



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Minutes of meeting 2023/3 of the Board of Trustees of Western Sydney University, held at 1.00pm on Tuesday 13 June 2023 in Conference Room 1, Level 8, Bankstown City campus.

Present:

Professor Jennifer Westacott AO (Chair and Chancellor)
Professor Barney Glover AO (Vice-Chancellor and President)
Professor Robert Mailhammer (Chair of Academic Senate)
Ms Elizabeth Dibbs (Deputy Chancellor)
Ms Kerry Stubbs (Deputy Chancellor)
Dr Linda O'Brien AM (Pro-Chancellor)
Ms Holly Kramer (Pro-Chancellor)
Mr Lee Pinder (Pro-Chancellor)
Mr Joseph Carrozzi AM
Ms Georgia Lee
Mr James Christian PSM
Dr Amanda Larkin
Mr Simon Hickey
Ms Coralie Properjohn
Dr Fiona Pacey
Mr Bayan Sohailee (*arrived at 1.29pm*)
Associate Professor Jennifer Mensch

Apologies:

Ms Natalia Centellas (née Vukolova)

In Attendance:

Professor Clare Pollock (Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost)
Mr Peter Pickering (Senior Vice-President)
Mr Angelo Kourtis (Vice-President, People and Advancement)
Professor Simon Barrie (Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic) (*arrived 1.08pm*)
Professor Deborah Sweeney (Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research, Enterprise and International)
Professor Michelle Trudgett (Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Indigenous Leadership)
Mr Bill Parasiris (Vice-President, Infrastructure and Commercial)
Mr Darren Greentree (Vice-President, Finance and Chief Financial Officer)
Ms Jane Hutchison (University Secretary)
Ms Sophie Buck (Director, Office of Governance Services)
Ms Christine Sharpe (Executive Governance Officer)
Ms Teneille Rousianos (Administration Officer) [meeting support]

1. OPENING AND PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1.1 Welcome

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

Professor Michelle Trudgett gave an Acknowledgement of Country.

The Chancellor advised the Board that it was the final meeting for Ms Coralie Properjohn and thanked her for her service and contribution to the Board.

1.2 Apologies

Apologies were noted from Ms Natalia Centellas.

1.4 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 and noted that Pro-Chancellor Holly Kramer had advised the University Secretary of her appointment to the Board of ANZ Group Holdings from 1 August 2023.

Mr Joseph Carrozzi advised the Board that he had written to the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor advising that he was unaware of the matter regarding the sharing of confidential tax information that occurred at PwC while he was Managing Partner.

1.5 Confirmation of Minutes

The Board requested an amendment to the wording in item 3.2 (2022 Audited Financial Statements), such that the fourth paragraph reads as follows:

The Chair invited the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) to speak to the success and challenges of the 2022 auditing process. The ARC Chair explained the expectation is that all audited statements are signed off, closing and management letters from the auditors are received, and that all issues are dealt with before the joint ARC and Finance and Infrastructure Committee (FIC) meeting in March. A key challenge this year was an issue raised at a very late stage in the process regarding the accounting treatment of a \$20m incentive payment for the Bankstown Campus. As a result, the audited accounts, and the finalised closing and management letters, were not ready for sign off at the joint ARC and FIC meeting. The Committees nominated their Chairs and selected members to meet further with Management and the Audit Office in relation to the outstanding matters. Representatives of FIC and ARC subsequently met with Management and the Audit Office to review the finalised accounts (specifically the amendment to the accounting treatment of the incentive payment) following the Audit Office and Management reaching agreement on the appropriate accounting treatment. In addition to this adjustment in the accounts, it was noted that the management letter has identified Western Growth as a high-risk item due to the complexity of the transactions. The Chair of ARC noted that the Committee Chairs had expressed their concerns in relation to the process of this year's audit and further discussions will be occurring to ensure the issues experienced in this year's audit do not recur.

Resolution

That, subject to the amendment of item 3.2, the Board of Trustees approved the minutes and confidential minutes of its 12 April 2023 meeting.

