University of New England
Council (3:2026)
Smart Farm, Armidale and Zoom Video Conference
Friday 29 May 2026

Present:

Dr Sarah Pearson, Chancellor
David van Aanholt, Deputy Chancellor, Chair of Finance and Infrastructure Committee, and Council Member
Prof Chris Moran, Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer
Prof Adrian Walsh, Chair of Academic Board
Megan Aitken, Council Member
A/Prof Onoriode Coast, Council Member
Prof Jody Currie, Council Member
Ian Gillespie, Council Member
Phil Hess, Council Member [Zoom]
Chanel Hopkinson, Council Member
Prof Pip Pattison AO, Council Member

In attendance:

Prof Chris Armstrong, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)
Karma Auden, Chief Financial Officer
Dr Neil Durrant, Executive Director, Future Students Engagement & Technologies
Prof Simon Evans, Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Tim Hume, Assistant Vice-Chancellor
Kus Pandey, Acting Director Governance and University Secretary
Meredith Parry, Chief Operating Officer
Rebecca Cawood, Director, Office of Strategy Management
Ben Gilmore, CEO UNE Partnerships
Dr Jessie Harman, Chair UNE Partnerships
Lu Hogan, Associate Director UNE Smart Farms
Michaela Lobb, Director Marketing

Apologies:
Col Murray, Council Member
Kristy Sillman, Council Member

IN-CAMERA SESSION

[redacted]

OPEN SESSION

The Meeting opened at 9.35am and was declared quorate.

1. PROCEDURAL MATTERS

The Chair opened the meeting and advised that the Secretariat was recording the session solely for the preparation of minutes, with the recording to be stored securely in TRIM once the minutes were confirmed.

1.1. * Acknowledgement of Country

The Chair read the University's Acknowledgement of Country, recognising the strength, resilience, and generosity of Aboriginal Elders past, present, and future, and reflected on the cultural training session held the previous day.

1.2. * Welcome

The Chair warmly welcomed Professor Pip Pattison and Professor Jody Currie as new Council members, noting that they had been selected for their exceptional knowledge and expertise relevant to higher education and the UNE strategy at an important and exciting time for the University. Council members and Executive staff introduced themselves to the new members.

The Chair reminded Council of three matters: the importance of completing mandatory training modules, including the gender-based violence program; the Staff Giving Program, which had recently been circulated; and the availability of psychosocial support should any agenda items raise concerns for members during the meeting.

The Chancellor thanked the Deputy Chancellor for his suggestion of identifying key focus areas at the outset of each meeting. The Chair identified the Financial Rectification Plan, celebrating success, the Ombudsman role, and matters occurring inside and outside the University as the primary areas of focus for the meeting.

1.3. * Apologies

Apologies for Col Murray and Kristy Sillman were received.

1.4. * Conflicts of Interest

Council members were asked to disclose any material interest, consistent with Schedule 2A Clause 5 of the University of New England 1993 Act (NSW). Council members were asked to update their Disclosed Register of Interest with the Secretariat as required.

No conflicts of interest were declared.

1.5. * Order of Business

The Chair outlined the approach to starred and unstarred items, noting that Committees had considered items in depth before making recommendations to Council. Two unstarred items requiring Council approval were identified: Item 5.4, the Privacy Management Rule, and Item 11.3.2, the Financial Management Policy Update, which had been endorsed by the Finance and Infrastructure Committee. Council accepted the order of business and endorsed, adopted, and approved all unstarred items.

Resolution:	Council ACCEPTED the order of business and ADOPTED, ENDORSED and APPROVED non-starred items.
OC/26/03/01	

2. CELEBRATING SUCCESS

2.1. * Lu Hogan Associate Director of UNE Smart Farms

Lu Hogan (A/Director UNE Smart Farm) and Justin Bailey (Director of UNE Smart Farm) presented to Council on engagement activities and future strategic projects at the Smart Farm.

2.2 * Michaela Lobb Director Marketing presenting 'Success in Engagement

The Chair introduced Micheala Lobb who provided a presentation on the successful Open Day in 2026.

Operational Action:	Director Marketing to circulate (via the Secretariat) the Open Day presentation deck and brand video to all Council members. [Postscript – Email circulated to Council members 5 June 2026]
AOC/26/03/01	

3. SAFETY MATTERS

3.1. * Safety and Risk Management (Including Student and Staff)

The Vice-Chancellor reported on the University's first annual Executive review of the Academic Workload Model. It was noted that participation levels were not yet where they needed to be, and the fidelity of information, including the degree of disaggregation, remained an issue. However, the data was beginning to reveal the distribution of heavy workload across the institution and enabled cross-referencing with research activation data, confirming a direct correlation between research and teaching workload in some areas.

