

**THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY  
COUNCIL MINUTES**

The 495<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Council was held at **8.30am (AEST) on Friday 1 August 2025** in the Mills Room, Chancelry.

**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. Mr Rob Whitfield AM
7. Professor Juliana Ng
8. Professor Lyndall Strazdins
9. Dr Francis Markham
10. Ms Megan Easton
11. Ms Brenna Barker-Lamb
12. Mr Will Burfoot
13. Professor Tony Connolly
14. Ms Tanya Hosch

**Apologies**

There were no apologies.

**In attendance**

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

**Secretariat**

18. University Secretary, Mr Phillip Tweedie
19. Manager Corporate Governance & Policy, CGRO - Ms Leslie McDonald
20. Senior Administrator, CGRO – Ms Elizabeth Johnson

## PART 1 – PROCEDURAL ITEMS

### CONFIDENTIAL SESSION

*Council held a confidential session at the beginning of the meeting to read and discuss the following items, provided to them in hard copy. The Chancellor advised that this was due to the ongoing investigation into the unauthorised disclosure of material from the meeting of Council in early July. The approach was recommended in discussion with TEQSA.*

### 1 PROCEDURAL ITEMS

#### Disclosure of Material Personal Interest

- Will Burfoot advised the Secretariat before the meeting of a conflict with Item 14 regarding the ANUSA constitutional change and his role as President of ANUSA. Council agreed that Mr Burfoot be allowed to remain in the meeting and present the paper.
- The Chancellor acknowledged the potential direct or indirect conflict for elected members of Council in relation to Item 10 Renew ANU. Three members, Dr Markham, Professor Ng and Ms Barker-Lamb, disclosed that their areas are affected to different degrees by the change plans. The Chancellor thanked them for their disclosures, and it was agreed that all members would participate in discussion of that item.

#### Arrangement of Agenda

- No further items were starred for discussion.
- The Chancellor outlined the arrangements for the confidential session of Council, which will be followed by a formal meeting.
- The Chancellor noted that a notice of motion had been sent by email and received around 9pm the previous evening. She undertook to consider the motion during the reading time and would advise her response later in the meeting.

#### Resolved:

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

#### Minutes

- The following requests were made for amendments to the minutes of the meeting on 30 May 2025:
  - The removal of some of the commentary around the Debt Strategy which could be commercially sensitive.
  - That Council's commitment to a period of engagement across campus be clarified in Other Business.
- The following requests were made for amendments to the minutes of the meeting on 3 July 2025:
  - Reference to the discussion on an independent review of management culture be added to the minuted discussion on the need for an independent review of Council's performance.
  - Clarification that the list of information requested by a Council member during discussion about Renew ANU was provided to members and the Secretariat.

#### Resolved:

Council **approved**, with agreed amendments, the minutes of the Council meetings held on:

- 30 May 2025
- 3 July 2025

## 6 COO'S REPORT – INFORMATION SECURITY

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

### Resolved:

Council noted the Information Security update.

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

## 9 TEQSA SELF ASSURANCE REPORTING

*The University Registrar and Head of the Academic Standards and Quality Office joined the meeting for this item.*

- The Vice-Chancellor spoke to the paper, noting:
  - The draft self-assurance document provided.
  - Once the self-assurance report is submitted, TEQSA will appoint an independent expert.

### Resolved:

Council noted the update on the University's TEQSA Self Assurance Report progress.

*Following the conclusion of its confidential session, Council commenced the main section of the meeting following a short break.*

## 1 PROCEDURAL ITEMS

### Announcements and Apologies

- The Chancellor noted that the Nominations Committee has submitted the nomination of Mr Andrew Metcalfe to the Minister for consideration of appointment to Council. Mr Metcalfe recently retired as Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and as Australia's Director of Biosecurity. He is currently a member of the Audit, Finance and Risk Committee and is the National President of the Institute of Public Administration Australia.

