

**THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY
COUNCIL MINUTES**

The 492nd meeting of the Council was held at **9.00am (AEST) on Friday 28 March 2025** online via Zoom.

Members present

1. Chancellor, the Hon Julie Bishop
2. Pro-Chancellor, Ms Alison Kitchen
3. Vice-Chancellor, Distinguished Professor Genevieve Bell
4. Dr Larry Marshall
5. Ms Padma Raman PSM
6. Dr Anne-Marie Schwirtlich AM
7. Mr Rob Whitfield AM
8. Dr Liz Allen
9. Professor Juliana Ng
10. Professor Lyndall Strazdins
11. Ms Megan Easton
12. Ms Brenna Barker-Lamb
13. Mr Will Burfoot
14. Professor Tony Connolly
15. Ms Tanya Hosch

Apologies

There were no apologies.

In attendance

From Part 2 Onwards

16. Provost - Professor Rebekah Brown
17. Chief Operating Officer (COO) - Mr Jonathan Churchill
18. Chief Financial Officer (CFO) - Mr Michael Lonergan

Secretariat

19. University Secretary, Mr Phillip Tweedie
20. Manager Corporate Governance & Policy, CGRO - Ms Leslie McDonald
21. Senior Administrator, CGRO – Mrs Monica McGrath

PART 1 – PROCEDURAL ITEMS

1 PROCEDURAL ITEMS

Announcements and Apologies

- Ms. Hosch must depart in the early afternoon due to an immovable commitment.
- The Chancellor noted that the Minister had approved the Nominations Committee's re-nomination of Ms Alison Kitchen and Ms Padma Raman for additional four-year terms.

Leave of Absence

- There were no additional requests from members for any leave of absence.

Disclosure of Material Personal Interest

- It was noted that for Item 14, Ms Easton and Professor Strazdins were former members of the ANU College of Health & Medicine.
- No members declared any material personal interests in matters on the agenda.

Arrangement of Agenda

- Council noted the Annual Report, including the National Institutes Grant Report, will be submitted for discussion and approval via Convene following this meeting.
- Council noted that Items 1-15, 27-28 were starred for discussion.

Resolved:

Council **approved** that the unstarred items be dealt with as proposed in the agenda.

Minutes

Resolved:

Council **noted** the minutes of the previous meeting on 14 February 2025, that were approved out of session on 11 March 2025.

Discussion

- The Chancellor acknowledged receipt of correspondence regarding confidence in the leadership of the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor.
- The Chancellor vacated the Chair for the Pro-Chancellor to lead a discussion on recent correspondence received by Council regarding University Leadership. Neither the Chancellor nor Vice-Chancellor participated in the discussion.
- It was noted that 17% of eligible staff participated in the NTEU survey.
- Members noted the importance of respecting the correspondence while balancing it against their responsibilities to the Institution as a whole and its many stakeholders.
- Council unanimously condemned all personal attacks that have been directed at the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor.
- Members were invited to contribute and discussion emphasised the confidence that Council have in the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor to perform their roles.
- One member indicated that they did not share Council's confidence. When asked, that member did not wish to pursue a formal vote on the matter.
- Several members raised a desire for Council to have a revised and expanded role in engaging with, consulting with, and listening to the concerns of the community in an ongoing way.
- Members agreed that a statement was necessary and should align with this discussion. The Pro-Chancellor agreed to draft it as the Chair of the discussion.
- The Pro-Chancellor thanked members for their contributions to full and frank discussions during a challenging time in the University's history.
- The Pro-Chancellor reminded members of the need to respect the confidentiality of deliberations, thanked the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor then vacated the Chair for the Chancellor to resume the agenda.

2 MATTERS ARISING

- Council discussed each of the items on the Matters Arising list. There were two matters, with neither proposed for closure at this stage.
 - The Chair of the Finance Committee noted that the Committee held a detailed discussion on options for the medium-term note maturing later this year.
- The Chancellor requested that for Meeting 1/2026, Council receive a consolidated report on Renew ANU alignment with University's KPIs, budget and forward estimates.

