



## **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Minutes of meeting 2023/2 of the Board of Trustees of Western Sydney University, held at 8.30am on Wednesday 12 April 2023 in Boardroom 1, The Chancellery, Building EB, Parramatta South 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)  
Ms Holly Kramer (Pro-Chancellor)  
Mr Lee Pinder (Pro-Chancellor)  
Mr Joseph Carrozzi AM  
Dr Amanda Larkin  
Mr Simon Hickey  
Ms Natalia Centellas (née Vukolova)  
Dr Fiona Pacey  
Mr Bayan Sohailee  
Associate Professor Jennifer Mensch

Members present via Zoom

Dr Linda O'Brien AM (Pro-Chancellor)  
Ms Georgia Lee  
Mr James Christian PSM  
Ms Coralie Properjohn

**Apologies:** Mr Angelo Kourtis (Vice-President, People and Advancement)  
Mr David Daniels (Director, Financial Audit, NSW Audit Office)

**In Attendance:** Professor Clare Pollock (Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost)  
Mr Peter Pickering (Senior Vice-President)  
Professor Deborah Sweeney (Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research, Enterprise and International)  
Professor Simon Barrie (Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic)  
Professor Andy Marks (Pro Vice-Chancellor, Strategy, Government and Alliances) [for item 2.2 only]  
Mr Bill Parasiris (Vice-President, Infrastructure and Commercial)  
Mr Bhavesh Narsey, (Partner, Grant Thornton) [for item 3.2 only]  
Ms Sophie Buck (Director, Office of Governance Services)  
Ms Prashana Fernando (Acting Executive Governance Officer) [minutes]  
Ms Teneille Rousianos (Administration Officer) [meeting support]

Attendees present via Zoom

Professor Michelle Trudgett (Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Indigenous Leadership)  
Mr Darren Greentree (Vice-President, Finance and Chief Financial Officer)  
Ms Jane Hutchison (University Secretary)

## **1. OPENING AND PROCEDURAL MATTERS**

### **1.1 Welcome**

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

### **1.2 Acknowledgement of Country**

The Chair gave an Acknowledgement of Country.

### **1.3 Apologies**

The apology from Mr David Daniels (Director, Financial Audit, NSW Audit Office) and Mr Angelo Kourtis (Vice-President, People and Advancement) was noted.

### **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. Deputy Chancellor Dibbs declared a potential conflict of interest regarding the Ellucian SaaS Contract, Attachment 12, Item 2.2.

### **1.5 Confirmation of Minutes**

The Board resolved as follows:

#### *Resolution*

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**The Board of Trustees approved the minutes and confidential minutes of its 22 February 2023 meeting.**

**[12/04/2023:1]**

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### **1.6 Action Sheets from Previous Meetings**

The Board noted the actions taken on items listed.

### **1.7 Starring of Items**

#### *Resolution*

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**The Board of Trustees resolved to approve all unstarred items as having been considered and noted, and their respective recommendations as adopted.**

**[12/04/2023:2]**

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### **1.8 Arrangement of Business**

The following items were identified for consideration in closed session: 3.1, 3.2, 3.5, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4.

## **2. REPORTS**

### **2.1 Chancellor's Report [Open Session Item]**

The Chancellor spoke to her report, noting the following:

- *Individual meetings with Board members:* The Chancellor thanked members for attending the one-on-one meetings with her and noted that these were instructive in considering the future direction of the University.
- *Australian Universities Accord:* Discussion of the Accord has elicited timely consideration of the role and purpose of the University ahead of the Board Strategy Day in June, particularly regarding WSU's mission, industry engagement, and our international reach. WSU's submission to the Accord panel was exceptional, and the Chancellor thanked all involved.
- *NSW State Election:* The Chancellor discussed the election of the NSW Labor party to Government and the potential implications that a change in government will have for the University. The Chancellor noted her recent conversations with the Hon Chris Bowen MP regarding a potential WSU presence in Fairfield.
- *Graduation Ceremonies:* The upcoming graduation ceremonies will include revised remarks by the Chancellor, which will be shared with Board members.
- *Session with Business Western Sydney:* The University co-hosted with Business Western Sydney a successful 'in conversation' event with the Chancellor discussing the future of the University.
- *Voice to Parliament:* Consideration by the Board on whether the University should take a public position on the Voice and the role of the University in raising awareness on the upcoming referendum.

