THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY
COUNCIL MINUTES

The 511th meeting of the Council was held at **9.00am (AEST) on Tuesday, 14 July 2026** in the Mills Room, Chancelry and by videoconference.

Members present

1. Interim Chancellor, Dr Larry Marshall
2. Pro-Chancellor, Mr Andrew Metcalfe AO (online)
3. Interim Vice-Chancellor, Professor Rebekah Brown (online, partial attendance)
4. Professor Juliana Ng
5. Professor Lyndall Strazdins
6. Professor Alexander (Sasha) Mikheyev
7. Ms Ewelina Przybyszewski
8. Mr Guoqing (Bruce) Pan
9. Mr Charley Ellwood

Apologies

10. Professor Tony Connolly

In attendance

1. Chief Financial Officer - Mr Michael Lonergan

Secretariat

1. Acting University Secretary and Chief Operating Officer - Mr Michael Schwager
2. Manager Corporate Governance & Policy - Ms Leslie McDonald
3. Senior Governance Officer – Ms Karen Hardiman

Guest Speakers

1. Director, Strategy – Mr Ant Bagshaw
2. Dean, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific – Professor Helen Sullivan

1.1 PROCEDURAL ITEMS

Announcements and Apologies

- The Interim Chancellor noted:
  - Apologies received from Professor Connolly and advice from Professor Mikheyev that he will join the meeting late.
  - A request from the Interim Vice-Chancellor for clarification from Council of the reasons why it was agreed to accept the first (but not the second and third) paragraph of the Universities Australia definition of antisemitism. This will be discussed under *Item 3.1 - Other Business*.

Leave of Absence

- There were no requests for leave of absence.

Disclosure of Material Personal Interest

- No disclosures or perceived conflicts of interest were raised.

Arrangement of Agenda

- All items have been starred for discussion and no changes to the arrangement of the agenda were proposed.
- The Interim Chancellor noted the following items to be discussed under *Item 3.1 - Other Business*:
  - Clarification on the decision regarding an antisemitism definition
  - Formation of the Nominations Committee
  - Appointment of Finance Committee, Audit and Risk Management Committee and Academic Board Chairs
  - Council deliberation time
  - ANU One reporting
  - Tuition fee setting
  - School of Cybernetics press coverage
  - [redacted]

Resolved:
Council **agreed** to the proposed arrangement of the agenda and **noted** the items to be discussed under Agenda Item 3.1 - Other Business.

Minutes

- Council discussed a proposal from the Chief Operating Officer to record Council meetings and utilise AI to produce meeting minutes.

  ACTION: The proposal will be revisited in the future to more closely consider issues relating to retention and (FOI) access requirements for recordings and any potential impact there may be on frank and robust discussions held at meetings.

- The following changes to the 24 April meeting minutes were requested:
  - Under *Members Only Session*:
    - the Interim Vice-Chancellor should be listed as being requested to leave the room.
  - Under *Item 3.1*:
    - "A few Council members expressed concern…" should be replaced with "Multiple Council members expressed concern…".
    - "concern about perceived negative comments" should be replaced by "concern about negative comments made by some members about the professionalism and abilities of others …."
    - A note should be added to reflect that feedback on the report from Council members was not subsequently provided to Mr Howell.
  - Under *Item 2.2 (Confidential):*

        - The Action relating to provision of an update on 'Deans' contract status and recruitment processes in train' should be changed to the provision of an update on the contract status of senior executive roles, without identifying any particular Deans, to ensure Council has visibility of any key personnel risks.
    - Under *Item 3.2*:
        - Updates should be made to reflect the following comments:

[redacted]

ACTION: The requested changes will be made and the revised minutes, as well as those from the 19 June meeting, will be made available in a Convene Review Room for Council feedback ahead of final versions being provided for approval at the next scheduled meeting in August. This will be the practice for future meeting minutes.

- The following comments were made on the approved *Circular Resolution on 26 June* regarding the 19 June Council Matters Arising table:

[redacted]

- An issue with the approved *Circular Resolution on 7 July* regarding Council Committee and Board Membership was noted. With the separation of AFRC into ARMC and Finance Committees, [redacted] A revised resolution will be issued to Council shortly for approval to resolve the issue.

Resolved:
Council:

- **requested** changes to the minutes of the Council meeting held on 24 April 2026;
- **noted** that the updated draft minutes of the Council meetings on 24 April and 19 June will be provided on a Convene Review Room for further feedback before final versions are provided to the 14 August Council meeting for approval.
- **noted** the following out of session resolutions approved by Council on Convene:
    - 26 June 2026 – Matters Arising as at 19 June 2026
    - 30 June 2026 – Letter of Intent – Voluntary Undertakings to TEQSA
    - 6 July 2026 – ANU Management Plan Thom Report
    - 7 July 2026 – Council Committee and Board Membership

Mr Bagshaw and Professor Sullivan joined the meeting for discussion of Item 2.1.

