Minutes of Senate held on 9 June 2026
At 4:30pm in the Senate Room, Level 5
Brian Wilson Chancellery

THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

Index

Attendance:

Present: Mr P N Varghese AO (Chancellor), Ms T Dwyer AM (Deputy Chancellor), Professor D Terry AC (Vice-Chancellor and President), Ms J Alroe, Ms S Atkinson AO, Ms C Chalmers, Ms R Cronin, Emeritus Professor C Dickenson AM, Dr R Haddrick, Professor G Hainge, HHJ N Jarro, Mr R Jones, Professor L Kavanagh, Mr R Liu, Professor K Lyons, The Hon A Palaszczuk AC, Mr J Titman, Mr I Walker, and Dr D Willox.

Apologies: Ms A Cross AM, Dr L Duffield, Mr E Yun

UQ In Attendance:

Present: Provost, Professor M Blows; Chief Operating Officer, Mr A Flannery; Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation), Professor S Harrison; Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Professor Kris Ryan; Vice-President (Advancement & Community Engagement), Ms J Karlson; Chief Financial Officer, Ms G Jukes; Director, Office of the Vice-Chancellor and President, Ms J Connah; Chief Marketing and Communication Officer, Ms K Robinson; Acting General Counsel, Ms Leanne Fox; and Ms A Roser, UQ Union President.

Secretary: Ms J Saunders.

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.

2. Welcome and apologies

The Chancellor welcomed members to the meeting and noted apologies from Ms A Cross, Mr R Lee and Mr E Yun.

The Chancellor also welcomed Professor Stephen Garton, the external reviewer of Senate, who would be attending to observe the meeting and provide an update on the review.

3. Approval of items *en bloc*

The Finance Committee Chair requested starring of the Finance Committee report.

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' updated declarations of interests for May and June 2026 were circulated with the agenda and noted.

Members **noted** that Dr Dino Willox was no longer a member of the RD Milne Antiquities Museum Advisory Board or the Intern Group's Academic Advisory Board.

5. Confirmation of minutes

The Chancellor noted that the minutes of the meeting held on 28 April 2026 had been circulated and advised that Professor Lyons had submitted proposed edits to the section dealing with the UQ Press matter. The Chancellor invited comments from other members, and noted one member's suggestion to update a reference from "UQ Press" to "UQ."

Professor Lyons indicated that in her view the draft minutes did not fully reflect the breadth of discussion, particularly in relation to the process undertaken in reaching the decision.

The Chancellor reiterated his advice from the previous meeting that the decision had been made in accordance with the Vice-Chancellor's delegated authority and emphasised the importance of maintaining appropriate governance boundaries.

Senate **confirmed** the minutes of 28 April 2026 subject to resolution of the UQ Press section. It was agreed that the proposed edits would be considered by the Chancellor and that the extract of the minutes relating to the UQ Press section with any amendments would be circulated for approval.

Postscript: Subsequent to the 9 June 2026 meeting, the Chancellor circulated an updated 'UQ Press section' of the 28 April 2026 minutes. The section was approved by more than the required two thirds of Senate members. One member of senate did not accept the minutes as an accurate account of the matters raised and discussed.

6. Matters arising from previous Senate meeting

The Chancellor noted that the matter on conflicts of interest for wholly owned subsidiaries of UQ had been considered and addressed by Governance Committee.

7. Update from the Chancellor

The Chancellor provided an update on the ongoing discussions between the University Chancellors Council (UCC) and Universities Australia (UA), comprising Vice-Chancellors and Chancellors, on how they could come together as joint members of a peak body for the sector as a way of ensuring a coordinated national voice. It was noted that these arrangements were expected to be finalised for implementation from early 2027.

The Chancellor also highlighted the increasingly complex regulatory environment and noted concerns regarding the expansion of requirements in relation to foreign interference settings, where a shift toward country-based restrictions was emerging. The importance of sector engagement to ensure a balanced regulatory approach was noted.

