

SENATE NEWS

The Academic Senate Communiqué

7th August 2024 Meeting



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

Quality Assurance

International Onshore Admission Report (excluding HDR)

The Office of the PVC EI presented the report as a summary of international admission results for the first half of 2024, including comparative year-on-year data. The report covered full degree programs at the undergraduate and postgraduate coursework levels for commencing onshore international students.

Annual Cohort Performance Report (Undergraduate)

The Equity Cohort Report presented an annual overview of student equity cohort participation, retention and success at the University. The report aligns with the University's strategic focus on equity, facilitates monitoring and review obligations, and will support and inform the University's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

2023 HERDC Submission

Members noted the summary of the 2023 HERDC submission that was presented to ELT which highlighted income funding by category, income category trends, and income by College / School.

Third Party Provider Annual Reports

Annual reports for Nurture HE delivery partners BINUS, UTCC AND VLU were presented to Senate noting that programs are in teach-out following the decision not to renew the agreement with Nurture HE in 2023. It was noted that annual reports would continue until programs had no further students.

TEQSA Re-Registration Submission

The DVCA advised members that the re-registration had been submitted TEQSA at the end of July and thanked the TEQSA re-registration team and staff involved for their hard work on the submission.

WHAT'S NEW

ELECTIONS

College Board Representatives to Academic Senate—nominations open in September.

Student positions on Academic Senate and College Boards—nominations open early September.

WATCH OUR PRE-RECORDED PRESENTATIONS

The following pre-recorded presentations are available on request from [AcademicSenateServices](#):

AWAM Update—Application of the Model

Business Improvement Program

Ourimbah Campus Update

CHMW College Board Report

CESE College Board Report

CHSF College Board Report

PALS Board Report

Strategic Issues & Innovations

Innovations from Members

The PVC and CEO NAIHE (Singapore) noted the emphasis in Singapore on learning, teaching and research in relation to the green, digital, and care economies, and advised that programs in Singapore were designed to align with these areas. The PVC and CEO noted collaboration with CESE for the engineering portfolio with a refreshment of courses underway and plan for a bridge between the campuses under discussion.

The PVC EI noted that DTS students were running proof of concept exercises across the business and teaching and learning space for advanced prompting in generative AI. The PVC EI also noted custom GPT use (eg difficult patient chatbot and draft course generation) for quicker course building. The PAS also noted that she had been requiring students to keep 4 written drafts of research work for submission of assessments.

The DVCA noted that there had been an increase of enrolments in the Master of Teaching and Master of Mental Health Nursing following the online delivery of the programs.

Forum Items

Academic Risk Discussion—Staff Risk Indicators

Casual work was discussed as part of the TEQSA Risk Monitor Dashboard deep dive session into the Staff Indicators (Senior Academic Leaders, Student to Staff Ratio (SSR), and Academic Staff on Casual Work Contracts). Members noted the data on each indicator and compared the data to the sector. Discussants noted the persistence of gender disparities for academic staff and noted that the large number of staff on fixed term contracts distort the high turnover figures presented.

Ourimbah Campus Update

The future of the Ourimbah campus was discussed following several questions raised at the last meeting. The Executive Dean of the Central Coast Campuses gave a pre-recorded presentation on the campus. The presentation provided an update on the progress of the Gosford campus and noted the importance of Gosford for future growth on the Central Coast, noting the Gosford site allowed for increased student accommodation which would be important for attracting future international students. It was noted that the Ourimbah campus presented challenges for planning, but noted there are strong Ourimbah based programs and that talks were underway with the State Government and TAFE NSW for an activation plan. Members noted the reduced staff and student morale at the campus and the need for more face-to-face activities which involved career paths to Central Coast industry.

AWAM Update—Application of Model

Members received an update on the AWAM with College PVC's giving feedback on the implementation of the model in each College. The Colleges have noted the how the flexibility of the model is working and noted there was a need for a transition plan to review courses that fall outside the guidelines to ensure sustainability and currency. The PAS has also attended a number of AWAM Panel meetings since the last meeting of Senate to raise such concerns.



Business Improvement Program

The Business Improvement Program was discussed in relation to perceived job losses and lower quality standards resulting from initiatives. The PVCAE noted that existing project groups will be included as part of the improvement process to reduce duplication of effort.

Reports from Executive

PAS Report

The PAS noted engagement with students and academic staff. In meeting with student representatives positive feedback had been received regarding proposed changes to the academic calendar with students advising that the changes may assist with parenting commitments. Other items discussed included the limited meeting spaces available at NuSpace; and the risks posed by the poor surface condition of carparks at Callaghan. Students also raised concerns regarding the guidance on generative AI, particularly around privacy and copyright. The Staff Forum highlighted concerns by members due to the Fair Work Act changes affecting casual and fixed term staff. Staff also raised concerns regarding incorrect advice given by the AskUoN service and the future of the Ourimbah campus.

The PAS gave an update on the work of the AI Taskforce and notified members that work is underway on AI governance documents for the University. Also noted was the work undertaken by AI Working Group and PVC EI in the preparation of the response to TEQSA’s Request for Information, with a note to all to visit the AI Working Group Sharepoint site for [Guidance for Course Coordinators - Responding to suspected inappropriate use of GenAI in written assessments](#). Also available on this page is information for the third Turnitin session of Artificial Intelligence and Academic Integrity. An additional document [Generative AI in Research: Guidance for Researchers](#) is available via ReSearch Hub.