PART 2 – KEY BUSINESS ITEMS

2.1 UNIVERSITY STRATEGY

Professor Mikheyev joined the meeting at 9:28am.

- The Interim Chancellor welcomed the Director, Strategy and Dean, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific to the meeting and thanked all members for the feedback they had provided, noting that it had not been provided to the Strategy team at this stage.

- The Interim Vice-Chancellor provided context on the development of the strategy and next steps required for approval, launch and implementation of the strategy.
- The Interim Chancellor presented themes synthesised from Council member feedback ahead of the meeting and provided Council with the opportunity to make the following comments:
  - It was noted that more information is required on:
    - the consideration, treatment of and response to risks
    - the University's distinctiveness
    - special obligations held
    - research leadership
    - how wellbeing is being addressed
    - how to excite and engage people about the University's future
    - governance boundaries of the strategy, including performance managers and how the strategy can be amended
  - Concerns and questions were flagged regarding:
    - the overly inward focus of the draft strategy and the proposed five-year timeline, noting the possibility of considering a rolling approach with iterative updates
    - ability to separate out and prioritise initiatives

- In discussion, Council considered:
  - Risks and Opportunities – consideration of current risks and opportunities has been undertaken with the University Leadership Group, University Executive Committee as well as with alumni, students and key stakeholders including international agents. Stocktakes on the University's reputation and financial position were also undertaken to identify risks in these areas and how the strategy can work to address them.
  - National Institutions Grant – it was noted that a core element of the strategy must be to demonstrate that that University deserves the grant and includes evidence to support this, including the University's mission, position and engagement in the region and role in translating research and education into societal impact and furthering research and knowledge.
  - Co-design model – the co-design process is valuable in situations where there has been unrest or uncertainty as it can surface a wide range of issues and help to build a common narrative. The process will be utilised again in future strategy development processes but will commence significantly earlier.
  - Framing and tone – it was agreed that the strategy should present a clear vision for the future with reflections on what has occurred and issues that need to be addressed being contained in the implementation plan or limited to the preamble. It was further agreed that version 2 of the strategy is too long and that initiatives need to be expressed more efficiently without losing any important issues. Language should also be positive rather than prohibitive, stating that "We will lead" rather than "We won't".
  - Strategy on a Page – it was agreed that it should capture why and what is changing and what success will look like in a memorable and efficient visual representation.

The Interim Vice-Chancellor departed the meeting at 10:36am.

  - Student and Alumni Experience – it was agreed that the experience offered to students is a key element of distinction for the University but how it can be achieved, including differentiating between the undergraduate and postgraduate experiences, needs to be clearly articulated in the implementation plan.
  - Strategic Priorities – it was noted that the priorities are currently articulated as looking downwards and inwards rather than upwards and outwards, and that they do not appear to link with, or are identifiable within, the body of the document. It was proposed that the priorities should be distilled into two categories: culture (incorporating values, integrity and care for staff and students) and achievement of the University's national mission (through research and education which demonstrates significant national impact)

***ACTION: KPIs will be discussed in detail when the strategy is further refined*.**

ACTION: Following the finalisation of the strategy, a series of workshops should be held on disruptions to higher education strategy including AI, policy settings, visa changes and social licence

ACTION: The Interim Chancellor agreed to provide all written feedback received to the Strategy team.

- Council noted that an updated version of the strategy will be provided on Monday 20 July. Members expressed concern regarding the limited time available for maturing the document to the level required for publication.

  ACTION: An out of session online meeting will be organised for Friday 24 July for Council to approve the final strategy.

- The Interim Chancellor thanked and farewelled the Director, Strategy and Dean, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific from the meeting.

Resolved:
Council **provided** feedback on Version 2 of the Draft University Strategy and **noted** that the final Strategy, incorporating feedback and detailing changes made from Version 2, will be provided on 20 July 2026, with a meeting to be scheduled for 24 July 2026 for Council to approve the document.

2.2 INTERNAL COUNCIL MEMBER SUPPORT

- In discussion, Council:
  - Requested that the section on central funding be amended to be "applied at the discretion of the area for appropriate and reasonable activities including … depending on needs". Reference should also be made to Schools alongside Colleges, Portfolios and Service Divisions.
  - Considered if any of the support mechanisms proposed constituted a material benefit or gain for members.
  - Agreed that support requirements of undergraduate and postgraduate student members will be different in each instance and that the detail of any student member support packages should be negotiated on an individual basis between the student and the Registrar.

Resolved:
Council **endorsed** the proposal to establish a centrally funded recognition and support package for internal elected members, enabling Schools, Colleges, Portfolios and Service Divisions to apply funds to cover reasonable and appropriate activities as required, as well as including performance-expectation adjustments and equivalent student academic support as developed in conjunction with the Registrar.

2.3 COUNCIL MEMBER INDUCTION

- In discussion, Council:
  - noted that information sessions for potential internal candidates are run as part of current election processes. The sessions engage a former Council member to provide reflections on the experience of serving on Council and answer any questions.
  - Requested that meetings with all Deans and the ANUSA Executive be included in the induction process.