8. Vice-Chancellor and President's Report

The Vice-Chancellor highlighted a number of significant achievements across the University community. Members noted that several current and emeritus staff had been recognised in the King's Birthday Honours, including Emeritus Professor Justin Kenardy AO, Emeritus Professor David McIntyre AO, Emeritus Professor Michael Roberts AO and Professor Peter Soyer AO, and Associate Professor David Austin AM, Emeritus Professor Tracey Bunda AM, Professor Noel Hayman AM, Emeritus Professor Sarah Roberts-Thomson AM, Associate Professor Michael Steyn AM, Professor Sean Tweedy AM and Professor Bala Venkatesh AM, and Associate Professor Helen Irving PSM.

In addition, members noted UQ's achievement of Platinum Tier status in the Australian LGBTQ+ Inclusion Awards and the award of a fifth SAGE Athena Swan Cygnet Award, reflecting sustained progress in inclusion and gender equity.

In sad news, the Vice-Chancellor reported on recent bereavements, noting the passing of Professor Roger Wepf and Associate Professor Marloes Dekker, and acknowledging their significant contributions to research, teaching and the broader UQ community.

The Vice-Chancellor also provided an update on UQ developments including National Reconciliation Week activities, growth in research partnerships, and international engagement initiatives, including the agreement to extend the current joint PhD program with the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IITD) for another 5 years.

Members were informed of the University's financial outlook, noting a deterioration due to lower than expected international student enrolments, driven by changing demand in offshore markets and broader global pressures. The drivers of this decline were discussed, including price sensitivity, increased global competition, and structural changes in key international markets, and members noted UQ's current mitigation strategies including scholarships, diversification of markets, and review of pricing models.

<u>**Strategic Matters**</u>

9. Discussion on the Australian Tertiary Education Commission (ATEC)

The Chancellor introduced Chief Commissioner, ATEC, Professor Barney Glover AO.

Professor Glover advised that ATEC's role is to provide system stewardship, rather than regulatory oversight, and highlighted a transition towards a managed growth funding model, tighter mission-based compacts, and alignment of institutional activity with national priorities.

It was noted that the new funding model aimed to replace current marginal arrangements with planned growth allocations and increased focus on equity participation, including regional and Indigenous students. Additional initiatives included improved sector collaboration, credit recognition pathways, and stronger demographic data to inform planning.

Members discussed implications for institutional autonomy, student choice, and funding certainty, and raised questions regarding allocation flexibility and potential constraints on university decision-making. It was noted that institutions would retain autonomy within overall funding envelopes and that compacts would allow flexibility with periodic review.

10. External Review of Senate – Update

Professor Stephen Garton provided an update on the external review of Senate, outlining that, under the TEQSA Higher Education Standards Framework, Senate meets the key requirements for effective corporate governance, including appropriate structures for oversight of risk, performance, finance and academic governance.

Professor Garton noted that Senate is functioning effectively, with a good balance of academic and corporate expertise and identified opportunities to further strengthen effectiveness, including enhanced focus on emerging areas of risk, more explicit Senate self-assessment, and consideration of how committees support Senate's oversight role.

Members noted a number of preliminary suggestions, including stronger strategic focus, improved timeliness of papers, and the use of external expertise on committees where appropriate. The review will also consider the size and composition of Senate, together with the number and structure of its committees.

The Chancellor requested that the final report include suggested key performance indicators or benchmarking measures to support Senate in assessing its own effectiveness.

Academic Matters

11. Update from the Academic Board President

The President of the Academic Board referred to her written report and provided an update on developments in academic governance, including increased use of secure digital assessments, expansion of alternative examination arrangements, and curriculum initiatives including the Indigenisation of the Curriculum guide.

It was noted that Academic Board was considering the establishment of committees focused on student equity and learning environments.

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

12. Academic Board Report

The report of the Academic Board was **noted**.

13. Proposed Amendments to the Academic Board Policy

Members were informed that the amendments reflected updates to ensure representation of faculty-level institutes on Academic Board and noted that the amendments had been endorsed through the Academic Board and the Senate Governance committee.

Senate **approved** the amendments to the Academic Board Policy.

