

4. RELATED BUSINESS REPORTS

5. BUSINESS AS USUAL REPORTS

5.1. * Chair Academic Board Report #21022

Council is asked to:

- 1) NOTE the UNE Animal Ethics Committee Terms of Reference; and
- 2) NOTE the Chair of Academic Board's report to Council, report #21022.

For Noting

Presented by Robyn Bartel



Authority	COUNCIL OPEN	Date	25 February 2021
Report Ref	#21022	Item No	5.1
Proposer	Associate Professor Robyn Bartel, Chair Academic Board		
Developed with	Secretariat		
Authorised by	Mr James Harris, UNE Chancellor		

#21022 – Chair Report – Academic Board

Report Purpose & Origin

Purpose	<p>To advise the Council regarding key academic matters approved or considered by the Academic Board since the last Council meeting, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strategic academic matters (such as new academic developments, priorities and policy related issues) and any recommendations; • the quality and delivery of academic programs, including teaching and learning and research, including risks or significant issues, major developments and key changes; • progress against academic quality initiatives, including performance against agreed academic quality measures; assurance regarding compliance with Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF) and Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) regulatory frameworks; and details of any risks or significant issues identified and their proposed treatments; • updates re key academic partnerships; • details of Academic Board’s use of the authorities delegated to it by the Council, such as some academic policy approvals; and • other significant academic matters impacting the sector or University relevant to the functions of the Council.
Origin	Standing item
Governance focus	<p>Council Policy: Oversee and monitor the academic activities of the University. TEQSA Act 2011 Ref: 6. Governance and Accountability: 6.2.1f (Corporate Monitoring and Accountability), 6.3 (Academic Governance).</p>
Accountability	UNE Council

Resolution

Council is asked to:

- 1) NOTE the UNE Animal Ethics Committee Terms of Reference; and
- 2) NOTE the Chair of Academic Board’s report to Council, report #21022.



<i>Authority</i>	COUNCIL OPEN	<i>Date</i>	25 February 2021
<i>Report title</i>	Chair Report – Academic Board	<i>Report Ref</i>	#21022

Executive Summary

The Academic Board at its meeting on 7 December 2020 has considered new and amended courses for 2021 and beyond and discussed wide-ranging initiatives, such as work on re-registration preparedness, academic risk, academic freedom, Future Fit, institutional benchmarking, course review process, student grievances and a review of the Undergraduate Certificate in Professional Development process.

The Board also reviewed and endorsed/approved a number of new policy documents and an amendment to the Academic Calendar.

Following elections, Associate Professor Robyn Bartel was elected unopposed as the Chair of Academic Board for a term of 2 years commencing 22 February 2021. A call for the two Deputy Chairs of Academic Board is currently underway, for election at the first Board meeting of 2021.

Key Information

Academic Board

The Animal Ethics Committee (AEC) Terms of Reference were reviewed and subsequently endorsed by Research Committee and Academic Board, before being approved by the Vice-Chancellor. The documents are provided for noting by Council (refer Attachment 1).

A two-year plan has been proposed to prepare for *re-registration* of the University with TEQSA. The plan has been informed by University-wide discussions and the re-registration risks identified from a TEQSA Risk Assessment.

The Board considered *academic risk* further, reviewing a report which aligned learnings from other universities that have progressed through the re-registration process with TEQSA within the UNE context.

The Board received an update on *course reviews* undertaken in 2020, and the Course Review Schedule for 2021-2025 (including 75 for 2021). Course reviews not only directly realise an obligation under the Higher Education Standards Framework, they also provide an opportunity for enhancing our programmes. They provide a mechanism and lever to realise academic excellence, to ensure that the importance and value of a course can be clearly articulated, and a means to further improve. Improvements come from recognising exceptional practice and sharing that practice, and actively seeking and acting upon internal and external feedback on how we can improve.

Strategic Plan 2021+: The VC and OSM presented *Future Fit*.



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Institutional benchmarking is a vital activity to enable continuous improvement, and provides Board with assurance that UNE is achieving its goals of academic and research excellence. Recognising this, in late 2018 Academic Board approved a series of benchmarks to be monitored each year. These benchmarks were designed to be largely consistent with those considered by TEQSA, and provide the Board with assurance of the quality of academic excellence.

The only benchmarks met in this round are where UNE measures its performance against itself, and one case of a sector benchmark for retention of international students. In sector benchmarks of success, completion, and domestic retention, UNE is not meeting the standards the Board has set.

Quality Audit - Undergraduate Certificate in Professional Development Process

In April 2020, as an element of its response to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Australian Government announced a Higher Education Relief Package. This package included a Short Course Initiative that invited higher education providers to develop and deliver courses in areas of national priority (for example, teaching, health, science and IT). The aim was to support the rapid upskilling or retraining of displaced workers through courses to be completed by December 2020.

