

WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY



ACADEMIC SENATE

Meeting 23/05 of the Academic Senate, Western Sydney University was held on Friday, 13 October 2023 at, 9:30AM, at, Parramatta South Campus, Boardroom 1 (PS-EB.2.02) and on Zoom.

Present:

Professor Robert Mailhammer, Chair of Academic Senate
Professor Sarah Zhang, Deputy Chair of Academic Senate
Professor Janice Aldrich-Wright, Vice-Chancellor's Nominee
Dr David Arness, School of Psychology (Level A, B or C) (exited 12:05pm)
Dr Evan Atlantis, School of Health Sciences (Level A, B or C) (exited 12:05pm)
Professor Clive Baldock, Dean, Graduate Research School and Researcher Development
Mr Glenn Campbell, Chief Executive Officer, The College
Dr Ritesh Chimoriya, Postgraduate Student Representative
Dr Evan Crawford, School of Computer, Data and Mathematical Sciences (Level A, B or C)
Associate Professor Ann Dadich, School of Business (Level D, E)
Professor Kevin Dunn, Pro Vice-Chancellor Research
Ms Jess Gleeson, Director, Data Integrity, Quality and Operations
Dr Erika Gyengesi, Senior Lecturer, School of Medicine (Level A, B or C)
Associate Professor Ana Hol, School of Computer, Data and Mathematical Sciences (Level D, E)
Ms Leanne Hunt, School of Nursing and Midwifery (Level A, B or C)
Dr Ranjith Liyanapathirana, School of Engineering, Design and Built Environment (Level A, B or C)
Professor Samantha Liyanapathirana, School of Engineering, Design and Built Environment (Level D, E)
Dr Erin Mackenzie, School of Education (Level A, B or C)
Professor Amir Mahmood, Dean, School of Business
Professor Rod McClure, Dean, School of Medicine
Professor Tanya Meade, Dean, School of Psychology (exited at 11am)
Associate Professor Jennifer Mensch, School of Humanities and Communication Arts (Level D, E)
Professor Graciela Metternicht, Dean, School of Science (exited at 12:21pm)
Dr Nicolene Murdoch, Pro Vice-Chancellor Educational Partnerships and Quality
Professor Susan Page, Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Education
Dr Alexie Papanicolaou, Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment, Academic Staff Member representing the University Research Institutes
Dr Ben Perry, School of Science (Level A, B or C)
Professor Clare Pollock, Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost
Professor Alphaia Possamai-Inesedy, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Engagement and Advancement
Dr Margarite Poulos, School of Humanities and Communication Arts (Level A, B or C)
Mx Vicky-Rae Reed, Disability Matters Student Representative
Dr Ana Rodas, School of Social Sciences (Level A, B or C)
Ms Vidushi Sethi, International Student Representative
Ms Elen Seymour, Interim Dean, School of Law
Ms Payal Shah, Postgraduate Student Representative
Professor Michele Simons, Dean, School of Education
Associate Professor Liesel Spencer, School of Law (Level D or E)

Professor Brian Stout, Pro Vice-Chancellor Humanities, Arts and Social Science Cluster and Dean, School of Social Sciences
Dr Ayda Succarie, School of Business (Level A, B or C)
Associate Professor Corrinne Sullivan, School of Education (Level D, E)
Professor Deborah Sweeney, Deputy Vice-Chancellor & Vice President, Research, Enterprise & International
Professor Vivian Tam, Interim Dean, School of Engineering, Design and Built Environment
Professor Linda Taylor, Pro Vice-Chancellor, International
Associate Professor Jacqueline Ullman, School of Education (Level D, E)
Professor Anna Williams, School of Nursing and Midwifery (Level D, E)

Apologies:

Professor Barney Glover AO, Vice-Chancellor, and President
Professor Simon Barrie, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic and Vice-President, Academic
Professor Si Bedford, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Learning Futures
Dr Maria Bhatti, School of Law (Level A, B or C)
Professor Dennis Chang, Director, Research Institute representing the University's Research Institutes
Professor Miroslav Filipovic, School of Science (Level D, E)
Professor Deborah Hatcher, Dean, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Ms Fiona Salisbury, Executive Director, Library Services
Ms Tiffany Sharpe, Indigenous Australian Student Representative
Professor Simeon Simoff, Pro Vice-Chancellor STEM and Dean, School of Computer, Data and Mathematical Sciences
Professor Michelle Trudgett, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership

