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Committee Secretary
Standing Committee on Social Issues
NSW Parliament House
6 Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000
By online submission

Dear Committee Secretary

RE: Submission in response to inquiry into the New South Wales university sector

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to this inquiry. The University of Technology (UTS) is committed to striving for best practice in its approach to governance and aims to continually improve and strengthen our processes and performance for the benefit of our staff, students and broader community.

We welcomed the appointment of the Expert Council on University Governance (the Expert Council) by Education Ministers. We also acknowledge the Interim Report of the Senate Education and Employment Legislation Committee inquiry (the Senate Inquiry) into the quality of governance at Australian higher education providers and look forward to its final report later in the year.

UTS is actively engaging in all these processes. We made submissions to both the Expert Council and the Senate Inquiry, followed by meetings with the Expert Council and an appearance before the Senate Committee on 8 September 2025. Throughout, we have consistently expressed our commitment to working collaboratively with government, regulators, our staff, students and the community to preserve the excellence of our higher education system.

It is important to recognise that universities operate within a complex web of oversight mechanisms. These include both state and federal agencies, each with distinct but sometimes overlapping responsibilities.

2025 has seen the introduction of additional accountability measures, including the appointment of a National Student Ombudsman, the establishment of the Interim Australian Tertiary Education Commission and legislation to establish a National Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence. The Federal Education Department is also currently consulting on ways to modernise and strengthen the powers of the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), the national regulator of higher education.

UTS encourages the Committee to have regard to the layers of existing regulation and oversight, as well as the governance inquiries and consultations currently on foot, when formulating its recommendations. Streamlined and coherent oversight which avoids duplication of effort and unnecessary administrative burden will ultimately deliver better outcomes for staff and students.

To assist the Committee's deliberations, included with this letter is a detailed **attachment** that sets out UTS's governance arrangements. It covers the role and composition of UTS Council and its committees, the role of Academic Board, engagement with student representatives, Executive remuneration, use of consultants and management of risk and conflicts of interest.

The Australian Higher Education sector is experiencing an unprecedented confluence of challenges: funding pressures, shifting public expectations, regulatory changes, the impact of AI and other new technologies and internal cultural shifts. Governance structures that have served us well through two decades of growth are being tested and required to adapt.

It is timely to examine whether these governance structures are fit for purpose in a rapidly changing environment. In doing so, it must also be acknowledged that to navigate this period of transition, NSW university councils will be best served by a state and federal government who are collaborative, coordinated and consistent in their responses and who are cognisant of the significant commitment, expertise and background that exists across our governing bodies.

Yours sincerely

Professor Andrew Parfitt
Vice-Chancellor and President

ATTACHMENT

Governance framework at UTS

To assist the Standing Committee with its inquiry, this section provides information regarding the composition of UTS's governing bodies and the transparency, accountability and effectiveness of their functions and processes.

Under the *University of Technology Sydney Act 1989* (the UTS Act) Council is 'the governing authority of the University' (section 8A(2) of the UTS Act). It has the powers needed to enable UTS to carry out its functions, including the power:

- to control and manage the affairs of the university (section 16(1A)).
- over money and property (sections 16, 18, 19, 20 and 21).
- to appoint a Vice-Chancellor (section 12).
- to delegate its functions (section 17).

The Council is empowered to act 'in all matters concerning the university in such manner as appears to the Council to be best calculated to promote the object and interests of the university' (section 16(1A)(c)). The Council has wide powers, but as emphasised above, they may only be exercised in pursuance of the university's object (section 6(1)) and then only in discharge of the university's functions specified in the UTS Act. These powers must be exercised subject to the by-laws of the university (section 16(2)), which are made by Council and approved by the Governor (section 28)).

UTS has implemented the *Voluntary Code of Best Practice for the Governance of Australian Public Universities* (Voluntary Code) as the peak framework against which the university monitors and reports its governance compliance. The University Chancellors Council has since endorsed an updated version of the Voluntary Code in December 2024 (now known as *A Code of Governance Principles and Practice for Australia's Public Universities*) followed by UTS Council's endorsement at its April 2025 meeting. Reporting on compliance with the Voluntary Code will be based upon the 2025 calendar year and reported on in the UTS 2025 Annual Report.

The Voluntary Code requires university councils to adopt a statement of their primary responsibilities. The statement of primary responsibilities and the minimum components of such a statement were incorporated into the UTS Act by the *University Legislation Amendment Act 2004* (NSW).

Accountability and effectiveness of Council's responsibilities (including expenditure, risk management and conflicts of interest)

The following table contains Council's primary responsibilities as prescribed by the UTS Act and a brief summary of the way in which Council carries out each of the responsibilities.

Council's primary responsibilities as prescribed by the UTS Act (section 16(1B)) are to:		How Council carries out these responsibilities
(a)	monitor the performance of the Vice- Chancellor	The Chancellor, in consultation with the Remuneration Committee, annually reviews the Vice-Chancellor's performance.
(b)	oversee the university's performance	Council approves the UTS Corporate Plan and annual targets. Council receives regular progress reports and briefings on strategic matters, KPI and financial performance reports.