#### **2.1.1 2024 Board of Trustees Meeting dates [Open Session Item]**

The Board noted the 2024 meeting dates. Members were asked to contact Jane Hutchison, University Secretary, regarding any conflicts with these dates. Holding Board meetings at other campuses may be considered in future.

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

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

- *Australian Universities Accord:* WSU's submission was strong amongst the 300 plus submissions received by the Panel. Professor Clare Pollock spoke to the key points of WSU's submission, including the need for financial flexibility, a mission-based approach, micro-credentials, and equity and access challenges. The Board discussed comparative international funding models, the secondary-tertiary education nexus, modelling to demonstrate macro-economic benefits, and the likely appetite for a whole-of-government and funding-neutral approach. The interim report of the Accord Panel is expected in June 2023.

*[Professor Andy Marks joined the meeting at 8.50am.]*

- *NSW State Election:* Professor Andy Marks presented on the State election outcomes, and highlighted the following:
  - The shift in margins was significant, particularly where candidates engaged on hyper-local issues.
  - The University's engagement with both political parties ahead of the election focussed on the community and was evidence based. The Centre for Western Sydney engaged with then-Opposition Leader the Hon Chris Minns MP on policy development for the region and is considering how to support Labor's objectives for TAFE as a priority.
  - The new Premier may hold a '100 days in office' address from the University in July.

- Regional priorities for the new government will focus on Western Sydney Airport, Bradfield, the Sydney west metro, hospitals, education (TAFE and IATs), and arts and culture.

The Board discussed the University's role in advocating for jobs in Western Sydney and addressing wage disparity and other significant economic issues.

*[Professor Andy Marks left the meeting at 9.30am.]*

- *Student load and Revenue update:* load is estimated to be 800 to 1000 EFTSL (approximately \$10m - \$11m revenue) under target for 2023. Commencing load is expected to exceed targets and International load is expected to exceed 2019 levels. The Board noted the pleasing performance of Sydney City Campus, and OES, and the forecasted growth for the Sydney Children's Hospital Network (SCHN) and the Australian Technical and Management College (ATMC).
- *2022 Annual Report:* Data trends revealed that the University contracted by approximately four per cent (approximately 2,000 students) during the pandemic and is now recovering.
- *Indigenous Futures Decadal Strategy 2023- 2032:* Professor Michelle Trudgett updated the Board on the extensive stakeholder consultations undertaken to develop the Strategy, including engagement with indigenous elders, staff, students, the Indigenous professoriate group, and the University's Executive Committee. Western Sydney University is the only university in Australia with both a standard-term (2020-2025) and long-term (decadal) Indigenous strategy. The Decadal Strategy will be launched at the opening of the First People's Walk at the Kingswood campus.
- *The Engaged Teaching Project:* Professor Simon Barrie updated the Board on projects to improve the University's QILT rankings and to meet student expectations as they return to campus following the pandemic. The project will run through three stages: engaging with students on resetting teaching standards; supporting staff by engaging postgraduate students as teaching interns; and ensuring a sustainable model for this work. The Board requested information on current infrastructure and processes that can be used to advance this project and the role of ratings. It was clarified that the initial project outputs will be communicated to the Board. The Board also discussed positive staff engagement to ensure success, improving response rates of student evaluation, and a sector review of successful strategies to improve QILT rankings. The Board also discussed balancing students' preferences for on-campus and online learning, and the University's role in delivering nuanced responses.
- *Chancellor's installation:* A short video of the Chancellor's installation ceremony held on 25 February was played.
- *UNSW/WSU Joint Engineering Program Update:* the Vice-Chancellor noted the reasons for the discontinuation of the joint program as well as outlining further potential collaborations with UNSW that are under consideration. The risks of partnerships will be discussed at the WSU Board of Trustees Strategy Day.

