

WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY



ACADEMIC SENATE

Meeting 24/06 of the Academic Senate, Western Sydney University was held on Friday, 6 December 2024 at, 9:30AM, at, Parramatta South Campus and via zoom.

Present

Dr Tuki Attuquayefio, School of Psychology (Level A, B or C Representative)
Dr Maria Bhatti, School of Law (Level A, B or C Representative)
Mr Glenn Campbell, Chief Executive Officer, The College
Dr Evan Crawford, School of Computer, Data and Mathematical Sciences (Level A, B or C Representative)
Professor Maryanne Dever, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President, Education
Professor Gabrielle Drake, Interim Dean, School of Social Sciences (Acting)
Dr James Dunn, School of Medicine (Level A, B or C Representative)
Professor Kevin Dunn, Provost
Professor Cath Ellis, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Quality and Integrity
Distinguished Professor Brian Falzon, Dean, School of Engineering, Design and Built Environment
Professor Miroslav Filipović, School of Science (Level D, E Representative)
Professor Jane Frost, School of Nursing and Midwifery (Level D, E Representative)
Associate Professor Emilee Gilbert, School of Psychology (Level D, E Representative)
Ms Jess Gleeson, Director, Data Integrity, Quality and Operations (exited at 12pm)
Associate Professor Leeanne Heaton, Interim Dean, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Associate Professor Ana Hol, School of Computer, Data and Mathematical Sciences (Level D, E Representative)
Professor Bahman Javadi, Interim Dean, School of Computer, Data and Mathematical Sciences
Professor Kurt Langfeld, Dean, School of Computer, Data, and Mathematical Sciences
Dr Peter Lewis, School of Nursing and Midwifery (Level A, B or C Representative)
Dr Ranjith Liyanapathirana, School of Engineering, Design and Built Environment (Level A, B or C Representative)
Professor Robert Mailhammer, Chair of Academic Senate
Professor Rod McClure, Dean, School of Medicine (arrived 10:15am; exited 10:50am)
Associate Professor Jennifer Mensch, School of Humanities and Communication Arts (Level D, E Representative)
Professor Graciela Metternicht, Dean, School of Science
Dr Nicolene Murdoch, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Global Partnerships
Professor Susan Page, Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Education
Mr Prasad Perera, Higher Degree Research Candidate Student Representative
Dr Ben Perry, School of Science (Level A, B or C Representative)
Dr Margarite Poulos, School of Humanities and Communication Arts (Level A, B or C Representative)
Professor Catherine Renshaw, Dean, School of Law
Professor Tony Rossi, Acting Dean, School of Health Sciences
Ms Fiona Salisbury, Executive Director, Library Services
Dr Ata Samad, School of Business (Level A, B or C Representative)
Ms Tiffany Sharpe, Indigenous Australian Student Representative
Dr Erika Smith, School of Social Sciences (Level A, B or C Representative)
Professor Meg Smith, Interim Dean, School of Business

Dr Kylie Steel, School of Health (Level A, B or C Representative)
Professor Brian Stout, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching
Professor Corrinne Sullivan, School of Social Sciences (Level D, E Representative)
Professor Deborah Sweeney, Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Vice-President,
Research, Enterprise and Global
Associate Professor Chloe Taylor, Vice-Chancellor's Nominee
Professor Linda Taylor, Pro Vice-Chancellor, International (exited at 12:20pm)
Professor Michelle Trudgett, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership
Distinguished Professor Anthony Uhlmann, Interim Dean, School of Humanities and
Communication Arts
Distinguished Professor George Williams AO, Vice-Chancellor and President

Apologies

Professor Janice Aldrich-Wright, Interim Dean, Graduate Research School
Professor Saba Bebawi, Dean, School of Humanities and Communication Arts
Dr Nathan Berger, School of Education (Level A, B or C Representative)
Professor Gawaian Bodkin-Andrews, Director of Indigenous Research (Vice-Chancellor's
Nominee)
Professor Dennis Chang, Director, NICM, representing the University's Research Institutes
Professor Ann Dadich, School of Business (Level D, E Representative)
Mr Prashith Fernando, Undergraduate Student Representative
Mr Nabin Gautam, Postgraduate Student Representative
Professor Deborah Hatcher, Dean, School of Nursing and Midwifery
Professor Wendy Hu, School of Medicine (Level D, E Representative)
Professor Sarah Lewis, Dean, School of Health Sciences
Professor Samantha Liyanapathirana, School of Engineering, Design and Built Environment
(Level D, E Representative)
Professor Amir Mahmood, Pro Vice-Chancellor and Provost, Surubya campus
Professor Tanya Meade, Dean, School of Psychology
Ms Alessia Nicolai, Undergraduate Student Representative
Associate Professor Alexie Papanicolaou, University Research Institutes Representative
Professor Adam Possamai, Interim Dean, School of Social Sciences
Professor Alpha Possamai-Inesedy, Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Success
Associate Professor Lei Si, School of Health Sciences (Level D, E Representative)
Professor Michele Simons, Dean, School of Education
Associate Professor Liesel Spencer, School of Law (Level D or E)
Associate Professor Jacqueline Ullman, School of Education (Level D, E Representative)
Professor Sarah Zhang, Deputy Chair of Academic Senate

