

**THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY  
COUNCIL MINUTES**

The 502<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Council was held at **11.00am (AEDT) on Thursday 19 March 2026** via video-conferencing.

**Members present**

1. Chancellor, the Hon Julie Bishop
2. Pro-Chancellor, Dr Larry Marshall
3. Ms Alison Kitchen AM
4. Interim Vice-Chancellor, Professor Rebekah Brown
5. Ms Tanya Hosch AM
6. Professor Juliana Ng
7. Professor Lyndall Strazdins
8. Mr Guoqing (Bruce) Pan
9. Mr Charley Ellwood
10. Professor Alexander Mikheyev
11. Mr Rob Whitfield AM
12. Mr Andrew Metcalfe AO
13. Professor Tony Connolly

**Apologies**

14. Ms Padma Raman PSM
15. Ms Megan Easton
16. The Hon Wayne Martin AC KC

**In attendance**

1. Mr Michael Lonergan, CFO and Acting COO for Items 3 and 6
2. Ms Lisa Macrides, Senior Advisor, Office of the Chancellor
3. Ms Bhavani Balakishnan, Chief of Staff, Office of the Interim Vice-Chancellor

**Secretariat**

1. Acting University Secretary, Ms Leslie McDonald

## 1 PROCEDURAL ITEMS

### Announcements and Apologies

- The Chancellor thanked members for their availability for this meeting at short notice. She noted:
  - The unanimous approval of Dr Larry Marshall's appointment as Pro-Chancellor and thanked him for his ongoing commitment to Council.
  - That the Pro-Chancellor has indicated he wishes to stand down from his membership of AFRC due to the increased workload, although he will stay in place in the interim and that the Chancellor is in discussions with the AFRC Chair to identify a new member with appropriate experience.
  - The unanimous approval of Professor Tony Connolly as the Chair of Academic Board and expressed Council's appreciation for his agreement to continue to Chair the Board on an interim basis while a process is underway to identify a substantive Chair.

### Disclosure of Material Personal Interest

- No members disclosed any interests in relation to items on the agenda.
- Council noted that it may be necessary for the Interim Vice-Chancellor to recuse herself from discussion on contingency planning specifically if it relates to the appointment of a new Vice-Chancellor.
- Similarly, the Chancellor noted her willingness to leave the meeting if discussion turns to the appointment of a new Chancellor.
- The Chancellor noted the disclosures that would be addressed, if necessary, depending on the discussion.

### Arrangement of Agenda

- The Chancellor noted that, due to the short agenda, no matters were proposed to be unstarred or re-arranged.
- Four items were raised for Other Business: the 2025 Annual Report, the 2025 Financial Statements, Council correspondence and an update on the Thom report.

### Minutes

- The following requests were made for amendments to the minutes of the meeting on 18 February 2026 which were agreed to by Council:
  - The published version of the document will, by necessity have redactions for privacy and confidentiality reasons.
  - Members were also given additional time to provide feedback to the Secretariat. *NOTE: Subsequently, no further changes were provided.*
- No requests were made for amendments to the minutes of the meeting on 24 February 2026, however members were also given additional time to provide feedback to the Secretariat. *NOTE: Subsequently, no further changes were provided.*

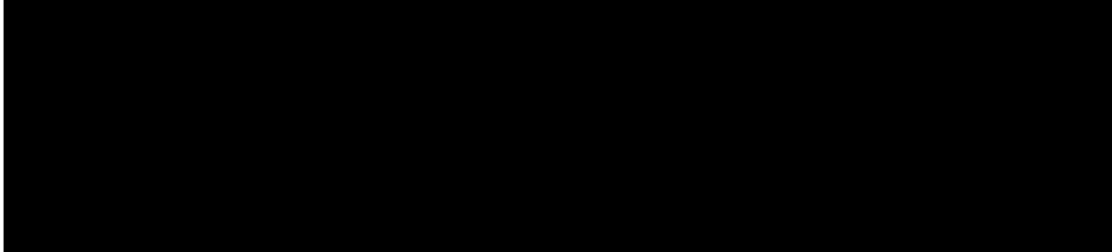
#### **Resolved:** Council:

1. **approved** the minutes of the Council meeting held on 18 February 2026, subject to the identified additional redactions from the public version.
  2. **approved** the minutes of the out of session Council meeting held on 24 February 2026.
  3. **noted** the out of session resolutions approved by Council on 26 February, 4 March and 12 March 2026.
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## PART 2 – KEY BUSINESS ITEMS

### 2 CORRESPONDENCE – CHANCELLOR UPDATE

- The Chancellor reported on correspondence, provided in the agenda pack, exchanged between her office and a number of external parties including TEQSA on appointments, the SAR and S28 responses; the Minister for Education; and ABC Four Corners. She noted:



- In discussion, Council noted:
  - That MinterEllison has been engaged by the Interim Vice-Chancellor as independent advisors to provide advice to the University in relation to regulatory matters.

#### **Resolved:**

Council **noted** the verbal report by the Chancellor on correspondence.

*Mr Lonergan joined the meeting.*

### 3 ANAO REPORT ON RENEW ANU - UPDATE

- The Chancellor reported on this item, noting:
  - The ANAO Report on ANU Financial Management was received by the Chancellor on the evening of 17 March and a copy was sent to the Interim Vice-Chancellor, the Chair of AFRC and CFO.
  - Although AFRC had not seen the report, the short deadline for response of 10 business days was discussed with attending members of ANAO at the AFRC meeting on 18 March.
  - AFRC have since been provided a copy of the Report in a Convene Review Room following clearance from ANAO in order to contribute to the response.
  - The Report has now also been provided to Council with the papers for today's meeting.
- In discussion, Council noted:
  - The Chair of AFRC reported that ANAO representatives acknowledged the short timeframe for response



- The Chair of the AFRC invited Council members to attend any meetings of the AFRC where the response is being discussed.
- The Council noted the need for effective communication of the final report to the community.