Absent:

Associate Professor Amit Arora, School of Health Sciences (Level D, E)
Professor Gregory Kolt, Dean, School of Health Sciences
Professor Andy Marks, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Strategy, Government and Alliances
Professor Matt McGuire, Dean, School of Humanities and Communication Arts
Professor Neil Merrett, School of Medicine (Level D, E)
Ms Sirjan Sidhu, Undergraduate Student Representative
Associate Professor Gabrielle Weidemann, School of Psychology (Level D, E)

In attendance:

Ms Sophie Buck, Director, Office of Governance Services
Ms Shubha Devadasen, Associate Director, Office of Governance Services
Ms Terri Mears, Manager, Disability Service (exited 10:18am)
Ms Georgia Vasiliadis, Senior Governance Officer
Emeritus Professor Paul Wormell, Interim Chair, TEQSA Steering Group

CONFIRMED MINUTES

1. PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1.1 INTRODUCTION, WELCOME, AND APOLOGIES

The Chair of Academic Senate, Professor Robert Mailhammer, formally opened the meeting at 9:30am by acknowledging the traditional custodians of the land, and welcoming members and attendees.

The Chair made a specific mention to:

Professor Rod McClure, new Dean of the School of Medicine.

On behalf of the Deputy Chair and himself, the Chair expressed his thanks to the Senate members for their continued support and their re-election for another term as Chair and Deputy Chair, enabling them to continue their work in service of the University.

The Academic Senate observed a minute's silence in remembrance of Dr Kate Liddell who was a much valued and highly respected member of the Academic Division.

1.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were requested to declare any interests in relation to the items on this agenda or this Committee more broadly. They were directed to the [Conflict of Interest Policy](#) and the [Compliance Program Unit webpage](#) for further information regarding declarations of interest.

Members were reminded that they should declare any interests arising during this meeting.

No Declarations of interest were made.

1.3 STARRING OF ITEMS

Apart from procedural items, items already starred on the agenda were:

- Item 2.1 – Academic Integration Plans and Disability Governance
- Item 3.1 – Chair's Report
- Item 3.2 – Vice Chancellor's Report
- Item 3.4 – TEQSA Steering Group Update
- Item 3.5 – External Review of Senate
- Item 3.6 – Update from Schools
- Item 3.7.1 - Enablers and Barriers to Improving Student Experience
- Item 3.8 – Academic Senate Policy Committee Update & Policy Review

The following items were additionally starred:

- Item 4.2 Academic Planning and Curriculum Approvals Committee update
- Item 4.3 Senate Education Committee
- Item 4.6 Research Studies Committee

It was resolved (AS 23/05:01):

That the documents for all unstarred agenda items are noted and, except where alternative action is noted as appropriate, all recommendations contained in those items are endorsed.

1.4 ORDER OF BUSINESS

No rearrangement of the order of business was requested.

1.5 OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was nominated for this meeting.

1.6 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on Friday, 11 August 2023, (meeting 23/04) were attached for confirmation. Some editorial mistakes (no content changes) were noted.

It was resolved (AS 23/05:02):

The unconfirmed minutes of the scheduled meeting of the Academic Senate held on Friday, 11 August 2023, (meeting 23/04), upon amendment of the editorial changes, are confirmed as an accurate record.

1.7 ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

To assist members with monitoring and controlling the work of the Committee, the current action sheet (incorporating items arising from previous meetings) was attached.

Members were requested to report on any developments in relation to the items.

Action: 23/04:3.3 Student's Report

Update: Item 2.1

Action: 23/04:3.5 Academic Literacy Strategy

Update: Fiona Salisbury sent her apologies for this meeting and is to provide an update at the December meeting of Academic Senate.

Action: 23/04:3.6 Transnational Education

Update: Dr Nicolene Murdoch to provide update when available to clarify the academic governance of offshore campuses, such as the new Western Sydney University campus in Surabaya, Indonesia, and how these intersect with the academic governance structures in general. Clarification was provided to Senate members that the University has an existing structure of academic governance for offshore campuses, and that Dr Murdoch would clarify this structure as an update for Senate. Update to be provided at the first meeting of Senate in 2024.