### **2.3 Academic Senate Report [Open Session Item]**

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

- *Implementation of the Graduate Research School Review:* Communication and processing delays are being addressed with long-term solutions still being developed. A move to automated processes is expected to improve efficiency.
- *Quality Assurance (QA) Processes:* As TEQSA reporting requirements and data gathering were impacted by the pandemic, QA processes were placed under review. New solutions have been developed, and their progress will be noted through the ARC.
- *Microcredentials:* Academic Senate has been working on the development of a microcredential approval processes, which will be both flexible and contain the

appropriate rigour to protect quality standards. Discussions are underway on the best processes to monitor and respond to cases of student misconduct.

- *Australian Universities Accord*: Academic Senate contributed to the University's response to the Australian Universities Accord.
- *TEQSA Renewal*: Academic Senate is assisting with preparations for the 2025 TEQSA reaccreditation submission, under the leadership of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic).
- *Student Feedback*: Means to improve student response rates to, and to have better alignment between, the student experience surveys and the student feedback surveys is ongoing.

### **3. SIGNIFICANT MATTERS FOR DELIBERATION OR APPROVAL**

#### **3.1 Assurance of Internal Controls [Closed Session Item]**

This item was considered in closed session.

*[Mr Bhavesh Narsey joined the meeting at 10.30am]*

#### **3.2 2022 Audited Financial Statements [Closed Session Item]**

This item was considered in closed session.

*Mr Bhavesh Narsey left the meeting at 11.30am.*

*Mr Darren Greentree left the Zoom meeting at 11.50am.*

#### **3.3 Annual Report [Open Session Item]**

The Vice-Chancellor introduced the item, noting that the Annual Report reflects on 2022 in a positive way. The data reveals the impact of COVID on the University, specifically in relation to the decline in student numbers as well as demonstrating the University's path to recovery.

##### Resolution

##### **The Board of Trustees:**

- 1. Noted the relevant sections of the Annual Report that pertain to the Board of Trustees, namely the sections on Governance and Management (pages 11 - 18), and appendices 1 – 3.**
- 2. Approved the Western Sydney University Annual Report 2022 and authorised the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor to sign the letter of submission to the Minister in accordance with section 9A (e) of The Annual Reports (Statutory Bodies) Act 1984.**

**[12/04/2023:4]**

#### **3.4 Sustaining Success 2021-2026: In-Depth Analysis and Reporting Sustainability [Open Session Item]**

The Vice-Chancellor introduced the papers on the in-depth analysis of the *Sustaining Success* key performance measures. This deep dive reporting was introduced with the new Strategic Plan to provide a more focussed view for the Board's consideration.

##### Measure 1 - Grow the University's reputation

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research, Enterprise and International spoke to this measure. The University is tracking well against the three KPIs: The Young Universities Ranking, The Impact Ranking and The Overall Ranking. Key activities include enhancing research income

and offering stipends to international students based on the SDG ranking. The University has also taken a leadership position by hosting a Thought Leadership Event series and partnering with and mentoring Australian and New Zealand partners on the impactful work of the University.

**Measure 2 - Adopt energy renewables in campus operations and advance toward carbon neutrality in 2023:**

The Vice-President, Infrastructure and Commercial introduced the report noting that the University reached its 100% renewable energy target in mid-2021 and is now carbon neutral. Work is underway to accelerate WSU's nature positive and carbon positive strategies.

The Board queried the methodology for reporting on carbon-neutrality. It was noted that reporting includes procurement, travel, student load, and resourcing. The University has also aimed for the highest possible accreditation and is being assisted by the organisation '100% Renewables' in this process. Reports are annual and are backdated 12 months. The Vice-President, Infrastructure and Commercial will circulate the more detailed report on the University's carbon neutral and nature positive targets to members for further information.

**3.5 Western Growth Update [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 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.**

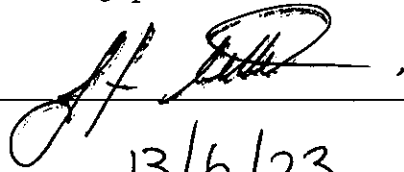
**[12/04/2023:10]**

**6. NEXT MEETING AND CLOSURE**

The next meeting of the Board will be held on Tuesday, 13 June 2023 at 1.00pm in Learning Studio BK1.6.08, Level 6, Bankstown City Campus.

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

Confirmed by:  
(Chair)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. F. [unclear]', written over a horizontal line.

13/6/23