In June 2020 the Vice-Chancellor commissioned an internal quality audit of the Undergraduate Certificate in Professional Practice to ensure that UNE had complied with its course development and approval policies and processes, any ancillary policies and procedures, relevant aspects of the Higher Education Standards Framework 2015 (Threshold Standards), the provisions of the AQF, and any other regulatory requirements. This was undertaken shortly after teaching had commenced. The audit found that there had been a deviation from some aspects of UNE policies or processes, as well as possible non-conformity with some requirements of the AQF Qualifications Insurance Policy. While these departures did not automatically lead to non-compliance with external regulatory requirements, eleven recommendations were made to enable demonstration of compliance or the mitigation of potential risk.

The Australian Government has since supported the continuation of the Undergraduate Certificate, at this stage to the end of 2021, and in a subsequent Major Course Amendment and other actions, UNE has addressed or is the process of addressing all Recommendations. The Recommendations and Responses are summarised below.

The *UNE Annual Grievances and Academic Assessment Appeals Report* is based on relevant data from UNE's Student Grievance Unit (SGU). SGU manually collects and collates data over a 1-year timeframe (1 January-31 December) into four primary grievance categories: Academic, Administration, Behaviour and Services.

The data does not reflect the number of complaints substantiated or unsubstantiated nor reflect the method of resolution or whether escalation was required. All matters were addressed with the business area/school or origin in the first instance to seek a resolution and/or relevant information. The vast majority of complaints were addressed in this manner with a very few complications requiring facilitation and guidance from executive level or expert areas of the University, such as the Legal Office.



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The Academic Board endorsed the *Freedom of Speech Principles and Statement of Academic Freedom and associated Guidelines* to the Council for approval.

The *Dynamic Document Working Group* was originally established as an action item from the first COVID-19 Academic Board Standing Committee meeting of 31 March 2020 to consider and map proposed policy amendments and waivers to support staff and students impacted by COVID-19 (C19) in Trimesters 1 and 2, 2020 (Report #AB20282). The original document was referred to as ‘overview of agreed actions’ and was subsequently named ‘dynamic document’.

The working group met regularly during the middle months of this year and most recently on 9 and 18 November (see Attachments 2 and 3) in response to an action item agreed at the Academic Board Standing Committee meeting of 03 November 2020. Members recommend that the working group be retained and reformed under revised terms of reference including a new name ‘COVID-19 Response Document Mapping Group’ (see Attachment 1 in #AB20126).

The Academic Board endorsed:

- Assessment Guidelines, Assessment Appeals Guidelines
- Admission Credit and Enrolment Guidelines
- Course and Unit Design and Approval Guidelines
- General Rules
- Course Progression Rule
- Teaching and Learning Expectations for Staff and Students,
- Course Progression Procedures
- English Language Requirements Higher than the University Minimum Requirement Annex

The Academic Board approved implementation of the *JMP Manual* to commence 1 January 2021, and to rescission of a number of JMP Policies/Procedures/Guidelines.

The Academic Board approved a minor amendment to the implementation of the 16-week trimester dates for 2021 to provide the opportunity for week 16 to be a non-teaching period. The proposed revision is a result of the Teaching and Learning Committee’s Academic Calendar Working Group’s assessment of the Academic Calendar, following feedback regarding the trimester dates from students and staff. Further, the Working Group proposed that the student facing Principal Dates website be simplified to only show the trimester dates on the primary page with dates for other teaching periods, such as block units, to be displayed on separate pages that are hyperlinked to the main page. These are considered administrative changes and therefore, do not require Council approval.

Chair’s Activities (main scheduled meetings as Chair)

20 Nov 2020	Council Meeting
24 Nov 2020	Academic Board Executive and Chairs Meeting
1 Dec 2020	ASCILITE Conference Day Two – Stream B Host
7 Dec 2020	Academic Board Meeting
8 Dec 2020	Academic Board Executive and Chairs Meeting



