

ELECTION OF TWO ACADEMIC STAFF MEMBERS (LEVEL A, B or C) FROM THE COLLEGE OF HEALTH, MEDICINE AND WELLBEING TO THE ACADEMIC SENATE FOR TERM 1 JANUARY 2027 TO 31 DECEMBER 2028 (7 NOMINATIONS RECEIVED) CANDIDATE STATEMENTS



DR MICHELLE STUBBS

I am pleased to nominate myself for election to the Academic Senate at the University of Newcastle. As a Senior Lecturer and Program Convenor of the Bachelor of Nursing for the past four years, I have developed a strong commitment to academic quality, curriculum integrity, and student success. My leadership role has involved coordinating teaching teams, enhancing program outcomes, and responding to accreditation and workforce needs. I am committed to strengthening research capacity, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration, and ensuring inclusive, transparent academic governance. I value evidence-informed decision-making and meaningful engagement with staff and students across the University community. If elected, I will advocate for academic excellence, support innovation in teaching and research, and contribute constructively to Senate deliberations. I would welcome the opportunity to represent my colleagues and help shape the University's academic future while upholding collegiality, integrity, and the University's strategic priorities across all disciplines and initiatives.

View University Staff Profile [here](#).



DR HAYLEY LEWTHWAITE

I am nominating for Academic Senate to contribute to maintaining and enhancing the quality, integrity, and standards of teaching, learning, and research across the University. As Program Convenor for the Master of Clinical Exercise Physiology programme and stream lead for Global Sport and Movement Collaborative, I am committed to ensuring our graduates are well prepared to serve the health needs of our communities and uphold the professional standards expected of allied health practitioners. Academic Senate plays an important role in leading and overseeing academic quality in a rapidly changing higher education environment. This includes addressing challenges such as use of AI in learning, assessment, and research. We must preserve academic integrity while helping students develop the critical thinking skills needed to evaluate and use these ever-evolving technologies appropriately. I welcome the opportunity to contribute to these discussions and support the continued excellence of the University's academic programs and research culture.

View University Staff Profile [here](#).



DR EVAN WILLIAMS

I am an EMCR (7 years PhD) Postdoctoral Research Associate in nutritional biochemistry and immunology, with a strong translational research focus on how nutrition, obesity, and inflammation influence respiratory diseases such as asthma. My work centres on improving real-world health outcomes through laboratory-based research integrated with clinical perspectives. As an EMCR, I have firsthand experience of the challenges posed by the current funding landscape, particularly the need to balance fractional FTE roles across multiple projects and supervisors. This can fragment research focus and hinder the development of an independent research profile, impacting career progression and stability. I am passionate about advocating for more sustainable and equitable pathways for EMCRs. Through Academic Senate, I aim to represent these perspectives, contribute practical insight to policy discussions, and support initiatives that enable EMCRs to build cohesive research programs and thrive academically.

View University Staff Profile [here](#).

ELECTION OF TWO ACADEMIC STAFF MEMBERS (LEVEL A, B or C) FROM THE COLLEGE OF HEALTH, MEDICINE AND WELLBEING TO THE ACADEMIC SENATE FOR TERM 1 JANUARY 2027 TO 31 DECEMBER 2028 (7 NOMINATIONS RECEIVED) CANDIDATE STATEMENTS



DR NASRIN ZAMANI JAVID

I am interested to join the University of Newcastle Academic Senate to contribute to the advancement of academic excellence in teaching, learning, and research across our institution. As a Lecturer in Midwifery, with over 25 years of experience in clinical practice, education, and/or research, I bring a strong understanding of the opportunities and challenges facing contemporary higher education. Throughout my career, I, as a skilled migrant, have been committed to improve the well-being of women and their babies including those from minority groups through evidence-based practice, student-centred learning, research-informed teaching, and collaborative professional practice. I am dedicated to providing excellence in education and equipping graduates for practice in the 21st century. If elected, I will actively represent the perspectives of academic staff, promote constructive and collegial debate, and contribute to Senate's important role in ensuring the quality, integrity, and strategic development of teaching, learning, and research at the University of Newcastle.

View University Staff Profile [here](#).



DR VIRGINIA STULZ

I am currently working as a Senior Lecturer in the School of Nursing and Midwifery and I am convening the Masters of Midwifery program and teach into both undergraduate and postgraduate courses. I have extensive experience in teaching, curriculum development, research and higher degree research supervision, having worked as a midwife for 35 years and as an academic for 15 years. I collaborate with other university academics across Australia and New Zealand as a member of the Trans Tasman Midwifery Education Consortium (TTMEC). I am currently leading a national research project with this consortium that explores characteristics of support within new graduate programmes within Australia and also leading another research project with academics from Australia and New Zealand in mapping undergraduate midwifery programs. I am currently supervising one PhD research student as a primary supervisor and co-supervising three PhD students (externally with University of Canberra and Western Sydney University).

View University Staff Profile [here](#).



MS MARLÉN ORSINA

I am nominating for Academic Senate because I value being part of thoughtful conversations that shape our academic community and student experience. After attending Senate as a proxy on 3 June 2026, I was impressed by the openness of discussion and the genuine commitment to representing both staff and student voices. My journey in the School of Nursing and Midwifery (from clinical facilitator to tutor and now Lecturer) spans over eight years, including over three years at the University of Newcastle. This has given me a practical, grounded understanding of teaching, curriculum design, and student learning, alongside clinical experience. My work is guided by innovation, academic integrity and a strong focus in developing safe nurse graduates with job-ready skills. I bring a collaborative, approachable, and growth-focused mindset. I am committed to strengthening connections between teaching, research, and student outcomes, and will contribute a balanced, thoughtful voice to Senate.

View University Staff Profile [here](#).

**ELECTION OF TWO ACADEMIC STAFF MEMBERS (LEVEL A, B or C) FROM THE COLLEGE OF HEALTH, MEDICINE AND WELLBEING
TO THE ACADEMIC SENATE FOR TERM 1 JANUARY 2027 TO 31 DECEMBER 2028
(7 NOMINATIONS RECEIVED)
CANDIDATE STATEMENTS**



DR LOUISE KOLLER-SMITH

I am a rheumatologist and mother-of-two working in the public outpatient clinic at John Hunter Hospital and a lecturer in medicine through the Joint Medical Program, currently working as Medicine Discipline Lead for Phase 2. My primary research and engagement focus is on preventative health through clinician and patient education, particularly in the field of rheumatoid arthritis. My teaching and learning focus is centred around collegiality, collaboration, and inclusivity, as well as streamlining course content and delivery to maximise relevance and engagement for students and improve the capability of our next generation of healthcare providers. I would like to join the academic senate to provide a voice for the needs of academic staff and help improve the delivery of academic goals at the University.

View University Staff Profile [here](#).