### Leave of Absence

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

## 2 MATTERS ARISING

- Council discussed each of the items on the Matters Arising list. There were five matters, with none proposed for closure in the pack. Council noted:
  - A briefing by the Chair of Academic Board on Academic Freedom is scheduled at the next meeting of Council and Matter 5 will be left open until that meeting.
  - A review of the 52-day rule was requested to be added to Matters Arising to be considered in due course as part of the normal review of policies.
  - That, in relation to Matter 4 appendix 2 of the Renew ANU update at Item 10 provides an overview of changes arising as a result of consultation feedback on plans released to date. Council agreed that this matter could be closed.

### Resolved:

Council:

1. **Noted** the Matters Arising as updated; and
2. **Approved** closure of Matter 4.

## PART 2 – KEY BUSINESS ITEMS

*The Chair of the Student Safety and Wellbeing Committee, Ms Catherine Fitzpatrick, and the Director, Residential Experience, Ms Felicity Gouldthorp, joined the meeting for discussion of Items 8A, 8B and 15, which were considered together.*

### 8A STUDENT SAFETY & WELLBEING REPORT TO COUNCIL: ACADEMIC PORTFOLIO UPDATE

### 8B STUDENT SAFETY & WELLBEING REPORT TO COUNCIL: RESIDENTIAL EXPERIENCE - PORTFOLIO UPDATE

- The Chair of the Student Safety & Wellbeing Committee and the Director of Residential Experience spoke to the papers for Items 8A and 8B, outlining discussion at the Student Safety and Wellbeing Committee, including:
  - Good progress in relation to measures to address sexual assault and harassment.
  - A new pilot for session 2 for student leaders and staff will ensure they have tools in place to support a neurodiverse community, including in residential communities.
  - The outcomes of the Nixon review are an opportunity for the Committee to focus on understanding different safety and wellbeing issues across cohorts with the proposed broadening of the Committee Charter.

In discussion, the Council noted:

- The work being undertaken to put measures in place to ensure the University will comply with the *National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence* by the deadline of 1 January 2026. This is a standing item for the Committee.
- Council requested an action item for a report from SWC to AFRC on readiness at its November meeting.
- Discussion on the potential impacts of Renew ANU on HDR student wellbeing, and steps being taken to ensure students are supported, including by their supervisory panel, should a supervisor leave.

### Resolved:

Council **noted** the updates from the Academic Portfolio and from the Residential Experience Division.

## 15 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS & CHARTER UPDATES

- The Chair of the Student Safety and Wellbeing Committee gave a brief update of proposed changes to the Charter and Membership of the Committee, noting:
  - The proposed changes to the Committee's Charter will give it oversight of safety and wellbeing for the whole University community.
  - Membership changes include adding the ANUSA President as a separate position and adding at least one internal Council member.

- In discussion, Council noted:
  - That the proposal was for two Council members, one of whom was an internal member of Council. It agreed to include three Council membership positions for the next 12 months to allow Padma Raman and Tanya Hosch to continue to serve, alongside an internal member of Council.
  - The Council thanked Ms Fitzpatrick and the Committee for its excellent work.

**Resolved:**

Council:

1. **approved** the Safety & Wellbeing Committee Charter; and
2. **approved** the proposed membership of the Committee, amended to include the ANUSA President as a separate position and three (3) members of Council for the next 12 months, including the two (2) current external members and one (1) internal Council member.

*The Chancellor moved, at this point, to discuss the motion which had been sent to her the previous evening. A paper copy of the motion was provided to members at the meeting and will be provided as an **attachment** to these minutes.*

**NOTICE OF MOTION**

- The Chancellor opened discussion, noting the following:
  - A notice requires time for analysis and reflection. This motion was sent to Council late the previous evening while many were in transit to Canberra, several members had not been aware of the email until the meeting commenced.
  - A number of the actions requested are already underway.

- The Chancellor thanked members for the discussion and suggested that an appropriate way forward would be for a paper to be prepared for the next meeting to detail current actions already underway and identify any outstanding items for consideration.

### 3 CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

- The Chancellor provided an update on activities undertaken since the previous meeting, including:
  - A meeting with the Minister and Departmental Secretary.
  - A meeting of the Nominations Committee of Council was held on 24 July 2025 which resolved to nominate Mr Andrew Metcalfe to the Minister of Education for consideration of appointment as a member for Council.
  - Attending the opening of Parliament on 22 July, which included meeting with a number of members of Parliament including the Speaker, Leader of the Opposition and Senator David Pocock.

