

# COUNCIL MEMBERS

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



### APPROACH

This professional development program for members of the University Council has the following broad aims:

- a. to provide individual members of Council with the appropriate skills and knowledge to operate effectively within the University governance system;
- b. to build upon the collective skills and experience of Council to enhance its general performance; and
- c. to encourage Council to evaluate the professional development needs of its members, both on an individual and collective basis.

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional development relating to the University of Newcastle and the higher education sector will be arranged for Council members as appropriate. Council members will receive periodic briefings on major developments/issues within the University at Council meetings.

The Vice-Chancellor (via the Report of the Vice-Chancellor) will periodically report on performance against strategy, and initiatives and developments stemming from attendance at and participation in various external meetings.

Invitations will be issued to Council members to attend University functions which will facilitate interaction with staff and students and broaden their knowledge about the University core business.

Members of Council will be provided with periodic media news clipping reports and media summaries about the University and/or broader tertiary education developments.

Members of Council will be expected to apply their individual knowledge, skills and experience by providing advice about and input into specialised University activities or initiatives.

Site visits and safety inspections will be organised for Council members to enhance understanding of the University's operations.

### GENERAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN GOVERNANCE

The University Secretary will arrange briefings for Council members on their rights and responsibilities as members of the governing body and provide updates on University governance.

## COUNCIL COMMITTEES

All members of Council are expected to participate actively in Council committees.

Members of Council will be inducted into the Committee and briefed on its recent activities and business by the Committee Chair, and/or the University Secretary, or appropriate nominee(s) prior to attending the first meeting.

## EXTERNAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The University will fully fund professional development programs for Council members, providing it is assessed to be warranted and budgeted. The University Council supports credentialing in AICD Governance Foundations and Company Directors courses.

Members are particularly required to develop a complete understanding of the following matters:

- a. understanding Financial Reports;
- b. understanding Audit Reports; and
- c. risk management and understanding risk management reports.

Information about major forthcoming professional development activities relevant to members of Council will generally be advised prior to the start of each calendar year (and throughout the year as information becomes known), to facilitate planning by Council members.

Members of Council may make an application for support of attendance at relevant professional development activities at any time throughout the year.

Applications for support to attend relevant professional development activities (particularly external conferences and seminars) should be made to the University Secretary for timely action.

The Chancellor will determine each application in consultation with the University Secretary and will be based on:

- a. the appropriateness of the activity given the level of experience and expertise of the member;
- b. the appropriateness of the activity given the role served on Council by the member;
- c. the previous professional development activities of the member that have been supported by the Council;
- d. the magnitude of the support sought; and
- e. the relevance of the professional development activity to Council's general objectives and to the benefit of the University.

The Council's professional development funds will be managed within the limits of the financial allocation provided for Council expenses and remuneration, negotiated annually by the University Secretary, as part of the University budget planning process.

An annual report on professional development expenditure, and associated claims for reimbursement will be provided to Council in line with the Reimbursement of Council Member's Expenses Policy.

## EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

Each member of Council is encouraged to informally discuss with the Chancellor their role within Council with a view to reflecting upon:

- a. individual performance, and any individual professional development needs; and
- b. committee membership and long-term succession planning.

Performance assessment and feedback of the Council and its individual members will be undertaken periodically.

Members of Council will be asked to reflect and recommend any changes to be implemented for the following year.