Absent

Mr Ashes Niroula, International Student Representative

In attendance:

Ms Belinda Atkinson, MinterEllison (arrived at 10:30am; exited at 10:47am)
Michael Baker, Director, Graduate Research School
Ms Sophie Buck, Director, Office of Governance Services
Ms Shubha Devadasen, Associate Director, Office of Governance Services, Secretariat
(exited 11:06am; arrived 11:47am)
Ms Julia Haremza, Director, Risk and Resilience
Ms Jane Hutchison, (exited 10:49am)
Dr Amanda Larkin, Board of Trustees member (arrived at 10:35am)
Professor Freya MacMillan, Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor Research
Ms Christine Sharpe, Executive Governance Officer (arrived at 10:45am; exited 11:48am)
Ms Georgia Vasiliadis, Senior Governance Officer
Mr Michael Wells, MinterEllison (arrived at 10:30am; exited at 10:47am)

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, acknowledging Country and welcoming members and attendees.

Professor Mailhammer acknowledged the incoming Dean, School of Computer, Data and Mathematical Sciences, Professor Kurt Langfeld.

The Chair noted that this meeting of Academic Senate was the final meeting for some of its members, and thanked them for their contributions to Senate:

Professor Bahman Javadi, Interim Dean, School of Computer, Data and Mathematical Sciences.

Professor Tanya Meade, Dean, School of Psychology.

Professor Linda Taylor, Pro Vice-Chancellor, International.

Distinguished Professor Anthony Uhlmann, Interim Dean, School of Humanities and Communication Arts.

Senate members were provided an opportunity to deliver the Acknowledgement of Country for the 2025 Academic Senate meetings. The Acknowledgement of Country will be delivered by the following members in 2025:

Professor Michelle Trudgett, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership

Dr Kylie Steel, School of Health (Level A, B or C Representative)

Dr Margarite Poulos, School of Humanities and Communication Arts (Level A, B or C Representative)

Professor Brian Stout, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching

Ms Jess Gleeson, Director, Data Integrity, Quality and Operations

Dr Evan Crawford, School of Computer, Data and Mathematical Sciences (Level A, B or C Representative)

1.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest were declared.

1.3 STARRING OF ITEMS

Members were asked which items they wish starred for discussion.

Apart from procedural items, the items below were starred:

- Item 3.1 – Chair’s Report
- Item 3.2 – Vice Chancellor’s Report
- Item 3.3 – Student Report
- Item 3.4 – External Review of Academic Senate
- Item 3.5 – Academic Senate Policy Committee Update & Policy Review
- Item 3.6 – AI Action Plan
- Item 3.7 – Academic Risk Framework
- Item 3.8 – TEQSA Risk Assessment

- Item 3.9 – Governance Framework- Entities and Educational Partners
- Item 3.10 – Literacy Strategy Update
- Item 4.2 – Academic Planning and Curriculum Approvals Committee
- Item 4.3 – Senate Education Committee
- Item 4.5 – Research Committee

It was resolved (AS 24/06: 01):

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

1.4 ORDER OF BUSINESS

A re-arrangement of the order of business was not required.

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 October 2024, (meeting 24/05) were attached for confirmation.

The following changes were made to the unconfirmed minutes:

Original text:

Item 4.3 Education
marked research.

Amended text:

market research.

Original text:

Item 4.3 Education

Professor Dever suggested that less choice for students would be a chance to provide more program coherence.

Amended Text:

Professor Dever suggested the review would be able to provide more program coherence.

It was resolved (AS 24/06: 02):

That Academic Senate confirmed the minutes of the Senate meeting held on Friday 11 October 2024, (meeting 24/05) as an accurate record pending the amendments listed above.

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.

24/04: 3.2 Vice Chancellor's Report: Professor Kevin Dunn to investigate the research support staffing issues to provide the support needed. Associate PVC Research, Professor Freya MacMillan to provide an update on recruitment.

Update:

Professor Kevin Dunn advised Senate that action has been taken.

Professor Freya MacMillan relayed to Senate that the HEW 8 position in the Central Grant Development Team had been filled while the HEW 7, Research Development Officer was pending fulfilment, and that additional support was forthcoming.

Professor Deborah Sweeney, Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, Enterprise and Global, stated that she would be happy to meet with academics who had constructive feedback on lessons learnt for improvement and with those academics who had been successful with their grant submissions.

The Grant Strategy was discussed at Research Committee in September. A report on grant support and processes would be available in 2025. This report would be presented at Research Committee and then Senate. A Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research would be appointed in the first quarter of 2025.

Senate noted that the issue was regarding resources, not the quality of the support provided.

Item Closed.

24/04:3.3 Student Report: Professor Maryanne Dever to talk through AI document with Mr Ashes Niroula and Mr Nabin Gautam.

Update:

Professor Dever advised Senate that this meeting has not taken place, and an update would be provided at the next Senate meeting.

24/04: 3.3 Student Report: Mr Ashes Niroula to talk to Professor Brian Stout, regarding an end date for Academic Integrity Module (AIM).

Update:

Professor Stout advised Senate that this meeting had not yet taken place. He also noted that there is no end date to AIM and that it was not compulsory for students to re-take the module.