(c)	oversee the academic activities of the university	The Academic Board and the Vice-Chancellor are the principal sources of advice to the Council on all academic matters. The Chair, Academic Board is an ex officio member of Council.
(d)	approve the university's mission, strategic direction, annual budget and business plan	Council approves the UTS Strategy, UTS Annual Plan, Finance Plan and annual budget. The Finance Committee advises Council on financial matters.
(e)	oversee risk management and risk assessment across the university (including, if necessary, taking reasonable steps to obtain independent audit reports of entities in which the university has an interest but which it does not control or with which it has entered into a joint venture)	Council approves the UTS Risk Management Policy, including the Risk Management Framework. UTS has in place an overarching risk architecture to ensure that Council has oversight of both strategic and other risks. The Audit and Risk Committee advises Council on UTS risk management generally. Other committees report on specific risk management within their terms of reference and in line with the risk architecture.
(f)	approve and monitor systems of control and accountability for the university (including in relation to controlled entities within the meaning of section 16A)	Council's delegations are contained in the University's delegations. The Audit and Risk Committee approves and monitors the annual audit plan.
(g)	approve significant university commercial activities (within the meaning of section 21A)	The UTS Commercial Activities Policy provides the framework for UTS commercial activities. The Chief Operating Officer advises Council on these matters.
(h)	establish policies and procedural principles for the university consistent with legal requirements and community expectations	Council approves all university policy except where it has delegated authority to the Vice-Chancellor or to Academic Board for academic policies. The UTS Policy Framework details requirements for policy development, approval and implementation.
(i)	ensure that the university's grievance procedures, and information concerning any rights of appeal or review conferred by or under any Act, are published in a form that is readily accessible to the public	The UTS Staff Complaints Policy outlines how complaints are reported and managed at UTS. The Policy is reviewed regularly in line with changes in legislation or regulation. Review and appeal processes are published widely within UTS and publicly.
(j)	regularly review its own performance (in light of its functions and obligations imposed by or under this or any other Act)	Council has established a Governance Review Framework, which is coordinated by the Governance Committee. Under this Framework, the effectiveness of Council's performance is subject to an external review every 4 years. Internal reviews comprise a governance systems review (every 4 years) and a Council evaluation survey (every 4 years).
(k)	adopt a statement of its primary responsibilities	Council has adopted a statement of primary responsibilities reflecting section 16(1B) of the UTS Act.
(l)	make available for members of the Council a program of induction and of development	Council has adopted statements on the structure and content of its induction and development program. This includes the opportunity for Council members to

relevant to their role as such a member.	participate in Australian Institute of Company Directors' courses.

UTS Council: composition of UTS's governing body

The Council may comprise up to a maximum of 22 members and a minimum of 11 (section 8B of the UTS Act) and is currently comprised of 18 members. Details of current members is available from here: https://www.uts.edu.au/about/leadership-governance/governance/committees/uts-council/council-members.

The composition of Council is in accordance with sections 8A-H, section 9 and Schedule 1 of the UTS Act, Part 2 of the University of Technology Sydney By-law 2005 (the UTS By-law) and Rule G1 of the UTS General Rules as follows:

- 3 official members:
    - the Chancellor
    - the Vice-Chancellor
    - the Chair of the Academic Board
- 2 external persons appointed by the NSW Education Minister for terms not exceeding 4 years
- 8 external people appointed by the Council for terms not exceeding 4 years
- 2 elected (academic staff) members elected by academic staff members for a term of 2 years in accordance with election procedures set out in Rule G3 of the UTS General Rules
- one elected (professional staff) member elected by professional (non-academic) staff members for a term of 2 years in accordance with the election procedures set out in Rule G3 of the UTS General Rules
- one elected (postgraduate student) member elected by postgraduate students for a term of 2 years in accordance with election procedures set out in Rule G3 of the UTS General Rules, and
- one elected (undergraduate student) member elected by undergraduate students for a term of 2 years in accordance with election procedures set out in Rule G3 of the UTS General Rules.

Importantly, Council has chosen to increase its representation of elected staff and student members above the minimum to support a strong voice in the constitution of its membership. Section 8D of the UTS Act stipulates a minimum number of one elected member in each of the three categories (academic staff, professional staff and students) but Council has a total of five elected members (two academic staff, one professional staff and two students).

Public access to Council decisions

There is no requirement for universities in New South Wales to publish minutes or agendas of their governing body or its subcommittees. As a consequence, there is a variable approach taken by universities across the Australian higher education sector.

Access to UTS Council agendas and minutes is limited to members of UTS Council and designated staff in attendance. Minutes are taken at Council meetings and are subject to Council approval.

To assist the UTS community with understanding the UTS Council's areas of focus, UTS issues Council meeting reports and these are published on the UTS website following the approval of minutes from the previous meeting. The intent of the report is to provide an indicative summary of areas of focus at each meeting.

