

WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Minutes of meeting 2023/5 of the Board of Trustees of Western Sydney University, held at 8.30am on Wednesday 4 October 2023 in Boardroom 1, The Chancellery, Building EB, Parramatta South campus and Zoom.

Present:

Members present in Boardroom 1

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)
Mr Lee Pinder (Pro-Chancellor)
Mr Simon Hickey
Dr Amanda Larkin
Mr James Christian PSM
Ms Georgia Lee
Ms Natalia Centellas (née Vukolova)
Dr Fiona Pacey
Mr Bayan Sohailee

Member present by Zoom

Dr Linda O'Brien AM (Pro-Chancellor)

Apologies:

Ms Holly Kramer (Pro-Chancellor)
Mr Joseph Carrozzi AM
Associate Professor Jennifer Mensch
Ms Payal Shah

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)
Dr Nicolene Murdoch (Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic)
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]
Ms Nicole Bannerman (General Counsel) (Observer)

1. OPENING AND PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1.1 Welcome

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

The Chancellor advised the Board that it was the final meeting for Dr Fiona Pacey and thanked her for her service and contribution to the Board.

Mr James Christian gave an Acknowledgement of Country.

1.2 Apologies

Apologies were noted from Ms Holly Kramer, Mr Joseph Carrozzi, Ms Payal Shah and Associate Professor Jennifer Mensch.

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 requested an amendment to the wording in item 2.3 (Academic Senate Report), correcting the date of the VC/Chair of Academic forum to 4 August 2023.

Resolution

That, subject to the amendment of item 2.3, the Board of Trustees approved the minutes and confidential minutes of its 3 August 2023 meeting.

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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.

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1.7 Arrangement of Business

The following items were identified for consideration in closed session: 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 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:

- The release of the *Working Future: The Australian Government's White Paper on Jobs and Opportunities* and the importance of the White Paper for the University, particularly given the 2024 Federal budget may focus on education.
- *Aerotropolis and Western City Parkland Authority (WPCA)* – The Chancellor provided an update on the future and restructuring of WPCA and potential opportunities for universities. The Board discussed the significance of the aerotropolis, emphasising the need for the University to take a lead and to continue the momentum on its vision for Bradfield. To achieve this, a working group comprising Deputy Chancellor Liz Dibbs, Mr Simon Hickey, Dr Amanda Larkin, and Professor Andy Marks will be formed. It will consider Western 2035 as a framework to determine the University's role and present an action list to the Board at a future meeting.
- *University Chancellors' Council* – The Chancellor advised that she had attended a joint meeting with the University Chancellors Council (UCC) and University Australia meeting (UA).
- *Vietnam trip* – The Chancellor provided an update on the successful trip to Vietnam, which included significant student engagement events such as the first Western Sydney University-only graduation ceremony, a concert organised by commencing students, an MBA event, and an alumni dinner.
- *Giving Day* – The Chancellor spoke to the success of Giving Day which raised over \$1.3m for student scholarships, student life programs and services, and research and innovation at the University.
- *Fairfield Connect* – The launch of Fairfield Connect on 5 August which was attended by the Hon Jason Clare MP and the Hon Chris Bowen MP.

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

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

- *Australian Universities Accord*: The University Accord Review Panel is finalising its deliberations and will deliver the final report to the Minister by December. The University made a submission in response to the Interim Report. The Government's comprehensive response is expected ahead of the Federal Budget in May 2024. The Vice-Chancellor recommended extending the June Strategy Day in 2024 to 1.5 days to focus on the financial challenges as the University will have more certainty on load and Commonwealth investment.
- *Higher Education Support Act s19 – 82 Compliance Notice*: The Commonwealth's Department of Education served 79 notices of non-compliance to universities across the sector, including Western Sydney University. The notice relates to mandatory reporting outside the required deadlines. The University will respond to the notice within the required deadline.
- *Student Load Update*: The total number of students in all categories studying onshore is 600 EFTSL less than the previous year. This decrease is attributed to students studying less intensively, despite the total student population, including offshore students, being slightly higher than the previous year.
- *Staffing matters*: The University has appointed several senior staff, including:
 - Professor Maryanne Dever as Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Education
 - Distinguished Professor Brian Falzon as Dean, School of Engineering, Design and Built Environment
 - Professor Rod McClure as Dean, School of Medicine
 - Professor Sarah Lewis as Dean, School of Health Sciences

