



What's New?

Proposed Change to Deputy Role

Creation of a single Deputy President of Academic Senate (DPAS) role to cover both Teaching and Learning and Research in line with the requirements for the President of Academic Senate (PAS).

Proposed Eligibility Criteria Changes

- Tightening of academic governance committee eligibility criteria to include requirement to be a "Fit and Proper Person" as defined by TEQSA.
- Requirement for student candidates to have academic progress reviewed prior to appointment to academic governance committees.
- DPAS eligibility will be broadened beyond existing Academic Senate members to the wider Level D and E academic community aligning with current eligibility requirements for the PAS.

Appointment of DPAS

Welcome to Associate Professor Geoffry De Iuliis as DPAS for 2026.

Vacancies!

2 x Level A, B or C positions for CHMW
1 x Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Student position

To all our 2026 members!



Quality Assurance

Annual Academic Senate Assurance Report 2025

Confirmed 2025 Academic Senate compliance with the Higher Education Standards Framework and identified improvement priorities for 2026.

Annual Animal and Human Ethics Committees Reports

The 2025 reports provided the annual updates on two Committees' activities, membership and compliance obligations, noting a more technical report was submitted to the NSW Department of Primary Industries by the ACEC.

Academic Senate Annual Member Survey Report

The report outlined outcomes of the 2025 Survey and proposed actions to support continuous improvement in academic governance.

CHSF Third Party Arrangements – Education Annual Report 2024

The report noted 2024 arrangements with Nurture Higher Education (NHE) and: University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce (UTCC); BINUS University, Indonesia; and Van Lang University, Vietnam.

QILT 2025 Institutional Data Student Experience Survey (SES)

Advised the combined SES and Graduate Outcomes survey were available on the [Student Insights SharePoint](#).

CES 2025 Course Experience Survey Report

Advised that overall outcomes and noted the integration of feedback into Canvas menus to encourage participation of the anytime "Feedback" facility. Further details are available on the [Course Experience Survey Hub](#).

Forum Items

Review of Current TEQSA Obligations

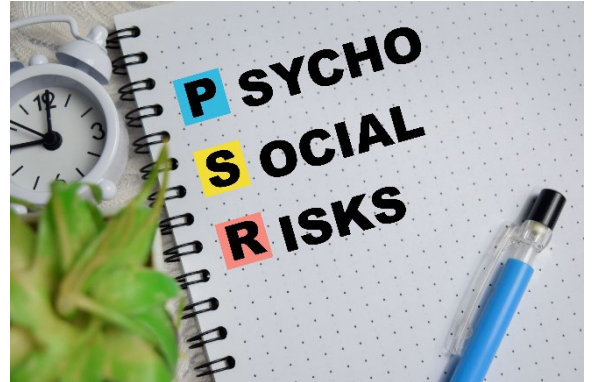


The Academic Senate discussed the findings from the external review of Current TEQSA Obligations by Treloar which identified opportunities to strengthen academic governance, academic quality assurance, academic risk management and University-wide reporting.

Response to 2025 Australian University Census on Staff Wellbeing noting High Psychosocial Risk

The AD Wellbeing, Health and Safety provided a pre-recorded presentation answering the four key questions raised in the recent Academic Senate Elected Staff Forum.

1. What strategies or programs has the University implemented to identify, monitor, and mitigate psychosocial hazards within academic and administrative workplaces?
2. How does the University support staff and students in managing workload pressures, role clarity, and workplace change?
3. What mechanisms are in place for staff and students to confidentially report concerns related to bullying, harassment, or other behavioural risks, and how are these concerns reviewed and acted upon?
4. How is the University ensuring that leaders and managers are trained and equipped to recognise and respond to psychosocial risk factors in their teams?



It was advised that the University had adopted a risk-based framework to identify, monitor and mitigate psychosocial hazards. Psychological safety and staff wellbeing—encompassing physical, mental, emotional and social health—are recognised as critical to effective performance, and psychosocial hazards are classified into sub-categories to address appropriately. The University monitors risk through mechanisms such as the YourVoice Survey, AIMS, complaints processes and risk registers, with strong emphasis on management commitment, communication, and consultation. Survey outcomes have driven responses in leadership effectiveness, strategic change and wellbeing, including workload and respectful workplace issues.

Support for staff and students includes extensive resources on the WHS SharePoint site, the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), wellbeing resources, Smart Hub and training initiatives such as Accidental Counsellor Training. While resources are viewed as high quality, concerns were raised that some initiatives are experienced as individual responses rather than addressing systemic workload and policy issues, notably the AWAM. Responsibility for systemic risks sits with the WHS team, with action plans under development and with regular reporting to Council.