The relevant website link is here https://www.uts.edu.au/about/leadership-governance/governance/committees/uts-council.

Committees of Council: role and operation

Council committees make decisions in thorough, consultative, consistent and transparent ways within delegations. Committees operate in line with approved Charters. Council's current committees are as follows.

Academic Board

The constitution, functions and powers of the Academic Board are determined by Council in accordance with section 15 of the UTS Act and set out in Rule G3 of the UTS General Rules. The Academic Board and the Vice-Chancellor are the principal advisers to the Council on academic matters. Subject to the UTS By-law, the UTS Rules and the resolutions of Council, Academic Board has a responsibility to assess the quality of, and provide direction to, the academic work of the university, including teaching, learning, scholarship, research and research training.

Further information about Academic Board and its Charter is available from here: https://www.uts.edu.au/about/uts-governance/committees-uts/academic-board

Audit and Risk Committee

The primary responsibility of the committee is to assist Council in overseeing the risk activities (including financial controls and Risk Management Framework) undertaken by UTS. In addition to oversight of risk management and the internal control framework, the committee has oversight of legislative compliance where appropriate, internal and external audit and external reporting accountability. More information about UTS' Risk Management is outlined further below under the heading Risk Management.

Further information about Audit and Risk Committee and its Charter is available from here: https://www.uts.edu.au/about/uts-governance/committees-uts/council-committees/audit-and-risk-committee

Finance Committee

Advises Council on financial matters and acts on its behalf within certain delegated authorities, while recognising the Vice-Chancellor's responsibility for management of the university. The committee makes recommendations and provides advice to Council on the following matters:

- Financial planning and budget – the Financial Plan, annual budgets, including the capital works budget, and subsequent amendments to budgets of the university proposed by the Vice-Chancellor.
- Financial performance – the ongoing financial performance of the university.
- Liquidity – cash flow and borrowings of the university.
- Financial sustainability – long-term financial matters with a view to sustaining and enhancing the financial health of the university. As well as funds investment and divestment matters.
- Research commercialisation investment – monitor investment in research commercialisation activities, and translation investment returns.
- Controlled entities – oversight of the financial performance of controlled entities.
- Risk – assist Council in discharging its responsibility to exercise due care and skill in relation to the designated risks contained within the UTS Council Committees Risk Oversight Responsibilities Framework.
- Policy – oversight of the financial aspects of corporate and functional policies.

Further information about Finance Committee and its Charter is available from here: https://www.uts.edu.au/about/uts-governance/committees-uts/council-committees/finance-committee

Governance Committee

Advises Council on matters relating to the university's governance framework; oversees the conduct of Council's Governance Review Framework; identifies and advises Council of the appropriate balance of skills, knowledge and experience that should exist in the Council as a whole and any related development requirements and strategies; oversees the development and operation of Council's induction and professional development program; reports to Council on UTS governance; and considers and advises Council on proposed amendments to the UTS Act, By-law and Rules as may be required for the university in accordance with sections 28 and 29 of the UTS Act.

Further information about the Governance Committee and its Charter is available from here: https://www.uts.edu.au/about/uts-governance/committees-uts/council-committees/governance-committee

Infrastructure Committee

Advises Council on matters relating to physical infrastructure, information technology infrastructure and precincts in the context of the UTS strategy and Finance Plan as approved by Council.

Further information about the Infrastructure Committee and its Charter is available from here: https://www.uts.edu.au/about/uts-governance/committees-uts/council-committees/infrastructure-committee

Nominations Committee

Recommends to Council candidates whom Council may appoint as Council members or nominate to the NSW Education Minister for appointment as Council members

Further information about the Nominations Committee and its Charter is available from here: https://www.uts.edu.au/about/uts-governance/committees-uts/council-committees/nominations-committee

Remuneration Committee

Advises Council on the Vice-Chancellor's and the Provost's performance, determines remuneration, the design parameters of the Remuneration Framework as it applies to those two positions, and is broadly across the senior leadership group.

Further information about the Remuneration Committee and its Charter is available from here: https://www.uts.edu.au/about/uts-governance/committees-uts/council-committees/remuneration-committee

Honorary Awards Committee

Advises Council on policy relating to all types of honorary awards and recommends nominations for honorary awards and titles.

Further information about the Honorary Awards Committee and its Charter is available from here: https://www.uts.edu.au/about/uts-governance/committees-uts/council-committees/honorary-awards-committee

Qualifications, experience and appointment of Council members

As outlined above, the Governance Committee is charged with identifying and advising Council of the appropriate balance of skills, knowledge and experience that should exist in the Council as a whole, and any related professional development requirements and strategies. In this regard, Council has approved a Skills and Experience Matrix (final page of this attachment) to ensure its composition reflects both requirements specified in the UTS Act and those specified by Council.