Action: 23/02:3.1 Chair's Report – Deputy Chair APCAC

Update: It was agreed to hold this item over until the new Senate is constituted, at the first meeting of Senate in 2024.

Action: 23/02:3.7 Learning Guide Data

Update: Update from Ms Jess Gleeson, Director, DIQO

The aim of this project had been to monitor when Learning Guides are available to ensure policy compliance. The Spring 2023 Learning Guide data was discussed at the last meeting of the Senate Education Committee. Ms Gleeson acknowledged the hard work of Schools and the need to obtain updates on regular publication of learning guides, which would be available to Deputy Deans, with annual reporting to Senate. Consequently, this item was closed. In this connection, it was noted that in the initial discussions of this topic earlier this year, one of the recommendations had been to form a Task and Finish Group to review the content of Learning Guides feeding into a review of the Curriculum Publications Procedures. The Chair of that Group reported that it was wrapping up with a final report to be discussed at the Senate Education Committee later this year.

Action: 23/01:4.6 MRes Scholarship Metrics

Update: Update to be provided at December meeting. Professor Baldock confirmed that this is on track for an update in December.

Action: 22/04:3.2 GRS Review

Update: Incorporated in the RSC report. The Chair suggested that Professor Clive Baldock provide a periodic GRS update as part of the Update from Schools item. The Senate members agreed with this recommendation. This item was closed.

Action: 22/02:3.1 SMS Update

Update: Update to be provided at the December meeting of Academic Senate.

2. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

2.1 ACADEMIC INTEGRATION PLANS AND DISABILITY GOVERNANCE

The student representing disability matters reported on their meetings with the Executive Director, Equity, Safety and Wellbeing, the Manager, Disability Support, the Disability Coordinator (School of Computing, Data and Mathematical Sciences) and the Chair of Academic Senate to address the issues raised in the paper presented at the last meeting of Academic Senate. The paper made four recommendations.

1. Meeting of disabilities coordinators to include a student representation where appropriate.
2. Annual SAC reports to include an item on disability matters.
3. Provide training for staff regarding the implementation of AIPs.
4. WesternNow - disability related services to be included in the WesternNow portal.

The report and recommendations were discussed by the committee. The Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor pointed out that mandating training was a management decision, and that the incorporation of Disability Services into WesternNow required a discussion in a greater context of what services should be prioritised. Professor Pollock suggested that Senate should be updated about existing training available to staff and about the Enterprise Management System project. Inconsistencies in the implementation of AIPs across Schools were also discussed by the committee, and there was a question about reimbursement of students. The answer was that student on Senate committees receive a modest stipend. Associate Professor Alexie Papanicolaou pointed out that, while the Academic Senate might not be best placed to design training, accountability of how students with disabilities are supported is necessary, and he wondered how compliance was monitored. In response, it was pointed out that compliance was reported through School Academic Committees (SAC), though this may be imperfect as these issues may not be raised at SAC. The Dean, School of Education noted that program teams had a holistic view of student and their progress, and an understanding when adjustments are made. They were therefore best placed to feed into the annual SAC reports. She also said in general adjustments vary depending on the task and they must be made *in situ*. In Education, students must complete an external test, but generally Schools have little control over the implementation of AIPs. The Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor drew attention to the fact that students can contact the Complaints Resolution Unit or Equity and Diversity to address a lack of sufficient AIP implementation. Associate Professor Papanicolaou pointed out that such a resolution is onerous for the student. Mx Reed added that this would not contribute to a timely solution of problems, which was one of the problems mentioned in the student point, and which was connected to the considerable number human touch points in the system.

Academic Senate endorsed the implementation of the first two recommendations and recommended that the Executive Director, Equity, Safety and Wellbeing, Disability Services and the Disability Coordinators develop a suitable process to identify an appropriate form of student representation with lived disability experience. Further, it

was decided that annual SAC reports must explicitly report on disability student matters. In relation to recommendations 3 and 4 the following two actions were recommended.