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9 Dec 2020	Council Meeting (Special)
9 Dec 2020	Audit & Risk Committee Meeting
9 Dec 2020	Finance & Infrastructure Meeting
11 Dec 2020	HDTT Committee Meeting
15 Dec 2020	Academic Board Executive and Chairs Meeting
16 Dec 2020	Chair Academic Board & Vice-Chancellor Meeting
21-24 Dec 2020	Academic Promotion feedback meetings
23 Dec 2020	Interview panel for Deputy Vice-Chancellor
23 Dec 2020	Interview panel for Executive Principal, Education Futures
6 Jan 2021	Academic Promotion feedback meeting
12 Jan 2021	Academic Board Executive and Chairs Meeting
12 Jan 2021	Academic Promotion feedback meeting
18 Jan 2021	SARG Meeting
19 Jan 2021	Academic Board Executive and Chairs Meeting
20 Jan 2021	Academic Promotion feedback meeting
27 Jan 2021	Chair Academic Board & Deputy Vice-Chancellor Meeting
28 Jan 2021	Academic Promotion feedback meeting
1 Feb 2021	Teaching and Learning Committee Meeting
2 Mar 2021	Academic Board Executive and Chairs Meeting
4 Mar 2021	Chair Academic Board, Deputy Chair of Academic Board & Deputy Vice-Chancellor Meeting
5 Feb 2021	Senior Leadership Team Retreat
9 Feb 2021	Curriculum Committee Meeting
9 Feb 2021	Academic Board Executive and Chairs Meeting
15 Feb 2021	Meeting with incoming Chair of Academic Board
16 Feb 2021	Academic Board Executive and Chairs Meeting
17 Feb 2021	Academic Board welcome and induction session 2021
18 Feb 2021	Audit & Risk Committee Meeting
18 Feb 2021	Finance & Infrastructure Meeting
18 Feb 2021	Welcome and Q&A session with incoming Academic Board representatives and incoming Chair of Academic Board
19 Feb 2021	Academic Board handover session between incoming and outgoing members

Future Fit Alignment	Contribution of this initiative
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Goal 1: Crafting, adapting and supporting learning journeys that are distinctive in their accessibility and flexibility.	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Goal 2: Creating and sharing knowledge to make a difference locally, regionally and globally.	



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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Goal 3: Committing to environmental, social and financial resilience for the University, our staff, our students and our communities.	
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Appendices / Supporting Documentation

Attachment 1: Animal Ethics Committee Terms of Reference



Terms of Reference - Animal Ethics Committee

Section 1 - Overview

Establishment of Committee

(1) The Animal Ethics Committee (AEC) is established as a Committee of the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer (VC & CEO) and has been delegated a number of functions in relation to animal research at the University.

Objectives

(2) The primary role of the AEC is to ensure that all activities relating to the care and use of animals are conducted in compliance with the [Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes](#) 8th edition 2013 (the Code). In carrying out this function, the AEC must:

- a. satisfy the legal and ethical requirements of the governing provisions of:
 - i. the Code;
 - ii. the [Animal Research Act 1985](#) NSW; and
 - iii. the [Animal Research Regulation 2010](#).
- b. facilitate appropriate research and teaching activities;
 - i. primarily by encouraging awareness of legal and ethical issues of animal welfare among researchers and teachers; and
 - ii. by reserving the power to enforce compliance in accordance with the governing provisions.

(3) The AEC must ensure that the care of all animals on University properties minimises pain, distress and discomfort. Animal use in research and teaching is allowable only when:

- a. there is no available acceptable alternative to the use of animals;
- b. justification is provided in terms of expected advancement in knowledge;
- c. facilities and techniques are available to ensure that pain, distress and discomfort to animals are minimised; and
- d. the researcher or teacher is competent in the appropriate procedures.

(4) In applying these principles, the AEC follows what is widely regarded as best practice, namely the “three Rs” of Replacement, Reduction and Refinement in the use of animals.

(5) The AEC is obliged to consider all ethical and welfare aspects, as well as the scientific or educational value of the use of animals for research and teaching purposes. The AEC does so in accordance with the UNE AEC Operating Procedures and associated governing provisions, including the Code.

Section 2 - Committee membership

(6) In compliance with the Code there will be four categories of AEC members, with at least one person from each four categories of membership:

- a. Category A member - persons with qualifications in veterinary science and with experience relevant to the activities of the institution. Veterinarians who lack this experience must familiarise themselves with the biology and clinical characteristics of the species of animals used.
- b. Category B member - persons with substantial recent experience in the use of animals in scientific or teaching activities. This will usually entail possession of a higher degree in research.
- c. Category C member - persons with demonstrable commitment to, and established experience in, furthering the welfare of animals, who are not employed by or otherwise associated with the institution, and who are not involved in the care and use of animals for scientific purposes. While not representing an animal welfare organisation, a person should, where possible, be selected on the basis of active membership of, and nomination by, such an organisation.
- d. Category D member - persons who are both independent of the institution and who have never been involved in the use of animals in scientific or teaching activities, either in their employment or beyond their under-graduate education. Category D members should be viewed by the wider community as bringing a completely independent view to the AEC, and must not fit the requirements of any other Category.

(7) The DVCR may appoint additional members to assist the Committee to function effectively. These may include a person responsible for the routine care of animals within the University and others with skills and backgrounds of value to the AEC.

(8) Research Services are required to provide the AEC with an annual training session to ensure that members are aware of their responsibilities and have access to the most up-to-date information regarding the governing provisions in order to make informed decisions.

Terms of Membership

(9) Category A to D members will hold office for a two-year period and may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms unless invited by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research (DVCR) to continue as a member for an additional period in the event that no suitably qualified alternative members can be identified.