The matrix is reviewed annually to ensure prescribed skills and experience remain appropriate and is also a guide for the identification of potential candidates to be members of Council when vacancies arise.

A requirement of the Voluntary Code, enshrined in section 8C(1) of the UTS Act, is that at least 2 members of the Council must have financial expertise and at least one member must have commercial expertise. Section 8C(2) further provides that all appointed members of the Council must have expertise and experience relevant to the functions exercisable by the Council and an appreciation of the object, values, functions and activities of the university.

It is the responsibility of the Nominations Committee (as outlined in clause 34 of the UTS By-law) to recommend suitable people to Council for nomination to the NSW Education Minister and for appointment by the Council.

Remuneration of Council members

UTS Council members receive no remuneration or sitting fees associated with their Council role. Members can seek reimbursement for reasonable expenses incurred to attend the University that is generally limited to travel expenses.

These expenses are considered under clause 10, Rule G1 of the UTS General Rules which provides: "If a member of the Council incurs out of pocket expenses while engaged on University business, the University Secretary may authorise the payment of the whole or any part of the expenses so incurred to that member".

Code of Conduct

Council has adopted a Code of Conduct for Council and external committee members that summarises the standard of conduct and responsibilities of members. The Code provides an ethical framework for members, in the context of their duties and liabilities under the law and embodies the principles covering appropriate conduct.

Members who are also university members of staff are also subject to the university's Code of Conduct.

This Code provides general guidelines and understanding to members of what is expected of them as members. If there are any problems or questions relating to the Code, members may discuss these with the Chancellor or, in appropriate cases, with the full Council or other relevant committee.

Conflicts of interest

Members are appointed with a wide diversity of skills and experience. Accordingly, they may have multiple professional and personal interests that make it impossible to avoid conflicts altogether. Conflicts of interest that do arise, whether actual, potential or perceived, need to be recognised, disclosed and effectively managed.

Committee members are also required to raise any potential conflict of interest with their committee chair in the first instance and at the earliest possible opportunity.

<u>Managing a conflict of interest</u>
Council and committee members are obliged to declare any conflicts of interest when they are appointed to Council or a committee, or at any time that they become aware of a conflict of interest. They must also declare any conflicts of interest on an annual basis. A declaration of interest form must be completed and lodged with the University Secretary.

Once a disclosure of such a material interest has been made and recorded, the conflict is managed by the member not receiving any papers relating to the matter; not being present during any deliberation or decision of Council or the committee regarding the matter; or as otherwise determined by Council or the particular committee.

Where chairs of Council committees, or individual members whose circumstances are not otherwise covered by the above mechanisms, have a current or potential conflict of interest, they should raise that conflict with the Chancellor who may make a determination or, if appropriate, bring the matter to the Governance Committee for its consideration.

A conflict of interest declaration is not complete until Council's declaration of interest form is completed and lodged with the University Secretary, except when made at a Council meeting or Council committee meeting on the basis that the form will be completed immediately after the meeting at which such disclosure is made.

Induction and professional development of Council members
The Governance Committee has oversight of the Council induction and professional development program.

<u>Council induction program</u>
The purpose of the Council induction program is to familiarise members of Council and its committees with:
- the role, duties and responsibilities of the Council and its members.
- UTS governance and the structure, functions and activities of the university.
- significant issues for, and external influences on, the university.

The program includes:
- governance orientation, including meeting the Chancellor and the Vice-Chancellor.
- financial orientation, including capital development, budget, accounting, financial planning, management reporting, controlled entities, part-owned entities and commercial activities.
- an information pack, including Council member roles and responsibilities, the Council Code of Conduct, strategic planning, risk management and other protocols.

<u>Council professional development program</u>
The purpose of the Council professional development program is to build Council expertise and knowledge in areas identified by the Council, for example:
- governance, structure, functions, activities and plans of the university.
- significant issues, external influences and emerging issues for the university.
- financial/business/commercial analysis.
- community expectations.

The program includes:
- Council lunch and Council meeting presentations.
- annual Council retreat.

- external seminars, conducted by appropriate bodies.
- external speakers series.
- opportunity to participate in Australian Institute of Company Directors' courses.

Academic governance and management

The Vice-Chancellor is the chief academic and administrative officer of the university and works with Academic Board as the principal sources of advice to the Council on academic matters.

Academic Board 'constitutes the primary forum in the University for the discussion and resolution of academic issues and matters, and has a responsibility to assess the quality of, and provide direction to, the academic work of the University, including teaching, learning, scholarship, research and research training'.