New Action 23/05: 2.1

Ms Ellen Brackenreg, Executive Director, Equity, Safety and Wellbeing, to report back to Senate with an overview of currently available training on the implementation of Academic Integration Plans at the next meeting of Senate or when available.

New Action 23/05: 2.1

The Chair of Academic Senate to contact Mr Peter Tow, Executive Director, Office of Strategic Projects Implementation and Improvement, to discuss on the Enterprise Management System and its interpretation with a discussion of feasibility and timing of adding Disability Services to WesternNow at a future Senate meeting.

The original action item was closed.

3. GENERAL BUSINESS

3.1 CHAIR'S REPORT

A written report from the Chair covering activities undertaken on behalf of the Senate since 11 August 2023 had been circulated. The Chair's report to the 4 October 2023 meeting of the Board of Trustees, had been appended to the Chair's report.

The Chair noted that he took the reports as being read, and highlighted two main points, that of governance and academic risk.

Academic governance

The Chair pointed out that a functioning system of independent academic governance was essential for all higher education providers. It is required by the Higher Education Standards Framework and by TEQSA. The Chair informed the committee that the submission of the Australian Chairs of Academic Boards and Senates (OzCABS) to the Accord Panel asked for an explicit acknowledgement of this in the Accord Panel's final report.

Academic risk

The Chair highlighted that Academic Boards/Senates play a key role in monitoring the management of academic risk, noting that the remit had expanded considerably in the latest TEQSA Guidance note to include any student risk, especially also risks to student wellbeing. He said that academic risk had been a topic at the last meeting of CoCABS. One outcome of the discussion had been that universities need to ensure that Academic Boards and Senates have clear line of sight on the relevant risks and that they have mature monitoring systems. This includes especially an academic risk register and processes to monitor relevant risks. The Chair mentioned that monitoring academic risk management would be a focus for 2024, and it would have to be explored whether the changes to the TEQSA Guidance Note on Academic Governance would require a change in the Academic Governance Policy.

3.2 VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

The Vice-Chancellor's Report had been appended. Professor Clare Pollock, Acting Vice-Chancellor spoke to this report on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor, who had sent

his apologies due to a concurrent engagement as Australia's government representative in a DFAT review of the University of the South Pacific.

Professor Pollock advised Senate members that she would take the report as read. She mentioned that the Board of Trustees had supported the budget, which had been designed to address the challenges that the University and the sector had been facing. The Senior Deputy-Vice-Chancellor also pointed to the Accord as global constraint, and that the final report of the Accord panel is scheduled for December. The changing landscape of education more broadly needed to be factored into the review of the Strategic Plan. She said the Board of Trustees had been supportive of a refresh of the Strategic Plan with a new version to emerge later in 2024. Professor Pollock also informed the Academic Senate that the Board of Trustees had given final approval to open the Surabaya Campus in Indonesia, and she acknowledged everyone involved under the leadership of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research, Enterprise and International), Professor Deborah Sweeney.

The Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor also commented on the distressing news coming from Gaza and Israel. She said this was a difficult time for communities. The University had communicated that discussions must be respectful. Academic freedom must be protected, but hate speech and racism would not be tolerated, and that students and staff had to be protected. She urged any staff witnessing disrespectful behaviour, to report these issues to the senior executive and security. In relation to the referendum on an Indigenous Voice to Parliament, Professor Pollock said racism exists in Australia and affected the Indigenous community especially. She emphasised that regardless of the outcome of the referendum, Indigenous colleagues and students needed support. The Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor pointed to events planned for the following week and encouraged all to participate.

Associate Professor Jennifer Mensch asked Professor Pollock to elaborate on the way the Accord will affect Western financially. The Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor explained that one idea that the Accord panel had been a funding model that would provide universities with a multi-year funding envelope as block-funding. Funding would be tailored to the mission and would then also comprise support services, which were not covered under the current funding model. Such a model would also give universities a more long-term financial perspective and allow universities to position themselves with respect their special needs and obtain funding for these, for example, skills needs or microcredentials.