Psychosocial hazards can be confidentially reported through the AIMS system. It was further noted that while leaders are aware of psychosocial risks, further training is needed to strengthen practical application and preventative approaches. The University has acknowledged cumulative change impacts, recruitment delays, and workload pressures, with policy reviews and post-implementation evaluations planned to address these risks more effectively.

Academic Risk Items



Graduate Risk Indicators

Members noted data from the TEQSA Risk Indicator Dashboard to assess the risk of graduate indicators, which advised that there had been no significant change in metrics since the data was reviewed in 2025, and that UoN scores align with sector averages for the metrics however current sector data is currently unavailable.

It was advised that TEQSA had removed the original graduate indicators of Completions and Destinations from their key indicator list. It was suggested that other data such as SES, QILT, SFUN and YourVoice would provide more meaningful qualitative data for graduate indicators and future improvement mechanisms.

Risk to University Reputation / Academic Integrity / Academic Freedom / Freedom of Speech - Radicalisation of Students by AI and Social Media Algorithms

The PAS advised Academic Senate of a request by the Cyber & AI Governance Committee, to review measures to mitigate the risk posed by AI and social media algorithms on students. Discussions were had with senior University stakeholders and benchmarking conducted with the CoCAB's group to inform proposed improvements to policy and processes moving forward.

Risk to Academic Governance / Risk to University Reputation - Election of Academic Governance Committee Members

Concern was expressed over the current election practices for academic governance committees following the last election cycle. The concern was raised that the staff and students are eligible to stand for these committees, regardless of past academic misconduct or student progression issues. A paper suggesting future tightening of the eligibility requirements for members be made to the *Governance Rule* and that election information for the requirement for nominees to be "fit and proper persons" as defined by TEQSA was endorsed by Academic Senate for Council approval.

Risk to University Reputation – Ourimbah Communication Issues

Several issues were identified by an Ourimbah staff member included instances of poor communication with staff and students leading to confusion. Further concerns were advised where there was a lack of clarity over the new Student Hub opening hours and the ability of students to access the Hub, parking at Gosford, Open Day and Graduations. The PAS advised these issues were under consideration by the relevant College PVC.

Risk to University Reputation / Financial Risk – Academic Calendar timing

Concerns relating to the early start of the academic year and the effect on student numbers, especially from countries that celebrate Chinese and Luna New Year were noted with the SDVCAG currently reviewing the start date of the calendar year in 2027 which will hopefully mitigate this risk.

Risk to University Reputation – New Timetabling System

Issues with the implementation of the new timetable system were noted.

Reports from the Executive

PAS Report

The PAS provided an update on academic governance, risk management and communication matters since the previous meeting. This included confirmation of Academic Senate membership changes for 2026, acknowledgement of outgoing members, an overview of the schedule for upcoming PAS Open Office sessions to be held across campuses and online to support staff engagement and transparency.

Engagement with student representatives and elected Academic Senate staff focused on the implementation and impacts of recent academic reforms. Key issues raised included the new academic calendar and timetabling system, the introduction of an automatic three-day extension for adverse circumstances, and the rollout of the revised assessment framework. Ongoing concerns were highlighted regarding academic workload pressures associated with the Academic Workload Allocation Model (AWAM), staff wellbeing and psychosocial risks, and perceived weaknesses in academic governance processes. In particular, questions were raised about the clarity of decision-making responsibilities and the roles of Academic Senate and the Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC) in major academic changes.



VC's Report

The Vice-Chancellor (VC) provided an update on staff and student wellbeing, health and safety, acknowledging the cumulative pressures arising from the Academic Workload Allocation Model, the Business Improvement Program, and the academic calendar. The VC reaffirmed the University's commitment to addressing wellbeing concerns and advised that a comprehensive Wellbeing Action Plan is in development and will be shared with staff shortly. Improved mechanisms to capture staff and student sentiment through expanded surveys were also identified as a priority.

The VC highlighted key institutional achievements, including Australia Day honours recipients, and confirmed that PhD scholarships have been prioritised for 2026, supported by the creation of a new PhD Recruitment Officer role. The 2026–2030 Strategic Plan remains on track for launch at the end of March, with supporting Education, Research and Engagement Plans currently under development and open for staff input.