The Vice-Chancellor emphasised that before the University could ask more of staff in terms of innovation and strategic change, workload hotspots had to be addressed. Rectification was being pursued through recruitment of staff where feasible, reduction of unnecessary work, and review of courses that were being over-taught. The principles of the workload model, that it be safe, equitable, transparent, and consistent across the institution were being upheld, with Deans and Heads of School as the key people adjusting workload levels.

[redacted]

A Council member raised the matter of fire compliance, noting that the University had an agreement with Armidale Regional Council to continue addressing fire compliance issues until April 2028, and that $1.5 million in capital expenditure funding had been allocated. The potential impact on insurance was raised as a matter requiring attention. The Vice-Chancellor confirmed that the University was in a much better position in terms of knowledge of each building's compliance status than two years prior, and that additional capital had been allocated to fire-related renovations. It was noted that insurance information would be available shortly.

A Council member requested that the workload data, including high-risk thresholds, be brought to Council in due course, and suggested linking this work to the enterprise risk management system. The Vice-Chancellor agreed and noted that the next phase of the enterprise risk management system, focused on mitigations, was being contracted, and that an overarching prioritisation exercise would be undertaken.

Action:	The Vice-Chancellor to bring the workload model data, including high risk thresholds to Council, linked to the Enterprise Risk Management Framework.
AOC/26/03/02	

The Chair commended the Chief Operating Officer and her team for improvements in student safety, noting that the current year had been significantly better than the previous year. The Chair also commended the Vice-Chancellor's management report for presenting key risks and mitigating actions in a format aligned with Council's governance responsibilities.

4. CHANCELLOR'S REPORTS

4.1. * Chancellor Report

The Deputy Chancellor reported on his attendance at the Universities Chancellors' Council (UCC) Plenary Meeting on behalf of the Chancellor. The NSW Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education, the Hon. Steve Whan, had addressed the meeting, expressing interest in and care for the sector but indicating no additional funding unless through the Commonwealth. The Minister had articulated a desire for diversity on boards, engagement with community, and engagement with Indigenous peoples, areas in which the University was already progressing.

The Chair and Managing Director of Universities Australia had presented on Council skills matrices, visibility, and accountability. The National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) National President and

Vice President had presented on governance, transparency, and communication. Enterprise bargaining was discussed, with the NTEU highlighting the Newcastle precedent of 17% casual superannuation as a likely new norm, and salary increases of approximately 3.5% per annum, though it was noted that the cost-of-living environment would likely push claims higher.

The ATEC Chief Commissioner had presented on the difference between ATEC and TEQSA, emphasising fairness in funding allocation and openness to engagement with universities.

An update on a KPMG webinar attended by several Council members was provided. The webinar's topic related to embedding the university governance principles. Key themes included:

1. Universities had been generally defensive in their response to the principles, which did not bode well.

2. Universities were called upon to lean into the principles, adapt them to their culture, and set a precedent for others.

3. Annual reporting to TEQSA against the principles was likely to be required.

4. Student voice was a critical theme, with Councils needing not only student representatives but direct engagement with students and evidence-based understanding of the student experience.

5. The concept of stewardship was emphasised, with Council members leaving behind a legacy and role-modelling positive momentum, rather than acting as passive participants.

6. Culture was set from the top, and risk management across the sector remained inadequate.

7. Transparency thresholds needed to be set at a high bar.

8. There were insufficient touchpoints between Council members and academic integrity, student representation, and academic discussions.

9. The Vice-Chancellor's remuneration needed to be transparent and linked to performance.

10. The volume of papers was not an excuse for Council members not understanding the business.

11. Council's ultimate responsibility for academic excellence and quality was strongly emphasised.

The Chair noted that the University had been working on governance improvements for some time and would continue to do so as a continuous improvement approach. The Chair requested more information in order to consider how Council engaged with student voice, including whether a postgraduate student representative on Council was warranted, and how First Nations voice and leadership were demonstrated. The Chair also noted the importance of being on the front foot in communicating the governance improvements already made and planned.

Action: The University Secretary to report to the upcoming Council meeting as to how Council engages with the student voice.
AOC/26/03/03

The Vice-Chancellor noted that the governance principles were embedded in the University's strategic plan and that a formal alignment exercise would be undertaken. It was noted that the Minister had referred the principles to the Higher Education Standards Panel for consideration of implementation through the Higher Education Standards Framework.

