

WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Minutes of meeting 2022/4 of the Board of Trustees of Western Sydney University, held at 8.30am on Wednesday 3 August 2022 in Boardroom 1, The Chancellery, Building EB, Parramatta South campus and via Zoom.

Present: Board of Trustees members present on Parramatta South campus
Professor Peter Shergold AC (Chair and Chancellor)
Professor Barney Glover AO (Vice-Chancellor and President)
Professor Sarah Zhang (Acting Chair of Academic Senate)
Ms Kerry Stubbs (Deputy Chancellor)
Ms Holly Kramer (Pro-Chancellor)
Mr Bob Sahota
Mr Simon Hickey
Ms Georgia Lee
Dr Fiona Pacey
Ms Coralie Properjohn
Associate Professor Jennifer Mensch

Board of Trustees member via Zoom
Ms Elizabeth Dibbs (Deputy Chancellor)
Dr Linda O'Brien AM (Pro-Chancellor)
Mr Lee Pinder
Miss Rayaca Tayabally
Mr James Christian PSM

Apologies: Mr Joseph Carrozzi AM
Ms Natalia Vukolova

In Attendance: Ms Jane Hutchison (University Secretary)
Professor Clare Pollock (Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost)
Mr Peter Pickering (Vice-President, Finance and Resources)
Professor Deborah Sweeney (Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research, Enterprise and International)
Professor Simon Barrie (Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic)
Professor Michelle Trudgett (Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Indigenous Leadership)
Ms Sophie Buck (Director, Office of Governance Services)
Ms Christine Sharpe (Executive Governance Officer) (Minutes)
Mrs Belinda Salvatori (Executive Assistant) (Meeting Support)

1. OPENING AND PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1.1 Welcome

The Chair gave an acknowledgement of country, declared the meeting open and confirmed a quorum was present.

The Chair welcomed members and observers, particularly Dr Fiona Pacey, newly appointed professional staff member, and Professor Sarah Zhang, Acting Chair of Academic Senate in Professor Mailhammer's absence overseas.

The Chair acknowledged that this was the last Board meeting for Mr Bob Sahota and, on behalf of the Board, thanked him for his significant contribution to the Board and the Finance and Investment Committee.

1.2 Apologies

Apologies were noted from Ms Natalia Vukolova and Mr Joseph Carrozzi.

1.3 Declarations of Material Interests

The Chair invited Board members to declare any new material interests in relation to matters on the agenda or their role on the Board more generally. No new declarations were made.

1.4 Confirmation of Minutes

The Board resolved as follows:

Resolution

The Board of Trustees approved the minutes and confidential minutes of its 8 June 2022 meeting.

[3/8/2022:1]

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 resolved to approve all unstarred items as having been considered and noted, and their respective recommendations as adopted.

[3/8/2022:2]

1.7 Arrangement of Business

The following items were identified for consideration in closed session: 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5. Item 4.4 was brought forward to be discussed after item 3.4.

2. REPORTS

2.1 Chancellor's Report [Open Session Item]

The Chancellor spoke to his report, noting the following:

- *International Travel* – The Chancellor outlined the success of the recent trip to Indonesia, Singapore, Vietnam and Malaysia that he attended in part with the Vice-Chancellor and other University staff. Highlights included officiating at the graduation ceremony at UEH University, and a live-stream session with Board and Board Committee members. The Chancellor advised that he and the Vice-Chancellor were each presented with honorary professorships from UEH. The Vice-Chancellor spoke to a

number of outcomes from the visit, including identifying opportunities for a campus development in Indonesia, the signing of cooperation agreements in Indonesia and Vietnam, discussions with embassies and consulates in the region, and the very significant progress that has been made with the WSU Vietnam campus.

- *UA/UCC* – The first meeting of Universities Australia (UA) meeting involving the representation of two Chancellors from the University Chancellors Council (UCC), and is indicative of the good progress being made in building a productive relationship between the two key advocacy bodies.
- *Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor Roundtable – Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Western Sydney* – A roundtable with key industry partners was held to identify and explore innovation and entrepreneurship opportunities for Western Sydney and the role of the University. The Minister for Skills and Training (and Minister for Science, Innovation and Technology), the Hon Alister Henskens, was in attendance. It was acknowledged that the roundtables are valuable opportunities to foster relationships with key ministries and stakeholders.
- *ATAR Reform* – As Chair of NESAS, the Chancellor spoke to the recently announced reforms to the HSC, highlighting the abolishment of the current system of classifying HSC courses as Category A or Category B Vocational Education and Training (VET) so more courses can contribute to a student's ATAR from 2025. Despite concerns that university early offer schemes may undermine the Higher School Certificate, Board members noted that the True Reward early offer scheme offered at Western Sydney University requires students to perform well in HSC subjects.

