

COUNCIL**Meeting No 5/25****Vice-Chancellor's Boardroom****Level 3, Professional Services Building, Bedford Park****Thursday 4 December 2025****2.00pm****MINUTES**

- PRESENT:** John Hood (Chair) (Chancellor), Professor Colin Stirling (Vice-Chancellor), Kim Cheater, Lucinda Hewitson, Abhishek Jain, Matt Johnson, Professor Christopher Kee, Leanne Liddle, Clare Mockler, Associate Professor Amanda Muller, Damien Walker, Kate Walsh, Brenda Wilson AM, Sharon Wilson
- APOLOGIES:** Benjamin Grillett
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Rosie Bolingbroke (Council Secretary), Marc Davies (General Counsel & University Secretary) (GCUS), Jayne Flaherty (Chief of Staff) – item 3.1, Shane Jennings (Interim Chief Information Officer) – item 3.4, Tania Johnson (Executive Assistant to the Chancellor), *Professor Romy Lawson (Deputy Vice-Chancellor Students) – items 2.6, 3.2 & 3.3, Jonathan Pheasant (Vice-President Corporate Services) – items 3.5 & 3.6, Richard Porter (Chief Financial Officer) – item 3.2, Mark Schultz (Director, People and Culture) – item 3.8, Karl Sellman (Chief Information Security Officer) – item 3.4, Angela Slattery (Associate Director, Risk & Assurance) – items 2.3 & 2.4, Jodie Zada (Director, Student Life) – item 2.6

** by videoconference*

All resolutions were passed by consensus unless otherwise indicated.

1. OPENING**1.1 Acknowledgement of Country**

The Council acknowledged the land upon which the meeting was held as the traditional land of the Kurna people, and paid respects to their spiritual relationship with their country, the Kurna people as the custodians of the Adelaide region and the continuing importance of their culture and heritage.

The Council further acknowledged and honoured the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands on which Flinders University operates; these are the Traditional Lands of the Arrernte, Dagoman, First Nations of the South East, First Peoples of the River Murray & Mallee region, Jawoyn, Kurna, Larrakia, Ngadjuri, Ngarrindjeri, Ramindjeri, Warumungu, Wardaman and Yolngu people.

1.2 Opening and Apologies

Benjamin Grillett was noted as an apology.

The Chair advised members that it was Benjamin Grillett and Abhisek Jain's last meeting and thanked them for their time on Council as the student members; and Abhishek as the co-opted member for the last two meetings.

1.3 Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of Council 4/25 meeting held on 16 October 2025 (Doc C 1.3/5/25) were confirmed as a true and correct record.

1.4 Business Arising

Council noted that all action items were complete (Doc C 1.4/5/25).

1.5 Arrangement of the Agenda

The Chair advised that the order of the agenda would be altered to facilitate Professor Romy Lawson (SDVC) presenting her items online.

1.6 Disclosure of Interests

No disclosures of interest were declared.

1.7 Council and Committee Membership Matters

The General Counsel & University Secretary (CGUS) provided the results of the recent student member of Council elections (Doc C 1.7/5/25), advising that Brady Johnson had been elected as the Undergraduate Student Member and Johanna Palenschus had been elected as the Postgraduate Student Member; and that their two-year terms would commence on 1 January 2026. An induction session for the students has been scheduled for 9 February 2026.

The GCUS also provided a verbal update on the succession planning process for Council and Committee members whose terms were expiring at the end of 2026.

The agenda was then varied to accommodate Professor Romy Lawson's attendance. As a result, Non-confidential (item numbers starting with 2.x) and Confidential matters (items starting with 3.x) were mixed. Confidential items have been marked with an asterisk () for avoidance of doubt.*

2. NON-CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

2.1 Vice-Chancellor's Report

The Vice-Chancellor's report (Doc C 2.1/5/25) was taken as read. In addition, he updated Council on:

- End-of-year events underway at the University.
- Research Outcomes: The University is currently ranked sixth in Australia for National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) funding; has been awarded ARC funding for 13 projects (the highest amount ever received by the University); and has received 10 National Industry PhD Program (NIPP) awards.
- Factory of the Future: The soft launch has been completed, with the Premier expected to formally open the facility during the opening of the technical college at Tonsley early next year.

- Teaching Initiatives: The Minister will announce a third degree-apprenticeship in engineering, with other disciplines being considered.
- Senate Inquiry: The Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor and General Counsel & University Secretary presented at the inquiry during November.
- International Engagement: Recent trips to Singapore and Vietnam covered graduations, meetings with prospective partners, agents, students, and an MOU signing with the Academy of Vietnam.
- Senior Appointment: Shortlisting for the Vice-President & Executive Director of Science & Engineering position is underway.
- Executive Training: The full executive team completed a training session on antisemitism, developed by Universities Australia (UA) and Monash University.