(10) If a Category A to D member vacates office prior to the conclusion of their term, written resignation must be made to the Chair of the AEC. The replacement will be appointed for a new two-year term.

(11) The Chair may ask a member to resign from the AEC, by providing not less than 24 hours' notice in writing, if the Chair deems this course of action to be in the best interests of ensuring that the AEC is able to perform its functions effectively. If the member does not accede to the Chair's request, the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer may initiate action through the DVCR to retire the member. The Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer may retire members at any time by providing not less than 24 hours' notice in writing.

(12) Members are recommended for appointment in writing to the DVCR by the AEC Executive, with the AEC's endorsement. For Category C members, this occurs after appropriate consultation with animal welfare organisations. The DVCR makes the final appointment.

Obligations of Members

(13) Committee members are obliged to treat AEC business as confidential and to declare any conflict of interest to the Committee. Members are required to complete a confidentiality acknowledgement and conflict of interest

undertaking prior to their appointment. If members have any questions or concerns about an application they may seek clarification from the researcher, prior to the meeting, after consulting the Chair.

Refer to the responsibilities of members and the conflict of interest section of the AEC Operating Procedures.

Chair

(14) The Chair should be nominated by the DVCR, in consultation with the Committee, following a selection process and approved by the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer. Appointment of the Chair must be approved by the NSW Animal Research Review Panel.

(15) The Chair should either hold, or have previously held, a senior position at UNE, or may be external. The Chair is to be appointed in addition to Category A to D members (Code, 2.2.2, 2.2.3).

(16) The term of office will be for two years. This period may be extended with the approval from the DVCR in consultation with the Committee.

(17) The Chair shall be responsible for impartially guiding the operation of the AEC, resolving conflicts of interest related to the business of the AEC, and representing the AEC in any negotiations with the Institution's management (Code, 2.2.13).

(18) The Chair must be provided with the necessary support and authority to carry out the role.

Deputy Chair

(19) Appointed from the membership and chosen by the DVCR, in consultation with the Committee. The person must be a UNE employee (i.e. a Category B member). The Deputy Chair will hold office for the term of their appointment to the AEC.

(20) The Deputy Chair will act as Chair, if the Chair is not available. If the Deputy Chair is unavailable to act as Chair then most senior Category B member will act as Chair.

Gender representative objectives

(21) Gender representation shall accord with the [Gender Representation on Decision Making and Advisory Committee Policy](#).

Section 3 - Functions of the Committee

(22) The functions of the Committee are to:

- a. review applications for projects and approve only those projects that are ethically acceptable and conform to the requirements of the Code (s 2.3.2.1 & 2, 2.3.5);
 - i. Consideration of what is deemed to be ethically acceptable shall be guided by the ethical framework contained in Section 1 of the Code and requires that:
 - ii. respect for animals must underpin all decisions;
 - iii. methods that replace or partially replace the use of animals must be investigated, considered and, where applicable, implemented; and
 - iv. ethical review must balance whether the potential effects on the wellbeing of the animals involved is justified by the potential benefits.
- b. review applications for activities associated with the care and management of animals in facilities, including procedures applicable to breeding programs integral to the maintenance of an animal line, and approve only

- those activities that are ethically acceptable and conform to the requirements of the Code;
- c. monitor the acquisition, transportation, production, housing, care, use and fate of animals by inspecting animals, animal housing and the conduct of procedures involved in the care of animals in facilities, and reviewing records and reports (2.3.17);
 - d. conduct follow-up review of approved projects and activities, and allow the continuation of approval for only those projects and activities that are ethical and conform to the requirements of the Code;
 - e. withdraw approval for all or any part of any project if deemed ethically unacceptable to the AEC per the requirements of the Code;
 - f. maintain a record of proposals and projects;
 - g. comply with the reporting requirements of the University and the governing provisions.
 - h. take appropriate actions regarding unexpected adverse events, including authorisation of the emergency treatment or euthanasia of any animal;
 - i. take appropriate actions regarding non-compliance;
 - j. examine, comment on and approve guidelines and plans for the care and use of animals on behalf of the University;
 - k. provide advice and recommendations to the University;
 - l. report on its operations to the University and recommend measures needed to ensure that the standards of the [Code](#) are maintained;
 - m. describe how members are appointed, re-appointed, or retired, according to procedures developed by the institutions;
 - n. require that all members declare any conflict of interest and deal with situations in which a conflict of interest arises;
 - o. consider and report on any matter referred to it by the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer or the Academic Board; and
 - p. perform all other duties imposed on the University by the Code.

Section 4 - Authorities

(23) The AEC is established under the authority of the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer to perform the functions set out in these Terms of Reference and all matters ancillary to those functions.

(24) The governing body as defined by the Code is the UNE Council.