In particular, Academic Board:
   (a) Shall report to, or advise Council or the Vice-Chancellor, on any aspect of:
      i. the academic goals, objectives, principles, directions, priorities and profile of the University, including advice on how these provide a basis for financial, capital or human resource planning.
      ii. the quality and standards appropriate to all aspects of the academic work of the University, and in particular to teaching and learning and the support thereof, and to research and research training.
   (b) Shall determine the accreditation of proposed or existing award courses on their academic merit and the removal of the accreditation of award courses.
   (c) Shall undertake initiatives and institute measures to promote the communication of academic issues and matters and the coordination of academic work and activities across the whole University.
   (d) Shall determine academic policies.
   (e) Shall determine the standards governing all aspects of academic administration, including, but not limited to, the admission of students and the examination and assessment of students work.
   (f) Shall set the conditions for the granting of fellowships, scholarships and prizes within the University.
   (g) Shall recommend to Council those students who, having satisfied all academic requirements for an award course, are considered eligible to graduate; and shall assure the validity of such recommendations by appropriate means.
   (h) Shall determine the structures and functions of faculty boards, noting that a faculty board's authority to act on specific matters will continue to require Council's delegated authority.

Council's monitoring and evaluation of its performance

It is good governance practice for governing bodies and their committees to have in place a sound performance review process. The Governance Committee is responsible for overseeing the conduct of Council's review of its performance.

Council has established a Governance Review Framework under which the effectiveness of Council's performance is subject to an external review every 4 years. Internal reviews comprise a governance systems review (every 4 years) and a Council evaluation survey (every 4 years).

Additionally, the Chancellor conducts annual one-on-one performance discussions with each Council member and of Council performance overall. Council committees assess their performance against their forward plan annually.

Risk management

UTS Council has approved a risk taxonomy framework which designates both strategic and operational risks. UTS Council has also designated where the oversight of the risk will be considered at either Council or Council sub-committee levels. The Audit and Risk Committee monitors the extent to which the University is operating within its risk appetite across the risk framework.

The Risk Management Framework is illustrated below:

UTS 2030 Strategy & Corporate Plan				
UTS Risk Management Approach			**UTS Risk Appetite**	
UTS Committees (Risk Oversight, Assurance & Attestations)				
Audit & Risk Committee				
Governance	Academic Board	Infrastructure	Remuneration	Finance
Risk Taxonomy				
Strategic	**Operational**	**Academic**	**Compliance**	
Scale	Liquidity	Academic Freedom/ Freedom of Speech	Regulatory	
Product	Revenue and Margin	Academic Integrity	Accreditation	
Student Satisfaction	Accounting, Legal and Tax	Assessment	Legislative	
Impact	Transaction Processing Risk	Research Environment	Privacy	
RoI	WHS	Research Integrity	Compliance Reporting	
Reputation	Cybersecurity			
Embodiment	Data Management, and Records			
Revenue	Artificial Intelligence (AI)			
Precinct/Campus	Workforce			
Talent	Third-Party			
Culture	Business Disruption			
	Fraud and Corruption			
	Social and Environmental			

UTS's Risk Management Framework aligns with international standards (ISO 31000:2018, Risk management — Guidelines). As shown above, this framework encompasses all aspects of university operations, including academic activities, research, change initiatives, financial planning, and legal compliance.

All staff members at UTS play a crucial role in risk management, ensuring that risks are understood, assessed and addressed within defined boundaries of risk appetite. Informed risk-taking, guided by UTS' risk appetite, contributes to the university's continued growth and success. UTS continues to strengthen risk maturity across the university in response to changes in the operating environment and external risk landscape. By fostering a risk-aware culture, UTS aims to enhance decision-making, protect its assets and maintain stakeholder confidence. Improvements across the university include:

- incorporated periodic external threat landscape scans as part of the risk identification and reporting processes.
- developed risk taxonomy covering strategic, operational, academic and compliance risks.
- developed risk assurance mapping that recognises various assurance activities undertaken across the university.
- strengthened risk governance with clear roles and responsibilities of Council and its committees and the university leadership team in risk oversight and monitoring effectiveness of risk mitigation strategies.
- rollout of on-the-job training of staff on risk management during periodic risk and opportunity review processes.

UTS maintains a comprehensive insurance program to cover the university and its controlled entities. These include:
- financial lines (including directors and officers, cyber, medical malpractice, commercial crime, professional indemnity, employment practices liability)
- public, products and environmental liabilities
- property and asset protection and business interruption
- accident and health (including travel insurance)
- staff and students international health and security management through International SOS.

Engagement with student representatives
UTS student representatives bring their voice, experience, insights and interests to the work of the university. Student representatives serve terms on UTS's Council, boards, committees and associations. Provided below is a detailed overview of these arrangements, beginning with the UTS Student Partnership Agreement.

<u>UTS Student Partnership Agreement</u>
In 2022, the first UTS Student Partnership Agreement was signed, supporting student engagement and collaboration as part of UTS's inclusive culture. The second iteration was formally signed and presented to the Student Council Liaison Group (a committee of the UTS Council) on 16 June 2025 (https://www.uts.edu.au/for-students/current-students/news/student-partnership-agreement-2025-2027-signed).

In the agreement, UTS, the ActivateUTS Board and the UTS Students' Association set out a combined approach to student engagement within the university's broader governance framework. The agreement seeks to engage our student community, empower our student leaders, and deliver agreed priorities.