The Chair formally recognised and commended the Vice-Chancellor for his professional, thorough, and informed appearance before the NSW Parliament Standing Committee on Social Issues inquiry into the NSW university sector. Council's full support was noted. The Chancellor also recognised that several questions on notice had been directed at Council rather than management and thanked the Vice-Chancellor for facilitating Council's input into the responses. The submission was due on the day of the meeting, and the Chair thanked the working committee of Council and the legal support provided for their contributions.

The Chair noted that Council recognised the importance of governance focus in higher education, had been working on improvements for some time, and was committed to continuous improvement, including increasing transparency in Council decision-making.

Resolution: Council NOTED the Chancellor's Report to Council [D26/45617].
OC/26/03/02

5. VICE-CHANCELLOR AND CEO MATTERS

5.1. * Vice-Chancellor and CEO Management Report

The Chair invited the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Chris Moran to speak to his report. The Vice-Chancellor's Management Report was taken as read, with several matters highlighted.

The Vice-Chancellor drew attention to the New England Renewable Energy Summit, which the University had convened on 23 May 2026. The event had been fully attended, with unanimously positive commentary. It was described as the first time the University had provided a neutral ground for community, industry, and government to work through contentious renewable energy issues constructively. The Mayor of Armidale Regional Council had acknowledged the University's important role. A report to attendees and a separate report to Council and the New England Joint Organisation were being developed. Discussions were underway with the Armidale Regional Council about making the summit an annual event, as no equivalent existed in New South Wales.

The Vice-Chancellor reported that the University had signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with The Armidale School (TAS). The MOU formalised existing collaborative activities and identified new areas of partnership, with buy-in from the academic community. The launch event had generated a collegial atmosphere and detailed, actionable commitments. The Chair noted the holistic nature of the partnership, including opportunities for nursing students to gain experience in the school setting. The Vice-Chancellor noted that the University had approached a number of schools in the region regarding this initiative, and that The Armidale School had been the first to confirm its participation.

The Vice-Chancellor raised the matter of foreign interference in research, noting that 13 of approximately 30 Australian Research Council projects had been declined funding based on foreign interaction declarations. The sector response ranged from one university signalling a ban on collaboration with certain countries to others advocating for a more measured approach pending further guidance. The University had 75 publications with affiliations from countries of concern and was undertaking further analysis. The Vice-Chancellor noted this was a significant and live issue for the sector.

The Vice-Chancellor provided an update on cybersecurity, noting that a program of work comprising six projects across three streams (governance, operations, and foundations) was commencing the following week. The program addressed the strategic risk around cybersecurity, including NIST cybersecurity maturity, Essential Eight maturity, crown jewel protection, team capability assessment, and awareness raising. The Executive Director of Technology and Digital Services had reprioritised $2 million from within the existing portfolio to fund the initial steps, which the Vice-Chancellor commended as an example of autonomous leadership within the institution. The Chair noted the significant improvement in cybersecurity since the appointment of the new Executive Director and confirmed that the program would be reported through the Audit and Risk Committee.

The Vice-Chancellor also highlighted the Campus Master Plan, noting that work was underway and that an updated plan was expected for the August Audit and Risk Committee meeting. The estimated cost of a full campus renewal was approximately $1 billion. The Vice-Chancellor emphasised the importance of an enterprise-wide approach to infrastructure planning rather than individually sponsored projects.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Operational Action:	Executive Director, Future Students Engagement & Technologies to publish the Cybersecurity Program Paper to the Convene Document Library and provide regular updates through the Audit and Risk Committee. [Secretariat and EDFSET] [Postscript: Cyber Uplift Project 18 Months report has been uploaded to the Document Library > Council Only Reference Material > 2026 May 29 Council Meeting]
AOC/26/03/04	

Resolution:	Council NOTED the Vice-Chancellor & CEO Management report – May 2026 [D26/60465]
OC/26/03/03	

5.2. * 2025 Key Result Area Performance Report

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Chris Moran presented the report, noting that it provided a comprehensive assessment of the University's performance against the key result areas established under the previous Strategic Plan. Council was advised that steady progress had been achieved in student outcomes, including a five-year high in unit success rate and Grade Point Average, improved retention based on 2023 lag data, and the University achieving five stars for Overall Student Experience in the Good Universities Guide for the twentieth consecutive year.

Strong research performance was also reported, with a five-year high in publication rate in the top ten per cent of journals and significantly increased grant value. Diversity data across staff and students was noted as strong.