(25) The DVCR representing the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer is the person responsible for overall institutional governance with respect to the care and use of animals. This includes providing adequate resources to ensure that the AEC and people involved in the care and use of animals can meet their responsibilities, including monitoring animals and managing adverse impacts on their wellbeing (2.1.5.1).

Section 5 - Conduct of Committee business

Reporting

(26) The AEC reports regularly to the DVCR. The AEC also provides the University with an annual report on all projects conducted in the previous year.

Meetings

(27) The Committee will meet on a monthly basis. Extraordinary meetings can be called at the discretion of the Chair.

Quorum

(28) At least one member from each of the membership categories A, B, C and D must be present at meetings to establish a quorum for a meeting. Categories C and D together must represent at least one-third of those members present.

Business papers

(29) Unless the Chair directs otherwise, Committee business papers, and explanatory documents accompanying them, will be distributed to Committee members and any official attendees as required and with as much notice as is practicable in the circumstances. Any additional documents may be tabled at short notice with prior approval by the Chair.

Executive

(30) The AEC delegates certain powers to its Executive (Refer to AEC Operating procedures - UNE AEC Powers of Executive) which consists of the Chair, the Secretary and at least one A or B member and one C or D member. Those AEC members participating in the AEC Executive may change depending on availability, provided that the above requirements for membership are met. The Deputy Chair acts as a reserve member for the Chair. Categories C and D together must represent at least one-third of the Executive. The Secretary serves on the Executive, as on the Committee, in a non-voting capacity.

(31) The Executive may not approve new proposals but it may approve minor modifications (Refer to AEC Operating Procedures - amendments to approved projects) to existing projects for review at the next AEC meeting. It will also review responses to conditions set down by the AEC.

Minutes

(32) Meeting minutes will be prepared by the meeting Secretary and circulated promptly following the meeting.

Disclosure of information

(33) Disclosure of business papers, minutes and other information received by the Committee should be made via the Chair or Secretary to the Committee.

Use of technology

(34) Face-to-face meetings are the preferred mode of meeting, where this is not possible the Committee will use video-conferencing, or, in special circumstances teleconferencing as arranged by the Chair and/or Committee Secretary. Meeting papers will be distributed via an online secure sharing program.

Self-Review

(35) Once every twelve-month period, the Committee shall devote at least one part of one meeting to the review of its policies, practices and procedures over the preceding twelve months.

Secretary to Committee

(36) Research Services is responsible for ensuring that the AEC has appropriate support to ensure it can meet its responsibilities under the Code.

(37) Support for the AEC must include:

- a. administrative assistance including development of policies and procedures for the submission, receipt and processing of applications and reports to the AEC, and make these policies and procedures readily available;

- b. recruiting, orientation and education of AEC members.
- c. service on the Committee and Executive in a non-voting capacity;
- d. reimbursement of members' out-of-pocket expenses and/or payment of an allowance to AEC members;
- e. development and implementation of procedures to include management of conflicts of interest, confidentiality, appointment and delegation of functions to an AEC Executive, meeting procedures, communication, records and documentation;
- f. maintaining communication with the Animal Welfare Unit of NSW Department of Primary Industries and the NHMRC Animal Welfare Committee; and
- g. ensuring all Committee agendas, minutes and reports are recorded in the University's corporate record keeping system in accordance with the University's [Records Management Rule](#).

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	11th December 2020
Review Date	11th December 2021
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer
Approval Date	11th December 2020
Expiry Date	To Be Advised
Unit Head	Heiko Daniel Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research dvcr@une.edu.au
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5.2. * Minor Updates Terms of Reference for select Council Committees #21097

Council is asked to:

- 1) APPROVE the administrative updates to the Terms of Reference for Honorary Degrees Titles and Tributes Committee; and
- 2) APPROVE the addition of the Deputy Chancellor to the membership of Remuneration Committee of Council Terms of Reference, as per report #21097.

For Approval

Presented by Gabrielle Price



Authority	COUNCIL OPEN	Date	25 February 2021
Report Ref	#21097	Item No	5.2
Proposer	Gabrielle Price, Director Governance and University Secretary		
Developed with			
Authorised by	Mr James Harris, UNE Chancellor		

#21097 – Minor Updates Terms of Reference for select Council Committees

Report Purpose & Origin

Purpose	To provide the Council with an opportunity to review proposed amendments to the Terms of Reference for select Council Committees.
Origin	New item
Governance focus	Council Policy : Establish policies and procedural principles for the University consistent with legal requirements and community expectations. TEQSA Act 2011 Ref: 6. Governance and Accountability: 6.1.3b (Corporate Governance).
Accountability	UNE Council

Resolution

Council is asked to:

- 1) APPROVE the administrative updates to the Terms of Reference for Honorary Degrees Titles and Tributes Committee; and
- 2) APPROVE the addition of the Deputy Chancellor to the membership of Remuneration Committee of Council Terms of Reference, as per report #21097.