Financial and Operational Matters

14. Warwick Solar Farm - Critical Infrastructure Risk Management Program

The Chancellor noted that the Warwick Solar Farm Critical Infrastructure Risk Management Program (CIRMP) had been developed to ensure compliance with the Security of Critical Infrastructure Act and that, while the Solar Farm was not classified as nationally critical infrastructure, it remained subject to relevant legislative obligations.

It was noted that the CIRMP provided a comprehensive framework for identifying and managing risks across cyber, physical, personnel, and supply chain domains, and adopted the University's enterprise risk management approach. The program includes a forward action plan to support ongoing improvement in risk maturity, supported by governance arrangements with clear accountability for monitoring and reporting.

Members discussed the program, noting that while key risk categories had been identified, further clarity regarding the treatment of residual risk would be beneficial. Members also discussed broader commercial considerations associated with the facility, including constraints relating to energy storage and market conditions.

Senate **approved** the Warwick Solar Farm CIRMP.

15. Wage Compliance Review Update

Members noted an additional amount to be remediated, following the completion of further wage compliance reviews. It was noted that this work forms part of a sustained program of remediation, which has progressed from addressing significant historical issues to identifying residual discrepancies.

It was acknowledged that the complexity of the enterprise agreement had contributed to historical challenges, and that efforts were underway to simplify processes and improve accuracy. Members further noted the implementation of strengthened controls, including improvements to payroll systems, enhanced governance oversight, and ongoing engagement with regulators. A significant investment in workforce and time-on-task systems was also noted as a key measure to support compliance and reduce risk.

The Chancellor sought explicit assurance that all necessary actions were being taken to ensure full compliance. The Chief Operating Officer confirmed that strengthened systems and controls to provide these assurances would be in place by November 2026, and undertook to report back to Senate on progress later in the year.

Senate **noted** the update and the ongoing implementation of corrective actions.

Governance Matters

16. Naming Requests

A. Naming Request – Brazil Family Chair in Spatial Medicine

Senate considered a proposal for the naming of the Brazil Family Chair in Spatial Medicine and were informed that the Chair had been established through philanthropic contribution aligned with the University's strategic priorities in health, research, and innovation.

It was noted due diligence and consultation had been undertaken in accordance with university policy, and in relation to the security of philanthropic commitments, appropriate contractual arrangements were in place, noting that default occurrences were rare.

Senate **approved** the naming of the Brazil Family Chair in Spatial Medicine.

B. Naming Request – Noel Hayman Reconciliation Garden

Senate considered a proposal to name the Noel Hayman Reconciliation Garden at the Herston Campus. Members were informed that the naming recognised the significant contribution of Dr Noel Hayman, Queensland's first Indigenous medical doctor and one of the first two Indigenous medical students to graduate from UQ in 1990.

It was noted that the proposal had been subject to consultation, including engagement with relevant indigenous stakeholders, and was aligned with UQ reconciliation objectives.

Senate **approved** the naming of the Noel Hayman Reconciliation Garden.

17. Corrupt Conduct against the Vice-Chancellor Policy

The Chancellor noted the review of the Complaints of Corrupt Conduct Against the Vice-Chancellor and President Policy, which outlines the process for managing complaints involving corrupt conduct by the Vice-Chancellor. Members were informed that the development of the Policy and the Policy itself complies with section 48A of the Crime and Corruption Act 2001, which requires a public official (in this case the Vice Chancellor) to establish a policy in consultation with the relevant authority, setting out how such complaints are to be managed.

It was noted that the Policy had been confirmed as fit for purpose, with no amendments proposed, and that this position had been endorsed by the Senate Governance Committee.

Senate **approved** the recommendation that no amendments are required to the Policy.

18. Revisions to the Diversity, Equity and Inclusive Behaviours Policy

The Chancellor noted that the revised and retitled Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy incorporates a number of key amendments, including implementation of Senate's February 2025 decision to endorse the Universities Australia definition of antisemitism, a clearer articulation of UQ's rejection of all forms of racism and unlawful discrimination, the definition of vilification consistent with the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld), and the role of the EDI Management Committee.

One member raised a number of drafting considerations, including the qualifying language relating to freedom of speech, the link to external web material regarding the definition of antisemitism, and the need for greater clarity in relation to enforcement of policy.