The Vice-Chancellor drew Council's attention to areas requiring continued focus under the new Strategic Plan. Student retention remained below sector averages and was identified as an ongoing priority. Postgraduate research satisfaction had experienced a noticeable drop and would require investigation. Research productivity, measured by the volume of outputs per staff member and the number of grants, had decreased, even as the value of individual grants had increased.

The Chair observed that the "Future Fit" strategy's performance reporting had underestimated the scale of some tasks, and that headline statements had lacked sufficient articulation for tracking benefits. The Vice-Chancellor acknowledged this observation and noted that the new Strategic Plan and Business Plan framework had been designed to address these shortcomings, with future reporting on strategic goals to be delivered through the Vice-Chancellor's report and the Business Plan monitoring report.

Action:	The Vice-Chancellor to draft a wrap-up paper on the "Future Fit" Strategic Plan, outlining lessons learned and what was done differently in the new Strategic Plan to avoid past pitfalls, for Council consideration.
AOC/26/03/05	

Resolution:	Council NOTED the 2025 Key Result Area Performance Report [D26/58268].
OC/26/03/04	

5.3. * Business Plan Monitoring

Council considered the Business Plan Monitoring Report for May 2026, which represented the first monitoring report under the University's new Strategic Plan.

The Vice-Chancellor presented the report, advising that fourteen of seventeen measures were on track at this early stage of the plan's implementation. Council was informed that three areas were experiencing issues or were identified as at risk.

The first area of concern was student load, which was below budget following Trimester 1 results. The Vice-Chancellor noted that this was partially mitigated by increases in continuing student numbers, which indicated that retention measures were having a positive effect, even though commencing student numbers had not met targets.

The second area at risk was the Financial Rectification Plan, with both student load and payroll tracking behind target. Council was advised that this matter would be addressed in greater detail under Item 5.6.

The third area of concern was the proportion of women in senior academic and professional leadership roles, with data showing that representation at Levels E, HEO 9, and HEO 10 had decreased. The Vice-Chancellor outlined mitigations underway, including the 2026 Women's Academic Promotion Mentoring Program and the Athena Swan project.

Resolution:	Council NOTED the Business Plan Monitoring Report – May 2026 [D26/58273]
OC/26/03/05	

5.4. Privacy Management Rule

Resolution:	Council APPROVED the revised Privacy Management Rule for publishing on the UNE Policy Register. [D26/52749]
OC/26/03/06	

Standing Orders were suspended at 11:00 am and resumed at 11:05 am.

5.5. * Financial Update

The Chair invited the Chief Financial Officer, Karma Auden to speak to the report. The Chief Financial Officer presented the financial position, noting that the University's net surplus result on the operational ledger was $63.9 million, which was $4.6 million unfavourable to budget. The variance was driven by a $1.9 million unfavourable student revenue result, reflecting a Trimester 1 shortfall across Commonwealth Supported Place and international cohorts, and a $2.0 million unfavourable payroll expenditure result due to challenges in achieving vacancy targets. Non-payroll expenditure was $1.1 million unfavourable to budget.

Council was advised that the most material student load variances were in Commonwealth Supported Places, which were down by 140 EFTSL, and international students, which were down by 68 EFTSL. Domestic fee-paying load was down by 13 EFTSL. International revenue was identified as the primary driver of the overall revenue variance. Research income was unfavourable due to international Higher Degree Research students, and grant income was slightly below budget due to timing. Business income was below budget, while other income was favourable due to higher interest income and a change in the Student Services and Amenities Fee revenue recognition methodology.

Payroll expenditure was $2.2 million unfavourable across all ledgers. The Chief Financial Officer noted that cash and cash equivalents had increased to $50.4 million from $30.4 million as at 31 December 2025, and the current ratio had improved following the renewal of the loan facility.

[redacted]

Resolution: Council NOTED:

1. the Financial Update and 31 March 2026 YTD Management Financial Reports. [D26/52780; and
2. the Treasury and Cashflow Update Report. [D26/52773].

OC/26/03/07

5.6. * Budget Forecast Updates

The Chair invited the Chief Financial Officer, Karma Auden to speak to the report. Council considered and discussed the 2026 Forecast Update #1 report, including the updated Financial Rectification Plan.

The Chief Financial Officer presented the forecast, advising that it projected a consolidated statutory deficit of $9.0 million, representing a $16.2 million downward shift from the budgeted surplus. Council was informed that the largest single variance was a $7.3 million non-cash deferral of Tamworth campus revenue into 2027, related to construction delays. However, the real operational threats were identified as a $5.9 million payroll overrun and a $4.7 million shortfall in student revenue.