Policy Changes

AMENDED

Governance Rule*
Standing Orders of the Academic Senate*
Research Breach Investigation Procedure
Third Party Arrangements – Education
Third Party Arrangements – Education Procedure
Recognition of Informal and Non-Formal Learning Procedure – Application for Recognition of Prior Learning Form
Student Academic Progress Procedure
Enabling Program Schedule
Program Discontinuation and Suspension Procedure
Higher Degree by Research Policy Document Amendments
Enrolment Manual
Code of Practice for Higher Degree by Research Candidature
Doctor of Philosophy(Research) by Prior Publication
Admission Assessment Panel Procedure

Collaborative Research Procedure
Research Data and Primary Materials Management Procedure
Research Authorship Procedure
English Language Proficiency Procedure
Course Assessment and Grading Manual
** Pending approval by the Nominations and Governance Committee.*

NEW – Nil
RESCINDED – Nil



Committee News

Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC) – 10th March 2026 Meeting

The PAS reported on the 10 March 2026 meeting for the SDVCAG and Chair of the Teaching and Learning Committee. The Committee noted institutional student survey outcomes, including the 2025 QILT and CES results, and reviewed the 2024 Third Party Arrangements Annual Reports. Teach-out of the Nurture Higher Education partnerships was completed; however, development of the new reporting identified significant data limitations, particularly regarding student wellbeing and health and safety. Ongoing issues with reports for the Singaporean partnerships (NAIHE and PSB Academy), including unclear responsibilities and duplicated reporting, were identified as serious compliance risks. A joint academic working group will be established to clarify reporting requirements, and colleges will submit 2025 reports excluding these partnerships pending the Group's outcomes.

Research Committee (RC) – 11th March 2026 Meeting

The Acting DVCRI and Chair of the Research Committee reported on the 11 March meeting, which reviewed 2025 research performance across ethics, grants, engagement and reputation. VR Stress training was highlighted as an example of outstanding University research. The Committee discussed strategies to improve performance against targets and enhance institutional rankings. The Ambitious Australia Strategic Examination of Research and Development paper and forthcoming ARC Open Access Policy changes were noted, with recognition that these will require changes to current University practices. It was also advised that data needed for the Research Academic Achievements Framework is not currently available, and work is underway to identify alternative indicators for possible inclusion under the Research Plan.

Program and Course Approval Committee (PCAC) – 3rd February and 4th March 2026 Meetings

The SDVCA and PCAC Chair noted the number of discontinued and suspended programs over this period. The Chair advised members that the PCAC are looking at accreditation requirements and advised of new TEQSA requirements for consultation for the closure of programs.

College Board Reports

Health Medicine and Wellbeing (CHMW) – 3rd March 2026 Meeting

The PVC CHMW and College Board Chair advised that the first Callaghan intake for the Bachelor of Podiatric Medicine had occurred and planning underway for the Graduate Certificate in Prescribing and Advanced Practice. Advised that the HMRI Research Space Utilisation Project had been completed. College staff achievements were formally recognised, including Australia Day Honours for Professor Matt Dunn and Mark Hughes, alongside other notable staff successes. Staffing changes within the College were noted, and the College Board communicated University-wide changes arising from the BiP across multiple Divisions.

Engineering Science and Environment (CESE) – 19th February 2026 Meeting

The PVC CESE and College Board Chair advised that research and industry engagement activity remained strong, within the College. Advised that preparations were underway for ARC Laureate Fellowships and NHMRC Ideas grants, alongside the introduction of a new Research Office grant submission process. Sixteen ARC Discovery Projects had advanced from EOI to full proposals, building on a strong 2025 pipeline. The National Science and Engineering Challenge received CFAL accreditation and was showcased at the Melbourne Formula 1 Grand Prix. Associate Professor Myles Young received an Australian University Award for Teaching, and Professor Natalie Famwatana was awarded the prestigious 2026 ANZIAM EO Tuck Medal. The new Energy Skills Hub was launched, along with the appointment of a new NIER Director.

Human and Social Futures (CHSF) – 12th March 2026 Meeting

The PVC CHSF and Chair of the College Board advised the College WHS Committee had been refreshed and will be chaired by Professor Jesper Gulddal, with a renewed focus on addressing psychosocial issues. Updates were provided on the NBS's strong performance in the THE Rankings, moving into the 151–175 band for Business and Economics and improving its national ranking from 14th to 11th in Australia. Associate Professor Nancy Cushing was recognised with an award for teaching excellence, and the progress on ARC Discovery Project EOI applications was noted as showing improvement on outcomes from previous years.

