

The University of Queensland
Minutes of a Meeting of Senate held on 13 April 2021 at 4:30pm
in the Senate Room, Level 5, Brian Wilson Chancellery, St Lucia

Minutes Confirmed on 20 May 2021

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Attendance

Present: Mr P N Varghese AO (Chancellor), Ms T Dwyer (Deputy Chancellor), Professor D Terry AO (Vice-Chancellor and President), Professor P Adams, Ms J Alroe, Associate Professor D Cavaye, Mr T Crommelin, Ms A Cross AM, Adjunct Professor D Dornan AO, Professor G Hainge, Mr P Hennessy AO (AVT), Ms R Hurst, Mr E Johnson, Professor B Lea, Mr R Lee, Mr J Merrick, Mr G Murdoch, Adjunct Professor Dr S Pitkin AO (AVT), Ms G Starr, Ms M Tredenick (AVT) and Ms C Wake.

(AVT – audio visual technology)

In attendance: Acting Chief Operating Officer, Mr R Moffatt AM; Deputy Vice-Chancellor (External Engagement), Mr R Li; Deputy Provost, Professor T Dunne; Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Advancement), Ms J Karlson; Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Engagement), Professor B Fredericks; Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching & Learning), Professor D Macdonald; Chief Financial Officer, Mr A Flannery; Chief Marketing and Communications Officer, Ms K Robinson; Deputy Academic Board President, Professor C Franklin; General Counsel, Ms C Seeto.

Observer: President UQ Union, Ms E Scott.

Secretary: Ms Jo Connah (acting).

1. Casual Vacancy – Elected Member of the Academic Board

This agenda item was attended only by Members and the Secretary.

Senate noted the circumstances surrounding the casual vacancy in office of the elected member of the Academic Board. Under Section 20A of the University of Queensland Act 1998, Senate was required to appoint an eligible person from the Academic Board. An Academic Board election had been held to fill a vacancy in the professorial members category, followed by a Senate election to fill the 'member of the Academic Board' category. Professor Greg Hainge was the successful candidate in the election.

The Senate -

1. **Noted** the creation of a casual vacancy with effect from 1 January 2021 in the elected member of the academic board category, created by Professor Greg Hainge's ineligibility to continue on the Senate in this category.
2. **Appointed** Professor Greg Hainge, under S20A(4) of the University of Queensland Act 1998, to fill the vacancy in the 'member of the Academic Board' category from the 13 April 2021 to 31 December 2021.

Members congratulated Professor Hainge and welcomed his return to Senate.

2. Acknowledgement of Country

On behalf of the Senate, the Chancellor acknowledged the Traditional Owners and their custodianship of the lands on which the meeting took place, and paid respect to their Ancestors and their descendants.

The Chancellor confirmed the Senate's ongoing commitment to the University's Reconciliation Action Plan.

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3. Welcome and apologies

The Chancellor welcomed everyone to the meeting.

4. Approval of items en bloc

Having provided Members with an opportunity to star any additional agenda items, it was **resolved** that Senate approve or note *en bloc* all items which were not starred.

5. Declaration of interests

Members' interests as at April 2021 were circulated with the agenda and **noted**.

The Chancellor provided Members with an opportunity to advise of any changes to the interests circulated and noted that Michelle Tredenick has joined the board of Zafin Labs Americas Incorporated, from 31st March 2021.

The Chancellor also provided Members with an opportunity to declare any perceived, potential, or actual conflict with any of the meeting agenda items.

6. Confirmation of minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2021, having been circulated, were **confirmed**.

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The circulating resolution dated 7 April 2021 was confirmed.

7. Matters arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising from previous minutes.

Members noted the follow up action that had occurred in relation to the payment of bonuses at the University.

8. Update from the Chancellor

The Chancellor reported on a meeting held with the Chair of the University Research Commercialisation Scheme Taskforce. At the meeting, the Chancellor had emphasised the value of introducing a new framework to fast track the proof of concept stage.

The University Chancellors Committee (UCC) had received a briefing on the Universities Australia (UA) Health Check Review from Professor Debbie Terry as Chair of UA. UCC was looking forward to working collaboratively to implement the recommendations of the Review.

A report from the UCC Working Group established to review Vice-Chancellors' remuneration would be considered by UCC later in the year. It was anticipated that the report would recommend adopting a principles-based framework for the setting of remuneration, against an understanding of the autonomy of governing bodies to make such decisions. Further details would be provided when available.

Delays in the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccination program had the potential to have significant consequences for borders and international engagement, which would impact universities across the country. The adverse impact on the ability of universities to attract and retain international students reinforces the importance of continuing work on frameworks and plans to support the return of students.