2.1.1 Board of Trustees Annual Strategy Day Outcomes [Open Session Item]

The Chancellor spoke to the agreed outcomes of the Board of Trustees annual Strategy Day, highlighting three concepts for further consideration, including the importance of the locations of Bankstown, Bradfield and Blacktown, mission-based partners, and embedded micro-campuses and open campuses. The Board discussed the importance of demographic and population trend data to drive this strategy, and fine-tuning the language used to describe the concepts within the plan.

The Vice-Chancellor advised that further data analysis will occur once the 2021 Census data becomes available over the next few months, with a view that the first draft of the Regional Masterplan will be presented at the Board Strategy Day in June 2023. It was agreed to provide the Board with an update of the analysis of the 2021 Census data.

Recommendation:

The Board of Trustees:

- a) acknowledged the significant contribution that Western Growth has made to the University's financial stability and the transformative nature of the region's growth;**
- b) endorsed the development of a decadal (2023-2033) Regional Masterplan that:**
 - i. coordinates the University's campus/precinct and academic planning**
 - ii. informs planning for the next wave of Western Growth**
 - iii. aligns with infrastructure investment, industry and employment growth in the region**
 - iv. meets the aspirations and changing needs of Western Sydney's communities, and**
 - v. enables sustainable, mission-led growth;**
- c) acknowledged the strategic importance of Blacktown, Bankstown (broadly defined) and Bradfield, and that the Regional Masterplan should consider a presence in these cities; and**
- d) noted that first draft of the Regional Masterplan will be presented at the Board Strategy Day in 2023.**

[3/8/2022:3]

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

The Vice-Chancellor highlighted the following items in his report:

- *COVID-19 Update* – The University continues to manage its response to COVID-19. The then-Acting Vice-Chancellor and President, Professor Pollock, issued an email informing staff that current arrangements will remain and encouraged staff to wear masks indoors and on transport.
- *UA Conference* – Minister for Education and Youth, the Hon Jason Clare addressed the conference, speaking of a positive “reset” of relations between government and universities. He highlighted a renewed focus on equity, enlarging Australia’s skilled workforce and rebuilding Australia’s education export industry. A key outcome from the conference was a recommendation for UA to discuss the Uluru Statement from the Heart and a voice to parliament at the 2023 UA Conference.
- *Enterprise Bargaining* – The University has signed a Heads of Agreement with the NTEU and CPSU, agreeing to a 13.7% salary increase over 4 years. Professional staff up to HEW level 5 will also receive a \$1,000 uplift and HEW 6-7 staff a \$500 uplift. Agreement has also been reached on a sector leading decasualisation strategy, with 150 FTE of new ongoing academic positions to be made available over the next 3-4 years, subject to the University’s financial position. The agreement will go to staff for a vote. The Board congratulated the management team on the successful outcome of the negotiations.
- *International travel* – The Vice-Chancellor advised the Board of a number of upcoming international trips, including UK and Europe, Taiwan, and India.
- *Business 20 (B20) meeting* – The University recently hosted the Business 20 (B20), the official G20 dialogue forum with the global business community. B20 representatives came together with Australian business community leaders on the Parramatta South campus to discuss how Indonesia and Australia can leverage their bilateral economic partnership to advance the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- *Cyber Security* – The Vice-Chancellor briefed the Board on a recent cyber-attack at the University of Western Australia, noting that WSU remains vigilant to cyber threats.
- *Association of Commonwealth Universities Appointment* – The Vice-Chancellor has been elected to the Council of the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) for a three-year term, from 1 August 2022.
- *NSW Supreme Court Proceedings: Thiab v WSU* – The University will appeal the Supreme Court decision, as it sets a precedent on interpretation of the University’s enabling legislation, and the concepts of political discrimination and academic freedom. The University’s insurer will indemnify the appeal.
- *State Government Funding Requests* – A number of funding requests have been put forward to the NSW Government, including a request for the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Acceleration Program.
- *Joint Medical Program with Charles Darwin University* – The University is exploring the development of a joint medical program with Charles Darwin University, similar to the joint program offered with Charles Sturt University.
- *Load and Revenue Update* – The Vice-Chancellor advised of an improvement in commencing student load while international load continues to be above target. Continuing load remains below target, in line with sector-wide trends.
- *General Staff Matters* – The Vice-Chancellor advised the Board of the passing of Distinguished Professor Anne Cutler FRS and George Henry Bennett OAM.
- *Appointment of new Dean, School of Science* – The Vice-Chancellor advised that Professor Graciela Metternicht has been appointed as the Dean of the School of Science and will join the University from 1 October 2022.
- *Sustainability Report: Reimagining Western 2021*: The Board commended the quality of the report and discussed what strategies the University was taking to leverage the

high performance against the SDGs. It was agreed that a strategy will be brought back to the Board in October for noting.