The agreement is reviewed bi-annually under the stewardship of the Student Council Liaison Group to ensure continued relevance. Collaborative priorities are agreed to every two years. For 2025-2027, the priorities have been re-organised to align with the four domains of the student experience – Wellbeing, Belonging, Partnerships and Academic Engagement.

Some of the new collaborative priorities in the agreement are to:
- Co-design a new Student Voice Framework
- Explore availability of short-term emergency accommodation for students in need
- Explore opportunities for permanent space for the UTS Student Association's free food services
- Expand and develop training and support for student leaders and case manager who respond to sexual assault and harassment.

An accompanying Action Plan, including a RACI Framework (Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, Informed), supplements the agreement to drive accountability and make sure that all relevant stakeholders are effectively engaged throughout implementation.

UTS, the ActivateUTS Board and the UTS Students' Association are proud of UTS's vision to be a leading public university, defined by our commitment to social justice and support for the economic, social and cultural prosperity of our communities.

The 2025-2027 UTS Student Partnership Agreement is available from the UTS website (https://www.uts.edu.au/for-students/current-students/support/opportunities/represent-your-fellow-students/meet-your-representatives).

Student representation at UTS in our governance arrangements
As outlined in the UTS Student Partnerships Agreement, students at UTS are formally represented on boards and committees by elected and appointed members of the student body.

UTS lists information on our website (https://www.uts.edu.au/about/leadership-governance/governance/committees) about our elected representatives currently serving terms on UTS's councils, boards, committees and associations, as well as their contact details so that students can get in touch with any questions or issues they'd like to raise.

The following table outlines current student representation on UTS Boards and Committees:

Forum	Description	No, of student representatives
UTS Council	UTS Council is the university's governing body. It's responsible for the management and control of the university's affairs, concerns and property. One undergraduate and one postgraduate student are elected to represent their respective student bodies. They work alongside the Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, Chair of Academic Board and a range of professionals to manage areas like finance and infrastructure. It is important to highlight that UTS Council has chosen to increase its representation of elected members above the minimum to support a strong voice in the constitution of its membership. Section 8D of the UTS Act stipulates a minimum number of one in each of the three categories (academic staff, professional staff and students) but Council has a total of five elected members (two academic staff, one professional staff and two students).	2, one elected undergraduate and one elected postgraduate student.
Student Council Liaison Group	The Student/Council Liaison Group is a forum for students, members of Council and senior management to discuss matters of UTS policy and governance relevant to the student body. It gives effect to the UTS governance principle that the University	Min of 10

	engage the relevant interests of its stakeholders.
	
	The forum consists of the following positions:
	• two members of Council
	    ○ one external member to be the Chair
	    ○ one member to be the Deputy Chair
	• two student members of Council
	• Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students) or nominee
	• Director, Student Services
	• an associate dean (either teaching and learning or research, or equivalent) nominated by the associate deans
	• President, Students' Association or nominee
	• Overseas Students Officer of the Students' Association
	• President, ActivateUTS or nominee
	• student representative of ActivateUTS clubs
	• a UTS Housing student representative nominated by the Residential Life and Learning Supervisor and Housing Services and the Manager, Housing Service
	• elected Indigenous student member of Academic Board
	• elected student members of Academic Board, one from each faculty
	• elected postgraduate research student member of Academic Board
	• co-opted members.
	
	More information about the UTS Student Council Liaison Group and its Charter is available from here: https://www.uts.edu.au/about/uts-governance/committees-uts-council-committees/studentcouncil-liaison-group	

Academic Board	Academic Board is the principal academic advisory body to the UTS Council. Academic Board plays a key role in the UTS community. It provides a forum for the discussion and debate of the university's academic direction, and ensures that the university's academic direction aligns with its strategic direction. The board promotes academic leadership at UTS by overseeing the quality of teaching, learning, research, scholarship	10

	and community service. It refers policy recommendations to Council and discusses academic matters referred to it by Council. Students are elected to Academic Board to: • give advice to UTS Council • discuss UTS courses • review policies 10 students are elected to the board, including one student from each faculty, an Indigenous student, a postgraduate research student and the President of the Students' Association.	
Academic Board Committees	Students on Academic Board Committees give advice on the UTS academic programs and make recommendations to inform Academic Board decisions. These recommendations may concern areas like research, teaching, learning and course accreditation. • Teaching and Learning Committee – 2 student representatives (refer to Case study #3 for an example of student engagement) • Research Committee – 1 student representative • Course Accreditation Committee – 2 student representatives • Higher Degree Research Committee – 2 student representatives • Institute for Sustainable Futures Institute Board – 2 student representatives	9
Appeals Committees	Committees established to independently consider student appeals related to Misconduct, Internships, Graduate Research Candidature. Each have a pool of students eligible and willing to serve on an appeal committee. Each Committee meeting has one student from their respective pool. Pool for: • Misconduct – 3 student representatives • Internships – 3 student representatives • Graduate Research – 7 student representatives	13
Faculty Boards	Both undergraduate and postgraduate students are elected to the board of each UTS faculty. They give specific advice about their faculty's academic programs to the dean, senior staff and wider Academic Board.	28