- Professor Vivian Tam as Interim Dean, School of Engineering, Design and Built Environment
- Ms Elen Seymour as Interim Dean, School of Law, and
- Professor Susan Page as Pro Vice-Chancellor, Indigenous Education.
- *Pro Vice-Chancellor, Global Development and Provost, Vietnam Campus* - The Vice-Chancellor advised that Professor Yi-Chen Lan has been appointed the President-elect of Fu Jen Catholic University in Taiwan and will finish with the University at the end of the year. The Board passed on their best wishes for Professor Lan's future endeavours.
- *Indigenous Centre of Excellence (ICoE)*– The Deputy-Vice Chancellor, Indigenous Leadership provided an update on the ICoE, which is the largest current Indigenous building project in Australia. The design competition is underway with the winner to be announced in December.
- *St Vincent's Boys Home*: After a consultation process to help identify options that will respectfully acknowledge the history and suffering that occurred at the current Westmead location, the Division of the Vice-President Infrastructure and Commercial will design an appropriate reflective space in the surrounds of the building. Survivors will be invited to an official opening of the site once complete.
- *Sustaining Success 2021-2026 – Mid-point Review*: The Vice-Chancellor advised the Board of the opportunity to reflect on the University's progress and to update the Strategic Plan to ensure consistency with the direction provided by the Board at the June Strategy Day. The revised draft has been the subject of internal consultation including (a) a dedicated webpage with targeted questions on the proposed changes, (b) an online session, and (c) face-to-face sessions with staff and students.

The proposed changes to the draft include:

- Refining the narrative to recognise the University's impact through increasing global presence and strategic priorities
- Further refining the mission statement and including the concept of 'one university'
- Adding a new value of 'agility' which reflects the University's approach to how it has responded and adapted to external changes
- Adding a new enabler, 'partnerships' to reflect the importance of collaboration to addressing local and global priorities, and
- Updating the success measures to reflect the current evidence base.

Board members discussed the difficulties of updating the current Strategic Plan due to the significant changes that have taken place since it was first drafted in 2020. Instead of proceeding with the mid-point review process, the Board agreed to continue to use the current version of the Strategic Plans and to leverage the insights of the revised version to prepare a 'provocations document' to be presented to the December Board meeting. The provocations paper is intended to help guide the University in the development of a new Strategic Plan (2025-2028) in the latter half of 2024.

- *Voice to Parliament*: The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Indigenous Leadership advised the Board on the University's preparations on the outcome of the referendum. The University has prepared two statements in response to either outcome. Three events have also been planned: (a) a gathering on 16 October for Indigenous staff, students, and Elders to support each other; (b) an event on 17 October at the Yarning Circle at the Bankstown City Campus; and (c) a final event on 18 October at the First Peoples Walk at the Kingswood campus. The University is developing a fact sheet to guide academic staff responses on the referendum and to inform students on the outcome. Discussions are also underway on how to embed the Indigenous voice at the heart of the ICoE. The Board discussed the importance of ensuring that Indigenous staff and students are provided with support post-referendum as they are very likely to be distressed. The University is exploring additional cultural leave options for Indigenous staff.

2.3 Academic Senate Report [Open Session Item]

The Chair of Academic Senate spoke to aspects of the report, including:

- *Quality assurance processes* – The Chair of Senate thanked management for resolving quality assurance reporting issues for Senate through the recalibration of reporting.
- *CoCABS Meeting* – Key discussions at the recent meeting of CoCABS focused on the formalisation of a body for the Australian Chairs of Academic Boards and Academic Senates (OzCABS) to be tabled at the national conference; the importance of independence in Academic Governance Processes; and the monitoring of academic risks.
- *Academic Promotions Report* - the Board raised questions about the 2022 academic promotion report and the criteria used to measure success. It was explained that regular monitoring takes place and that policies are updated to ensure that career advancement opportunities are available for equity groups.

3. SIGNIFICANT MATTERS FOR DELIBERATION OR APPROVAL

3.1 2024-2026 Proposed Budget [Closed Session Item]

This item was considered in closed session.

3.2 Western Sydney University Indonesia [Closed Session Item]

This item was considered in closed session.

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

The Board noted the Sustaining Success 2021-2026: In-Depth Analysis Report – Connectedness without discussion.

3.4 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 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.

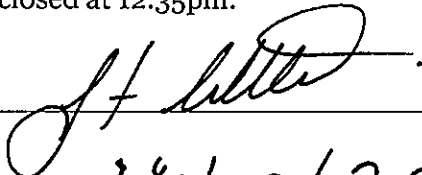
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6. NEXT MEETING AND CLOSURE

The next meeting of the Board will be held on Wednesday 6 December 2023 at 1.00pm in Boardroom 1, The Chancellery, Building EB, Level 2, Parramatta South campus.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 12.35pm.

Confirmed by:
(Chair)


14/12/2023