Resolved:

Council **noted** the Matters Arising as updated since the meeting of 14 February 2025.

PART 2 – KEY BUSINESS ITEMS

The Chief Operating Officer, Chief Financial Officer and Provost joined the meeting.

3 CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

- The Chancellor provided an update on activities undertaken since the previous meeting.
- Council discussed the update and thanked the Chancellor for her efforts.

Resolved:

Council **noted** the Chancellor's Report.

4 VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

- The Vice-Chancellor spoke to the paper provided.
- Council discussed the update and thanked the Vice-Chancellor for her efforts.

Resolved:

Council **noted** the Vice-Chancellor's Report.

5 PROVOST'S REPORT

- It was noted that this was the Provost's first report.
- The Provost spoke to the paper provided.
- Council noted the data provided to support decisions enabling fair and balanced decision making and requested that it continued to be provided.
- Council provided positive feedback on work for the equitable distribution of academic workload, noting the need to ensure marginalised voices were heard during its development.

Resolved:

Council **noted** the Provost's Report.

7 STUDENT SAFETY & WELLBEING REPORT

- The Chair of the Student Safety & Wellbeing Committee, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and the Director of Residential Experience spoke to the paper provided.
- Council discussed preparation for a potential *National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence* to ensure a diverse student cohort and efforts to enhance oversight of Affiliated Residential Colleges.
- As it would be her last meeting prior to departing the University, Council noted their thanks and appreciation for Professor Venville's contributions over many years.

Resolved:

Council **noted** the updates from the Residential Experience Division and University Experience Division.

8 STAFF WHS ANNUAL REPORT

- The Chief People Officer and Deputy Chief People Officer (Safety & Wellbeing) spoke to the paper.
- Council discussed the update and noted the potential benefits in providing measures of severity as a component of incident reporting.

Resolved:

Council **noted** the Work Health & Safety performance reporting for the period 1 January to 28 February 2025.

6 ANU FINANCIAL UPDATE

- The Chief Financial Officer spoke to the paper provided.
- Council noted the uncertainty around Semester 2 enrolments and the importance of communication with the University community in regard to the complex situation.
- Council requested regular reporting on the “at risk” savings identified in the budget noting achievement is essential to meeting the goals set.

Resolved:

Council **noted** the University’s February 2025 year-to-date financial results as compared to the Budget.

9B/C ANNUAL REPORT (Financial Statements)

- The Chief Financial Officer and Director, Corporate Finance and Reporting spoke to the papers and noted that the University anticipates receiving an unqualified audit report from the ANAO.
- Council thanked the Chief Financial Officer for facilitating a briefing on the statements for members of the Finance Committee and Audit & Risk Management Committee. The Chairs of both committees noted their endorsement of the statements.
- Council discussed the Statements and highlighted that communication on the 2024 result must be clear on restricted revenue in the form of investment income and hail insurance proceeds, emphasising the significant, underlying operational deficit.
- The Vice-Chancellor confirmed that the University would seek the Minister’s approval to make this financial data publicly available as soon as possible.

Resolved:

Council

- **noted** the commentary and analysis on the draft 2024 Statements of Income, Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Cash Flows for the University;
- **approved** the University’s 2024 Annual Financial Statements and consolidated statement which includes the subsidiaries;
- **approved, adopted and authorised** the signing of the Transmittal letters;
- **noted** the ANAO closing letter;
- **noted** the ANU Enterprise Pty Ltd Annual Financial Statements; and
- **approved** the proposed approach that ANUE financial statements will, in future, be presented to ARMC through the University’s consolidated financial statements only.

10 ANNUAL FREEDOM OF SPEECH ATTESTATION STATEMENT

- The Chair of Academic Board spoke to the paper provided.
- Council discussed the update provided by Professor Connolly and thanked Academic Board for their oversight of these matters.

Resolved:

Council **approved** the ANU Attestation Statement on Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom for 2024.