	Each faculty Board has 4 students, one of which must be a PG student. UTS currently has 7 faculties.	
Indigenous Committees	UTS has a comprehensive Indigenous governance structure to oversee the development and progression of our Indigenous commitments. There are 5 Committees, all but one has at least one indigenous student representative.	4
UTS Students' Association	The UTS Students' Association (SA) is a completely independent and democratic organisation run by students, for students. The SA runs campaigns based on student issues, provides free student services, and supports student collectives and clubs in their initiatives. SA provides the following services to UTS students: • Advocacy and support • Bluebird Brekkie Bar and Supper (welfare initiative) • Calculator loans • Peer tutoring • Recycling • Vertigo magazine (student media) The UTSSA is led by an executive team (5 members), General Councillors and Officers for a range of like-minded communities (18 Councillors). These collectives include the: • Women's • Queer • Education • Disabilities • Enviro • Ethnocultural • Indigenous • International • Postgraduate • Welfare	18
Student Representative Advisory Group	The Student Representative Advisory Group provides advice to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students) on all matters relating to the student experience, from teaching and learning to student services and extracurricular activities. The group is made up of student leaders: • UTS Council members • ActivateUTS President • ActivateUTS Vice-President • UTS Students' Association President	5

<u>Incorporating the student perspective into academic administration</u>

In early 2024, student members of the Student Council Liaison Group (SCLG), raised six key areas of concern where they perceived there to be inconsistencies or unfairness in either academic administration policies or processes at UTS or how these were being applied across and/or within faculties. Some of the areas raised included compulsory classes, short assessment extensions, special consideration, late penalties, due dates and times for assessment and appealing results (task or subject).

This led to the establishment of the Academic Administration Working Group (AAWG) chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students). The AAWG reports formally to the Teaching and Learning Committee, which is a subcommittee of Academic Board.

The AAWG is a true collaboration of student representatives (including reps from ActivateUTS, the UTS Students' Association, UTS Council and Faculty Boards) with key academics from across the faculties and professional staff from key support areas such as accessibility, academic learning support and student administration.

The group comes together guided by the agreed purpose of creating administrative processes that are consistent across the institution (without exception), simple to understand and implement, streamlined and user-friendly for staff as well as students, are enshrined in policy and procedure where appropriate, and well-communicated.

To date, the working group has been able to deliver outcomes in relation to 3 of the 6 areas of concern by simplifying and streamlining the following academic processes:
- Late penalties (when applied) – 5% per day for up to seven days (maximum of 35% penalty);
- Short extensions – the introduction of a new, automated 72-hour short extension process for assessments submitted via Canvas; and
- Standardised Canvas assignment submission times – 11:59pm on any day of the week (as chosen by the Subject Coordinator).

Given the success of the working group in 2024, the list of administrative matters to be addressed has been added to and prioritised for action by the working group members. In 2025, the AAWG has focussed on Special Consideration and Compulsory classes and class participation and is working towards developing some policy options for review and consideration later this year.

This is a great example of students, academics and professional staff working in partnership to improve our administration processes and the student experience.

UTS leadership

Council appoints the Vice-Chancellor and determines their remuneration. The current UTS senior executive positions are:

- Vice-Chancellor and President.
- Provost and Senior Vice-President.
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Education and Students).
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (External Engagement and Partnerships).
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (International).
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research).
- Chief Operating Officer and Vice-President.

The power to control and manage UTS' affairs is, generally speaking, exercised by the Vice-Chancellor who is responsible for the administration of the university. The UTS Act makes the Vice-Chancellor 'the chief executive officer of the university' and, by implication, must be taken to confer on the Vice-Chancellor the powers needed to perform the functions of chief executive officer.

In addition, the Vice-Chancellor holds such powers of the Council as the Council may delegate under section 17 of the UTS Act. Other legislation, both Commonwealth and state (for example the Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988 (NSW) and the Educational Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (Cwlth)) casts specific responsibilities on the Vice-Chancellor together with the powers needed to discharge those responsibilities.

Executive Remuneration and 2024-2025 performance pay outcomes

The Australian Universities Vice-Chancellor and Senior Staff Remuneration Code is a voluntary set of principles and processes designed to ensure fair and appropriate remuneration for university leadership that is understood and supported by the sector.

UTS acknowledges the importance of ensuring the remuneration of its Vice-Chancellor and senior leaders is competitive, appropriate and transparent.

Remuneration needs to appropriately reflect the value that high quality leaders bring to the university, and the broader economy and society, while also acknowledging the role of universities as public purpose institutions.

Transparency is a vital part of good practice remuneration ensuring that decision-making bodies, processes and outcomes are openly explained and readily available to all stakeholders.

