



Confirmed 27 February 2025

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Attendance:

Present: Mr P N Varghese AO (Chancellor), Ms T Dwyer (Deputy Chancellor), Professor D Terry AC (Vice-Chancellor and President), Ms J Alroe, Ms S Atkinson AO, Ms C Chalmers, Ms A Cross AM, Dr L Duffield, Professor C Franklin, Professor G Hainge, Mr P Hennessy AO, Mr R Jones, Mr R Lee, Professor K Lyons, Mr J Marsh, Mr G Murdoch, Dr M Naidoo, Mr J Titman (via zoom) and Dr D Willox.

Apologies: HHJ N Jarro and Ms C Wake.

UQ In Attendance:

Present: Provost, Professor M Blows; Chief Operations Officer, Mr A Flannery; Interim Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation), Professor P Bonnington; Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Engagement), Professor B Fredericks; Vice-President (Advancement & Community Engagement), Ms J Karlson; Chief Financial Officer, Ms G Jukes; Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Professor Kris Ryan; General Counsel, Ms C Seeto; Marketing and Communication Officer, Ms K Robinson; and Executive Administrative Officer, Office of the Vice-Chancellor and President, Mr I Vallely.

Secretary: Ms S Spencer.

1. 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 respects to their ancestors and their descendants.

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

2. Welcome and apologies

The Chancellor welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted from HHJ N Jarro and Ms C Wake.

3. 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.

4. Declaration of interests

Members' interests for November 2024 were circulated with the agenda and noted. Updated interests since the last meeting were noted for Ms T Dwyer. Upcoming updates to interests were noted for Ms S Atkinson AO, Ms J Alroe, and Ms A Cross AM. The Chancellor provided members with an opportunity to advise of any changes to the interests as circulated.

The Chancellor provided members with an opportunity to declare any perceived, potential, or actual conflict with any of the meeting agenda items. Mr R Jones noted a potential conflict of interest in relation to Item 11 as a Director of QIC. The Chancellor advised that Mr Jones would not need to recuse himself from this discussion as no decision was required from Senate, and given Mr Jones' role as Chair of UQ Holdings Pty Ltd. With regard to Item 19.1, Professor C Franklin noted his membership to The Women's College Council.

5. Confirmation of minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 October 2024, having been circulated, were **confirmed**.

6. Matters arising from previous Senate meeting

There were no new matters arising from the previous Senate meeting.

7. Update from the Chancellor

The Chancellor provided an update to members on the proposal to establish the Expert Governance Council which arose from the Australian Universities Accord review. The Chancellor outlined the proposed membership to the Council, which would include representatives from: University Chancellors Council (UCC); Universities Australia; Australian Institute for Company Directors; Governance Institute Australia; Australian Indigenous Governance Institute; and representatives of State and Federal governments. The Council would now likely have the specific purpose of updating the UCC's *Voluntary Code of Best Practice for the Governance of Australian Public Universities*.

The Chancellor noted that the Queensland University Chancellors met on 26 November 2024, and discussed holding a collective meeting with the new Queensland Government regarding how universities could help to address the state's big challenges and issues in public policy. Discussions also included the compliance and regulatory outlook for the sector and resource implications including the proposed Australian Tertiary Education Commission.

The Chancellor noted that the Australian Government had announced the terms of reference for the 'Strategic Examination of Research and Development (R&D)' system which would be led by an independent expert panel. The panel would examine the current state of Australia's R&D system, and the comparable state of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) investment in R&D.

8. Vice-Chancellor and President's Report

The Vice-Chancellor's written report and dashboard reports were **noted**. An update was provided on the incident at 308 Queen St, and the proactive steps taken by the University.