VC’s Report

The Vice-Chancellor report noted the University’s wellbeing, health and safety figures and brought attention to the proposed formation of the Australian Tertiary Education Commission (ATEC) with submissions from the sector calling on higher education representation on the Commission. The VC noted that it is expected there will be a managed growth funding system with potential for the University to grow in the equity and Indigenous cohort space with needs-based funding, and that the University is collaborating with the Australian Technology Network (ATN) of universities to form joint submissions to common policies. International student cap numbers were discussed with the VC noting that it was expected that the caps would be felt more by Sydney-based universities. The important role of New Columbo scholars as ambassadors, and recent visits with Waikato University, Fiji Tertiary Scholarship and Loans Service; Fiji Government Ministers; and Fiji National University and the Indian government visit to Newcastle was highlighted. Clarification was given on the Business Improvement Program noting that this had not been designed for job losses. Also highlighted was the progress on proposed changes to the academic calendar; the importance of University Open Days for student recruitment; HERDC research results and positive feedback from industry on Career Ready Placements.

POLICY CHANGES

AMENDED

Ethical Human Research Procedure Manual
–administrative amendment

*Micro-credentials Policy and
Micro-credentials Schedule*
- inclusion of a business case template

Research Breach Investigation Procedure
–alignment with the Student Conduct Rule

*Recognition of Formal Learning Procedure &
Recognition of Informal and Non-Formal
Learning Procedure*
- alignment with the Credit and Recognition
of Prior Learning Policy

Research Integrity Policy

English Language Proficiency Procedure
–inclusion of the Duolingo English Test

Responsible Conduct of Research Policy
–revision

NEW

Policy for the Use of Generative AI in Teaching, Learning and Assessment

RESCINDED

NIL



Committee News

Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC) - 30th July Meeting

The DVCA and TLC Chair noted further information on proposed academic calendar changes would be forthcoming in the next week. Highlighted the presentation on the "Digital Day in a Student's Life"; the formation of the Student Success Committee; Program Progression Project (PPP) progress on the College implementation plans.

Research Committee (RC) - 30th July Meeting

The DVCRI and RC Chair noted an update on Engagement Priorities and advised of the launch of the digital Grant Establishment Form; highlighted the current visit to the Dubbo Resources Energy Forum; and the attendance of Council members to the last meeting.

Program and Course Approval Committee (PCAC) 29th May, 26th June and 31st July Meetings

The DVCA and PCAC Chair advised Senate on the proposal to develop 9 diplomas titled "Diploma of University Studies" as exit awards for students who had completed a substantial volume of studies but no longer wished to continue with Bachelor studies.

College and PALS Boards

Health Medicine and Wellbeing (CHMW) - 4th June Meeting

The PVC CHMW and College Board Chair noted the recent graduations ; Professor Jenny May appointment to National Rural Health Commissioner; Laureate Professor Nick Tally recognised as Australia's number 1 best medicine scientist in Research.com's annual list; and Kings Birthday Honours List. Noted the launch of the Newcastle Academy of Health Professional Development; Nursing and Midwifery expos; College and Thurru Wellbeing Day and partnerships with Wollotuka for Emerging Day for the Central Coast Clinical School.

Engineering Science and Environment (CESE) - 4th July Meeting

The PVC CESE and College Board Chair highlighted the recent Experiment Fest for HSC students funded by Orica; Mathematics Professional Development Day and Mathematics in Surveying Day for high school maths teachers; NuTeams Rocketry participation in 2024 Spaceport America Cup Competition for the manufacture and design of high-power rockets with the team placed 30th overall; and the inaugural round of Professional Staff Excellence Awards.

Human and Social Futures (CHSF) - 11th July Meeting

The PVC CHSF and College Board Chair highlighted the proposal to reinvigorate College Board for more inclusivity; the Centre for Law and Social Justice briefing to Senator Penny Allman-Payne on the Right to Education Report; Associate Professor Tamara Young as Newcastle Tourism Industry Group Award for Employee of Year; Associate Professor Julie McIntyre and Professor Catharine Coleborne were experts to the SBS "Who Do You Think You Are?" program, and Professor Penny Jane Bourke's keynote address 'Higher Education as a Driver for Gender Equality' at the Times Higher Education Global Sustainability Conference in Bangkok in June.

Pathways and Academic Learning Support (PALS) - 3rd June Meeting

The Director of PALS provided an update on behalf of the Chair and highlighted that over 4000 students are enrolled in a pathways programs and that 20% of commencing undergraduate students had previously enrolled in an enabling program. Noted that Yapug programs are offered at Callaghan and Central Coast campuses and that the University offers the UniSteps program to partner high school students. Advised of increased Diploma offerings for 2025 and that the NuPrep program offers bridging taster courses for potential students. Fifty years of Open Foundation was noted with UoN recognised as a sector leader.

Next Meeting
Wednesday 9th October 2024

Want More Information

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