9. Vice-Chancellor and President's Report

The Vice-Chancellor took the Report as read and commented on the following items:

Further to the circulating minute passed on 7 April 2021, all 38 universities had voted in favour of the proposed transaction to transfer their Education Australia Limited (EAL) shareholding into ownership of IDP Education Limited shares, at the Extraordinary General Meeting of EAL on 13 April 2021.

Following the release of the Consultation Paper on University Research Commercialisation by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment, there had been strong sector-wide engagement with the submission process. UQ Holdings is undertaking a strategic review of UniQuest to ensure it is fully aligned to the University's objectives and that UQ is well positioned to respond to the government's renewed focus on research and commercialisation. UQ is also undertaking a review of research partnerships functions and associated capabilities. The review seeks to ensure we deliver a high quality and responsive research partnership function that will support, nurture, and grow UQ's research excellence and impact.

Members noted the recent media coverage regarding a UQ vaccine. The team is continuing to work on the vaccine to progress trials and a statement will be issued early next week.

Following Census date on 31 March 2021, the University had recorded stronger than expected student numbers, with domestic postgraduate enrolments 16% higher than in 2019. This is a positive result in an area that has been identified as a key priority for UQ. The international intake was expected to be 39% lower than in 2019 but recruitment has been stronger than anticipated with the intake only 10% lower than 2019. In addition, the returning load is 4% higher than projected. It was noted that this outcome was largely due to the re-enrolment of students who had deferred their studies early in the pandemic. The University continued to be conservative in budget projections.

Due to the pandemic, many academic staff are continuing to deliver courses in dual mode to ensure that students residing offshore can continue their studies. In acknowledgement of the ongoing impact on staff, the University had released funds to faculties and schools to assist with teaching.

Members noted the results of the 2020 Student Experience Survey, released on 18 March. The results reflected the impact of the rapid move to online learning and border closures on students, with overall satisfaction with the educational experience declining across the sector. Further analysis will be undertaken to identify the specific aspects of the student experience that were most impacted to inform the way we continue to support our students through the pandemic and beyond. The results reinforced the importance of the on campus experience alongside digital offerings. These priorities would be explored further in the strategic planning process. In response to a question from a member, it was noted that data about HDR student satisfaction was captured through a separate process and would be shared with Senate.

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Members noted the update provided on Change processes underway.

In response to a question regarding casual employment, it was noted that the University was reviewing casual academic working hours and payment categories to confirm that work and wages are fairly, correctly and consistently applied, as well as assessing the reasonableness of pay to conduct each assigned task. The project will review pay allocation and approval processes to assess accuracy and adequacy of controls in place. Members noted the reforms to the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth) regarding casual conditions, enacted on 27 March 2021. The University is working through the changes to develop guidelines for UQ managers. Members noted the importance of PhD students having the opportunity to access casual teaching experience to support them in being better equipped to move into academic roles.

UQ received an additional \$99.5m through the Government's Research Support Package to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on Australia's research workforce and capability. UQ has established three schemes to guide funding allocation to support and strengthen research capability. The schemes included allocation of funds on the basis of earnings; funds for an early and mid-career postdoctoral fellowship support scheme; and funds allocated for strategic research investment. In light of the requirement that funds be spent over 2021-2022, longer term initiatives would be considered through the Vice-Chancellor's Strategic Initiatives fund.

In response to a question from a member regarding participation rates for the HCMS training, it was noted that a reminder would be sent to staff to undertake a session. Training will be available to staff following the roll out of the system and the intent with the current offering was to enable managers to become familiar with the new system.

Members noted the update on recent health and safety incidents. In response to a question from a member about a contractor incident, it was noted that the University has increased the regulation of work being undertaken on campus. Operational oversight is maintained for high risk work, with contracts being clear that that contractors are required to have appropriate training plans and certifications in place.

Members discussed opportunities that could be explored if Brisbane were successful in its bid to be host city for the 2032 Olympics.

The following matters were also in the Vice-Chancellor and President's Report –

Sector Update

- Launch of Australian Strategy for International Education 2021 – 2030
- University Research Commercialisation – Consultation Paper
- Research Support Package
- ARC Linkage Projects 2020 Assessment Round 2
- Foreign Relations and Foreign Influence
 - Australia's Foreign Relations (State and Territory Arrangements) Act 2020
 - Disclosure and Management of Interests at UQ
 - Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security
- National Press Club Address

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Strategic Matters

- Development of UQ Strategic Plan 2022 - 2025
- UQ Holdings- Strategic Review of UniQuest
- Semester 1 2021 Post Census Enrolments
- TEQSA 2020 Risk Assessment
- Student Experience Survey 2020
- Brisbane South State Secondary College
- Translational Research Institute 2 (TRI 2)
- Herston Precinct Scoping Study
- Cyber Security Strategy
- UQ Pulse Survey Pilot
- COVID-19 Vaccination Roll Out for UQ Students and Staff

