

# UTS Council meeting report

18 June 2025

This report covers some of the non-confidential matters considered by UTS Council at its 18 June 2025 meeting.

*\*The Report structure replicates the flow of the agenda.*

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## Strategic items of business

### People Strategy and Priorities Update

Council noted the following four key workforce priorities for UTS in 2025-26:

- Right-size and maintain sustainable workforce - The size and composition of the UTS workforce is financially unsustainable. Immediate action is being taken to reduce workforce cost and align workforce to strategic priorities. Future workforce cost, alignment and efficient utilisation will be enabled by the ERP.
- Maintain a safe, welcoming & inclusive workplace - The OSI will be delivered with approaches and support that mitigates risk to staff engagement, well-being and impacts on staff diversity as much as practicable. The solutions for OSI will form part of a refreshed framework and program for managing psychosocial risk.
- Develop staff & leaders for high performance - Workday presents an opportunity to elevate the career experience at UTS. In parallel to establishing those foundations, UTS will continue to invest in staff and leaders by shaping a potential Leadership Academy and progress other staff development priorities in research and education. Insights from transformation programs underway have highlighted the opportunity to better implement consistent workload and performance processes.
- Simplify work - UTS has made substantial investment in establishing a core ERP system, Workday. This must be designed and implemented well to support contemporary and compliant workforce planning and management, while removing staff experience pain-points across people and finance processes. Other technology enablers will be prioritised in line with OSI opportunities

### Digital Presence Program

The Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) presented the outcome of the Digital Presence Program (DPP) which encompassed a new University website that has been designed with a focus on the user experience particularly for prospective students and partners.

Council acknowledged the significant work undertaken to develop the new website and recognised that it represents a significant shift in how UTS positions itself in the market to attract students and partners, and foster community engagement.

Resource allocation for ongoing content development and opportunities to enhance philanthropic engagement was also discussed. Council noted that future work will

focus on establishing a customer data platform to enable personalised experiences for students, staff, and philanthropists.

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## Operations and performance

### Report from the Vice-Chancellor

*The Vice-Chancellor provides a report to each Council meeting containing updates on key developments and events that have occurred since Council's last meeting. Updates include; the implementation progress of the UTS Strategy, State and Federal Government issues, updates regarding the university sector and internal matters, particularly achievements and awards.*

Council noted the Vice-Chancellor's recent appointment to the Universities Australia Board.

The Vice-Chancellor extended congratulations to the recipients of the 2025 King's Birthday Honours and also noted that Professor James Brown was awarded an Order of the British Empire (OBE) through the British Honours system.

Council also noted that the new faculty will be named the Faculty of Design and Society. The Vice-Chancellor also advised Council that the recruitment process for the Dean of the new Faculty was nearing completion.

The positive performance of UTS in various rankings surveys was also acknowledged, reinforcing the University's reputation and competitiveness in the national and global higher education landscape.

### Health Safety and Wellbeing Standing Report

Council discussed the current state and future direction of gender-based violence reporting practices across the University. Council noted that work is underway to further modernise and streamline reporting systems for gender-based violence. The Vice-Chancellor indicated that he would provide an update to the Student/Council Liaison Group members on work underway to support the implementation of the National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence.

Council noted that a national survey on sexual assault and sexual harassment in Australian universities is expected to be conducted in 2026.

Council confirmed that the Health Safety and Wellbeing standing report should continue to be submitted directly to Council to ensure appropriate oversight of health, safety, and wellbeing reporting.

### 2024 Sustainability Report

The significant work being undertaken across the University in support of sustainability goals was acknowledged. The Report provides an opportunity to showcase UTS sustainability activities in education, research and operations.

Council considered the overall staff feedback and recognised the document as a valuable research artefact and a source of pride for both staff and students. Council also

discussed the level of staff numbers accessing social justice leave to participate in volunteering activities, and volunteering in general across NGOs being low post Covid.

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## Reports from committees

*Council has a number of committees, whose membership have particular expertise, to provide assistance and advice to Council on matters for Council consideration. These committees report back to Council.*

### **Report from Audit and Risk Committee**

*The primary responsibility of the Audit and Risk Committee is to assist Council in overseeing the activities undertaken by the UTS body corporate and, from time to time, other related entities as requested by Council.*

Council noted the Committee updates on Cybersecurity, the Annual Management Signoffs, and the establishment of a dedicated safety team to respond to incidents of gender-based violence involving students.

### **Report from Finance Committee**

*The Finance Committee advises Council on matters relating to the distribution and supervision of university finances, and acts on behalf of Council in areas of delegated authority.*

Council was advised that since the release of the University's response to the OSI Discussion Paper in March, engagement has been extensive. This includes monthly Senior Leaders Group meetings, regular updates from Executive Sponsors, all-staff town halls, drop-in sessions and local forums. A responsive communications strategy is in place to ensure consistent messaging and transparency.

The immediate priority is the preparation of Academic Workforce change plans for consultation (scheduled for release early July), with Operating Model proposals to follow. Staff wellbeing remains central, with psychosocial risk assessments informing support strategies. Broad engagement will continue through divisional and faculty visits, supported by targeted local communications as change proposals are developed and implemented.

### **Report from Governance Committee**

*The primary responsibility of the Governance Committee is to assist Council in regards to policy, general governance specified risk matters.*

Council considered and approved the 2024 UTS Modern Slavery Statement as required by the Commonwealth Government and also approved the University's response to the NSW Government's modern slavery reporting requirements.

### **Academic Board Annual Report 2024**

Council was provided with the Academic Board Annual Report (2024). In summarising the Annual Report, the Chair of Academic Board provided Council with a summary of key priorities that had been focus points during 2024. Key areas of priority included:



- Artificial Intelligence, Academic Integrity, TEQSA Request for Information (RFI)
- Support for Students: Legislation and UTS response
- Embedding Academic Risk into decision-making
- Improving communication between Faculty Boards and Academic Board

The valuable contributions by student members of Academic Board were also acknowledged. Council also noted the progress and ongoing work in relation to 2025 priorities.

### **Report from Student/Council Liaison Group**

*The Student/Council Liaison Group is a forum for UTS students, members of Council and UTS senior management to discuss matters of UTS policy and governance relevant to the student body.*

Council was advised that the UTS Student Partnership Agreement 2025-2027 had been finalised. The Agreement constitutes a statement of mutual intentions with respect to student engagement with representatives from UTS, ActivateUTS and the UTS Students' Association. The Agreement also recommended the development of a RACI framework to provide a reporting mechanism on the progress of projects specified in the Partnership document.

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### **Items for approval**

Council approved:

- 2026 Council and Committee Meeting Dates; and
- changes to Committee Chair and Membership.

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### **Items for noting**

*Council are provided papers for noting and include activity that has occurred between Council meetings.*

- Chancellor's Report
- Use of Power of Attorney, University Seal and Executive Action

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### **Items of General Business**

#### **Presentation: Faculty of Health**

Council was joined by Professor Debra Anderson (Dean, Faculty of Health) for a presentation on the Faculty of Health.

Professor Anderson's presentation highlighted key areas including student experience, local and global partnerships, transdisciplinary research, Insight, First Nations Leadership, diversity and inclusion, and AI and digital technology solutions.

Council noted the significant work undertaken by the Faculty and discussed the diversity of its student cohort and the strength of its local and global partnerships.

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## Other reports

- Report from Infrastructure Committee
- Report from Academic Board