The Vice-Chancellor provided the following updates:

- UQ's Stretch Reconciliation Plan and Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy 2025 – 2027 were officially launched on 2 December 2024. The Vice-Chancellor acknowledged the role of the RAP Oversight Committee, and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Engagement) and her team in this important milestone.
- UQ had topped the Australian Financial Review's (AFR) Best Universities Ranking for the second consecutive year. The ranking measured Australian universities across four pillars - teaching, research, equity and career impact. UQ had scored well across all four pillars. The UQ Business School also ranked 3rd nationally in the 2024 AFR Best Business Schools List.
- The Australian's 2025 Research magazine had named UQ as a 'fast mover' in recognition of the high-impact research UQ leads to help address complex global challenges. Nineteen UQ researchers were recognised in this year's publication as leaders of their field, and UQ was named in the nation's top research institutions in 27 fields, and globally in two fields.
- UQ celebrated the culmination of the 1,000th student from the joint MD program in partnership with the Ochsner Clinical School (New Orleans). The partnership was established in 2009.
- The Australian Government had announced that it would not proceed with the proposed student caps under the *ESOS Amendment (Quality and Integrity) Bill 2024*, following opposition in parliament. Ministerial Direction 107 remained in place. UQ had maintained a measured approach to international student growth and would continue this approach into the future.
- The sector had been engaging with TEQSA to identify and produce best practice resources on social cohesion to combat antisemitism and islamophobia. The University had also continued its engagement with Jillian Segal AO, the Special Envoy to Combat Antisemitism, on the development of both a common definition of antisemitism across the sector and shared training materials.
- The Federal Government announced changes to the Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) indexation.

Members discussed the Vice-Chancellor's update. The Vice-Chancellor responded to questions from members. In response to a question from a member, it was noted that the position of Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Campus Culture and Leadership would have responsibility for the management of UQ's cultural assets, overseeing and improving social cohesion on campus, and helping to develop leadership programs and opportunities for academic staff.

Strategic Matters

9. English Language Proficiency Action Plan 2024 - 2027

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) (DVCA), Professor Kris Ryan, presented to Senate on the student support activities and current initiatives under the University's English Language Proficiency Action Plan (the Plan), which commenced in 2022. The DVCA provided an update to Senate on priorities for the next phase of the Plan which included expanding the existing pilot program; reviewing governing policies and processes in ELP Development and Concurrent Support; expanding Post-Entry English Language support for students early in their academic journey; developing scalable support for curriculum and assessment models; and enhancing professional development for academic staff in teaching linguistically diverse students.

Following observations outlined by the Academic Board President, the University would also review the English language requirements, student support, student experience, and academic progression for international students, particularly those in courses with lower proportions of domestic students.

Members had an in-depth discussion regarding student experience, student satisfaction, and the sense of belonging. Members commented on the need to work in partnership with the UQ Union and student-led organisations to ensure that all students feel welcome and included.

In response to questions and comments from members, the DVCA noted that:

- In addition to the priorities identified under the Plan, the University was actively addressing the challenges posed by artificial intelligence (AI) to assessment integrity. This include identifying a range and breadth of high security assessment options across all faculties and embedding learning designers in each Faculty to assist.
- TEQSA had published a list of illegal and blocked websites.
- The provision of support for academics would be considered in conjunction with the Teaching, Learning and Student Experience Committee of Academic Board.

In response to a question from a member, the Vice-Chancellor noted that the University was working with schools and faculties to ensure that appropriate workplace models were in place across the University.

The Chancellor thanked the DVCA for the briefing and the President of the Academic Board for his report on international students in the BEL Faculty. The latter raised important questions about the concentration of international students in certain courses, as well as English language capability. The Chancellor welcomed the decision to set up a review to examine these issues. Many universities face similar challenges and this was an opportunity for UQ to do some ground-breaking work on the situation of international students and academic integrity.

The Vice-Chancellor noted that Senate would be regularly updated on the outcomes of this focus and review.

The update on the English Language Proficiency Action Plan 2024 – 2027 was **noted**.

10. 2025 Budget

The Chair of the Finance Committee noted that the committee had convened twice to consider the 2025 budget for the University, which had been developed to return to a normalised EBITDA of 10% in 2027. It was noted that the University's cash balance had improved in relation to the EBITDA increase and, as a result, constrained capital expenditure could be expended with appropriate stage gates in place. The Finance Committee had recommended the 2025 budget to Senate for approval.

The Vice-Chancellor thanked the Finance Committee and its chair for its oversight of the budget process, noting the initial workshop earlier this year allowed for detailed preparation of the budget. The budget proposed a path to achieve a 10% EBITDA in 2027, while continuing to ensure appropriate constraints were in place for planned expenditure. The

University had planned a moderate approach to international student numbers, in line with the previously proposed international student cap.

