolution

The Board of Trustees:

- 1 endorsed the proposed consultation framework to inform the development of the Strategic Plan Sustaining Success 2021-2026;**
- 2 endorsed the overarching strategic intent to strengthen the University's role as an anchor institution of Western Sydney together with the aim to extend its global presence; to offer excellent lifelong learning opportunities and constantly improving graduate outcomes; to capitalise on its growing research reputation and global ranking; and to lead sustainability, innovation and social transformation in the Greater Western Sydney region and globally.**

[07/8/2019:3]

3.2 Western Growth Update [Closed Session Item]

This item was considered in closed session.

3.2.1 Unsolicited Proposal – Walker Corporation [Closed Session Item]

This item was considered in closed session.

[Ms Gabrielle Trainor joined the meeting at 10.26am]

[Professor Denise Kirkpatrick and Associate Professor Alpha Possamai-Inesedy left the meeting at 10.50am]

4. PRESENTATION

4.1 School of Social Sciences and Psychology [Open Session Item]

[Professor Kevin Dunn and Professor Brian Stout, joined the meeting at 11.5am for this Item]

Professor Kevin Dunn and Professor Brian Stout attended the meeting to provide Board members with an overview of the School of Social Sciences and Psychology.

Professor Dunn highlighted the history of the School of Social Sciences and Psychology, outlining the growth of load and revenue of the School since its inception in 2012. Professor Stout highlighted the makeup of the different student cohorts within the School and provided an overview of the program performance and the impact of the 21C Curriculum Project, as well as the international reach and reputation of students. Professor Dunn spoke of research with impact and the success in Category 1 Grants, especially in 2013 and 2015, and highlighted the School's partnerships. Professor Stout spoke of the academic restructure and the outlook for 2020.

The Board commended the work of the School of Social Sciences and Psychology and thanked Professor Dunn and Professor Stout for the presentation.

[Professor Dunn and Professor Stout left the meeting at 11.40am]

5. BOARD COMMITTEES AND ADVISORY BODIES

5.1 Audit and Risk Committee [Closed Session Item]

This item was considered in closed session.

5.2 Board Executive Committee [Closed Session Item]

This item was considered in closed session.

[Ms Carmel Hourigan joined the meeting via Zoom at 11.51am.]

5.3 External Relations Working Party [Closed Session Item]

This item was considered in closed session.

5.4 Finance and Investment Committee [Closed Session Item]

This item was considered in closed session.

5.5 University Infrastructure Committee [Closed Session Item]

This item was considered in closed session.

[Ms Carmel Hourigan left the meeting at 12.15pm.]

6. OTHER MATTERS FOR APPROVAL OR NOTING

6.1 Uses of the University Seal [Open Session Item]

Resolution

The Board of Trustees approved the affixing of the University Seal to those documents listed in the attached report, pursuant to the University Seal Usage Policy.

[07/8/2019:11]

7. NEXT MEETING AND CLOSURE

The next meeting of the Board will be held on Wednesday 16 October 2019 at 8.30am at the Parramatta South Campus.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 12.20pm

Confirmed by:

(Chair)



(Date)

16/10/19