Associate Professor Papanicolaou questioned whether the access to media, especially newspaper subscription available to students through the University was balanced enough to support the development of a well-informed opinion. He referred to the most recent all-staff webinar, where Mr Angelo Kourtis, Vice-President, People and Advancement said he would investigate this matter. The Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor took the question on notice and said she would get back to Senate on this matter.

New Action 23/05: 3.2

The Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor to provide an update regarding the diversity of the University newspaper subscription at a future Senate meeting.

3.3 STUDENT REPORT

No student reports had been submitted to this meeting.

3.4 TEQSA STEERING COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Interim Chair of the TEQSA Steering Group, Emeritus Professor Paul Wormell, updated the Senate on the progress towards preparing the University for the TEQSA renewal scheduled for 2025. Emeritus Professor Wormell acknowledged the late Dr Kate Liddell's and her significant academic committee and policy work, as well as liaison with TEQSA.

Professor Wormell pointed out that the University was subject to the Commonwealth's TEQSA Act. To be recognised and registered as an Australian University, it must continue to meet the national Higher Education Standards Framework under TEQSA's oversight and regulation. He said that the Framework was comprehensive, and covered almost everything the University does, including finances, governance, teaching, research, research training and student wellbeing.

The Interim Chair explained that the University was keen to be renewed unconditionally for another seven years. He said the application is due on 25 May 2025. Professor Wormell also remarked that TEQSA expected the University to meet all the standards, although there were some key ones that it focused on, following a core and extension model. The TEQSA Steering Group was using the successful process from 2018 as guide. The Steering Group consisted of senior officers from a range of major portfolios, although it would contact all portfolios directly as part of the evidence mapping and assurance. Professor Wormell pointed to the strategic monitoring role of the Steering Group to ensure that all evidence is gathered and said that the University was also collaborating with other universities who are also coming due for renewal for any feedback they are getting from TEQSA.

The Interim Chair further advised that the revised TEQSA Guidance Notes were informing the Group's mapping and assurance work, and that TEQSA regularly writes to the University about areas of current and emerging concern. The Steering Group also was also watching the outcomes of the Universities Accord with particular interest. Benchmarking with the IRU TEQSA Quality and Standards Group, was also especially informative with respect to the processes that other universities use.

Emeritus Professor Paul Wormell highlighted the following key points:

- This is an important all-of-institution process.
- Academic Senate and its Standing Committees play crucial roles and evidence includes the minutes.
- Evidence is based on regular processes and reporting, and there needs to be continual improvement in these. TEQSA is alert for *patterns of inaction*, thus the importance of the capacity of universities to self-regulate, close loops and drive quality improvement.
- There is a need to be flexible to accommodate changing requirements.

The Interim Chair informed Senate that the Steering Group was contributing to an evidence map to address the different domains of the Standards Framework, with key staff, accountabilities, and links to evidence sources. It was identifying focus groups to interrogate evidence, identify gaps and share good practices. Some Senate members would be contacted to contribute to this work. The Steering Group would work closely with the incoming Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Education, Professor Maryanne Dever.

Professor Alphia Possamai-Inesedy commented that she was thankful that Emeritus Professor Wormell was steering the work and guiding the University through reaccreditation.

3.5 EXTERNAL REVIEW OF SENATE

Ms Sophie Buck, Director, Governance Services spoke to this paper, advising Committee members that the first and only review of Senate had been completed in June 2019. The normal review cycle was 7 years, which would be June 2026. However, it had been proposed to review Academic Senate earlier and at the same time as the Board of Trustees. Ms Buck advised that benchmarking had shown a variety of approaches. Informed by discussions with the Chair of Academic Senate, the paper recommended that the person who would conduct the review should have a good understanding of academic boards/senates and academic governance in general, and that the external review should take place in second half of 2024. She said that a former Chair of Academic Board/Senate would generally have appropriate experience in these areas. The paper also included recommendations, commendations, and affirmations from the last review. There were 20 recommendations. 18 recommendations were implemented, reasons were provided for not implementing two (2) of the recommendations, and these are noted in the paper.

It was resolved (AS 23/05:03):

That Academic Senate endorsed the proposal to conduct an external review of Senate in 2024, to be held in conjunction with the external review of the Board of Trustees. It was further resolved that the chosen reviewer or review panel have appropriate experience in Academic Governance.