Major Projects

- Human Capital Management System
- Review of Student Disciplinary Policy and Process
- Enterprise Agreement and Bargaining

Organisational Matters

- COVID-19 March Lockdown
- Recent Workplace Health and Safety Incidents
- Establishment of an expanded UQ College
- Research Partnerships Review
- Marketing, Communications and Recruitment Review
- School of Architecture
- UQ Library
- Casual Employment Update

Capital Update

- Cladding Replacement Update
- Warwick Solar Farm
- Liveris Building
- Walcott St Acquisition
- Plant Growth Facility
- 308 Queen Street

Recent Activities and Achievements

- Australian University Teach of the Year
- Australian Academy of Science- Fenner Medal
- 2020 UQ Awards for Excellence in Teaching and Learning
- New Members of the Australian Research Council College of Experts
- Uluru Statement: University Week of Action 22-26 March 2021
- Student Welcome and Induction 2021

10. Integrity Update: Presentation by CCC and QIC

Mr Alan MacSporran QC (Chairperson of the Queensland Crime and Corruption Commission) and Dr Nikola Stepanov (Queensland Integrity Commissioner) presented to Senate on the responsibilities regarding the reporting of corrupt conduct, and the role of the Integrity Commissioner.

The following arose during discussion –

Integrity Commissioner

Dr Stepanov advised that a key role of the Commissioner is to provide advice to designated persons identified in the Integrity Act, which for UQ's Senate included Governor in Council appointments and the Chancellor. Areas of advice included compliance obligations, lobbying, ethics, integrity and interest issues. Members noted the importance of understanding their duty to declare conflicts that may arise for members of Senate due to other Board roles held.

Members were encouraged to seek advice from the Director of the UQ Integrity and Investigations Unit or from the Queensland Integrity Commission. A range of resources are available on the website.

Crime and Corruption Commission (CCC):

Mr MacSporran noted that the CCC is an independent agency established to combat major crime and reduce corruption in the public sector. The definition of corrupt conduct and the duties to report are defined in the Crime and Corruption Act 2001. Members of Senate have obligations to understand; the definition of corrupt conduct and misconduct; the policies in place; and the processes to follow to report and ensure a matter is investigated. It was noted that members are not authorised to investigate, however if a matter were reported, there is a responsibility to act. Member were advised to encourage the person to report their concerns either through their line management or to the Integrity and Investigations Unit (IIU). As a result of UQ's track record in handling of corrupt conduct, the CCC has allowed for UQ to undertake initial investigations through the IIU and report back to the CCC. Representatives from CCC are available to assist through education, advice or other support required.

It is important that organisations understand the key business and reputational risks, and ensure that policies, procedures, training and controls are in place to mitigate those risks. Internal controls are important to ensure that measures are operating optimally. Members noted the importance of a strong workplace culture that supports reporting where staff trust that their concerns will be taken seriously. While leadership sets the tone for ethical culture, it is important to ensure that messages are communicated consistently throughout the organisation.

The Chancellor thanked the attendees for their presentations and reinforced the importance that, as a governing body, members had as clear an understanding as possible about their obligations and their role in terms of culture, and the context in which we operate. The University values the relationship it has with both the QIC and the CCC.

11. Health and Safety Annual Update

Mr Jim Carmichael, Director of Health, Safety and Wellness (HSW), provided a presentation to Senate on the Health, Safety and Wellness 2020 Annual Report and outlined activities of the HSW division, key statistics for workers' compensation claims and regulator contact. Mr Carmichael outlined the top risks identified, risk management actions underway and presented current and planned internal HSW audits. Senate noted the focus of senior leaders in the University on communicating and leading a strong safety culture.

A regular HSW update would be provided to each meeting of Senate in the Vice-Chancellor's report. Members acknowledged the important role of the HSW division during the COVID lockdowns in informing the University response and working with Queensland Health on contact tracing requirements. It was noted that the new HR system would support improved monitoring of staff training.

The University is self-insured for workers' compensation, enabling it to manage and make determinations on claims. The University is assessed by the Regulator against a set of requirements and UQ has been assessed as low risk.

The Associate Director HSW advised members that all actions arising from the 2016 audit have been completed as of March 2021. Members noted the importance of ensuring that actions in place for addressing audit recommendations will address the issues identified and are implemented.

It was noted that a substantial program of work was underway through Property and Facilities Division to address flammable cladding risks. The University had identified high risk buildings with work underway to remove the cladding.

A full briefing on the University's response to the Respect at Work Report would be provided to a future meeting of Senate.