2.3 Academic Senate Report [Open Session Item]

The Acting Chair of Academic Senate spoke to the report, noting:

Student Management System (SMS) Project Update

The Chief Digital Officer and members of the project team attended the June meeting to provide an update on the SMS Project in relation to the next round of results processing and graduations. Academic Senate acknowledged the hard work of the project team to overcome the challenges.

Foreign Arrangements and Interference at Western Sydney University

The Director of Research Ethics and Integrity attended the meeting to provide an update on the procedures that have been put in place at the University to ensure compliance and reporting requirements under the Foreign Arrangements legislation and guidelines.

Monitoring of Academic Quality and Standards and Associated Risks

The Academic Senate meeting covered the sector-wide issues and risks associated with the maintenance of academic quality and standards, including staff fatigue, lack of capacity and the quality of online teaching. The Acting Chair of Academic Senate noted that the appointment of the new Pro Vice-Chancellor, Student and University Planning is a welcome step in mitigating this risk. These were discussed at the Co-CAB meeting in July

3. SIGNIFICANT MATTERS FOR DELIBERATION OR APPROVAL

3.1 Election of Chancellor [Closed Session Item]

This item was considered in closed session.

[Dr Linda O'Brien left the meeting at 10.30am]

3.2 Sustaining Success 2021-2026: In-Depth Analysis and Report - Transformation [Open Session Item]

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research, Enterprise and International) spoke to Measure 6 of *Sustaining Success 2021-2026* – Improve our research quality and impact, highlighting:

- *Excellence in Research Australia (ERA)* – The Australian Research Council (ARC) administers ERA, which aims to identify and promote research excellence within Australian higher education institutions.
- *Engagement and Impact Assessment (EIA)* – The ARC also administers EIA, using a 3-point rating, high, medium and low.

ARC has indicated there will be changes in the 2023 assessment. This may include additional case studies for each Field of Research (FoR), the use of impact and engagement metrics, or both. The guidelines have not yet been released. The Board discussed the measure's connection to the QS reporting and the definition of 'engagement' with industry and community.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) spoke to Measure 7 of the Strategic Plan – Increase the retention of our domestic and international students and the quality and employability of our graduates, highlighting:

- The Vice-Chancellor's Transition and Retention Taskforce is pivotal in the coordination

and oversight of retention activities, working closely with Schools and units to review retention data and develop resources to enhance student success.

- The University's graduate employability activity is coordinated within the Office of People by the Careers, Talent and Organisational Success team, who implement career development programs for students.
- Retention activities include the Student Transitions Achievement Retention and Success (STARS) project, Step to Success, Program Review Cycle and Western Success.
- Graduate Employability activities include general employment support, the High Flyers program (an innovative employability program that supports students to overcome traditional recruitment barriers), and the Graduate Recruitment Accelerator program which helps students make a smooth transition from study life to work life by presenting a range of activities and tasks designed to help prepare quality applications.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) also spoke to Measure 10 of the Strategic Plan – Expand the proportion of curricula and microcredentials that are co-created with industry and community partners, highlighting:

- The new Curriculum Design and Approvals Policy ensures that all curriculum embodies partnership pedagogy by being co-created with partners to ensure authenticity, relevance, and engagement.
- The Partnerships pedagogy (a key curriculum principle in the Curriculum Design and Approvals Policy) enables the University and its students to remain critically engaged with emerging social and ecological challenges, including engagement with the SDGs and complex future work environments.

3.3 Western Growth Update [Closed Session Item]

This item was considered in closed session.

3.4 Transformation Program Update [Open Session Item]

The Board noted the Transformation Program Update without discussion.

4. BOARD COMMITTEES AND ADVISORY BODIES

4.1 Audit and Risk Committee [Closed Session Item]

This item was considered in closed session.

4.2 Board Executive Committee [Closed Session Item]

This item was considered in closed session.

4.3 Finance and Investment Committee [Closed Session Item]

This item was considered in closed session.

4.4 People and Culture Committee [Closed Session Item]

[This item was brought forward and discussed prior to item 4.1 at 11.45am, whilst the Chair of People and Culture Committee was present]

This item was considered in closed session.

4.5 University Infrastructure Committee [Closed Session Item]

This item was considered in closed session.

5. OTHER MATTERS FOR APPROVAL OR NOTING

5.1 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 *Western Sydney University (University Seal and Authentication) Rule 2021*.

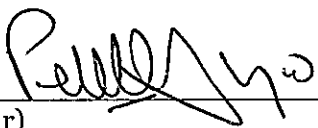
[3/8/2022:8]

6. NEXT MEETING AND CLOSURE

The next meeting of the Board will be held on Wednesday 5 October 2022 at 8.30am in Boardroom 1, Building EB, Parramatta South campus.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 12.30pm.

Confirmed by:



(Chair)

5/10/22

(Date)