UTS has a Remuneration Committee comprising the Chancellor, Deputy Chancellor and one Council-appointed person whose term of appointment is not about to expire. The committee advises Council on the Vice-Chancellor's and Provost's performance and remuneration. In addition to the Remuneration Committee of Council, UTS also has a Vice-Chancellor's Remuneration Committee that considers Senior Executive Management performance and remuneration.

The Remuneration Committee of Council and the Vice-Chancellor's Remuneration Committee meet biannually to review remuneration: once to determine any variable performance pay outcomes and once for annual remuneration setting.

In determining performance pay outcomes, each committee considers institutional and individual performance. Institutional performance is reviewed against the UTS corporate plan and annual KPI scorecard, which includes a range of financial and non-financial targets. Individual performance reviews are required to be undertaken annually and consider individual performance from a leadership, culture and risk management perspective, and against agreed work programs with target outcomes. Recommendations are submitted to the relevant committee for determination and approval.

In setting remuneration, an annual remuneration review is completed for the Vice-Chancellor, the Provost and Senior Executive Management to ensure remuneration is competitive from an attraction and retention perspective and within range in comparison to higher education sector relativities. Sector remuneration and benefit benchmark data for comparable roles as well as market observations and movements are provided to the relevant committee for determination and approval.

No bonuses will be paid to members of the university leadership team or senior staff for the 2025 performance cycle, nor will any bonus scheme be reconsidered until such time as the university achieves a financially sustainable position and only after considering a remuneration review. The bonus pool for the 2024 performance cycle for all eligible staff was reduced by 50%.

Together, these outcomes will amount to approximately $2.4m in savings.

UTS welcomes the work of the University Chancellors Council in writing to the Federal Minister to champion a new advisory framework for Vice-Chancellor remuneration, to be supported by the Commonwealth Remuneration Tribunal.

The Tribunal's assistance will help to ensure that remuneration is appropriately calibrated with benchmarks across the university sector, while also differentiating the process from market-driven pay settings that may not align with broader community expectations regarding fairness, transparency and public accountability.

Managing conflicts of interest
UTS expects staff, students and affiliates to act with integrity at all times.

Conflicts of interest can occur from time to time during the course of normal university work, studies or duties. While the presence of a conflict of interest does not constitute corrupt or improper conduct, a conflict may become an issue if it is not disclosed and managed appropriately. For this reason, all actual, perceived and potential conflicts must be disclosed.

UTS is committed to maintaining a culture of integrity and transparency, requiring all staff and affiliates to identify, disclose and manage conflicts of interest. UTS' Conflicts of Interest Disclosure Policy, in combination with our Code of Conduct, provides guidance on the following:
- defining conflicts of interest.
- outlining how to identify conflicts of interest.
- specifying the requirements for disclosing conflicts of interest.
- providing guidance for managing conflicts of interest.

UTS' Conflicts of Interest Disclosure Policy is available from here: https://www.uts.edu.au/about/uts-governance/policies/uts-policy/conflicts-interest-disclosure-policy as well as information for the public: https://www.uts.edu.au/about/uts-governance/speak-up/conflicts-of-interest

Use of consultants

UTS engages consultants for various reasons, including to deliver expertise we do not hold in-house. This includes capital works programs, complex financial modelling for specific projects and procurement and implementation of IT infrastructure, property and maintenance and a range of other reasons. These engagements generally involve complex, one-off or high-risk matters where it would be neither practical nor cost-effective to establish permanent in-house capability.

Regarding the university's consultancy expenditure, UTS reported a total consultancy spend of approximately $44 million in 2024, which represents approximately 3% of our total operating expenditure of $1.39 billion. This figure is publicly available in our Annual Report (https://www.uts.edu.au/about/leadership-governance/annual-reports).

COUNCIL MEMBERS - SKILLS MATRIX

Member	Council Statement regarding skills and experience												
	Council as a whole Should have:												
	Financial acumen UTS Act 8C(1)(a) min 2	Commercial expertise UTS Act 8C(1)(b) min 1	Graduate of UTS UTS Act 8E(1) min 1	Education, Research, Technology sector experience	Legal expertise	Capital management (incl Digital and physical assets)	Risk Management	Leadership and Governance	Strategy and Global Perspective	Service Delivery	People and Culture	Environmental and Social	Additional Expertise When Required
Ex- Officio													
Chancellor													
Vice-Chancellor (or nominee)													
Chair, Academic Board													
Minister Appointed													
(Minister Appointed 1)													
(Minister Appointed 2)													
Council Nominated													
Member Appointed by Council													
Member Appointed by Council													
Member Appointed by Council													
Member Appointed by Council													
Member Appointed by Council													
Member Appointed by Council													
Member Appointed by Council													
Member Appointed by Council													
Member Appointed by Council													
Elected													
Elected Academic Member of Staff													
Elected Academic Member of Staff													
Elected Professional Member of Staff													
Elected Undergraduate Student													
Elected Postgraduate Student													