3.6 UPDATE FROM SCHOOLS

3.6.1 SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY

Due to an urgent matter, this item was rescheduled until the following meeting of Academic Senate.

3.6.2 SCHOOL OF SCIENCE

The Dean of the School of Science, Professor Graciela Metternicht, highlighted that her update would include some points on Teaching and Learning (T&L), the initiative on transnational education and retention strategy. She informed the Senate on a community of practice of T&L as a forum where academics meet monthly to share good practices. Practicum 1 & 2, had been introduced, as new Work-Integrated-Learning subjects for all students. Moreover, a new pathway of Science/Advanced Medical Science had been developed as a fast-track into the Master of Research degree. Professor Metternicht also said that the School's retention strategy was focusing on educating academics on the drivers and the validation of retention (culture, different campuses) with a strong commitment by the School. Plans for 2024 included an evaluation of practical skills and a review of assessments, science for sustainability, a stronger partnership with TAFE and Destination College, and a stronger presence in India and close collaboration with HIE, focusing on food science and nutrition. The School was also working closely with Corey Aden Tutt OAM, an Aboriginal Australian STEM professional, and the founder of *DeadlyScience*, an initiative that provides STEM resources to remote schools throughout Australia, aiming at building research impact. Professor Metternicht thanked Professor Trudgett for supporting this appointment.

3.6.3 SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Professor Brian Stout noted that there had been a change in staff profile since being a single school due to new appointments, especially through the decasualisation process. The School was ensuring that there is mentoring and support, and research opportunities for these staff. Professor Stout also pointed out that 2022 had been a very successful year of research impact with several important outcomes as a result of large grants. He informed the Senate that Social Sciences was an international school, where there had been a sudden increase in international recruitment in areas such as art therapy and cyber security. The School had been focusing on the Pacific but that delivering the programs offshore, such as tourism in Vietnam was also in development. This had also opened other partnerships in Vietnam. One of the main challenges for the School was providing placements in social work, and Professor Stout commended the professional staff in sourcing the placements, in engaging with organisations and partners. He said it was important to have long lasting partnerships for the continuing success of these courses.

A committee member asked about collaboration between the School of Science and the School of Social Sciences. In response, Professors Metternich and Stout said that the alignment was more natural in postgraduate work, in science by coursework and environmental criminology.

There was a brief discussion on the suitability of the Bachelor of Advance Science as a model that could be used in other schools. One major advantage that was pointed to, was the creation of a HDR pipeline process starting at the undergraduate level. Dr Erika Gyengesi wondered whether students would have sufficient training for a PhD with only one year of postgraduate work and whether that would disadvantage them on the labour market. In response, Professor Aldrich-Wright pointed out that this issue had been considered in the conception of the course, and that potential students were selected carefully based on merit and trained specifically to compensate for the compressed timeline. It was noted that there were other universities offering a one-year masters, such as the University of Sydney, and that this was an opportunity for widening participation and offering research opportunities to capable students.

3.7 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE/HOT TOPICS

3.7.1 ENABLERS AND BARRIERS TO IMPROVING STUDENT EXPERIENCE AT WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY

Dr Evan Atlantis spoke to the paper. He advised Senate that the context for this paper was a shared vision for Western to be ranked highly for educational experience and the desire to increase ranking in the quality of teaching. Dr Atlantis highlighted that different cohorts responded differentially, that student satisfaction also correlated with success and the learning experience, that international students would need more support, especially in terms of English, and that one key factor of quality of a positive experience was a positive student: staff ratio. The question that the paper posed was: “How can the university increase the teaching quality?”

The Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic, Dr Nicolene Murdoch, responded to this paper and advised Senate of the Engaged Teaching Project a new project, whose aim was to increase teaching quality. Speaking on behalf of Professor Simon Bedford and Learning Futures, she said that this project was one of the six Transformation Projects, with three streams of work:

1. Subject Teaching Engagement & Pedagogy Standards (STEPS)
2. The Learning Classroom
3. Western Teaching Culture

Dr Murdoch asserted that this project would make changes and improvements in the Schools.

New Action 23/05: 3.7.1

Update on the Engaged Teaching Project in the first quarter of 2024.