Professor Maryanne Dever relayed that a rethink on culture and education was needed as part of the AI Action Plan. The Module was a small part of the education regarding academic integrity and AIM. She said there was a need to rethink how to approach academic integrity, and that this would be included in the work of the AI Action Plan.

Ms Jess Gleeson advised Senate that DIQO, the Library and the SMS team had been working towards implementing a change to move the AIM into MySR to allow

students to access it at any time throughout their study more easily. Final testing was underway, due to be completed before the Christmas shutdown, and be available in MySR for 2025 commencing students.

24/04: 3.3 Student Report: Professor Adam Possamai and Mr Nabin Gautam to meet and provide update to Senate on the Social Work, work placement issue at the December 2024 meeting.

Update:

Professor Gabrielle Drake, Acting Interim Dean, School of Social Sciences advised Senate that Professor Possamai and Mr Gautam had met. Professor Drake acknowledged that there had been significant challenges in Social Work, falling short of 200 placements. Professor Drake said the School had a collaborative research placement for those that missed out. The School had established a Working Party and had been liaising with international colleagues to work with agents to provide information, support and additional resources for Social Work.

Item Closed.

24/03: 3.3.2 Postgraduate Student Report: Mr Prasad Perera to provide regular updates on the PhD Scholarship Stipend.

Update:

Discussed in Item 3.3 Student Report.

24/03: 3.3.3 Diversity Student Report: Mr Ashes Niroula to talk to Distinguished Professor Brian Falzon regarding engineering site visits. Update 24/05: Conversations are ongoing. Both parties will endeavour to close item by December meeting.

Update:

Distinguished Professor Brian Falzon confirmed that this meeting had taken place, and that the conversation had extended beyond internships and included site visits. In the past Navitas had helped with placements, but this was no longer the case. Students at the Sydney City Campus can get internships, but not students at other campuses. Distinguished Professor Falzon said that this was a resourcing issue, requiring a dedicated placement officer. He noted that the School had been successful in getting placements for domestic students.

Item Closed.

24/02: 1.7 Academic Integration Plans and Disability Governance: Chair to set up meeting with Ms Terri Mears and Mr Ian Sharpe (Vicky-Rae Reed no longer a student representative for Senate).

Update:

The Chair reported that during this meeting, the Chair, Ms Terri Mears, and Mr Ian Sharpe had explored ways to improve disability services in WesternNow. An update regarding the services available on WesternNow for disability services would be presented at upcoming meeting of Senate. Professor Mailhammer said that this item would be revisited if problems persist.

Items Closed.

2. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

There was no business arising from previous meetings.

3. GENERAL BUSINESS

3.1 CHAIR'S REPORT

*Higher Education Standard(s): 6.3.1, 6.3.2
Mitigation against risk(s) in Academic Senate Risk Register: 1, 3, 5, 6*

The Chair drew Senate's attention to the OzCABS conference, where Academic risk and Generative AI in research focal topics; Flinders University presented their approach to AI in research, and the University of Adelaide presented their AI Action Plan. In the discussion, it was pointed out that Professor Freya MacMillan, recently organised an event regarding research and AI, and that this would feed into the University's Institutional Action Plan.

3.2 VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

*Higher Education Standard(s): 6.3.1, 6.3.2
Mitigation against risk(s) in Academic Senate Risk Register: 1, 3, 5, 6*

The Vice-Chancellor reported that the whole sector was facing difficulties, pressure on programs and staffing. He emphasised that Western was focusing on cost cutting in other areas.

Distinguished Professor Williams said that the School Review was underway with further announcements in 2025, and that there would be an extra investment of 10% in Schools with a focus on research. Additionally, announcements regarding scholarships would be forthcoming soon. He added that the Program Review, which was also underway, would ensure the right courses and a reduction of the significant program complexities. Further efficiencies would also be brought through the red tape review, e.g. in procurement, so that academic staff could focus on teaching and research.

The Vice-Chancellor also advised of changes to the committees for the Board of Trustees (Board) based on the External Review of University governance. He also expected subsequent changes to the committee structure of the Academic Senate because of the External Review of Academic Senate, whose recommendations the Vice-Chancellor supports. Distinguished Professor Williams expressed that Senate has an important role: to have focus on the mission and academic governance and excellence.

The Vice-Chancellor said that although the international student caps had not been legislated yet, the government would still enforce them. Consequently, the funding implications would remain; currently, international student fees cross-subsidise domestic students with 24c per dollar. And though some relief had been provided through HECS, this did not apply to equity students. Distinguished Professor Williams advocated for arts students and a decrease in fees, against the government driving a reduction in Humanities.

Senate was assured that academic staff would be given opportunities to provide their input for the review of programs and offerings. The Vice-Chancellor said that the programs offered would be based on student needs and noted that income was not

the only determinant for program continuation; a cost subsidisation for courses was also included.

Professor Maryanne Dever concurred that input from all was wanted for this review. The aim was to achieve a more distinctive suite of programs for Western.

Senate expressed concerns regarding the announcement of cutting research in Humanities in New Zealand and whether there would be a coherent response from Australian universities. The Vice-Chancellor expressed his support of Humanities and reported briefly on his lobbying in various forums. He also asserted that it was wrong of the universities to agree to the fee structure in 2021 for Humanities. Distinguished Professor Williams said he would request that this topic be put on the agenda at the Universities Australia conference. He noted that low SES, Indigenous people, and women were impacted the most.