#### **Resolved:**

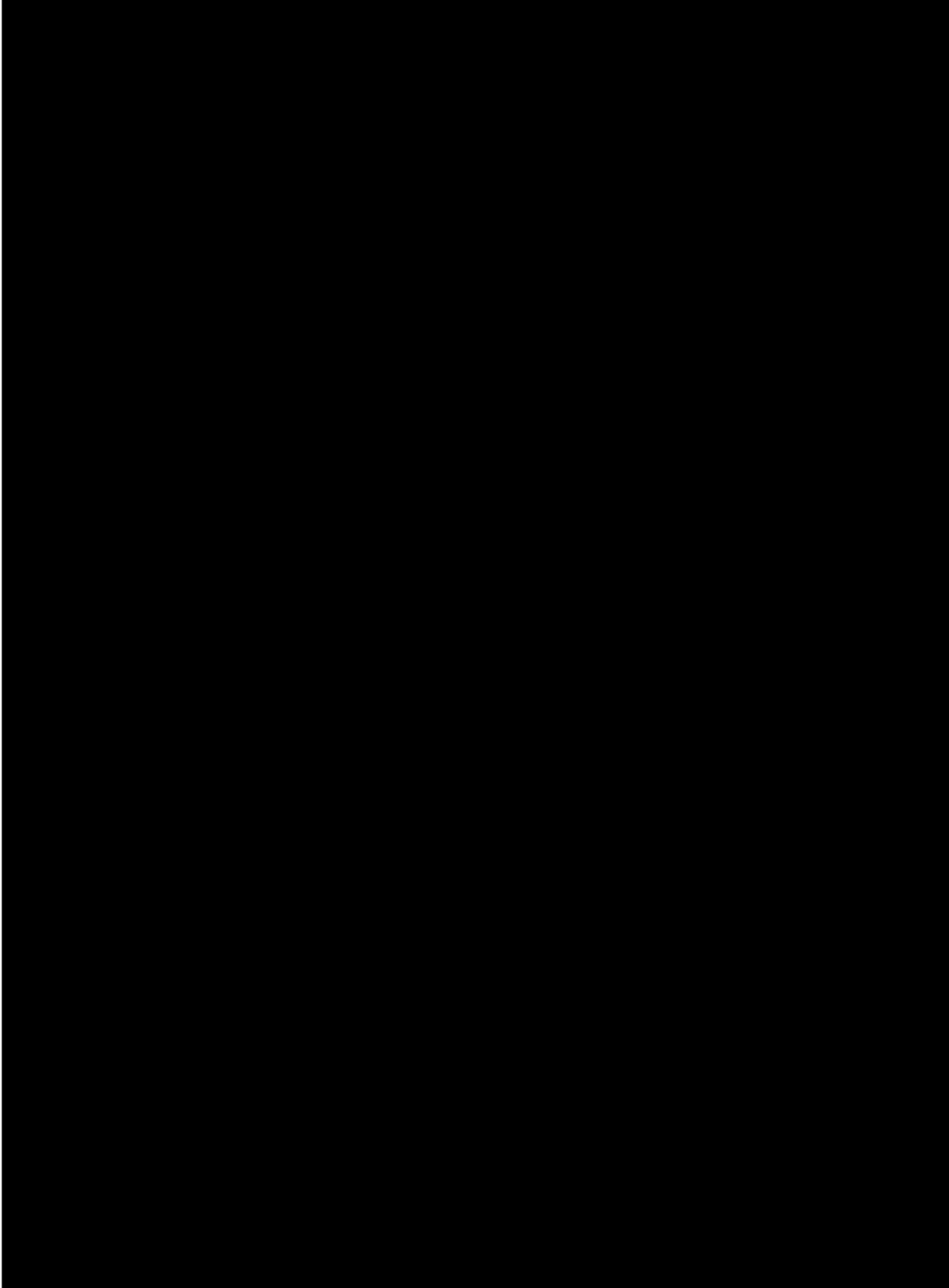
Council:

1. **Noted** the update on the ANAO Report on Renew ANU; and
2. **Agreed** that the CFO, COO and IVC will have carriage of drafting a response together with members of the AFRC;

3. **Agreed** that a draft of the three requirements (covering letter, 200 word summary and editorial comments) will come back to Council for another out-of-session meeting before the due date; and

*Mr Lonergan left the meeting.*

#### **4 COUNCIL CONTINGENCY PLANNING**



## 5 ROYAL COMMISSION INTO ANTISEMITISM AND SOCIAL COHESION - UPDATE

- The Interim Vice-Chancellor gave a brief verbal update on this item and noted:
  - The University is preparing for the Royal Commission into Antisemitism and Social Cohesion;
  - Efforts will be made to reconnect with key decision makers involved in the encampment to provide that background.
  - The IVC has met with the Go8 to understand their approach to legal representation at the Royal Commission. Following receipt of proposals from three firms, MinterEllison were engaged to support preparatory work based on a number of factors including their work with other Go8 universities and the ability to secure the services of Michael Hodge KC.
  - Preparatory work, including document gathering and the creation of a master chronology is underway, with key staff identified to lead on central information collection.
- In discussion, Council noted:
  - The Royal Commission should be a standing item on Council agendas going forward.

### **Resolved:**

Council **noted** the verbal update on the Royal Commission into Antisemitism and Social Cohesion.

