

# UTS Council meeting report

18 August 2021

This report covers some of the non-confidential matters considered by UTS Council at its 18 August 2021 meeting.

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

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## Strategic items of business

### **Vice-Chancellor's Strategy Development Update**

Council discussed the context for the renewed strategy development. The current UTS Strategy was structured into three year plans, with the first plan coming to a conclusion at the end of 2021. The first three years of implementation have delivered some foundation elements that are now in the process of being refined into a new suite of initiatives for the period 2022 - 2024. These new initiatives will be outcome focused. The next three-year plan is in development and broad consultation is taking place.

The UTS 2027 project streams and their linkage to the Fit for 2027 initiatives were discussed. Council emphasised the need to ensure quality and excellence is reflected in all the University's activities

### **Annual DVC Research Briefing**

Council received a report from the DVC Research and noted the following;

Council discussed the Research Strategy Implementation Plan and the connectivity between the strategic projects, strategic enablers and culture, in context with the UTS 2027 foundational elements and UTS research characteristics. A matrix approach is used to ensure UTS Research is connected, impactful and outcomes focussed.

Reframing research concentrations using a network approach to quickly respond to market gaps, primed for partnerships with industry, will enable UTS to increase translation and impact.

The key challenges and opportunities were discussed. While it is important for the University to create impactful research through partnerships. It was acknowledged that fundamental research will continue to be important.

### **UTS Corporate Plan 2021 mid-year progress report**

Council discussed progress being made with implementing the Corporate Plan at the mid-year point and the data underlying the results.

Furthermore, Council discussed the Fit for 2027 program including some projects that are now transitioning into formal change processes. A staff survey will soon be finalised to inform new ways of working and wellness initiatives.

Council noted that UTS will have delivered significant savings by the end of the year. Council expressed appreciation to all members of the UTS team responsible for delivering projects and work streams that have enabled these savings to be realised.

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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 2027 Strategy, State and Federal Government issues, updates regarding the university sector and internal matters, particularly achievements and awards.*

The Vice-Chancellor provided Council with an update on COVID-19 (Phase 2 of UTS campus reactivation on 27 July 2020 and the Campus Reactivation Portal). He commended staff for undertaking relevant safety measures to ensure the health and safety of the UTS community is maintained.

The DVC (Education and Students) provided an update on the completion of online examinations (Autumn 2020). It was noted that UTS hosts 65,000 exam sittings each semester, however, in the current COVID-19 environment, the majority of exams for Autumn 2020 were either take-home or online via the UTS learning management system.

Council noted that the media reports around the lack of support for international students stranded by COVID-19 would negatively impact Australia's international standing as an education destination. Council noted the measures being undertaken at federal, state and UTS-level to support these students.

The Vice-Chancellor was pleased to note that UTS was placed #1 in Australia for the Leiden world ranking of universities and performed well in the Academic Ranking of World Universities subject ranking, as outlined in the report. While challenges linked to COVID-19 have surfaced recently, UTS continues to perform well.

The Vice-Chancellor provided Council with an update on the Voluntary Separation Program, and the recent online "Town Hall" meeting that he convened for UTS staff.

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## Reports from committees

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

### Academic Board

Academic Board referred to Council for decision, proposed amendments to the:

- UTS Student Rules and UTS Delegations in relation to the new Short Forms of Learning Policy and the new Internships Management Policy
- UTS Student Rules to support changes to the exclusion appeals process and repeated failure in subject process.

The Chair of the Board presented to Council for noting, matters arising from the 21/3 meeting of the Academic Board, held on Wednesday 28 July 2021 including updates on UTS TEQSA and CRICOS Registration Renewals, Transdisciplinary Electives Program, International Engagement at UTS, Strategic Risk Assessment for Academic Board and 2020 Academic Board survey: results.

### **Honorary Awards Committee**

*The Honorary Awards Committee recommends to Council, nominations for honorary awards according to the policy and procedures adopted by Council.*

Council approved a number of honorary awards, including: emeritus professorships; honorary doctorates; fellows of the University; and distinguished service awards.

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### **Items for approval**

Council approved appointments to the Insearch Ltd Board and the ActivateUTS Board.

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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**

#### **Dean's Presentation (Faculty of Science)**

Council discussed the Faculty Strategy Plan for 2021 to 2023 and the alignment with the UTS 2027 Strategy. The areas of focus for the Faculty through five spheres of focussed activity were discussed. These focussed areas will ensure the Faculty delivers for UTS and society into the future. Challenges and opportunities were noted. There was also discussion in relation to how an education in Science prepares graduates for a breadth of careers.

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### **Other reports**

- Work Health and Safety Report
- Finance Committee Report
- Physical Infrastructure Committee Report
- Student/Council Liaison Group Report
- Governance Committee Report
- Remuneration Committee Report