Professor Deborah Sweeney relayed to Senate that the current fee system was under review. Professor Sweeney also stressed that it was important to not lose sight of importance of Humanities, and the need to speak up to avoid that Australia follows New Zealand in moving against the Humanities.

Professor Rod McClure entered at 10:15am.

3.3 STUDENT REPORT

*Higher Education Standard(s) :6.3.3
Mitigation against risk(s) in Academic Senate Risk Register: 3*

In his report, Mr Prasad Perera requested that Senate consider allowing HDR students to use AI research tools as elements in their research, noting that HDR candidates at other institutions were using AI tools to refine their research reading and referencing. He also highlighted the HDR stipend, noting that an increase in the stipend would positively impact research quality and the importance of getting good HDR students and supporting them. He finished his report with a proposal that HDR students be monetarily rewarded for submitting papers/publications.

Professor MacMillan noted that Western's approach was more cautious and integrative, seeking to implement appropriate guardrails before allowing AI tools. She advised that Western was engaging with the Innovative Research Universities network externally and internally with activities such as the recent AI Forum, with more to come in 2025.

Professor Dever also noted that it was important to look at the digital uplift across the whole University, and not just in specific areas. It was important to develop a coherent approach with relevant committee infrastructure in place, which was planned for 2025.

Senate noted that the School of Computer, Data and Mathematical Sciences had world-leading staff in AI, and it would be valuable and important to consult with these internal experts and have them as members on AI Committees.

Professor Sweeney advised that PhD stipends would go up in 2025 with a year-on-year increase and noted that a balance between an increase in the stipend and providing new scholarships was needed.

Professor Brian Stout, Pro Vice-Chancellor Learning and Teaching, advised Senate that rewarding students financially for contributing to publishing currently took place in individual Schools and these Schools would be able to speak to their experiences.

Ms Belinda Atkinson and Mr Michael Wells entered at 10:30am.

3.4 EXTERNAL REVIEW OF ACADEMIC SENATE

*Higher Education Standard(s): 6.1.3d, 6.3
Mitigation against risk(s) in Academic Senate Risk Register: 1, 3, 5, 6*

Mr Michael Wells advised Senate that the governance review met TEQSA requirements. However, it pointed out necessary improvements in governance. He said the review had recommendations, commendations and affirmations and that the evidence was mapped to TEQSA standards. The report was currently with the University for consideration. Mr Wells said the review and the University's response would be examined by TEQSA for the University's re-registration. Mr Wells emphasised that a greater expectation of reporting and accountability was now required of academic boards to the governing body. He said that external standards were coming into effect to academic governance as what to expect in good academic governance.

Mr Wells said that Senate had been commended for student representation in academic governance, and in developing an approach to managing academic risk and its monitoring.

There was a greater opportunity to express the Academic Senate's Terms of Reference and consider restructuring the committees to align to external standards and structures. Mr Wells said Academic Senate oversees standards, courses, and course changes. As a self-accrediting body, it is important for the University to have a robust and independent system of accrediting courses, and for Senate to have input in academic planning and the planning process.

In relation to quality and risk, Mr Wells said that Senate needed to ensure that quality assurances are in place for education, research, and research training, and that there had been a shift with Senate to have a greater accountability and provide greater assurance to the Board.

Responding to a question regarding the report noting that Senate had a large composition that was skewed towards management, Mr Wells noted that the composition of Academic Senate should be balanced between senior executive, discipline leads and elected representatives. He explained that while some members could represent more than one type of member, discipline leads would be staff below the position of Dean, and they would not be senior executives of the institution.

An amendment to p54 of the report: report should read Professor Corrinne Sullivan.

It was resolved (AS 24/06: 03):

That Academic Senate:

- 1. Noted the Independent Review of Corporate and Academic Governance prepared for Western Sydney University by MinterEllison Consulting, November 2024; and*
- 2. Requested that the University Secretary, in consultation with the Chancellor and Chair of Academic Senate prepare a response to the recommendations contained with the MinterEllison Report for consideration at the February 2025 Board of Trustees and Academic Senate meetings. This will outline an implementation plan for the recommendations that will be adopted by the University.*

Dr Amanda Larkin entered at 10:36am.
Ms Christine Sharpe entered at 10:45am.
Ms Belinda Atkinson and Mr Michael Wells exited at 10:47am.

3.5 ACADEMIC SENATE POLICY COMMITTEE UPDATE & POLICY REVIEW

Higher Education Standard(s): 6.3.1a-c, 6.3.2.d-f
Mitigation against risk(s) in Academic Senate Risk Register: 1, 3, 5

3.5.1 ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE UPDATE

Higher Education Standard(s): 5.2.1, 6.2.1g, 6.3.1d, 6.3.2a,
Mitigation against risk(s) in Academic Senate Risk Register: 2

Professor Kevin Dunn, Chair of the Academic Senate Policy Committee noted that the report included a summary of 2024 and a plan for 2025.

Ms Jane Hutchison exited at 10:49am.
Professor Rod McClure exited at 10:50am.