## **PART 3 – OTHER BUSINESS**

*Mr Lonergan returned to the meeting*

## 6 OTHER BUSINESS

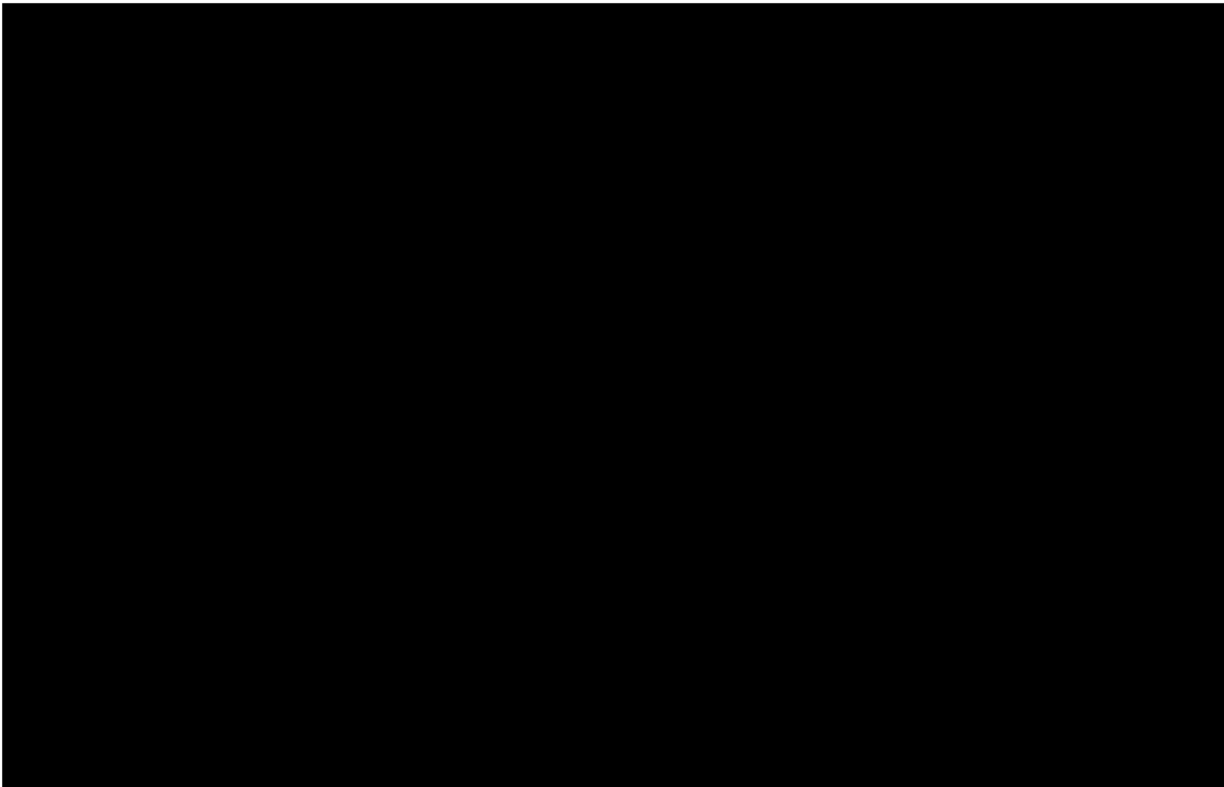
### 2025 Annual Report

- The Chancellor noted that the Secretariat would provide a draft of the Annual Report via Convene Review Room in the next day for member feedback by Tuesday 24 March. On incorporation of feedback, the Secretariat will circulate the final version for approval by out of session resolution shortly thereafter in order to meet printing and Ministerial deadlines.

### 2025 Financial Statements

- The CFO reported that the 2025 Financial Statements and ANAO Closing Letter have yet to be finalised.
- AFRC have delegated authority for final endorsement of the statements to a sub-set of the Committee. When finalised, the statements will be provided to Council for approval in an out of session meeting before the end of the month in order to meet Annual Report deadlines.

*Mr Lonergan left the meeting*



**Resolved:**

Council considered any other business raised.

**7 NEXT MEETING**

Council **noted** that the next scheduled meeting will be held on 24 April 2026.

The meeting closed at 1.28pm (AEDT)

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The Hon Julie Bishop  
Chancellor  
The Australian National University

Date