ACTION: Current elected members are to provide the Secretary with the top four things they wish they would have known about Council prior to joining to be incorporated into the induction pack.

ACTION: The proposed mentorship program will be further developed to include additional detail on how it will function.

Resolved:
Council **noted** the current governance induction process utilised for new Council members and **agreed** on process improvements to be implemented.

2.4 UNIVERSITY RISK MANAGEMENT - INTRODUCTION

- *This item was not considered due to time constraints. Briefings for interested members can be organised with the Risk Office ahead of the 14 August meeting.*

Resolved:
Council **agreed** interested members should organise a briefing on the University's Enterprise Risk Management Framework and risk management processes with the Risk Office ahead of the 14 August meeting.

PART 3 – OTHER BUSINESS

3.1 OTHER BUSINESS

Council discussed the following topics:

- Briggs Review: there may be some minor media attention in relation to the review. However, the Voluntary Undertakings to TEQSA will address most of the review findings.

- ANU One: Consideration of this item at the previous meeting flagged concerns regarding the clarity of the information provided and the ability of members to be fully informed and confident on the KPIs and milestones they are being asked to agree to and measure performance against with these types of proposals.

  ACTION: KPIs and milestones for the ANU One program need to be summarised and documented more clearly in a short traffic light/dashboard performance report for Council's next meeting ahead of the next full update report at the end of the year.

  ACTION: Stronger guidelines are required for major initiatives submitted to Council Committees and Council for consideration, including the requirements for clear KPIs, stage gates and performance reviews.

  ACTION: pre-meeting working dinners ahead of main scheduled Council meetings may be used going forward as a forum for planning and discussion of agenda items.

- Academic Board Chair: Professor Mikeyev proposed that the process for the appointment of a new Academic Board Chair be amended to include a Council-led Selection Committee.

  ACTION: Professor Mikheyev will develop Terms of Reference for an Academic Board Chair Selection Committee for Council consideration, noting that, due to conflicts of interest, it cannot be chaired by an internal Council member.

- Tuition Fee Setting: Council noted that, as per the Tuition Fee Setting Policy, the setting of fees for 2027 and indicative fees for 2028 and 2029 will be approved by the Interim Vice-Chancellor following endorsement by the Finance Committee. The decision will be subsequently noted by Council. An out of session Finance Committee meeting to address this issue is being organised ahead of the 14 August Council meeting.

- Finance Committee and Audit and Risk Management Committee Chairs: Council approved the appointment of Mr Metcalfe as acting Chair of the Finance Committee in order that the out of session meeting can proceed. Permanent appointments to both roles will be determined via the Nominations Committee.

- Antisemitism definition: Council noted that Academic Board extensively discussed the issues associated with the adoption of a definition of antisemitism in 2025 and considered the University's existing anti-racism and discrimination policies and procedures, the work of the Anti-Racism Taskforce and the risks to academic freedom and freedom of speech.

Council also confirmed that it had considered the adoption of the full Universities Australia definition at its Planning Day in February following discussion with Dr Alan Finkel AC and had agreed to the adoption and utilisation of paragraph one as sufficient to operationalise a definition, with paragraphs two and three being assessed as qualifying statements. It agreed that the definition could be reviewed by Council at any time if necessary.

Council approved the release of the proposed media statement in response to testimony at the Royal Commission.

[redacted]

- Chancellor appointment: Council noted that [redacted] A preferred candidate will be recommended to Council on 14 August. It was agreed that this is a decision that needs to be made in person (rather than as an out of session resolution) and that, in order for the incoming Chancellor to be properly briefed and prepared, an announcement of the appointment will be made separately to the Council meeting and celebrations of 14 August.

Dr Marshall departed the meeting at 3:34pm. Mr Metcalfe assumed the role of Chair.

[redacted]

- Indigenous Representation on Council: Professor Peter Yu is unable to fulfill the proposed temporary role on Council while it is reconstituted but is actively seeking an appropriate person for the position for Council approval. Former Senator Pat Dodson has also undertaken to provide feedback for Council, which will be provided via the Chief Operating Officer.

- Foreign Interference: Council noted that communications will be issued this week regarding the prohibition on collaboration with Russia, Iran, North Korea and Belarus. Information on how existing collaborations and students will be addressed are being developed.

- Nominations Committee: the proposed Nominations Committee meeting for 15 July 2026 will be cancelled and focus will be given to filling the vacant positions and standing the Committee up properly.

Resolved:
Council **agreed** that the recommendation from the Chancellor Selection Panel will be considered at the 14 August meeting but will be announced at a later date to distinguish the announcement from the Strategy launch and University House re-opening as well as allowing sufficient time required briefings to occur.

3.2 NEXT MEETING

Resolved:
Council **noted** that the next meeting is scheduled to take place on 14 August 2026.

The meeting closed at 2.26pm (AEDT)

______________________________ Date

Dr Larry Marshall
Interim Chancellor
The Australian National University