14 NIXON REVIEW

- Professor Nixon and Ms Bowman spoke to the paper and highlighted key themes for Council.
- Council discussed the report and noted the importance of developing a considered plan as a matter of priority to publicly release the report and to address the issues raised.
- The Vice-Chancellor noted that discussions were already underway to develop that plan and that relevant staff have been provided early access to this report.
- Council thanked Professor Nixon and Ms. Bowman for their work.
- Professor Nixon acknowledged all members of the community who contributed.

Resolved:

Council **noted** the update from Professor Nixon.

Ms Hosch departed the meeting.

PART 3 – STRATEGIC ISSUES AND DISCUSSIONS

11 RENEW ANU

The Chief Operating Officer spoke to the paper provided.

- Council discussed the update and noted their thanks for the efforts to communicate and consult with the community, with positive feedback provided on the in-person town halls.

Resolved:

Council **noted** the University's ongoing Renew ANU program.

12 ANU COLLEGE OF SYSTEMS AND SOCIETY PRESENTATION

N.B. Item 12 was postponed to the next meeting on 30 May 2025.

13 COUNCIL COMMITTEES - STRUCTURE

N.B. Item 13 to be submitted for out of session discussion and approval via Convene.

PART 4 – OTHER MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION AND/OR DECISION

15 SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENT REPORT

N.B. Item 15 was postponed to the next meeting on 30 May 2025.

16 KAMBRI SCHOLARS PROGRAM ANNUAL REPORT

Resolved:

Council **noted** the Kambri Scholars Program Annual Report for 2024.

17 HONORIFIC RECOGNITION - NAMING AND HONORARY DOCTRATES

Details of these appointments will remain confidential until confirmed with the nominees.

Resolved:

Council **approved** the award of an honorary degree to the following person, as endorsed by the Honorary Committee on 5 December 2024:

- Ms Michelle Melbourne - HonDSc

18 EMERITUS PROFESSOR APPOINTMENTS

Resolved:

Council **noted** the list of individuals who have been approved the title of Emeritus Professor from 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024.

19 COUNCIL COMMITTEES MEMBERSHIP UPDATES

Resolved:

Council:

- **Approved** the appointment of Ms Michelle Melbourne to the Audit and Risk Management Committee for a four-year term commencing on 1st May 2025.
- **Approved** the appointment of Mr Adrian Loader to the ANU Foundation Board for a four-year term commencing on 1st July 2025.

PART 4 – OTHER MATTERS FOR NOTING

20 INFORMATION SECURITY UPDATE (1 OF 2)

Resolved:

Council **noted** the Information Security update.

21 STUDENT ENROLMENTS PROGRESS (1 OF 2)

Resolved:

Council **noted** the report.

22 COUNCIL COMMITTEES - EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES

Resolved:

Council:

- **Noted** the Council Committees and the Academic Board Executive Summaries from February and March 2025 meetings.
- **Approved** the proposed amendments to the Academic Board Charter.

23 COUNCIL COMMITTEES – ANNUAL REPORTS

Resolved:

Council **noted** Council's Committees and the Academic Board annual reports and self-assessments for the year ending 31 December 2024.

24 LEGISLATION UPDATE

Resolved:

Council:

- **Noted** that no new legislation has been approved or made by Council or the Vice-Chancellor since the Council meeting on 14 February 2024.
- **Noted** the update to the report received by Council in February 2025 on legislation made by the Acting Vice-Chancellor in December 2024.

25 GRANTS AND CONSULTANCIES

Resolved:

Council **noted** the report on grants and consultancies.

PART 6 – OTHER BUSINESS

26 COUNCIL DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Resolved:

Council **noted**

- the Register of Disclosed Interests as of March 2024.
- Gifts received by the Office of the Vice-Chancellor.

26 OTHER BUSINESS

Resolved:

Council **considered** any other business raised.

27 NEXT MEETING

Council **noted** that the next meeting will take place on Friday 30 May 2025.

The meeting closed at 2:00pm (AEDT)