The Chief Financial Officer outlined that the forecast pushed the operating margin back into a deficit position of negative 2.3 per cent, and the employee benefits ratio showed payroll consuming 60.5 per cent of total revenue, with no improvement from 2025 and falling short of the 56.5 per cent target. The updated forecast projected a year-end closing cash balance of $25.4 million, down from $33.1 million budgeted, but the University remained resilient without needing to draw on the credit facility. Capital expenditure was noted as behind schedule.

Council discussed the financial scenarios at length. The Vice-Chancellor explained that the University Executive was shifting to strategic execution, introducing thematic financial scenarios based on four levers: domestic student growth, international student growth, commercial and philanthropic growth, and expenditure control. The Vice-Chancellor acknowledged that the previous approach to the Financial Rectification Plan, which had focused primarily on intensifying existing measures, had not delivered sufficient results. In response, the Executive had developed a menu of scenarios and options rather than a single intensified plan, reflecting feedback from across the organisation that a different approach was required.

Council also discussed excess leave balance and the need for staff to be encouraged to take leave, whilst ensuring workload stress is not affected.

A Council member observed that the financial discussions had been candid and upfront about the available options and commended the transparency of the scenario-based approach. The Vice-Chancellor noted that the Chief Financial Officer and the Executive had worked together to develop the scenarios in direct response to organisational feedback, recognising that staff had indicated the existing measures were insufficient and that greater optionality was needed.

Council was advised that preserving cash relied on achieving intake targets and enforcing expenditure limits, and that failure to recover domestic student load in the current year risked a $4.8 million funding shortfall in 2027. The risks identified included the 2027 funding shortfall, workforce expenditure, and capital phasing.

A Council member enquired about the transparency of the financial scenarios with staff. The Vice-Chancellor confirmed that the scenarios would be communicated to staff, noting that previous steps in the Financial Rectification Plan had been communicated openly and that this approach would continue. A Council member commended the transparency, noting it had been important for staff morale.

Action: The Chief Operating Officer and the Chief Financial Officer report to Council on strategies to reduce excess leave.

AOC/26/03/06

Resolution: Council NOTED and DISCUSSED the 2026 Forecast Update #1 report. [D26/60935]
OC/26/03/08

5.7. Student Member Report

Resolution: Council:

1. NOTED the interim governance arrangement for the UNE Student Council (UNESC) for the remainder of the current term, under which operational leadership and duties have been delegated to Deputy Chair Chris Burke, while Kristy Sillman retains the title of Chair and her seat on UNE Council to serve as the formal representative and communication channel between the two bodies; and
2. NOTED the urgent constitutional reform underway to bring the UNESC Constitution into compliance with the Student-Led Organisation (SLO) definition under the Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Cth), as amended by the Universities Accord (Student Support and Other Measures) Act 2024, with a constitution vote targeted for 12 May 2026, noting that Legal advice on the revised draft is pending at the time of writing and will be incorporated if received prior to that date; and
3. NOTED that UNE cannot lawfully release and administer the confirmed 2026 SSAF allocation of $1.1 million to UNESC as a Student-Led Organisation until a compliant constitution is enacted, that UNE is required to report to the Department of Education on SLO compliance in June 2026, and that the Acting Director Governance and University Secretary has advised that even the current timeline carries impacts for the 2026 UNE Council election cycle.

OC/26/03/09

6. CHAIRS' REPORT (OPEN)

6.1. * Chair of Academic Board Report

The Chair invited the Chair of Academic Board, Professor Adrian Walsh to speak to his report. The Chair of the Academic Board reported on changes in key personnel, noting that Professor Brian Wilson had taken over from Professor Amir Karton as Chair of the Academic Board's Research Committee.

The Chair of Academic Board reported on his attendance at the Open Council of Academic Boards of Australia (OZCABS) meeting on 24 April, where discussions had focused on the University Governance Principles, the TEQSA Regulatory Risk Framework, Academic Risk and Integrity, and responses to antisemitism definitions. Work was underway on updating the document titled "The Purpose and Function of Academic Boards." The Chair of Academic Board also reported on a KPMG webinar on "Embedding the University Governance Principles" held on 24 April 2026, the webinar had emphasised Council's ultimate accountability for governance, including the academic mission, and the need for clearer role definition and engagement between Councils and Academic Boards.

