

Council Meeting Minutes

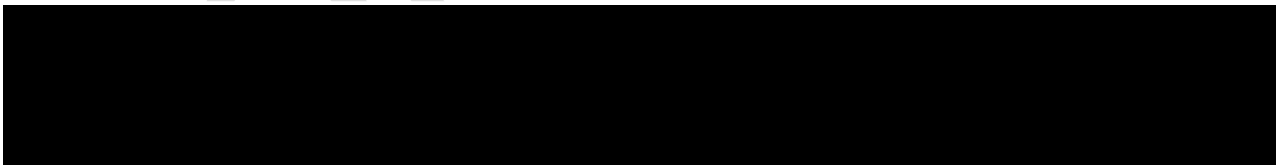
Date and Time: 29 November 2024 – 8.30am

Location: Council Room, Booloominbah, Armidale and Zoom

Present	Dr Sarah Pearson	Chancellor
	Jan McClelland AM	Deputy Chancellor
	Prof Chris Moran	Vice-Chancellor & CEO
	Megan Aitken	Council Member
	Dr Onoriode Coast	Council Member
	Russell Evans	Council Member
	Ian Gillespie	Council Member
	Phil Hess	Council Member
	Chanel Hopkinson	Council Member
	Colin Murray	Council Member
	Kristy Sillman	Council Member
	David van Aanholt	Council Member
	Prof Adrian Walsh	Chair, Academic Board

Official Attendees:	Prof Chris Armstrong	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research
	Karma Auden	Chief Financial Officer
	Ben Bible	Interim Chief Executive Officer UNELife
	Prof Simon Evans	Deputy Vice-Chancellor
	Meredith Parry	Chief Operating Officer
	Susannah Warrick	Interim Director Governance and University Secretary
	Rebecca Cawood	Director Office of Strategy
	Sue Crew	Executive Principal – Education Futures

1. IN-CAMERA SESSION



2. PROCEDURAL MATTERS

The meeting opened at 9am and was declared quorate.

The Chair welcomed members, with a special mention of Professor Adrian Walsh, who was recently appointed as the Chair of the Academic Board and Kristy Sillman, Student Representative.

2.1. * Acknowledgement of Country

The Chair undertook an Acknowledgement of Country.

2.2. * Apologies

Nil.

2.3. * Conflicts of Interest

Russell Evans and Professor Chris Armstrong declared they were ABRI Directors.

Rebecca Cawood declared an interest in item 6.1 (UNE Life Controlled Entity Report 2024) as Chair of UNE Life. Professor Chris Moran declared a conflict of interest in item 6.1 (UNE Life Controlled Entity Report 2024) as his wife worked at the UNE Medical Centre

2.4. * Order of Business

The Order of Business was revised to accommodate the following changes:

1. the Chancellor announced she would deliver a verbal report; and
2. item 9.1 (Meeting of Convocation held on 1 November 2024) was unstarred, as a prepared response to Convocation would be addressed under item 7.6.

Members agreed that future agendas should include a standing item for a 'safety reflection' immediately following the Order of Business.

It was also noted that strategic topics, such as student retention, attrition, and HDR students, should be included as standing items.

Additionally, members expressed concern about the number of late items and requested that reports be provided at least a week before Council meetings.

Action: Secretariat to amend the Workplan to include standing items (Safety Reflection, Student Retention, Attrition and HDR Students). [Postscript: Items have been included on Workplan for 2025]

AOC/24/06/01

Resolution : Council ACCEPTED the amended order of business and ADOPTED non-starred items.

OC/24/06/01

3. OPEN SESSION

3.1 Chancellor's Report

The Chancellor expressed her gratitude for the warm welcome and extended special thanks to the Deputy Chancellor, Jan McClelland, for her role in the recruitment process. She acknowledged the Manager Advancement, Alumni and Events, Samantha Crick and the Communications and Events Team for organising a comprehensive itinerary, which included meetings with key academic and local figures, as well as visits to various campus facilities. The Chancellor also noted interactions with Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors nationwide and held budget discussions with UNE's senior financial officers. During her campus tour, she visited her former office, the library, the natural history museum, the sporting facilities, and participated in media interviews. She informed members that she would be unable to attend the December graduation ceremonies due to prior commitments, with the Deputy Chancellor, Jan McClelland attending on her behalf.

4. * Vice Chancellor and CEO Management Report

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Chris Moran, presented a report covering key areas such as updates on higher education policy, progress on the staff survey, and the implementation of the University's Generative AI Action Plan. The Albanese Labour Government announced a 20% reduction in student loan debts, and the University continued to advocate for its role as a regional education provider. The staff survey results highlighted areas for improvement as well as some green shoots of progress noted in the Staff and student complaints, safety and wellbeing reporting. The AI Action Plan was on track for completion by the end of 2024. The Vice-Chancellor also addressed delays in the Tamworth Campus Development Application and emphasised the importance of student load, student experience, and staff wellbeing. Concerns about maintaining the University's social licence were raised, the Vice-Chancellor advised that the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) would follow up with the member offline to address the concerns raised.

Resolution: The Council NOTED the Vice-Chancellor & CEO Management Report, specifically:

- (1) The final UNE Risk rating by TEQSA.
- (2) Updates in relation to the higher education policy environment.
- (3) Progress in relation to the staff survey. [D24/164068]

OC/24/06/02

4.1. * Business Plan Key Performance Indicators

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Chris Moran, provided an update on the 2024-27 Business Plan's progress. The report highlighted that five out of sixteen KPIs were 'at risk,' including load-related targets and excess leave liability. Student enrolments for 2024 were below projections due to changes in student visa processing. There was significant improvement in WHS incident reporting, and the all-staff survey results were released. TEQSA reregistration was progressing well, and infrastructure projects were underway. Cyber security measures were being enhanced, and research grant income showed an increase. However, reducing excess leave liability remained a challenge.

Resolution: The Council NOTED the October Business Plan Key Performance Indicators Update Report and the planned monitoring/reporting avenues for 2025. [D24/165265]

OC/24/06/03

4.2. * 2024 Interim Future Fit Key Result Area Performance Report

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Chris Moran, provided an in-year update on the Key Result Areas (KRAs) as outlined in the Performance Reporting Framework associated with Future Fit. The report highlighted improvements in success rates, GPA, student commitment, and graduate employment outcomes, with continued excellence in teaching and research grant application success. However, areas needing further attention included postgraduate research course satisfaction and research outputs per FTE. The University also saw reductions in utilities consumption and staff turnover returning to the sector average. Despite these improvements, postgraduate research satisfaction declined slightly, and the Indigenous Employment percentage, while above the sector average, fell short of the target.

Resolution: The Council NOTED the 2024 Interim Future Fit Key Result Areas Performance Report. [D24/168301]

OC/24/06/04

4.3. * Chair of Academic Board Report

Professor Adrian Walsh, Chair of the Academic Board, acknowledged the outstanding contributions of Professor Jennifer McDonnell during her tenure as Chair. He outlined his 2025 priorities, focusing on enhancing communication between the Academic Board and Council and addressing challenges associated with artificial intelligence. Professor Walsh also emphasised his commitment to keeping staff informed about the Board's activities and announced that Academic Risks would now be a standing agenda item. The report included a request for Council to approve the Principal Dates for 2026, detailing key academic dates for the year.

Resolution: Council:

(a) APPROVED the 2026 Principal Dates (as attached to the report); and

(b) NOTED the Chair of Academic Board's report to Council [D24/162307]

OC/24/06/05

Standing Orders were suspended at 10.05 am.

Standing Orders were resumed at 10.12 am.

5. CLOSED SESSION