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Members commended the transparency of the report and reinforced the importance of ensuring a workplace culture that supports a strong commitment to safety at work. The University acknowledges and celebrates safety success through safety awards as part of the annual series of staff excellence awards. Members noted that senior leadership highlighted the importance of an engaged safety culture through regular safety updates at the commencement of all executive and senior leadership meetings. Internal processes had been strengthened to ensure that senior leaders receive reports of training completions in their areas to meet mandatory training requirements.

In response to a question regarding whether fieldwork should move to the watch list, it was noted that the recent implementation of a new corporate system provided good visibility and oversight of activities.

Academic Matters**12. Update from the Academic Board President**

Professor Adams drew members attention to the report of the Academic Board.

13. Academic Board Reports

The Academic Board Report for the meeting held on 22 March 2021 was **noted**.

14. Posthumous Conferral of an Award

In accordance with section 5 of the Awards Policy, Senate **approved** the Posthumous conferral of a Bachelor of Mathematics on Margaret Den Dulk.

Sec.

Financial/Operational Matters**Governance Matters****15. Complaints of Corrupt Conduct Against the Vice-Chancellor and President Policy**

The Senate –

1. **approved** the Complaints of Corrupt Conduct against the Vice-Chancellor and President Policy; and
2. **noted** that the Policy be included in the list of Senate reserved policies.

16. UQ's Modern Slavery Statement for the year ended 31 December 2020

Senate considered UQ's Modern Slavery Statement for the year ended 31 December 2020 prepared in accordance with the Modern Slavery Act 2018 (MSA).

The Senate -

1. **approved** UQ's draft Modern Slavery Statement for the financial year ending 31 December 2020 prepared in accordance with the MSA (Appendix 1); and
2. **authorised** the Vice-Chancellor to sign the Modern Slavery Statement on behalf of UQ.

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17. Honorary Awards Nominations

The Honorary Awards Committee met on 24 March 2021 and recommended the nominees below for honorary awards.

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It was noted that Honorary Awards Committee would consider consolidating the Distinguished Service Medal and UQ Fellowship, with further consideration given to the eligibility criteria. A proposal would be forthcoming to a future meeting of Senate.

17.1 Professor Megan Davis

Senate **resolved** that Professor Megan Davis be invited to accept an Honorary Doctorate of Laws from The University of Queensland.

17.2 Emeritus Professor Alan Rix

Senate **resolved** that Emeritus Professor Alan Rix be invited to accept a UQ Fellowship from The University of Queensland.

17.3 Emeritus Professor Maree Smith

Senate **resolved** that Emeritus Professor Maree Smith be invited to accept a UQ Fellowship from The University of Queensland.

17.4 Mr William (Tony) Lee

Senate **resolved** that Mr William (Tony) Lee be invited to accept a UQ Fellowship from The University of Queensland.

18. Filling of the Vacancy of the Office of the Academic Board President.

The Deputy President left the meeting for discussion of this item.

Members noted that a casual vacancy would arise in the office of the President of the Academic Board following the resignation of Professor Peter Adams, effective from 10 September 2021.

Section 3.7(b) of the Academic Board policy allows for the Deputy President to be deemed to have been appointed to act in the office of the President whenever there is a vacancy in the office of the President. Section 2.7(f) of the Academic Board policy provides for Senate to direct that a supplementary election be held for a vacancy in the office.

To ensure continuity of the Academic Board and alignment of the term of the President of the Academic Board with the calendar year, the Senate -

1. **approved** that a supplementary election be held to fill the vacancy in the office of the President, for the term 1 January 2022 – 31 December 2023; and
2. **noted** that the Deputy President will fill the vacancy created in the office of the President between the period 11 September to 31 December 2021.

Senate Committee Reports**19. Governance Committee**

The Governance Committee Report for the meeting held on 24 March 2021 was **noted**.

20. Advancement Committee

The Advancement Report for April 2021 was **noted**.

21. Capital Infrastructure Committee

The Campus Infrastructure Committee Report for the meeting held on 23 March 2021 was **noted**.

Other Matters for Noting**22. UQ Significant Litigation Report**

The Significant Litigation Report dated 31 March 2021 was **noted**.

23. Senate Annual Calendar

The Senate Annual Calendar was **noted**.

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24. Any Other BusinessSenate Create Change Scholarship

Members noted that four recipients of the Senate create change scholarships funded by the 33rd and 34th Senates would attend the dinner. A plan for the opportunities for a scholarship support by the 35th Senate was under development.

Thanks were expressed to members for their support of students through the scholarships.

25. UQ Senate Meetings 2021-2022

The UQ Senate meetings 2021-2022 were **noted**.