

# ACADEMIC SENATE COMMUNIQUE



## 4 MARCH 2020 MEETING

### President of Academic Senate Report

The Deputy President of Academic Senate (Research), Professor Karen Blackmore and Deputy President of Academic Senate (Teaching and Learning), Professor Liz Millward were congratulated on their recent election.

### Vice-Chancellor's Report

An overview of the proactive and comprehensive response to recent threats posed by the catastrophic bushfires, flooding and the COVID-19 Coronavirus (coronavirus) was noted, commending the professionalism of all involved. Effective and efficient reduction of courses will be a substantial focus in 2020, to position the University to adapt and manage challenges including the coronavirus. Updates on infrastructure and strategic projects were provided.

### Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update

An update on the University's thorough planning, preparation and responses to the coronavirus outbreak. Regular email updates are provided by the Vice-Chancellor, the University has a dedicated information webpage, and non-health related questions can be directed to email: [health.response@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:health.response@newcastle.edu.au).

### New Strategic Plan Update and Discussion

A high-level overview of the new Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025 was provided, ahead of the 18 March 2020 launch. Members discussed the development of KPIs for engagement priorities and priority setting methodology for Council reporting purposes. Members continued this discussion at an additional forum on 11 March 2020.

### 2019 Academic Senate Annual Assurance Report

An overview of the annual academic quality assurance report was provided, highlighting the areas identified in the assurance process as strengths and those requiring improvement. Actions to enhance academic governance and engagement activities were discussed.

### Draft Code for the Protection of Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom

The draft Code for the Protection of Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom was endorsed by Council in December 2019, for consultation, including consideration by Academic Senate at the 12 May 2020 meeting.

### Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC) Chair's Report

Key matters considered at the 18 February TLC included the coronavirus response and compulsory attendance.

### Research Committee Chair's Report

Key matters considered at the 19 February Research Committee meeting included emphasising industry research activities, making the most of strategic research funds and successive years of growth in HERDC income.

### Faculty Board Reports and Recent Activities in the Faculties

The chairs of each faculty board provided key highlights of work currently underway in their faculties and schools.

### Pathways and Academic Learning Support (PALS) Board

The Pathways and Academic Learning Support (PALS) Centre Board was formed as a committee of Academic Senate, replacing the disestablished English Language and Foundation Studies (ELFS) Board.

### Contact

For more information, email Council and Academic Senate Services: [academicsenate@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:academicsenate@newcastle.edu.au), or the President of Academic Senate on

[PAS@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:PAS@newcastle.edu.au)  
☎ 4921 5332.

**Next meeting - 12 May 2020**