[13/06/2023:1]

[Professor Simon Barrie arrived at 1.08pm]

1.6 Action Sheets from Previous Meetings

The Board noted the actions taken on items listed.

1.7 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.

[13/06/2023:2]

1.8 Arrangement of Business

The following items were identified for consideration in closed session: 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5.

2. REPORTS

2.1 Chancellor's Report [Open Session Item]

The Chancellor spoke to her report, noting the following:

- *International engagement:* she participated in a Business Roundtable with the Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi and travelled to Vietnam for WSU-UEH engagements focused on the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Australia and Vietnam, and which involved the Prime Minister of Australia.
- *Sector and related engagements:*
 - Australian Universities Accord – Attended the Ministerial Reference Group meeting at the Bankstown City campus.
 - University Chancellors Council (UCC) - Appointed to the Executive Committee of the UCC from May 2023 and invited to participate in the sub-committee organising the National Conference on University Governance in Melbourne in October.
 - Times Higher Education 2023 Global Sustainable Development Congress – Presented via Zoom on *'Using reconciliation and migration to drive the development of more sustainable and equitable societies'*.
 - NEC Partnership - A partnership MOU was signed between WSU and NEC.
 - BCA and AUKUS – An update was provided on the industry opportunities within the AUKUS partnership.
- *University activities:*
 - Graduation ceremonies – Presided over her first round of graduation ceremonies, involving 5,300 graduates, 57 University medals, and four honorary awards.
 - Individual meetings with Board members – Advised that one-on-one meetings with members are now complete.
 - Foundation Council – Attended a meeting with the Vice-Chancellor and Mr Peter Brennan to discuss the disestablishment of the Foundation Council and the establishment of the Foundation Forum and Foundation Executive.
- *BCA tenure:* The Chancellor updated the Board on her tenure with the BCA.
- *Federal Budget* – There were no major funding announcements for the higher education sector in the recent Budget.

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

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

- *TNE* – The University has made great progress in meeting the intricate legal requirements for launching and running a campus in Indonesia. Recent advancements necessitate a return of the proposal to the Board for final approval in October. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research, Engagement, and International provided the Board with updates on these developments. The University has received permission to establish the Yayasan although new stipulations must be met. The Yayasan will be established as a non-profit organisation, and the University must provide an upfront payment of \$1 million for its operations. Additionally, the Yayasan must employ all academic staff. The University is diligently working on the business model and exploring various scenarios. It was agreed that the adjustments made to the initial proposal would be highlighted when the full proposal returns to the Board for consideration in October.

[The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research, Enterprise and International left the meeting at 1.37pm]

- *Time Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings*: The Vice-President People and Advancement, spoke to the two phases of the marketing plan to capitalise on the University's success in obtaining number 1 in the world for two years in a row, including (a) media release and email communications to students, staff, alumni, Viva Engage (formerly Yammer), website, digital screens and social media; (b) outdoor advertising, digital and social media, radio, shopping centres. The University is reviewing all opportunities throughout the year to integrate messaging into the full-year recruitment plans and embed within the University's operations more broadly.
- *Revenue Update (late paper)*: The Q1 Budget has been reforecast due to: (1) increased international student applications; (2) uplift in indexation for CGS places; (3) the JRG Low Completion rate rule impacting load by 500 EFTSL; and (4) an internal review of the funding clusters. The \$20 million negative contingency has been released into the budget, with the University on target for 2023. The Vice-President Finance and Chief Financial Officer advised that several elements have been factored into the reforecast, including (a) revenue contingencies and (b) retained underspend from activity inertia. The University's investments have shown strength due to market recovery, resulting in an improvement in the corpus. Additionally, the University has a strong cash position and does not need to utilise MTN funds.
- *Chinese Language Bridge Competition*: The University has won the Chinese Language Bridge Competition for the second year in a row.
- *Australian Museum Eureka Prizes*: One of the University's researchers are a finalist in the Australian Museum Eureka Prizes.
- *Australian Universities Accord*: The interim report (due mid-July) will include some recommendations for immediate action and raise further issues for discussion. The Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost will manage the University's response to the interim report.
- *International Delegation Visits*: The University hosted a number of international delegations, including: (a) a Chinese Consul-General Delegation; (b) City University of Macau Delegation; and (c) Japanese Cybersecurity Delegation.
- *QILT Report*: The University's performance improved compared to the sector from the 2021 results, and the percentage of undergraduate students satisfied with the Quality of the Overall Educational Experience is back to the pre-pandemic level.
- *Staff appointment*: The Board were advised that Mr Glenn Campbell has been appointed Chief Executive Officer of The College.

