



WHAT’S NEW

New Members from CHSF

Dr Angela Page

New Members from CESE

Dr Boyang Li

New Student Members

Jennifer Lowe

Imogen Reid

Anushka Karki

Cornelius Paardekoooper

Pre-Recorded Presentations

The following pre-recorded presentations are available on request.

Supporting Student Wellbeing—RAPs

Supporting Student Wellbeing—University Transport Plan

Quality Assurance

Academic Senate Annual Assurance Report

All Functions of Academic Senate had been met in 2024 with the Report outlining the work under each Function in the previous year. The report noted the for further benchmarking to enable better decision making on major issues coming to Senate as well as highlighting academic risk concerns for students undertaking too many 1000 level courses.

Annual Reports from Animal and Human Ethics Committees

The 2024 Annual Reports were noted by both Academic Senate and the Research Committee. The reports comply with Section 9.0 of the HREC Constitution, HESF 4.1 & 4.2); ACEC Constitution, terms of reference; and the Animal Research Regulatory Manual.

Annual Cohort Performance Report (International including UNCIE)

Results from the International onshore undergraduate student outcomes for 2019-2023 were advised in alignment with the HESF 1.3.5; and 5.3.4a. The report was referred to the International Student Support and Engagement Committee to inform initiatives to support international student success and retention. It was noted that a report on the 2024 data would be forthcoming once released by the Department of Education.

Annual College and International Articulation Arrangements Reports

Academic Senate reviewed reports from each of the Colleges for domestic articulation arrangements in 2024 to comply with the *Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy* and HESF 7.3.2g. A separate report was also reviewed for current international articulation arrangements.

Quality Assurance—continued...

Annual Academic Integrity and Risk Report (Teaching and Learning)

Academic Senate endorsed following TLC recommendation, the current process of reporting student academic Integrity matters to schools, Academic Senate and Council as appropriate to fulfil TEQSA obligations. The 2023 report addresses HESF 5.2, 4.2, 6.2, 6.3, 7.2 and 7.3, and discussed the current challenges and risks raised. The key challenge for academic integrity was advised as gen AI. It was noted that the adoption of *Policy on the Use of Generative AI in Teaching, Learning and Assessment* was available to help guide staff and students, and that the AI Working Group continued to provide education and materials.

QILT Student Experience Survey (SES) Update

The 2023 sector comparisons Student Experience Survey (SES) results were discussed with a paper on the institutional SES results to come to a future meeting of both TLC and Senate following the release of this data. The data was discussed with actions such as leveraging best practices in high performing areas; targeted interventions; enhanced peer engagement; improved teacher quality of high performing areas in lower areas; strengthening student support services; and enhanced learner resources particularly in Medicine and Social Work, advised.

Forum Items—with a Student Wellbeing Focus

Reasonable Adjustment Plans (RAPs)

The Associate Director Student Wellbeing provided a pre-recorded presentation on the range of student wellbeing services available at UoN. The presentation focussed on *AccessAbility*, although it was noted that Student Wellbeing also provided health services; advice; support; financial assistance; and advocacy for students.

AccessAbility provides support for students with permanent or temporary disability to create (or accommodations) for equity in learning. RAPs consider the inherent program requirements, the nature and onset of the disability; the type of assessment and course requirements; the ability to participate in courses; usual work methods and ability to achieve learning outcomes; and includes information from the student. The focus of the RAP is on enhanced independence / capacity building, whilst also considering the effect of the RAP on other staff and students.

Common RAPs include extra exam or assessment time, breaks, technology, transcription, additional exam considerations, however other accommodations can be used to suit student needs.

Students can register for a RAP through *AccessAbility* at any time, although it was advised that earlier registration provides better student outcomes, with the plans made in consultation with the student. It was noted that the University is currently investigating ways to improve the process, especially the response times.

University Strategic Transport Management Plan (STMP)

An update on the University's (STMP) was given by Associate Director Campus Services. The presentation focussed on student safety and connectivity between campuses.

The 2023 review of the STMP included 28 recommendations with 5 core considerations of: peak parking demands; parking utilisation; mode share; travel origins; and growth challenges. Several projects were underway to address parking issues including the use of differential parking. Other projects underway included investigation to increasing shuttle services to include John Hunter Hospital and HMRI, additional bike hubs; smart paths and travel access guides.

Meetings are ongoing between the University, Transport NSW and Newcastle City Council to increase connectivity across campuses and high demand locations and improved infrastructure. Members raised concerns for student safety following changes to transportation systems and requested that risk assessments include such concerns in future.



Want More Information

Academic Senate Services: academicssenate@newcastle.edu.au
or the President of Academic Senate: PAS@newcastle.edu.au

Reports from the Executive

PAS Report

The report noted student representatives had raised the issue of access to internal Sharepoint sites for committee communications. The issue was raised with DTS and committee secretaries for rectifying. The PAS advised that the first Elected Academic Senate Staff Member Forum will be held on 29th April, with Forums also in June and September.

The PAS advised members that the new *Artificial Intelligence Governance Policy* had addressed feedback following the consultation period on the Bulletin Board and was progressing for final approval, with work continuing on the development of the *Artificial Intelligence Governance Procedure*. The PAS also made members aware of TEQSA’s recently launched s [Gen AI strategies for Australian higher education: Emerging practice](#) toolkit.