Associate Professor Mensch asked about the relation between class size and quality, saying that students succeeded in smaller classes and that many institutions overseas often had smaller classes. She also pointed out large classes were particularly hard on casual staff.

Professor Pollock emphasised this should not be taken as a criticism of staff. There had been a decline in the number of domestic students and in some areas of study. She asserted that the quality of education and teaching was not where we should be, and that it was necessary to increase support, especially for casual staff in relation to professional development.

Dr Atlantis concurred that the key message was not intended to criticise staff, but rather to help staff and to see how best to support staff to develop their teaching and get professional development.

The Dean, School of Education noted that the debate around class size had been a constant in the education sector. Professor Simons emphasised the role of the curriculum and staff's understanding of it. In the School a focus had been placed on program logic, and casual staff are thoroughly familiarised with it. She also pointed out that another key issue was the science of learning, particularly dealing with diverse cohorts, and she called for a revision of the Foundations of University Teaching and Learning program.

A Committee member also pointed out that staff may have formal teaching qualification, but that many staff were primarily trained as researchers.

3.8 ACADEMIC SENATE POLICY COMMITTEE UPDATE & POLICY REVIEW

3.8.1 ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Academic Senate Policy Committee update report was appended. Professor Clare Pollock, Chair of the Academic Senate Policy Committee, spoke to this report and thanked the Deputy Chair, Professor Robert Mailhammer, for chairing the last meeting, and acknowledged Ms Sophie Buck, Director of the Office of Governance Services in leading the review of the University's policy framework. She advised the committee on the progress of this review. One key element was restructuring the framework as a head-policy framework with nested policies and procedures sitting under an overarching policy. The revised framework was available for comment at the DDS, and Professor Pollock encouraged members to read and comment on the proposed changes.

3.9 APPROVAL OF SCHOLARSHIPS

The Committee was requested to consider and approve the following new scholarships and to consider and approve the amendments to the following current scholarships.

New donor scholarship for approval

- Women in Industrial Scholarship for Women
- William Buck Indigenous Scholarship
- Greenplus Scholarship for Emerging Leaders in Protected Cropping

Amendments to Existing Scholarships

- Asylum Seeker Scholarship
- Neville Amy Scholarship (current name)
- Rotary Club of Carlingford Nursing Scholarship (current name)
- Sydney Zoo Indigenous Scholarship (current name)
- The Lynch Group Scholarship for Emerging Leaders in Horticulture (current name)
- Indigenous Smart Start Grant (current name)

It was resolved (AS 23/05:04):

That the Academic Senate approved the following proposed new donor-funded scholarships:

- Women in Industrial Scholarship for Women
 - William Buck Indigenous Scholarship
 - Greenplus Scholarship for Emerging Leaders in Protected Cropping
- And that the Academic Senate approved the amendments to the following current scholarships:*
- Asylum Seeker Scholarship
 - Neville Amy Scholarship (current name)
 - Rotary Club of Carlingford Nursing Scholarship (current name)
 - Sydney Zoo Indigenous Scholarship (current name)
 - The Lynch Group Scholarship for Emerging Leaders in Horticulture (current name)
 - Indigenous Smart Start Grant (current name)

3.10 POSTHUMOUS AWARDS

There were no posthumous awards for noting.

4. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

Some Chairs of the Senate Standing Committees provided brief updates of the key developments from their committee.

4.1 SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The report of the Senate Executive meeting (Meeting 23/03) was attached for noting by members, and consisted of the following item:

- Approval of the new University-funded scholarship, the *Vice-Chancellor's Diplomatic Scholarship*.

4.2 ACADEMIC PLANNING AND CURRICULUM APPROVALS COMMITTEE

The Report of the e-meeting of the Academic Planning and Curriculum Approvals Committee (APCAC) held on 1 August (meeting e23/01) and the reports for the e-meeting held on 1 August (meeting e23/01) and 6 September (meeting 23/06) and relevant annexures were appended. The Acting Chair of the Academic Planning and

Curriculum Approvals Committee, Dr Nicolene Murdoch, gave a brief update, advising Senate that the committee had completed three big pieces of work:

1. Examining rule waiver applications, noting the high volume of applications (21,000 in 2021 and 16,000 in 2022).
2. Curriculum portfolio – recognised that several programs have not had any enrolments for several years. Dr Murdoch noted thanks to Deans and Deputy Deans, as 153 programs and 324 subjects had been removed.
3. Program monitoring and curriculum monitoring cycle.