Members acknowledged that these matters could be addressed through post meeting refinement during implementation and at subsequent policy review points.

The Chancellor reminded members that Senate had endorsed the UA definition of antisemitism in February 2025 and that the policy aligns with the University's commitment to the freedom of speech principles of the French Review.

Senate **approved** the revised Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

19. Senate Remuneration Policy amendment to salary sacrifice provisions

The Chancellor noted the proposed amendments to the Senate Remuneration Policy, specifically relating to clause 22 and the operation of salary sacrifice arrangements.

Members were informed that the amendments, which had been endorsed by the Senate Governance Committee, were developed to clarify the application of salary sacrifice arrangements for Senate and ensure compliance with relevant taxation requirements.

Senate **approved** the amendments to the Senate Remuneration Policy.

20. Senate Election Review Findings

The Chancellor noted the report on the 2025 Senate Election, including the "lessons learned", and were informed that the report outlined the conduct of the election in accordance with the University of Queensland Act 1998 (Qld), including the nominations process, voting arrangements, and feedback received on the delivery of the election.

It was noted that the report identified opportunities to improve future Senate elections, including clarifying nomination and voter eligibility requirements, refining election timeframes, strengthening procedures, and improving communication and awareness, particularly among graduates. Members also noted recommendations to enhance the functionality and timing of the voting platform.

Senate **noted the report and approved** the recommendations, including the preparation of proposed amendments to the policy and Electoral Code for subsequent Senate review.

21. Minor amendments to Senate Committees Terms of Reference/membership

The Chancellor noted the inclusion of an independent member to the Campus Infrastructure Committee, following endorsement by the Chancellor.

It was further noted that the amendments included adjustments to the Terms of Reference to clarify attendance arrangements, including recognising the Provost as the Vice-Chancellor's alternate on the Campus Infrastructure Committee and amending the Advancement and Community Engagement Committee arrangements to allow for the "Provost or nominee" to attend.

Senate **approved** the amendments to committee memberships and Terms of Reference.

22. Modern Slavery Statement

The Chancellor noted that the Statement has been prepared to meet the University's obligations under the Modern Slavery Act 2018 (Cth) and outlines the risks of modern slavery in the University's operations and supply chains, as well as the actions being taken to assess and address these risks.

It was noted that the Statement reflects improvements in the University's approach to identifying and managing modern slavery risks, including strengthened due diligence and engagement across operational areas. Members also noted the importance of the Statement in supporting ethical practice, transparency, and risk management. It was noted that the wording on page 19 would need to be corrected from "Student Wellbeing and Success" to "Student Support and Wellbeing Services".

Senate **approved** the 2025 Modern Slavery Statement for submission to the Modern Slavery Statements Register.

<u>Senate Committee Reports</u>

23. Campus Infrastructure

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

24. Finance

The Finance Committee Chair noted that UQ remained in a position of strength, with active scenario planning to be presented at the upcoming Senate retreat.

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

25. Governance

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

26. Risk and Audit

The report of the Risk and Audit Committee was **noted**, including the sexual misconduct update 2025 and National Code update for April 2026; the Animal Ethics Committee Annual Report for 2025; and the Research Ethics and Integrity Annual Report for 2025.

<u>Other Matters for Noting</u>

The following items were noted:

27. Senate Annual Calendar 2026

The Senate Annual Calendar 2026 was **noted**.

28. 2026 Senate and Senate Committee Meeting Dates

The 2026 Senate and Senate Committee Meeting Dates were **noted**.

29. UQ Significant Litigation Report

There were no matters to report.

Any Other Business

Members noted that this would be the final Senate meeting for the Chancellor after a decade of chairing Senate and expressed their appreciation for the Chancellor’s leadership and contribution to Senate, acknowledging his role in strengthening governance and facilitating constructive debate. A formal farewell would be held on 8 July.

The Chancellor expressed his appreciation to members and staff for their contribution to the work of Senate.

The next Senate meeting will be held on Tuesday, 18 August 2026.

The meeting closed at 7.29pm.