Executive Summary

A change to the membership of the Remuneration Committee of Council, to include the Deputy Chancellor as a member was discussed in 2020 following the Council Committee elections. This is now proposed for adoption by the Council.

As a result of organisational structure/title changes two minor amendments within the Honorary Degrees Titles and Tributes Committee terms of reference are also proposed membership for Council approval.

A more detailed review of Council Committee terms of reference is expected following Council and Council Committee reviews later this year.



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<i>Report title</i>	Minor Updates Terms of Reference for select Council Committees	<i>Report Ref</i>	#21097

Key Information

A. Remuneration Committee of Council

A change to membership of the Remuneration Committee of Council [Terms of Reference](#) – to include Deputy Chancellor is proposed (change indicated in red below):

Membership

(4) The members of the Committee are as follows:

- a. Chancellor;*
- b. Deputy Chancellor;*
- c. Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer;*
- d. Chair of Finance Committee;*
- e. Two Lay members elected by and from the Council;*
- f. Up to two Lay non-Council persons with appropriate expertise and experience may be co-opted to the Committee, provided they are elected onto the Committee by the Council upon the recommendation of the Committee.; and*
- g. Up to two Lay Council members may be co-opted from Council to the Committee by the Chair in order to meet the Committee's stated gender representation objectives.*

B. Honorary Degrees Titles and Tributes Committee

Updates to Honorary Degrees Titles and Tributes Committee [Terms of Reference](#) are proposed as follows:

- Membership references to 'Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor ex officio (or his or her nominee)' to be changed to 'Deputy Vice-Chancellor (or nominee)'
- References to 'Chief Legal and Governance Officer and/or nominee' to be changed to 'University Secretary (or nominee)'.

Future Fit Alignment

Goal 1: Crafting, adapting and supporting learning journeys that are distinctive in their accessibility and flexibility.

Goal 2: Creating and sharing knowledge to make a difference locally, regionally and globally.

Goal 3: Committing to environmental, social and financial resilience for the University, our staff, our students and our communities.

5.3. UNE Council WHS - Due Diligence Obligations #21102

Council is asked to NOTE the UNE Council WHS - Due Diligence Obligations, report #21102.

For Noting

Presented by Peter Creamer



Authority	COUNCIL OPEN	Date	25 February 2021
Report Ref	#21102	Item No	5.3
Proposer	Professor Peter Creamer, Chief Operating Officer		
Developed with	Ms Diana Chambers, Work Health and Safety Manager		
Authorised by	Mr James Harris, UNE Chancellor		

#21102 – UNE Council WHS - Due Diligence Obligations

Report Purpose & Origin

Purpose	To provide the Council with details on WHS Due Diligence Obligations.
Origin	Scheduled item
Governance focus	<p>Council Policy: Oversee and monitor risk management and risk assessment across the University. Approve and monitor systems of control and accountability for the University.</p> <p>TEQSA Act 2011 Ref: 6. Governance and Accountability: 6.1.4 (Corporate Governance), 6.2.1a,e (Corporate Monitoring and Accountability).</p>
Accountability	UNE Council

Resolution

Council is asked to NOTE the UNE Council WHS - Due Diligence Obligations, report #21102.

Executive Summary

Due Diligence obligations require an Officer of a Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU) – The University of New England - to take reasonable steps:

1. To acquire and keep up to date knowledge of work health and safety matters
2. Gain an understanding of the nature of the operations of the University and the hazards and risks associated with those operations
3. Ensure appropriate resources and processes are undertaken to eliminate and minimize risks to health and safety as a result of the University's operations
4. Ensure there are appropriate processes for receiving and considering information regarding incidents, hazards, risks and responding in a timely way to that information
5. Ensure there are processes for complying with any WHS duty or obligation
6. To verify the provision and use of resources and processes related to in element three and five

WHS priorities since the last reporting period have continued to focus on the University's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and supporting on-campus operations in a COVID safe way. Activity on-campus is continuing to gather momentum and the WHS team is actively engaged with internal and external stakeholders to support requests for learning, student and community related activity.



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<i>Report title</i>	UNE Council WHS - Due Diligence Obligations	<i>Report Ref</i>	#21102

The reduced campus based in 2020 activity has contributed to a lower WHS incident rate and reduced Workers Compensations claims experience this period. However, the University has had two incidents requiring involvement of Safework NSW.

Key Information

Incidents

There have been four notifiable incidents to SafeWork NSW since 1 July 2020.

Vegetation incident resulting in fatality

Unfortunately, one involved the fatality of a public Sport UNE member while leaving the venue in an extreme storm event when a tree branch struck his vehicle. Subsequent Police and Safework NSW investigations did not incur liability for UNE and the University's risk-based tree management program was considered appropriate.