#### **Resolved:**

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

### 4 VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

- The Vice-Chancellor spoke to the paper provided, and added:
  - The ANU Annual Report 2024 has now been tabled in Parliament. The ANU website has been updated with a link to this report, as well as a series of FAQs.
  - The ANU Corporate Plan 2025-2028 was publicly released in late May.
  - A further targeted VSS scheme is under consideration.
  - Throughout July, a number of small group forums have been held by the Vice-Chancellor to discuss the future of the University with community members.
  - High level Pulse survey data from 2024 has been released on the ANU website for information and the University has committed to running a new survey in October.
- In discussion, Council noted:
  - The work being done to support leadership and the importance of ongoing professional development for all University leaders.
  - The Chair of Academic Board reflected that all Deans recognise the problem being addressed by change plans and are participating in discussions about the design of the response and the current implementation of change plans.
  - An update was requested for Council on the implications of the recently released Jillian Segal's report on antisemitism.
  - The discussion on the need for a Strategic Plan.

#### **Resolved:**

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

### 5 PROVOST'S REPORT

- The Provost spoke to the paper provided, including the positive response and engagement from the University community to the Nixon Report Implementation Plan. She noted, in response to questions from members:
  - The extent to which the findings from the Nixon Report regarding the ANU College of Health and Medicine are relevant to other Colleges is under investigation.
  - One of the key findings has been the lack of training in key skills for academic staff, and the University will now run sessions on challenging and difficult conversations as well as trauma-informed leadership for academic staff.
  - All working group recommendations will be published.
- Council noted their thanks to the Provost for her report.

#### **Resolved:**

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

### 6 COO'S REPORT including Staff WHS

- The Chief Operating Officer, CPO and Deputy CPO spoke to the paper provided. They noted:
  - The University has been engaging with the Fair Work Ombudsman weeks in relation to the underpayment of some casual staff. This issue was self-disclosed and immediate action was taken to rectify the problem. Remediation payments

are underway to affected staff and, where the University is unable to locate people, the funds will be transferred to the regulator to hold.

- The organisational risk register for psychosocial risk is going out for consultation. The psychosocial risk management plan is constantly under review and refinement as case law changes.

- [REDACTED]

- Council thanked the COO, CPO and Deputy CPO for their report.

**Resolved:**

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

## 7 CFO'S REPORT

- The Chief Financial Officer spoke to a presentation and the paper provided in the pack, noting:
  - That although the University is budgeting for another deficit in 2026, it is on a much better financial trajectory; and
  - The aim is to start 2026 with a lower cost base noting that the cost base in 2024 had reached record levels.
- Council thanked the CFO for his report.

**Resolved:**

Council **noted** the CFO Update and **noted** the University's financial performance to 30 June 2025.

## **PART 3 – STRATEGIC ISSUES AND DISCUSSIONS**

## 10 RENEW ANU

- The Chief Operating Officer spoke to the paper, noting:
  - The savings, both salary and non-salary, provided in the report, will be built into the 2025/26 budgets to help the University get back to breakeven.
  - The report provides extensive examples of how implementation plans have evolved in response to feedback from stakeholders on change plans, with that for PSP being a good example of thoughtful and practical contributions producing an improved final implementation plan.
  - The proposed change plan for Residential Experience will achieve efficiencies by engaging with Uni Lodge, who are experts at large-scale residential transactions.
- Council noted:
  - The paper was a useful oversight of the change process and provides evidence that the work is resulting in outcomes. Consideration should be given to providing the community with some of the information about the impact of feedback on implementation plans.

**Resolved:**

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

## 11 2025 CORPORATE PLAN Q2 QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT

- The Director of the Planning and Service Performance Division spoke to the paper.
- Council noted:
  - The Chair of AFRC's congratulations on the work that has been carried out and improvement in performance against KPIs.
  - The need to communicate to stakeholders inside and outside the University the importance of the Corporate Plan to good governance and accountability.

**Resolved:**

Council **noted** the Quarter 2 performance report against the 2025-2028 Corporate Plan.