3.5.2 HIGHER DEGREE RESEARCH POLICY SUITE

Higher Education Standard(s): 4.2.1, 4.2.4
Mitigation against risk(s) in Academic Senate Risk Register: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6

Dr Michael Baker, Director, Graduate Research School, relayed to Senate that several policies had been reduced to one policy and nine procedures. He reported on the extensive consultation process with 100 responses received, on which the refinement of the policies and procedures was based on. The changes were designed to make the policy clearer and to fill in policy gaps, as well as to introduce an oral thesis examination.

Senate queried the timing of the oral examination and was advised that the oral examination was to be part of the exam process. A draft report would be written by the examiners, the candidate would deliver their oral examination, and examiners would be afforded the opportunity to edit their reports, which would then be sent to the School or Institute.

Senate also expressed concern regarding the provisions for leave in the event of illness and were advised that provisions had been made for recreational and sick leave similar to that for employment. Dr Baker advised that these types of leave did not extend the candidature period. If a candidate was significantly unwell, they should apply for Leave of Absence for a quarter. Their candidature would then be extended, and they would be paid. However, due to government reporting and the fee implications, Leave of Absence cannot have a duration of less than a quarter. Dr Baker noted that while it is problematic to apply a Leave of Absence retrospectively, the Dean of the Graduate Research School has discretion in this area.

Senate members were advised that only the primary supervisor, who is a Western academic staff member, can grant leave. There are some mechanisms in place to appoint external supervisors as adjunct academic staff, but generally external supervisors do not have access to University systems. Dr Baker advised Senate that

all candidates have at least two internal supervisors; the external supervisor is present for their expertise and do not need to go through Western training.

It was resolved (AS 24/06:04):

That Academic Senate approved the revised and renamed HDR policy documents suite, as listed below:

- *Higher Degree by Research Policy*
- *Higher Degree by Research Procedures – Admission*
- *Higher Degree by Research Procedures - Candidature*
- *Higher Degree by Research Procedures – Candidature Variation*
- *Higher Degree by Research Procedures – Dual Awards Research Degrees*
- *Higher Degree by Research Procedures – Examination*
- *Higher Degree by Research Procedures – Progress*
- *Higher Degree by Research Procedures – Resources*
- *Higher Degree by Research Procedures – Scholarships*
- *Higher Degree by Research Procedures – Supervision*

And that Academic Senate approve the retirement of the following policy documents:

- *Research Masters (Honours) Policy*
- *Doctor of Medicine by Publication Policy*
- *Doctor of Philosophy by Publication Policy*
- *Research Higher Degree Candidature Essential Resources Procedures*
- *Supervision of Research Candidates Procedures.*

3.5.2 PROGRAM SPECIFIC PROGRESSION RULES

Higher Education Standard(s): 1.3.4-6

Mitigation against risk(s) in Academic Senate Risk Register: 1, 2, 3, 5

Ms Jess Gleeson, Director, Data Integrity, Quality and Operations advised Senate that Program Specific Rules were introduced for cases in which the procedures are insufficient. The proposed changes arose from to deficiencies identified in clarity in version 1 of the Program Specific Progression Rules. She said foundation students operated on a different GPA structure. The changes were introduced to clarify when the progression stages are applied. The College was comfortable with the changes.

It was resolved (AS 24/06:05):

That Academic Senate approved the revised Program Specific Progression Rules.

Ms Shubha Devadasen exited at 11:06am.

3.6 AI ACTION PLAN

Higher Education Standard(s): 1.4.3-4, 5.2, 6.3.2d

Mitigation against risk(s) in Academic Senate Risk Register: 1, 3, 5

Professor Maryanne Dever, relayed to Senate that in June, TEQSA had formally requested from all higher education providers a document on how the institution was going to secure the integrity of awards in relation to AI. TEQSA had released its report on institutional practices and plans on 28 November 2024, including examples of good practice.

Professor Cath Ellis advised Senate that the Institutional Action Plan (IAP) had been developed to secure award integrity. She said that AI was both a disruption and an

opportunity; the IAP was the University's commitment to excellence in learning and teaching Professor Ellis pointed out that the IAP was a risk-based, phased approach with work commencing immediately. It included evaluations of proposed actions. A focus on redevelopment would take place in 2025 and further implementation in 2026.

Professor Ellis said that the IAP was underpinned by a robust academic governance structure.

The plan consisted of interconnected four workstreams, curriculum, assessment, research training and academic governance.

Professor Ellis further asserted that many areas of the curriculum needed to change to ensure the programs maintain their currency. She said that both staff and students needed to be upskilled. Changes to the curriculum also included changes to assessments and the tracking of student performance. Professor Ellis also posited that a review of assessments was needed to decrease the volume of assessments and remove any unnecessary assessments. She also argued that new ways of measuring learning and securing assessments were required. Professor Ellis also emphasised the need to be agile while maintaining rigour and standards as well as to have appropriate documentation and accountability

Professor Dever noted that this was an opportunity to focus on program level thinking. Further, this work was not being undertaken in isolation, but alongside product strategy, the curriculum platform, and the move towards digital assessment.

Senate queried whether thought had been given to additional resourcing requirements. The advice was that the curriculum work is part of a larger program which would require relevant business cases.

Professor Ellis noted that the plan was to seek efficiencies in relation to assessment, as staff and students cannot be asked to do more than what they are currently doing.