Mental Health

One related to an incident of attempted self-harm by a college resident which necessitated medical assistance. The resident had pre-existing support and was discharged with a continuing care plan.

Electrical incidents

There were two separate incidents related to staff members receiving an electric shock. These two incidents have been resolved to address immediate risks. Investigations have been completed internally and remedial actions are in the course of implementation. SafeWork NSW attended the University for the latter incident and determined no further action subject to periodic reporting against the remedial actions. Investigations have been completed internally and remedial actions are in the course of implementation. The WHS Management Committee will monitor remedial actions until complete.

There has been one COVID-19 related incident reported for potential exposure since the last report. COVID-19 response plans were implemented and it was confirmed through testing that exposure had not occurred.

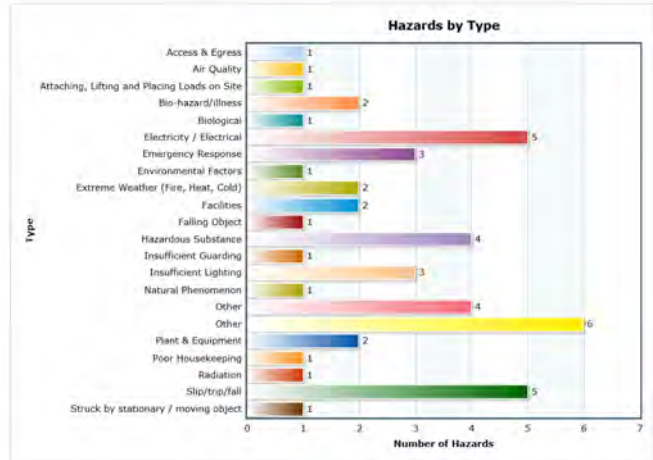
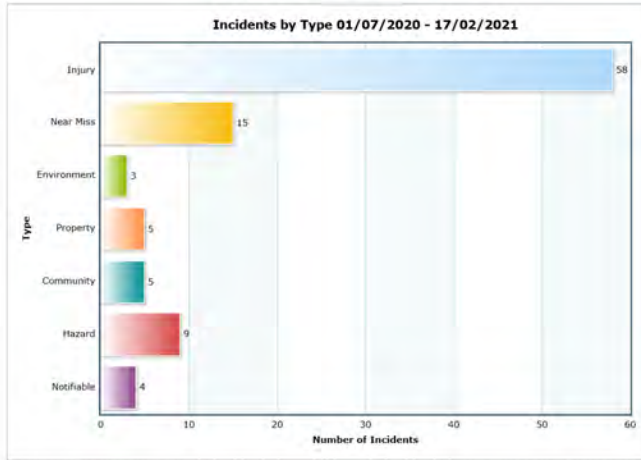
The Skytrust incident and hazard reporting experience has been different in 2020/ 21 than it was in 2019/ 20. For similar periods (01 July-17 February), the figures are as follows:

- Incidents (01 July 2019-17 February 2020) = 104
- Incidents (01 July 2020-17 February 2021) = 80

It is anticipated the reduction is due to less campus-based activity associated with COVID-19 restrictions and the wellbeing benefits of the staff leave purchase program. There have been 80 incidents reported since 1 July 2020. The graph below shows incident reporting at 99, however, several incidents are reported with more than one incident category type. The data relating to incidents and hazards in this report has been generated directly from SkyTrust.



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Hazards

The number of hazards reported has increased and may be due to increased situational awareness and circumstances brought about by a phased return to campus after COVID-19 restrictions. Increased hazard reporting can be considered as desirable in so far as it supports a more proactive approach to hazard identification and resolution:

- Hazards (01 July 2019-17 February 2020) = 38
- Hazards (01 July 2020-17 February 2021) = 49

For the period 1 July 2020 – 17 February 2021, 49 hazards were reported. Skytrust assists in the tracking and reporting of day to day hazards identified by staff and students.

Specific, targeted safety awareness campaigns communicated by the WHS team may also temporarily increase the reporting of certain types of hazard. This could explain, for example, the 10 hazards in the “other” category.

Investigation and controlling the risk of hazards are monitored by the WHS team in People and Culture (P&C) and reported through to the Work Health and Safety Management Group and Work Health and Safety Committee.

Return to Campus Update

The WHS team remains heavily invested in supporting an operational return to campus since the last reporting period. The lead up to Trimester 1 has observed an increase in teaching, research and event activities involving staff, students and community organisations from a wide range of sectors.

With increasing campus-based activity – transmission risk of COVID-19 transmission is being managed through a risk assessment process. Resources and tools to support COVID-Safe conditions continue to be adapted and reviewed in accordance with public health advice and the evolving needs of stakeholders.