The Chair of Academic Board reported that the Academic Board meeting of 12 May had endorsed several significant items. These included a review of the Research Authorship Policy to reflect the use of artificial intelligence and external agreements, the Student Learning Abroad Rule with an amendment addressing foreign interference and influence risks, and the Intellectual Property Rights Report, which outlined a new IP Rights Policy and Procedure, with Indigenous intellectual property to be developed separately. The Annual Research Overview Report for 2025 had also been noted by the Academic Board.

The Chair of Academic Board drew Council's attention to the full implementation of the Assessment Architecture across all courses as of Trimester 1, 2026, noting that an implementation audit was underway. The Assessment Architecture represented the University's "two-lane approach" for assessment in the context of generative artificial intelligence, aligning with TEQSA guidance and sector practice. The Chair also noted that the final report under the University's 2024 Generative AI Action Plan had been received, with actions continuing while a broader whole-of-institution plan was being developed under the Chief AI Officer.

Members were advised that an upcoming demonstration by Aaron Driver on 1 June 2026 would showcase an AI-driven learning system, and that the Council of Chairs of Academic Boards (CoCABS) would meet at the University on 19 June 2026.

The Chair of Academic Board acknowledged that communication from the Academic Board to the University community needed improvement and noted that this was an area of focus. Council members were invited to attend an Academic Board meeting.

Key focus areas identified by the Chair included the Interim ATEC paper on teaching in higher education, which carried significant implications for the sector; discussions on Academic Freedom considering changes to Universities Australia's code on racism and discrimination; and the ongoing embedding of the Assessment Architecture for generative AI.

Resolution:	Council NOTED the Chair of Academic Board's Report to Council and provided feedback on concerns that have been highlighted for the period from 10 April 2026 to 29 May 2026. [D26/62360]
OC/26/03/10	

The Vice-Chancellor left the meeting briefly at 12.38pm and returned at 12:40pm

6.1.1. * Annual Research Overview Report for 2025

The Chair invited the Vice-Chancellor Research, Professor Chris Armstrong, to speak to his report.

The Annual Research Overview Report for 2025 was presented to Council as a management report for noting. This was the first iteration of a new reporting framework, assessing the University's 2025 research performance across four pillars:

1. Strong Performance Areas:
   - Category 1 funding reached $54.8 million across 38 awards, exceeding the target.
   - HDR recovery was strong, with 144 commencements exceeding the target.
   - Research output quality improved, with a Field-Weighted Citation Impact (FWCI) of 1.60 and 90.4% of publications appearing in Q1–Q2 journals — a five-year high for publication rate in the top 10% of journals.
   - Research integrity governance was robust, with a 100% preliminary assessment resolution rate.
2. Critical Gaps Requiring Institutional Response:
   - A significant decline in research-to-policy translation, with a 90% decrease from 2019 levels.
   - Portfolio concentration and diversification underperformance, with Category 2–4 income falling below target.
   - Indigenous Field of Research visibility and funding gaps, with zero funding recorded for Field of Research Code 45.
   - HDR internship shortfalls, with a 33% shortfall against targets.

3. Watchpoints:
   - HDR satisfaction sat at 83.1%, below the 85% benchmark.
   - Industry internship participation remained behind target.
   - Indigenous HDR commencements were at 2 against a benchmark of 3.

4. Key 2026 Priorities Identified:
   - Development of a three-year diversification roadmap for research income.
   - Stabilising institutional research share.
   - Promoting HDR internships and investigating satisfaction gaps.
   - Establishing government engagement mechanisms for policy translation.
   - Launching a Non-Traditional Research Output (NTRO) awareness campaign.

- Lifting Indigenous research coding accuracy.
- Enforcing Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) compliance.

The report aligned with the University's strategic focuses on World-Class Research, Governance, and Community Collaboration (including Upholding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Rights to Education, Resilient Regional Relationships, Regions of Tomorrow, and Renewable Energy Zone Alliances), with strategic risks identified in Reputation and Trust, Research, and Financial Sustainability.

Council noted the report. It was also noted that future reporting on strategic research goals would be integrated into the Vice-Chancellor's report and the Business Plan monitoring report under the new Strategic Plan framework.

Action: The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research to present a paper to Council (October 2026) on changing the research culture, 2026 Revitalisation Plan.
AOC/26/03/07

Resolution: Council NOTED the Annual Research Overview Report for 2025. [D26/56262]
OC/26/03/11

Council suspended Standing Orders at 12:55 pm and resumed at 1pm.

CLOSED SESSION

[redacted]