- *International Recruitment*: Due to visa fraud concerns, the University – like other universities - has suspended applications from three Indian states until 1 July 2023. To strengthen connections with Africa, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, Enterprise, and International will oversee re-engagement efforts.
- *The Voice to Parliament*: The Chancellor discussed the upcoming Voice to Parliament referendum. Although this item is to be discussed in depth at the August Board meeting, the Board could make a statement earlier than August. It was agreed that the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership draft a statement of support for the consideration of the Board. It was agreed that a pledge page, similar to the one set up in response to the Black Lives Matter campaign, would be instigated.

[The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research, Enterprise and International re-joined the meeting at 2.35 pm]

2.3 Academic Senate Report [Open Session Item]

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

- *Number 1 in the THE Impact Rankings*: which was fundamentally driven by our whole of University commitment to sustainability.
- *TEQSA renewal of registration*: Due to the complexity of the work required for the renewal of registration, a steering group has been formed to assist the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic. The Board were advised of Senate's concerns with the quality assurance and reporting mechanisms that have been impacted by the pandemic and the implementation of the new Student Management System. The Chair of Academic Senate reassured the Board that a process and roadmap have been established, and Academic Senate's reporting processes will return to their regular reporting capabilities.
- *Student Misconduct Rule*: The University has recently revised its Student Misconduct Rule, procedures, and policies following wide consultation across the University. These changes aim to improve decision-making and streamline the processes involved.

Resolution:

The Board of Trustees approved the revised Student Misconduct Rule to take effect from the date of publication.

[13/06/2023:3]

3. SIGNIFICANT MATTERS FOR DELIBERATION OR APPROVAL

3.1 Sustaining Success 2021-2026: In-Depth Analysis and Reporting - Equity [Open Session Item]

The Board noted the Sustaining Success 2021-2026 report: In-Depth Analysis Report – Equity.

The University's recruitment of Indigenous students was discussed. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership provided an update, stating that while the University currently has 714 Indigenous students enrolled, further efforts will be required during Semester 2 to reach the same level of Indigenous student enrolment as seen in 2022. To increase recruitment, the University is implementing a variety of strategies such as targeting non-school leavers and exploring approaches to TAFE leavers. The Indigenous Centre of Excellence (CoE) will also play a crucial role in attracting attention, and the University will actively promoting it to the community.

3.2 Western Growth Update [Closed Session Item]

This item was considered in closed session.

3.3 Hawkesbury Contamination Risk [Closed Session Item]

This item was considered in closed session.

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 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.

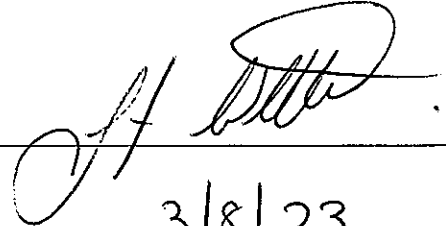
[13/06/2023:11]

6. NEXT MEETING AND CLOSURE

The next meeting of the Board will be held on Thursday 3 August 2023 at 8.30am in Boardroom 1, The Chancellery, Building EB, Level 2, Parramatta South campus.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 4.04pm.

Confirmed by:
(Chair)



3/8/23