2.2 Academic Senate Chair's Report

The Chair, Academic Senate presented a report to Council on the activities of the Academic Senate (Doc C 2.2/5/25), highlighting the following key points:

- Reflection at the last Senate meeting on the implementation of the governance review. Chairs of sub-committees considered the process to have progressed favourably, noting there is now a broader range of staff across committee memberships.
- Attendance at the OzCabs annual conference, which featured a presentation by Professor Mary O'Kane, Chair of the Australian Tertiary Education Commission (ATEC).
- The distinction between academic governance and corporate governance, highlighting the unique responsibilities and frameworks underpinning each.

ACTION: *The Chair, Academic Senate to circulate the link to Mary O'Kane's presentation to be shared with Council.*

Angela Slattery (Associate Director, Risk & Assurance) joined the meeting at 2.30pm.

2.3 University Risk Appetite Statement (Financial Risk Categories)

The Associate Director, Risk & Assurance presented the University Risk Appetite Statement, which now incorporates financial risk categories (Doc C 2.3/5/25). The statement was approved at the previous meeting and has since been updated to include financial risk categories, which were reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) at its meeting in November.

The Chair of ARC confirmed that the Committee had endorsed the revised statement, and acknowledged the significant work undertaken to develop it.

RESOLUTION: *Council approved the Risk Appetite Statement (with Financial Categories incorporated).*

2.4 University Risk Report

The Associate Director, Risk & Assurance presented the University Risk Report (Doc C 2.4/5/25), highlighting that the Internal audits for 2025 are almost complete; the plan for internal audits for 2026 was provided for Council's information; and that a new risk framework roadmap will be presented to Council at its first meeting in 2026.

Angela Slattery left the meeting at 2.35pm.

2.5 Review of Council and Committee Performance and Annual Assurance

The GCUS presented the Review of Council and Committee Performance and Annual Assurance Statement (Doc C 2.5/5/25). The GUCS advised that:

- The review is primarily compliance-focused, with consideration being given to introducing a more subjective assessment in future.
- Members were asked to review their attendance and advise of any discrepancies as this information will be included in the University's 2025 Annual Report.
- The requirements under the Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF) were highlighted.

2.6 Whole-of-Organisation Gender-based Violence Prevention and Response Plan

The Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor (SDVC), Director, People & Culture and Director, Student Life presented the Whole-of-Organisation Gender-based Violence Prevention and Response Plan (Doc C 2.6/5/25), highlighting that:

- Council approval for the plan is required under the National Code by 16 January 2026, noting that the next Council meeting is not scheduled until March 2026.
- The approach aligns with sector guidance and reflects feedback from the recent Safe Community Conference, however the plan is still subject to departmental review.
- The plan uses the terminology of 'gender-based' violence as required by the National code, however the University's internal policy and communications environment will still also utilise the terminology of 'Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment (SASH)' because that is more widely understood amongst the University community.
- Whilst significant work has been completed, further actions are required to meet all compliance requirements under the National Code and a gap analysis had been completed to identify existing compliance gaps.

Council:

- Acknowledged the rapid turnaround and resource requirements to develop the plan, noting the importance of the initiative to the University's commitment to a safe community.
- Discussed the applicability of the plan and the University's policy environment to all genders.
- Discussed the need for inclusive language and definitions. It was noted that the term "violence" may lead to misconceptions that the plan does not cover behaviours such as sexualised jokes. It was confirmed that policy definitions and training, including bystander training, will address all forms of SASH, but that the National Code required the use of the term 'gender-based violence' in the plan.
- discussed the gap analysis and the implications of partial compliance ratings.
- Noted that the action plan will be a public document.

RESOLUTION: *Council approved the Whole-of-Organisation Gender-based Violence Prevention and Response Plan, the Outcomes Framework and the*

Gender Equality Action Plan, and authorised the Chancellor to sign the endorsement template on behalf of the Council.

ITEM 3.1 TO 3.11 WERE CONFIDENTIAL TO MEMBERS ONLY

Minutes of these items are available for members only

4. MEETING FINALISATION**4.1 Minutes of Sub-Committees**

Council reviewed and noted the minutes of Sub-Committees (Doc C 4.1/5/25):

- Academic Senate 5/25 (unconfirmed)
- Executive Committee 5/25 (confirmed)
- Executive Committee 6/25 (unconfirmed)

4.2 Other Business

The Chancellor thanked the Council Secretariat, the Vice-Chancellor and Executive staff for their contributions during the year.

Abhishek Jain thanked all Council members their support during his term on Council and expressed how much he has learnt and how grateful he has been for the opportunity.

There was no other business.

4.3 Schedule of Business

Council noted the Schedule of Business for 2025 and 2026 (Doc C 4.3/5/25).

4.4 Next Meeting

Council noted that the date of its next scheduled meeting was Thursday 19 March 2026 at 2.00pm, Boardroom, Level 14 City Campus, Festival Tower.

The Chair thanked all those in attendance and closed the meeting at 5.11pm.

EXTRACT FROM confidential minutes of meeting 5/25