Committee News continued...



nganggali ngara ngura
(Darkinyung language for Talking Listening Place) Ourimbah Campus

PALS and NAIHE Board Reports

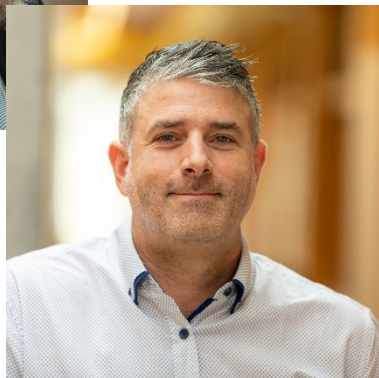
Pathways and Academic Learning Support (PALS)– 8th December 2025 Meeting

The Director of PALS reported that participation in Fee-Free Uni Ready pathways remained strong, with 10% of students identifying as Indigenous, and advised that the University had been recognised as best practice for pathways, with advice provided to ATEC. NUPrep enrolment trends and planned delivery changes for 2026 were noted, including the largest decline occurring in LANTITE courses. The early start to the academic year was noted

to have had an impact on NUPrep enrolments in Semester 1. Community engagement outcomes from widening participation initiatives, including the Children’s University, were positive.

Newcastle Australia Institute of Higher Education (NAIHE) Academic Board Report – 21 January 2026 Meeting

The PVC and CEO of NAIHE Singapore advised positive outcomes from an EduTrust mock audit noting this had been conducted in preparation for the scheduled external audit in April. It was advised that EduTrust accreditation will enable NAIHE to make offers to international students on visas and for undergraduate programs. An external audit by UoN was also noted, and it was advised that NAIHE had recorded 20% growth in 2025, supporting improved financial sustainability. Three-year average performance outcomes demonstrated strong retention, high program success, improving graduation rates, and strengthened quality through full assessment moderation. Research capability building and funding activity increased, alongside higher research outputs and engagement. Enrolments and EFTSL grew significantly, particularly in undergraduate programs delivered in Singapore, aligning with strategic priorities.



2026 Academic Senate Membership

President

Associate Professor Marcus Rodrigs

Deputy President

Associate Professor Geoffry De Iuliis

Ex Officio Membership

Vice Chancellor
DVC (Engagement & Equity))
SDVC (Academic)
DVC (Research & Innovation)
CHSF PVC
CESE PVC
CHMW PVC
PVC (Student Experience)
Academic Registrar
PVC (Education Innovation)
PVC (Research)
PVC (Industry & Engagement)
PVC (Indigenous Strategy & Leadership)
Director PALS
Dean of Graduate Research
PVC and CEO NAIHE (Singapore)

Professor Alex Zelinsky AO
Mr Nathan Towney (*Interim*)
Professor Belinda Tynan
Professor Juanita Todd (*Acting*)
Professor Robert Greenberg
Professor Craig Simmons
Professor Lisa Wood
Professor Susan Ledger (*Interim*)
Mr John Radvan (*Representative*)
Professor Steven Warburton
Professor Rohan Walker
Mr Warwick Dawson
Ms Loren Collyer (*Acting*)
A/Professor Anna Bennett
Professor Kylie Shaw
Professor Abhisek Bhati (*Interim*)

Elected Staff Membership

CHSF

Dr Kate Ferguson-Patrick
Dr Tim Connor
A/Professor Bin Li
Professor Marianna Sigala
Professor Jesper Gulddal
A/Professor Nancy Cushing
Dr Justin Ellis
Dr Angela Page

CESE

Dr Kyle Harrison
Dr Joseph Pegler
Miss Maria Cano Dominguez
A/Professor Terrence Summers
A/Professor Geoffry Deluliis
A/Professor Michelle Kelly
Dr Boyang Li
Dr Mark Wallis

CHMW

Dr Shep Chidarikire
A/Professor Vanessa Murphy
A/Professor Adam Collison
Professor Allison Cummins
Dr Michelle Stubbs
Dr Catherine Johnston

PALS

Dr Michelle Mansfield
Dr Annika Westrenius

Non-Newcastle Campus

Professor Troy Gaston
Dr Joyleen Christensen

Student Representatives

Undergraduate

Imogen Reid
Omotola Abimbola
Marie Ferguson

Postgraduate Coursework

Cheryl Johanna Meeran

Postgraduate HDR

Thomas Tildsley

International

Ashutosh Chugh

Vacant and disestablished positions removed.

Next Meeting

Wednesday 3rd June 2026