## **PART 4 – OTHER MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION AND/OR DECISION**

*Mr Marshall left the meeting at 2.57pm.*

### **12 COUNCIL & CHARTER REVIEW**

- The Chancellor spoke to the paper provided, noting:
  - The proposal is for the University Secretary to seek quotes, but also engage with TEQSA for advice, once a provider has been selected, to establish a program of work for the review. It would be important to minimise duplication with the planned TEQSA assessment.
  - Input from members to the University Secretary is welcome.

#### **Resolved:**

Council **noted** the next steps to evaluate Council's own performance being:

- University Secretary to seek quotes from at least three external providers;
- Engage TEQSA for advice once the supplier has been selected; and
- Undertake the Council performance evaluation.

### **13 TUITION FEES 2026 AND 2027**

- The Director of the Planning and Service Performance Division and Provost spoke to the paper provided. They noted:
  - The paper was developed by a Tuition Fee-Setting Group with representatives from the Provost portfolio, delivering a data informed, benchmarked and competitive outcome. It has also been considered by AFRC before being approved by the Vice-Chancellor.
  - Although there is no change to the fee increases endorsed by Finance Committee last year for 2026, over the next 12 months, changes will be made to the architecture of fee setting; not necessarily changing fees but reshaping offerings and making it easier for students to see what they can study at the ANU.
- Council noted:
  - The difficulty in absorbing some of the data in the report as presented and a request for a graphical representation. The Director, PSP, agreed to provide access to a better dashboard of the information.
  - The continuation of Government constraints on international student numbers. The Vice-Chancellor noted that a paper will come to Council on 2026 funding impacts and long-term implications of this policy, along with measures to address it.

#### **Resolved:**

Council **noted** the Vice-Chancellor's approval of the 2026 Tuition Fees as endorsed by the Audit, Finance & Risk Committee (AFRC) including:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

## 14 ANU STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

- The ANUSA President (and Undergraduate Student member of Council) spoke to the paper provided, noting:
  - When ANUSA took over the Postgraduate and Research Students' Association in 2023, a governance review with an external consultant was a condition for the University's funding. This took place in 2024, with the consultant considering the Constitution and coming back with recommendations.
  - The implementation of those recommendations was brought to a General Meeting of ANUSA this year. Not all changes sought were passed as gaining the required votes for motions is difficult to achieve under their Constitution. In coming years the Association will consider further changes but believe the version of the Constitution before Council is still a good governance framework.
  - Two particular areas which will require further work include improving both the disputes model in relation to cases of misconduct, and also visibility over the governance and management of ANUSA Departments.
- Council noted
  - Their support for the ANUSA Annual Report to be provided to AFRC and Council for noting each year, in addition to ANUSA financial statements, giving members a better idea of the work undertaken by the Association.
  - The University Secretary's thanks to Mr Burfoot for incorporating the changes requested in relation to the election of ANU Council student members.

### Resolved:

#### Council:

1. **approved** the amendments to the Constitution for the ANU Students' Association; and
2. **requested** ANUSA Annual Reports be provided to AFRC and Council for noting each year, in addition to the current requirement regarding the ANUSA financial statements.

## PART 5 – OTHER MATTERS FOR NOTING

## 16 COUNCIL COMMITTEES AND ACADEMIC BOARD – EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES

### Resolved:

Council **noted** the Council Committee and Academic Board Executive Summaries from June and July 2025 meetings.

## 17 OTHER BUSINESS

- In summing up discussion at the meeting, the Chancellor invited members to provide any further input on the response to TEQSA to the Vice-Chancellor.

