

# UTS Council meeting report

16 August 2023

This report covers some of the non-confidential matters considered by UTS Council at its 16 August 2023 meeting.

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

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## Strategic items of business

### **Strategic Briefing – Innovation – UTS Overview**

Council discussed the implementation of the recent Innovation Review and the Vice-Chancellor provided an overview of Innovation across our research, teaching, engagement and operations domains. The Innovation Review report provides the opportunity for UTS to take a “whole of University” approach within the context of UTS 2027.

Both the Innovation Review update in 2022 and the recent External Engagement Review demonstrate that UTS is recognised by key stakeholders as an innovative University. At the heart of our Distinctive Identity is our commitment to creativity, technology, and innovation. However, to fully leverage the opportunities in this space it is important that we have a shared understanding of innovation and what it means across all our domains of activity (teaching, research, engagement and operations) and to organise ourselves to ensure we can scale and embed innovation across UTS. Our aspiration is to ensure that innovation supports all aspects of our mission in a way that is both recognisable and which demonstrates an engaged and agile approach to meeting the needs of key stakeholders.

Focussing on value creation and outcomes rather than activity and input is crucial. There was recognition that time spent on design will also enhance the opportunity to achieve value.

### **Strategic briefing – Responsible Leadership of Technology**

Council was joined by The Hon Verity Firth (Pro Vice-Chancellor, Social Justice and Inclusion) and Professor Edward Santow (Director, Human Technology Institute).

The Provost introduced this item noting that whilst the University has a critical role not only in creating technology solutions but also understanding what the impact of the technology may be and influencing how it may be implemented in the context of its social impact. Council discussed how UTS’s research, teaching and practice supports our strategic commitment to and thought leadership in the responsible leadership of technology.

One of the pillars of the UTS Strategic Plan is the ‘Responsible use of Technology’, and Professor Santow outlined the work to date to further this goal, including the

establishment of the Human Technology Institute (HTI). The University's commitment to social justice and human rights is well embedded across the organisation. This is demonstrated by the depth, breadth and inter-disciplinary nature of UTS research including work with the Digital Finance CRC and the UTS Data Science Institute. UTS has a strong platform on which to build further cross disciplinary collaborations that deliver end-to-end approaches and solutions, including ethical and legal considerations, social responsibility, technology development and application.

The University will consider how it frames its work and activities in the responsible use of technology area so that it is well positioned to leverage external opportunities and also cement its reputation as being the sector leader in this area.

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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 advised Council that Professor Verity Firth AM is a member of the Review Panel, chaired by Dr Michele Bruniges AM, established by the NSW Government to review the NSW vocational education system.

Council was advised that work is progressing on the implementation of the UTS Staff Agreement 2021.

On 28 June, the QS World University Rankings 2024 were released. UTS was named in 90<sup>th</sup> place globally (up from 137<sup>th</sup> last year). Council discussed how this outstanding result will be leveraged by the University.

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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.*

### Academic Board Report

The critical and increasing role that Academic Board will have in the oversight of risks appropriate to its remit was noted. The Chair advised Council that at each meeting of Academic Board this year, the Board has focused on one or two academic risks for deeper consideration and determine the adequacy of current mitigations.

The Board has been considering the use of Generative AI as a learning tool and its impact on assessment, lead by the DVC (Education and Students). The DVC Education and Students is working with stakeholders and will report back to the Board.

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

The Chair, Student Council Liaison Group gave an update on the discussions at the meeting. The Group will be provided annual reports against the priorities of the Student Partnership Agreement, and this will be forwarded to Council.

### **Report from the Governance Committee**

The [Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022 \(NSW\)](#) (PID Act) comes into force on 1 October 2023. This will replace the existing [Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994 \(NSW\)](#). A proposed plan to meet the requirements of the new Act was endorsed by the University Leadership Team (ULT) and Governance Committee, then reported to Council in April 2023. Included in that plan was the development of a new policy response. Draft policies were presented to Governance Committee in June 2023 for feedback.

The final version of the draft policies have now been considered by the Governance Committee and were recommended to Council for approval. Council approved the rescission of the existing Fraud and Corruption Prevention and Public Interest Disclosure Policy and Procedure; and approved the new Whistleblowing and Public Interest Disclosure Policy and the Fraud and Corruption Management Policy. Council also noted the [Speak Up](#) webpage and the [Whistleblowing](#) webpage to support policy implementation.

### **Jumbunna**

Council was joined by Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Leadership) Professor Robynne Quiggin to discuss the work carried out by Jumbunna.

Professor Quiggin outlined the context and role of the Jumbunna Institute for Indigenous Education and Research at UTS, and gave a brief overview of its strategies and activities.

The strategic approach to increasing Indigenous student participation, utilising a cross-university approach with strategic resources in Jumbunna, was discussed.

Council recognised the strong performance in completion rates for Indigenous students (with Jumbunna support).

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## **Items for approval**

- Appointment of the Chair, Audit and Risk Committee

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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
  - Notice of Election of pro-Chancellor
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## Items of General Business

- Council Reviews the Meeting and Reports at each Meeting
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## Other reports

- UTS Corporate Plan 2023 Mid-Year Report
- Work Health and Safety Report
- Remuneration Committee Report