It was resolved (AS 23/05:05):

That Academic Senate noted the report and corresponding annexures of the Academic Planning and Courses Approvals Committee e-meeting held on 1 August 2023 (meeting e-23/01) and the meeting held on 6 September 2023 (meeting 23/06) and approved the recommendations contained therein.

4.3 SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The unconfirmed minutes of the Senate Education Committee held on 3 August 2023 (Meeting 23/03) were appended for noting by the Senate. Dr Ana Rodas, Deputy Chair of the Senate Education Committee, provided update, as the Chair, Professor Si Bedford, had sent his apologies. The progress of education strategies focused transition and retention. The Committee had also done data analytics work to identify “at risk” students to intervene pre-census by embedding stronger analytics in 2024, with the overall aim of having support in place when it is needed for these students. Dr Rodas also said that the block model trialled at The College had received good feedback regarding student satisfaction, transition and retention. Another focal point for the committee had been the Graduate Outcome Survey, which showed a moderate increase in employer satisfaction. Dr Rodas pointed out that one goal was building to increase the student’s confidence to make a better case for themselves when applying for jobs. An increase in the use of portfolio assessment would be able to assist with this process, as would be the idea of the proposed national skill passport. Another topic the committee engaged with is generative AI and its impact on assessment and academic integrity. Moreover, student satisfaction results would be funnelled back to the Schools through SACs to close the loop. Finally, Dr Rodas reported that the Learning Guide Task and Finish Group would be completing their work later this year.

4.4 SENATE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

The unconfirmed minutes of the Senate Assessment Committee held on 22 August 2023 (Meeting 23/04) were appended for noting by the Senate.

4.5 RESEARCH COMMITTEE

There were no minutes from the Research Committee available for noting.

4.6 RESEARCH STUDIES COMMITTEE

The confirmed minutes of the Research Studies Committee held on 11 July, and 8 August 2023 (Meeting 23/06 and Meeting 23/07) and the unconfirmed minutes of the Research Studies Committee held on 12 September 2023 (23/08) were appended for noting by the Senate. The Chair of the Research Studies Committee, Professor

Clive Baldock, gave a brief update on the activities of the Research Studies Committee and the operations of the Graduate Research School. The Change Proposal for the GRS was out for feedback, closing on Wednesday 18 October. Professor Baldock also informed the committee that the Commonwealth had increased the stipend for 2024 to \$32, 900, pointing out that this increase would decrease the number of available scholarships, which led to a brief discussion of the support for graduate research at Western. Associate Professor Papanicolaou asked about the technicalities of how top-ups in the case of externally funded PhD scholarships. It was agreed that this matter should be resolved outside the meeting and that Prof. Baldock would report back to Senate.

New Action 23/05: 4.6

Professor Clive Baldock to report back on the issue of top-ups in the case of externally funded PhD scholarships.

4.7 ACADEMIC SENATE POLICY COMMITTEE

The confirmed minutes of the Academic Senate Policy Committee (ASPC) held on 5 July 2023 (Meeting 23/03) and the unconfirmed minutes of the Academic Senate Policy Committee (ASPC) held on 6 September 2023 (Meeting 23/04) were appended.

4.8 THIRD PARTY PROVIDER COMMITTEE

The Third-Party Provider Committee (TPPC) met on 17 August 2023 (Meeting 23/04). The unconfirmed minutes were appended.

4.9 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled for 6 December 2023. Summaries and minutes of the Board of Trustees meetings are available on the University website at:

https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/about_uws/leadership/board_of_trustees

5. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business raised at the meeting. .

6. NEXT MEETING

It was advised that the next meeting of the Academic Senate Committee (23/06) would be on 8 December 2023 at 9:30am at Parramatta South Campus, Boardroom 1 (PS-EB.2.02).

The remaining meeting scheduled for 2023 is as follows:

- 23/06 – 8 December 2023

The meeting was formally closed at 12:25pm.