The Chief Financial Officer, Ms Gail Jukes, presented a summary of the 2025 proposed budget to Senate which included detail regarding tuition revenue assumptions, the path to 10% EBITDA, the debt profile and cash position, capital expenditure profile, non-capital expenditure profile, and long-term investment portfolio.

Senate discussed the proposed 2025 budget. In response to a question from a member, the Vice-Chancellor noted that two capital projects had been scheduled for 2025 – 2026, namely the Stage 1 of the Student Union Complex redevelopment and the Fitness Centre. Priority has been given to these projects as staff and student facing areas.

Senate acknowledged the effort from staff in obtaining the operational savings and efficiencies required to deliver this budget.

Pursuant to section 50(1) of the UQ Act, Senate resolved to **adopt** and **approve** the 2025 final budget.

11. 1909 Fund Update

Dr Dean Moss, CEO of UniQuest, attended for this item.

The Vice-Chancellor noted that the proposal to establish the 1909 Fund arose from KPMG's strategic review of UniQuest in 2021, which recommended the establishment of a research commercialisation fund to support the maturation of UQ intellectual property, and to keep the benefits in Australia. Senate reviewed the Request for Proposal (RFP) in August 2024.

Dr Moss provided an update to Senate on the request for proposal process for the 1909 Fund following its release to market in August. Given the lack of alignment of any of the proposals with the initial requirements for the fund, an external review of the plan for the 1909 Fund will be undertaken early next year. The review will be undertaken prior to any reengagement with potential partners.

The Chair of the Finance Committee noted the need to consider what the Fund required in order to be successful and move forward.

Members **noted** the update on the 1909 Fund. Further updates would be provided to Senate.

Academic Matters

12. Update from the Academic Board President

The President of the Academic Board discussed his written report, which covered the notable items from the 8 November 2024 Academic Board meeting.

The President noted that end of semester examinations had been completed and provided an update on the number of examinations and individual sittings that had been conducted. The President acknowledged the work of the University's administrative and academic staff, and significant workload involved, in conducting these examinations.

The President referred to the previous discussion at Item 9, and provided support for the review, noting the need to consider additional support for academic teaching staff.

Senate **noted** the updated from the Academic Board President.

13. Report from Academic Board

The Academic Board Report was **noted**.

14. Academic Board Review Recommendations – Implementation Report

The Academic Board 2021 review implementation final report was **noted**.

Financial and Operational Matters

15. Human Capital Management System – Stage 3 Budget

The Chancellor noted that approval from Senate had been sought for additional funding towards Stage 3 of the Human Capital Management System project. The business case had been endorsed by the Senate Finance Committee.

Senate resolved to **approve** additional funding (including contingency) towards the third stage of the Human Capital Management System project.

Governance Matters

16. Draft Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom Attestation Statement

The Chancellor noted that the draft 2024 Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom Attestation Statement had been circulated in the agenda. The statement followed the template approved by the University Chancellors Council and outlined the University policies and activities relating to freedom of speech and academic freedom this year.

Governance Committee endorsed the draft statement. Following discussions at Governance Committee, additional detail had been incorporated into the draft statement regarding the University's response to the protest activity and encampments.

Members were supportive of the statement, with one member suggesting that an additional sentence be added regarding the membership of the Freedom of Speech Assessment Group.

Senate resolved to **approve** the 2024 UQ Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom Attestation Statement.

17. New Honorary Award Nomination: 2024 UQ R.H Roe Award

The Chancellor referred to the nomination for Professor Paul Young for the 2024 UQ R.H. Roe Award circulated in the agenda. Professor Young was well known for leading the consortium that developed a COVID-19 vaccine candidate in early 2020. Professor Young's work in this area extended to establishing strategic research partnerships for the development of vaccine technology in Queensland. Professor Young had made significant contributions to the University as a member of academic staff, including as Head of School of Chemistry and Molecular Biosciences.

The nomination was supported by the University Senior Executive Team, and unanimously endorsed by the Senate Honorary Awards Committee via circulating resolution.

Senate resolved to **approve** the conferral of the 2024 UQ R.H. Roe Award to Professor Paul Young.

18. Sponsored Research Naming Request: CISCO Research Chair – Network Security

The Chancellor noted that Senate approval had been sought for the naming of the CISCO Research Chair – Network Security. The proposal had been circulated in the agenda for a jointly funded position which would strengthen the University's strategic research partnership with CISCO. The proposal was endorsed by Senate Governance Committee.