Senate was concerned with the implication that current assessments were superfluous. Any plan needed to have input from those who are in the classroom with the students. Senate was advised that there was a risk that assessments have increased in recent years, and that this was an opportunity to critically review the types and number of assessments, identify good practices, move to programmatic thinking and see the link between assessment and student well-being. Student feedback indicated some lack of clarity on the purpose of assessments.

Senate members relayed that there had always been changes to technology and the focus should not be exclusively on AI but rather on reasons for the decrease of student numbers. They also stated that academics needed to be trusted as experts in their field and that in technical areas there might be a need to increase the number of assessments rather than reduce them, noting that there needed to be a balance between volume and quality, and that industry can require more hands-on training.

Professor Dever argued that there was a need to monitor the volume of assessment and that there was a need for more authentic assessment.

Professor Ellis assured Senate that the AIP was evidence based. Furthermore, if a review of the assessments resulted in finding no unnecessary assessments, then no changes would be needed. Additionally, while the volume of summative assessments might decrease, there might be opportunities for self-testing and self-evaluation. Assessments needed to motivate and assure learning.

In response to a query regarding the wellbeing of staff and the insufficient tools to identify AI, Professor Ellis noted that research indicated burnout for academic staff over assessments.

Attachment 1: Institutional Action Plan to Mitigate Risks of Generative AI on Award Integrity

3.7 ACADEMIC RISK FRAMEWORK

*Higher Education Standard(s): 6.2.1e-f, 6.3
Mitigation against risk(s) in Academic Senate Risk Register: 1, 3*

Ms Julia Haremza, Director, Risk and Resilience, advised Senate that there had been a review of academic risk with a focus to align methods and practices of identifying risk and the incoming 2030 strategy, AI development and TEQSA requirements. The report would be presented at the next meeting of Academic Senate.

3.8 TEQSA RISK ASSESSMENT

*Higher Education Standard(s): 6.1.3a, 6.2.1a+c+e, 6.3.1d
Mitigation against risk(s) in Academic Senate Risk Register: 1*

Professor Maryanne Dever explained to Senate that TEQSA undertakes an annual risk assessment of higher education providers, and that this paper was summarising the 2023 assessment. The report noted a low overall risk to students and staff, finance in 2023. There were specific indicators that were rated a moderate or high risk, such as graduate satisfaction and financial sustainability. The University had responded to the financial risk rating by asking for more info on how TEQSA reaches its rating, however, no additional information had been provided. Professor Dever said that part of issue of financial rating was the way that TEQSA formulate their rating which was different to the way the University does this. She added that the rating to the casualisation risk had preceded the decasualisation program while the rating regarding student satisfaction had preceded the work on the employability framework and the Enhanced Teaching Project. A reassessment considering the University's response had not resulted in any changes to the rating.

Senate members queried that considering the external review of Senate, would a copy of the report be provided to Senate, and were advised that the report has not been presented at Academic Senate since 2017. The report would be presented to Senate when the Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, Mr Darren Greentree would be available to speak to the report so that the details in the report and the University's financial standing would not be misconstrued.

New Action:

Senate determined that the TEQSA Risk Assessment report be brought back to the February 2025 meeting of Academic Senate and Mr Darren Greentree invited to speak to this report.

3.9 GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK | ENTITIES AND EDUCATIONAL PARTNERS

*Higher Education Standard(s): 5.4.2, 6.3.1, 6.3.2
Mitigation against risk(s) in Academic Senate Risk Register: 1*

Dr Nicolene Murdoch advised Senate that a paper would be brought to Senate in the new year and that work was taking place with the Office of Governance Services and considering the External Review of Academic Senate. A broader review of partnerships was being conducted, and some partnerships had been terminated. The framework and governance of partnerships had been upgraded. Work was currently taking place on two recommendations, working with School Academic Committees to close the gap and to change the Terms of Reference and the name of the Third-Party Providers Committee.

Ms Shubha Devadasen entered at 11:47am.
Ms Christine Sharpe exited at 11:48am.

3.10 LITERACY STRATEGY UPDATE

*Higher Education Standard(s): 1.3.2a-c, 3.3
Mitigation against risk(s) in Academic Senate Risk Register: 1, 3, 5*

Ms Fiona Salisbury advised Senate that the Literacy Strategy had been developed in 2022 and implemented in 2023 - 2024. The Literacy Strategy was being reviewed and revised at the request of the Senate Education Committee. The focus of the updated strategy were four core literacies: academic literacy, generative AI and digital literacy, and numeracy. She said that a literacy roadmap had been developed to develop foundation skills across the four literacies and then to expand and scaffold the students' development beyond foundational literacies. This work aligned with the work of the Library and the Enhanced Teaching Project. Ms Jess Gleeson exited at 12:00pm.

Attachment 2: Academic Literacy Advisory Group (ALAG)

3.11 UPDATE FROM SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTES

*Higher Education Standard(s): 6.3.1a, b, c, 6.3.2d-f
Mitigation against risk(s) in Academic Senate Risk Register: 1, 3, 5, 6*

There were no Updates from Schools or Institutes for this meeting.

3.12 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE/HOT TOPICS

There were no Questions on Notice or Hot Topics for this meeting.