### Resolved:

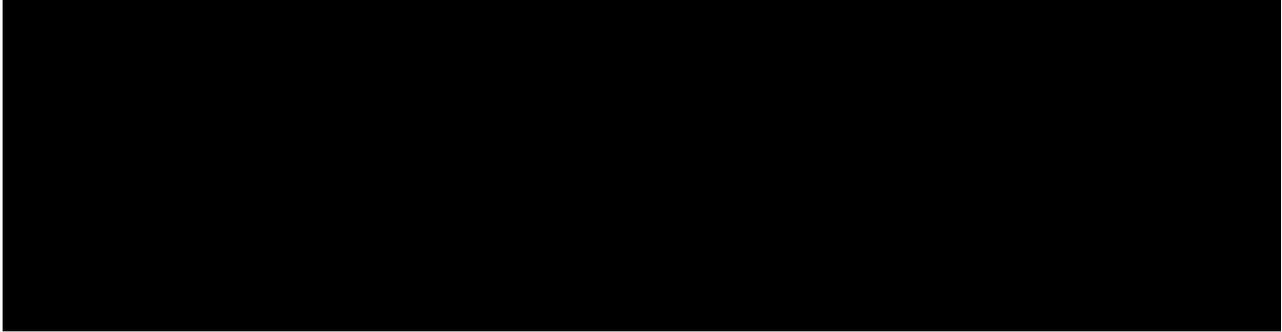
Council **considered** any other business raised.

## 18 NEXT MEETING

Council **noted** that the next meeting will take place on Friday 3 October 2025.

**PART 6 – OTHER BUSINESS**

The meeting closed at 3:00pm (AEDT)



***ATTACHMENT: Notice of Motion Received on 31 July 2025 from Mr Will Burfoot***

## ATTACHMENT – NOTICE OF MOTION RECEIVED 31 JULY 2025 – MR WILL BURFOOT

Title - Reaffirming Council's commitment to the success of RenewANU

Preamble:

RenewANU represents a significant undertaking by the University to ensure our finances and operating model are sustainable and successful as we face a more uncertain environment in the higher education sector and for the ANU. Considering the stage at which we find ourselves and the challenges we have faced, it is imperative that Council have strong oversight over all future activities related to RenewANU, therefore fulfilling our collective responsibility for the mission and strategic direction of the University, as well as ensuring effective overall governance and management, and responsible finance and risk management.

Despite the best efforts of the senior leadership group and Council to ensure the success of RenewANU, our community has not joined us on this journey. To continue without recognition of that fact will cause irreparable harm to this University, its staff and our students. It is therefore prudent to consider how we might better approach the challenges ahead of us.

It is in this context that the following principles be considered paramount to the success of RenewANU, and will assist in part to rebuild the trust of the community that has been eroded over the past 10 months.

1. A strong vision for the future and a strategic plan to guide decision-making. Given our current strategic plan expires in five months it is appropriate this work begin immediately. The vision needs to articulate our future state, our future strengths and a tangible plan to get there which will guide any structural and financial reform. This must go further than the Change implementation principles which have already been outlined and must give confidence to the community that restructuring is in the best interests of the University.
2. Tangible action on cultural reform as well as action on structural and financial reform. This should include an independent review of senior leadership culture.
3. Collaborative, connected, evidence-based decision-making to bring people along — staff, students, and our stakeholders. This requires an ongoing monitoring and transparent reporting of staff and student morale, experience and engagement.
4. Council to be a beacon of accountability. This requires looking in the mirror to assure that we are holding ourselves, our University and its leadership to account. A review of actions against our previous independent Council review in 2022, and the commissioning of a new independent review is imperative to achieving this goal.

Given what has been outlined above, the effective and successful implementation of the change plans should be considered conditional on the following action items, and therefore they should be undertaken as swiftly as possible.

Actions:

1. Council notes the four principles listed above and recognises their importance in ensuring the University is positioned to drive change successfully. Council requests a strong future state vision and Strategic Plan is developed to guide decision-making and reform.
2. Council requests the Audit, Finance and Risk Committee urgently meet to consider how an extension of the target to achieve savings by 12 months will impact the financial position of the University. Upon receiving the advice from AFRC, Council will reconvene at the earliest possible time to consider this advice.
3. Council commits to undertaking an external and independent review of our governance framework and of senior leadership culture to ensure we are meeting or exceeding the expectations of the ANU community and our external stakeholders.

4. Council requests a comprehensive risk assessment that considers how governance, communication, reputation, research performance, educational performance, and student and staff wellbeing have been and will be impacted by RenewANU. This risk assessment should include the previously identified risks outlined in the Change Principles consultation paper.

Mover: Will Burfoot

Seconder: Juliana Ng