Following review by the Senate Governance Committee, the UQ Naming Policy would be updated to provide a more flexible approach to UQ's naming criteria to support similar partnerships.

Senate resolved to **approve** the naming of the CISCO Research Chair – Network Security.

19 Amendments to Residential College Constitutions**19.1 The Women's College**

The Chancellor noted that the amendments to The Women's College Constitution had been reviewed by Governance Committee. Governance Committee had endorsed the proposed constitution, noting that the college would seek an amendment to the council membership provision at its next AGM for consistency with the establishing Letters Patent.

One member wished to acknowledge the contributions made by the Academic Board Presidents to the Women's College Council over the years.

Senate resolved to **approve** the amendments to the constitution for The Women's College.

19.2 Amendments to Residential College Constitutions: Cromwell College

The Chancellor noted that Cromwell College had sought approval from Senate to amend its constitution. Senate Governance Committee had endorsed the amended constitution.

Senate resolved to **approve** the amendments to the constitution for Cromwell College.

20. Senate Committees – Membership and Terms of Reference

The Chancellor noted that some minor changes had been proposed to the terms of reference for Campus Infrastructure Committee, Finance Committee, Honorary Awards Committee, and Risk and Audit Committee regarding the capacity in which the Provost and Academic Board President sit on these committees. An additional clause had also been proposed to the terms of reference for the Senior Executive Remuneration and Performance Committee.

Senate **resolved** to:

- **Approve** the proposed amendments to the terms of reference for the Campus Infrastructure Committee; Finance Committee; Honorary Awards Committee; Risk and Audit Committee; and Senior Executive Remuneration and Performance Committee; and
- **Note** the appointments to the Senate committees for: Professor Lydia Kavanagh as President of the Academic Board commencing 1 January 2025; and Professor Mark Blows as Provost who commenced on 7 October 2024.

20.1 Senate Risk and Audit Committee – Terms of Reference

As set out in the agenda, minor administrative amendments had also been proposed by Senate Risk and Audit Committee to its terms of reference.

Senate **resolved** to:

- **Approve** the proposed amendments to the terms of reference for the Risk and Audit Committee.

Senate Committee Reports**21. Advancement and Community Engagement**

The Advancement and Community Engagement Committee update was **noted**.

The Chair of the Advancement and Community Engagement Committee noted that one year remained for the 35th Senate Scholarship, and thanked the members of Senate who had made donations to this valuable fund.

22. Campus Infrastructure

The report of the Campus Infrastructure Committee was **noted**.

23. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

The report of the Committee for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion was **noted**.

24. Finance Committee

The report of the Finance Committee was **noted**.

25. Governance Committee

The report of the Governance Committee was **noted**.

26. Risk and Audit

The report of the Risk and Audit Committee was **noted**.

Other Matters for Noting**27. Higher Education Standards Compliance**

The 2024 report on UQ's compliance with Part A of the Higher Education Standards Framework 2021 was **noted**.

28. Senate 2025 Election Dates

The proposed 2025 Senate election dates were **noted**.

One member requested additional information regarding the role of the Advisory Group supporting the Returning Officer for the next Senate election. These details would be provided to the next meeting of Senate.

29. UQ 25 Year Service Awards 2024

The recipients of the 25 Year Service Awards was **noted**.

30. UQ Significant Litigation Report

The Significant Litigation Report for November 2024 was **noted**.

31. 2025 Meeting Dates

The Senate meeting dates for 2025 were **noted**.

32. Senate Annual Calendar 2024

The Senate Annual Calendar for 2024 was **noted**.

Any Other Business

The Chancellor noted that this would be the final meeting for Professor Craig Franklin, and recorded appreciation, on behalf of the Senate, for his contributions as President of the Academic Board (September 2021 – December 2024).

The Chancellor also acknowledged the UQ Union President, Mr Angus McRae, whose term in the office would conclude on 31 December 2024, and thanked Angus for his contributions to Senate throughout the year.

The Chancellor thanked Senate members for their contributions to Senate this year, particularly the cooperative and constructive way in which members had engaged.

The meeting closed at 6.40pm.