3.13 ACADEMIC SENATE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE | REVISED MEMBERSHIP

*Higher Education Standard(s): 5.2.1, 6.3.1a-c, 6.3.2.d-f
Mitigation against risk(s) in Academic Senate Risk Register: 2*

It was resolved (AS24/06: 06):

That Academic Senate approved the revised membership of the Academic Senate Assessment Committee.

3.14 APPROVAL OF SCHOLARSHIPS

*Higher Education Standard(s): 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 6.3.1b, c, 6.3.2b, d
Mitigation against risk(s) in Academic Senate Risk Register: 2*

It was resolved (AS24/06: 07):

The Academic Senate reviewed and approved the proposed new scholarships and gift of funds and reviewed and approved the amendments to existing scholarships and prizes for immediate execution.

New donor scholarship for approval

The Brian Schwartz AM - Scentre Group Scholarship for Excellence
Warwick Cumming Refugee Scholarship
Q Agency Scholarship for Excellence
Baxter Healthcare Indigenous Scholarship in Health Sciences
Baxter Healthcare Indigenous Scholarship in Nursing
Westlink M7 Indigenous Scholarship
AirTrunk STEM Scholarships

Amendments to Existing Scholarships

GE Healthcare Biomedical Engineering Scholarship for Women
Podiatry Professionals Scholarship – Six months
The Matthew Hotchkis Sports Podiatry Scholarship – One year
Scholarship: Dialysis Australia Clinical Placement Bursary in Nursing

Amendments to Existing Donor-Funded Prizes

Picton Family Medical Centre & Wollondilly Shire Council Prize for Academic Excellence in General Practice
Richardson & Wrench Prize for Personal and Professional Development and Leadership

New Gift of Funds

Anne Cutler Memorial Travel Grant

3.15 GRADUAND LISTS, UNIVERSITY MEDALS AND POSTHUMOUS AWARDS

*Higher Education Standard(s): 1.5.1, 1.5.2, 1.5.3, 1.5.4, 6.2.1h
Mitigation against risk(s) in Academic Senate Risk Register: 2*

3.15.1 CONFERRAL OF AWARDS

There were no students lists for noting or approval.

3.15.2 POSTHUMOUS AWARD

This item has been redacted.

4. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

Chairs of the Senate Standing Committees will provide brief updates of the key developments from the committee.

4.1 SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

*Higher Education Standard(s): 6.3.1a, 6.3.1d, 6.3.2d
Mitigation against risk(s) in Academic Senate Risk Register: 3*

The reports of the e-meetings of the Senate Executive Committee held on 29 October 2024 to 1 November 2024 (meeting e24/08) were appended for noting by members and consisted of the following item:

October Conferral of University Awards

The Academic Senate Executive Committee:

- i. Approved the award of degrees with distinction to graduands listed Attachment A – Graduands for awards with distinction.*
- ii. Approved the award of the University Medal to the graduates listed in Attachment B – Graduates to be awarded the University Medal.*
- iii. Noted the conferral of awards to graduates with pass or honours coursework degrees as listed in Attachment C - Graduates with pass and honours coursework degrees approved within SAC delegation.*
- iv. Noted the conferral of awards to graduates with a research degree as listed in Attachment D - Graduates with research degrees approved within RSC delegation.*

4.2 ACADEMIC PLANNING AND CURRICULUM APPROVALS COMMITTEE

*Higher Education Standard(s): 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.1.3, 5.2.1, 6.3.1a, c, 6.3.2c, d, f
Mitigation against risk(s) in Academic Senate Risk Register: 1, 2, 3*

The reports of the meetings of the Academic Planning and Curriculum Approvals Committee (APCAC) held on 3 September 2024 (meeting 24/06), 8 October 2024 (meeting 24/07), and 27 November 2024 (meeting 24/08), were appended. The Chair advised Senate that one of the recommendations of the External Review of Academic Senate was to have clear visibility of approvals at committee level and the review of the changes to programs was an opportunity to implement this recommendation.

It was resolved (AS24/06:09):

That Academic Senate noted the reports of the Academic Planning and Courses Approvals Committee meetings held on 3 September 2024 (meeting 24/06), 8 October 2024 (meeting 24/07), and 27 November 2024 (meeting 24/08), and approved the recommendations contained therein.

4.3 SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

*Higher Education Standard(s): 6.3.1a-d, 6.3.2d-f
Mitigation against risk(s) in Academic Senate Risk Register: 1, 3*

The confirmed minutes of the Senate Education Committee meetings held on 19 September 2024 (meeting 24/04) and 17 October 2024 (meeting 24/05) were appended for noting. Professor Maryanne Dever, Chair of the Senate Education Committee, relayed to Senate that the Committee had critically examined the 2025

Workplan for Senate Education Committee and how the work of the Committee aligned with the new strategy and new priorities, as well as where redundancies could be removed. A review of the reports had also been undertaken to ascertain whether the reports were useful and adding value, were in line with the management of academic risk, and when they were going once presented to Senate Education Committee.

Senate was assured that while there would be a high-level account, there would be no changes to the detailed minutes and reporting. The report would provide a holistic picture.

