



## **OUTCOMES FROM DEAKIN UNIVERSITY COUNCIL MEETING 5, 2024 – 8 NOVEMBER**

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Deakin University Council met on 8 November 2024 at the Melbourne Burwood Campus and dealt with matters as follows in accordance with its legislative responsibilities and 2024 business schedule.

### **Setting the strategic direction of the University**

Council considered a report from the Vice-Chancellor on current matters including:

- the latest information on student enrolment numbers for 2024 and 2025, which are tracking consistent with planning, including 2025 budget calculations (as further discussed below)
- the status of government policy and legislative measures: the Expert Governance Council arising from the Universities Accord review, the National Student Ombudsman Bill, the Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry into Antisemitism in Australian Universities, changes to casual employment under the 'Closing Loopholes' legislation, and amendments to the Education Services for Overseas Students Act to cap international student numbers
- latest results in university rankings, including Times Higher Education, CWTS Leiden and Australian Student Experience Survey (SES).

Council joined the Vice-Chancellor in congratulating Dilendra Wijesekara, PhD student in the Institute for Frontier Materials, on winning the People's Choice Award in the 2024 Asia-Pacific Three Minute Thesis Final. This follows last year's success when Agnes Mukurumbira from the CASS Food Research Centre won the 2023 Asia-Pacific Final and People's Choice Award.

### **2025-27 Financial Plan**

Council considered in depth the 2025-2027 University Financial Plan and a comprehensive presentation by Clare Lezaja, Chief Financial Officer.

The Plan comprises the 2025 University budget and financial projections for 2026 and 2027, covering all domestic and international operations and all University controlled entities.

There is high level of confidence about the precision of the budget forecasts and parameters for 2025, buttressed by the latest information on student numbers and government policy settings. The forecasts for 2026 and 2027 are the best possible projections, from the firm basis of 2024 and 2025.

Council considered the basis for financial projections, external benchmarks and funding priorities over the triennium. Council was satisfied that the University is maintaining a strong cash position over the three years, is not taking on any debt, and is continuing a positive financial trajectory.

Following full discussion, Council approved the 2025 Deakin University budget and noted projections for 2026 and 2027.

Council expressed its appreciation to staff across the university on their work on a cogent and well considered Financial Plan addressing a challenging and changing funding context.

### **Investments**

Council considered a report from the Investment Committee on the University's managed investments and future arrangements for expert advice on those investments. There will be an investment strategy session at the 2025 Council Strategy Conference.

### **Major Projects**

Council considered the Major Projects Report for the third quarter.

## **Enterprise Service Management Phase 2**

Council approved the business case for Phase 2 of the Enterprise Service Management project. This will complete the move from the legacy to the latest Service Now system and will overcome inefficiencies and annoyances arising from running two versions concurrently.

## **Research Streamline Program**

Council approved a Change Request to the previously approved parameters of the Research Streamline Program. The changes will focus concerted work on two subprojects essential to deliver information system stability and improvements by the end of 2025. These two subprojects are 'Research Funding and Project Management' and 'Graduate Researcher'.

Council had regard to the review of the Change Request by the Finance and Business Affairs Committee. The Committee was satisfied that the Change Request represents a sensible way forward to conclude the Program, manage attendant risks and deliver important system improvements.

## **University policy – Treasury management**

Council approved amendments to the Treasury Policy and Treasury Management Procedure. The first versions of this Policy and Procedure were approved by Council in 2023 and came into effect on 1 October 2023. In accordance with the University's Policy Framework, a one-year post implementation review was conducted. This review concluded that they are operating as intended. The amendments involved certain clarifications to wording and the incorporation of provisions previously contained in the Investment Management Procedure. This is consistent with the University's priority to consolidate policies and procedures to reduce duplication.

## **Overseeing and monitoring of academic activities**

### **Academic Board**

Council considered a report from the Chair of the Academic Board on the Board's most recent meeting and on the ongoing work with Lancaster University on a shared suite of policies for the International Branch Campus at Bandung Indonesia. Council acknowledged the active approach of Deakin staff in taking the lead on the development of the policies and the energetic oversight of the Academic Board. Council noted that concerted work was required to complete fully detailed policies and expressed its appreciation of the professionalism and commitment of staff to see this important work through to fruition.

Council noted that Deakin Distinguished Professor Currey would provide an update at the meeting on 13 December alongside her annual review of work by the Academic Board over the year.

### **Facilities and Developments at the Burwood Campus**

Council was delighted to view facilities and to meet staff and research students in the School of Communication and Creative Arts at the Burwood Campus, including the Motion Capture Lab and film and television production facilities. Council was impressed by the technology and its application in important research projects in areas as diverse as dance/movement analysis and child road safety.

In addition, Council was pleased to see the Engineering presence established at Burwood and to hear the growth plans for this discipline at the Campus.

These windows into work at the Campus augmented Council's previous tours at Burwood of the Law School, SEBE buildings and the Faculty of Health.

Council expressed its sincere appreciation to student and students for sharing their work and research projects in such an engaging and enthusiastic manner.

**Disclaimer:** This report provides an overview for the University community of the Council's decisions and actions at the relevant meeting. It is not intended to cover every decision made at the meeting or the full detail of decisions and discussions.

*Inquiries and requests for further information can be directed to the University Council Secretary on [council-secretary@deakin.edu.au](mailto:council-secretary@deakin.edu.au).*