In updating members on the annual OZCABs Conference, the PAS advised that the sector continues to discuss how best to address academic risk, with discussion on research quality, academic freedom and WHS obligations.

Concerns were raised by the PAS over the number of RADs received for 2024 noting a substantial increase on the previous year. The PAS advised the main reasons sought for the RADs last year were students undertaking too many 1000 level courses and course substitutions.

VC’s Report

The VC highlighted recent discussions across the sector at the Universities Australia conference on the definition of anti-Semitism. It was noted that the University would be strengthening existing policies to ensure an anti-racism was clearly adopted. It was also advised that the Go8 were proposing that TEQSA adopt an anti-racism standard that would also ensure academic freedom.

The VC also highlighted the recent questionnaire sent to all Universities from the US Government and advised many in the sector believed that this amounted to foreign interference.

Further, it was noted that the University was well placed to benefit from the recent NSW Public Partnership for Public Benefit: Higher Education Strategy 2025-29 due to the close alignment with the Strategy’s aims.

Policy Changes

AMENDED

Admissions Manual—Coursework and Enabling Programs—Appendix for Guaranteed Entry Admission Scheme Schedule.

Adverse Circumstances Affecting Assessment Items Procedure—types of applications and requirements.

English Learning Proficiency Procedure – updated list of recognised Australian University affiliated ELICOS Programs; updated Medium of Instruction Register; and updated English Language Test Validity Period.

JMP - Admission and Selection Policy (Bachelor of Medicine / Doctor of Medicine) – for reduced ATAR of at least 85 for eligible students under the Rural Bonus Scheme.

Research Breach Investigation Procedure— following full review.

Micro-Credentials Policy - for alignment with recent changes made to the Guidelines for Commercial Activity.

Policy on the use of Generative AI in Teaching, Learning and Assessment—for use of GenAI in marking.

NEW

Program Discontinuation and Suspension Procedure.

RESCINDED

NIL



Committee News

Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC) - 26th Nov and 11th Mar Meetings

The DVCA and TLC Chair's report advised that the TLC had discussed the review of the academic program portfolio, noting this will focus on low enrolment courses with the aim to introduce a set of generic structures where possible. The TLC was advised of the new academic calendar and received updates on Career Ready Placements. The project updates for ODVCA in 2025 were given and it was noted that the Academic Portfolio Design Project is part of the Academic Portfolio review and that members would be able to contribute to these initiatives in the future.

Research Committee (RC) - 27th Nov and 7th Mar Meetings

The DVCRI and RC Chair advised members that new Spinouts had attracted external funding; the 14-year sub-lease with HMRI had been signed; and advised of a tender for the International Research Collaboration Strategy mapping. The DVCRI noted updates were given at the Research Committee on the 2024 Research Performance; HERDC Sector data for 2023; the intersection of the Engagement Priorities and the Business Improvement Program for the R & I Division; and that the meeting had discussed the need to improve Category 1 funding. Further, it was noted that HDR rates had returned to more normal pre-Covid levels.

Program and Course Approval Committee (PCAC) - 30th Oct and 27th Nov 2024 Meetings

The DVCA and PCAC Chair noted membership changes for the Committee and that PCAC considered a new consultation process for new programs and major program revisions, for implementation in 2025. The PCAC approved the recognition of Kaplan Digital Pathways programs for entry into University of Newcastle degree programs.

College and PALS Boards

Health Medicine and Wellbeing (CHMW) - 29th Oct and 18th Feb Meetings

The PVC CHMW and College Board Chair advised of several leadership team changes with Heads of School and Assistant Dean appointments. The launch of the Bachelor of Biomedical Science in Singapore and the Graduate Certificate in Nutrition grant success were noted. The CHMW PVC noted the priorities for College for 2025 included optimisation of the AWAM, academic portfolios, academic calendar change preparation, increasing research income and the use of digital technologies in programs.

Engineering Science and Environment (CESE) - 31st Oct Meeting

The Deputy Head of College CESE provided an update for the PVC CESE and Chair of the College Board. A recent report to the College Board on the IT Challenges in University Teaching Spaces was advised, noting that this report had been forwarded to the Office of COO. It was advised that the Head of School and Dean of Engineering had been appointed, and that work was underway across the College to increase Category 1 funding. The Deputy Head of College noted the increased student load across all Schools of the College in semester one, and that an opt-in pilot for tutoring was currently underway.

Human and Social Futures (CHSF) - 27th Feb Meeting

The PVC CHSF and College Board Chair updated Senate on the progress on the academic portfolio project; a planning day to increase student experience especially QILT scores; the increase in EFTSL load in 2025, especially for international students; and that two EOIs had progressed to the next round for ARC Discovery Projects. It was noted the update from the 7th November meeting would come to the next meeting of Academic Senate.

Pathways and Academic Learning Support (PALS) - 18th Nov Meeting

The Director of PALS provided an update on behalf of the Chair which advised of the success of the ELICOS programs, and a partnership with Japan. The success of the UniSteps and Children's University programs was highlighted, noting that the latter now involved 52 partnering primary schools. It was also noted that in the first two weeks of semester, the Academic Learning Support unit had received 11,000 students.



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

Next Meeting

Tuesday 27th May 2025