Three task-specific COVID-19 Return to Campus risk assessments have been developed for teaching, events and general bookings. Any room bookings with over 20 people are required to complete a risk assessment. This month, the WHS/RTC team has approved 31 risk assessments, and is assisting with progression of an additional 38 risk assessments, with further bookings anticipated.

COVID-19 close contact locations are being continuously monitored to ensure responsiveness to outbreaks and movement restrictions/isolation requirements are observed.



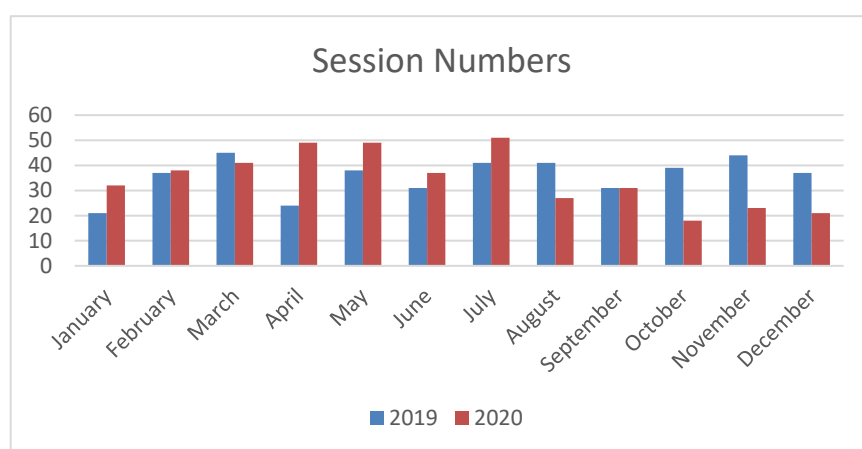
<i>Authority</i>	COUNCIL OPEN	<i>Date</i>	25 February 2021
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A pre-requisite for attendance on campus requires successful completion of a COVID-19 induction. Induction material has been revised to reflect current operating conditions.

Staff and Students	Residential Students	Contractors and Visitors
3,461	1,124	972

Employee Assistance Program

In 2020 there was an increase in staff accessing the Employee Assistance Program in the second quarter, this is assumed to be in response to the prolonged time spent responding to COVID-19 restrictions.



Wellbeing Update

UNE's Health and Wellbeing Coordinator has had a busy start to the year kick-starting initiatives across campus. Staff will be offered free Active Programs on campus in 2021 including yoga, Pilates and body balance. Individual work areas are also participating in initiatives including Estate and Built Environment (EBE) and Environmental and Rural Science.

Compliance Update

There is continued activity to ensure as far as practicable that UNE is meeting the required level of compliance under Work Health and Safety legislative obligations. Activities include:

- Monitoring of incidents and hazards through Skytrust and implementing processes to ensure appropriate corrective action is taken where required. The subscription to the Skytrust platform has been renewed for 2021.
- The consultation framework has continued with regular meetings of the Committees for BioSafety, Radiation Safety, Hazardous Substances and Health and Safety; with meetings undertaken in remote working format.
- Reporting and investigating Notifiable Incidents.
- Re-alignment and training of emergency warden, first aiders and return to campus coordinators following the Time-for Change program.
- On-line emergency warden training with practical training resuming in 2021
- A requirement for each School and Directorate to complete Annual Health and Safety Plans has been launched for the 2021 reporting period.



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- Filling the Manager Work Health and Safety position with a permanent appointee.
- Due Diligence Training for positions considered officers is planned for second quarter 2021.
- The Emergency Management Coordinator position is undergoing recruitment with temporary resourcing allocated to support continued servicing of essential WHS requirements and COVID-19 risk management.

Future Fit Alignment	Contribution of this initiative
<input type="checkbox"/> Goal 1: Crafting, adapting and supporting learning journeys that are distinctive in their accessibility and flexibility.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Goal 2: Creating and sharing knowledge to make a difference locally, regionally and globally.	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Goal 3: Committing to environmental, social and financial resilience for the University, our staff, our students and our communities.	This report is aligned to Future Fit Strategy to maintain our environmental, social and financial resilience considering the needs of our stakeholders and to inform our execution of Due Diligence.

Financials	
Item	Estimate
Cost to develop and implement project	
Annual cost to maintain	<p>The WHS Management Committee consisting of Senior Executive and Senior Managers holds bi-monthly meetings to oversee and prioritise work health and safety expenditure.</p> <p>WHS resourcing is distributed across several directorates to ensure resourcing of the digital platform, asset compliance, WHS related roles.</p>
Estimated annual cost savings	
Estimated additional annual revenue	
In Budget/requires Budget allocation	

6. * GENERAL BUSINESS

7. MEETING FINALISATION

7.1. * Next Meeting and Close

The next Council meeting is scheduled for
Friday, 21 May 2021.

Presented by James Harris