4.4 SENATE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

*Higher Education Standard(s): 6.3.1a-d, 6.3.2e-f
Mitigation against risk(s) in Academic Senate Risk Register: 1, 3, 5*

The unconfirmed minutes of the Senate Assessment Committee held on 11 November 2024 (meeting 24/05) were appended for noting.

Professor Linda Taylor exited at 12:20pm.

4.5 RESEARCH COMMITTEE

*Higher Education Standard(s): 6.3.1a-, 6.3.2e-f
Mitigation against risk(s) in Academic Senate Risk Register: 1, 3, 6*

The unconfirmed minutes of the Research Committee meeting held on 11 September 2024 (Meeting 24/04) were appended for noting. Professor Deborah Sweeney, Chair of the Research Committee, advised Senate that the Committee had discussed the reporting structure of the dashboard for overall and individual details, aligned with the University Strategy. Reports would be presented to the Senate Research Committee, the Academic Senate, and the Board of Trustees with appropriate timings to ensure appropriateness and usefulness of data.

Professor Sweeney advised Academic Senate that the research ‘themes’ had been refreshed based on consultation, with a change to the term ‘themes’ to take place. There would be six overarching themes, with sub-sections for each theme that have more specifics and flexibility. She said that the list would be refined in 2025 . Professor Sweeney stated that she would share a report that shows the volume of work done by research theme leaders from 2016 to 2024.

Responding to a question, Professor Sweeney asserted that the themes had been determined in consultation with staff. She emphasised the need to see the importance of all research, including but not limited to applied research, and research in the areas of HASS and STEM.

Attachment 3: Research Themes

4.6 RESEARCH STUDIES COMMITTEE

*Higher Education Standard(s): 6.3.1a-, 6.3.2e-f
Mitigation against risk(s) in Academic Senate Risk Register: 1, 3, 6*

The confirmed minutes of the Research Studies Committee meeting held on 8 October 2024 (Meeting 24/11) and the unconfirmed minutes of the Research Studies Committee meeting held on 5 November 2024 (Meeting 24/12) were appended for noting by the Senate.

4.7 ACADEMIC SENATE POLICY COMMITTEE

*Higher Education Standard(s): 5.2.1, 6.3.1a-c, 6.3.2.d-f
Mitigation against risk(s) in Academic Senate Risk Register: 2*

The unconfirmed minutes of the Academic Senate Policy Committee meetings held on 6 November 2024 (Meeting 24/03) were appended for noting by the Senate.

4.8 THIRD-PARTY PROVIDER COMMITTEE

*Higher Education Standard(s): 5.4.2, 6.3.1a, 6.3.1d, 6.3.2d
Mitigation against risk(s) in Academic Senate Risk Register: 1,3*

The confirmed minutes of the Third-Party Provider Committee meeting held on 25 September 2024 (Meeting 24/04) and the unconfirmed minutes of the Third-Party Provider Committee meeting held on 20 November 2024 (meeting 24/05) were appended for noting.

4.9 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled for Friday 21 February 2025. 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

If raised at the meeting.

6. NEXT MEETING

This was the last meeting of the Academic Senate Committee for 2024.

The next meeting of the Academic Senate Committee (25/01) will be Monday 24 February 2024 at 9:30am at Parramatta South Campus, Boardroom 1 (PS-EB.2.02).

The meetings scheduled for 2025 is as follows:

- 25/01 - Monday 24 February 2025
- 25/02 - Friday 11 April 2025
- 25/03 - Friday 20 June 2025

- 25/04 - Friday 15 August 2025
- 25/05 - Friday 10 October 2025
- 25/06 - Friday 5 December 2025

The meeting formally closed at 12:29pm.



**INSTITUTIONAL
ACTION PLAN TO
MITIGATE RISKS OF
GENERATIVE AI ON
AWARD INTEGRITY**

Why we need this plan

Generative AI is the biggest disruption to Higher Education in our lifetime

It has made at least some of our current state unfit for purpose

We must transform both what we teach and how we assure students have learned it



Generative AI: Disruption and Opportunity

Generative AI both challenges and redefines our teaching and research practices

Rethinking Practices

- We must reconsider what and how we teach and deliver research training

Aligning Curriculum

- We must ensure our curriculum meets the evolving needs of students and employers

Adapting Swiftly

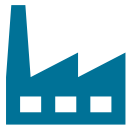
- We must equip students with relevant skills and knowledge for the Generative AI era

Assessing Differently

- We must explore new methods to evaluate core competencies and prepare graduates for the workforce

Impact of Generative AI on Education and Industry

Generative AI's disruption is being felt beyond our sector



Curriculum Alignment

We must maintain strong alignment with industry and use employer insights for curricular revisions



Dynamic Job Market

We need to prepare graduates for frequent and rapid changes



Beyond Technical Skills

We should emphasise adaptability and ethical decision-making



Lifelong Learning

Our graduates must be equipped for continuous professional development in the Generative AI era

Our plan: aligns with our values



Boldness

Times of uncertainty and disruption call on us to be courageous as we plan to address the challenge and embrace the opportunities of Generative AI



Fairness

Our plan prioritises maintaining the excellence of our teaching and of our students' learning experiences, regardless of their backgrounds and future aspirations



Integrity

Our plan is fundamentally focussed on the integrity of our awards and the strength of our educational and research integrity culture



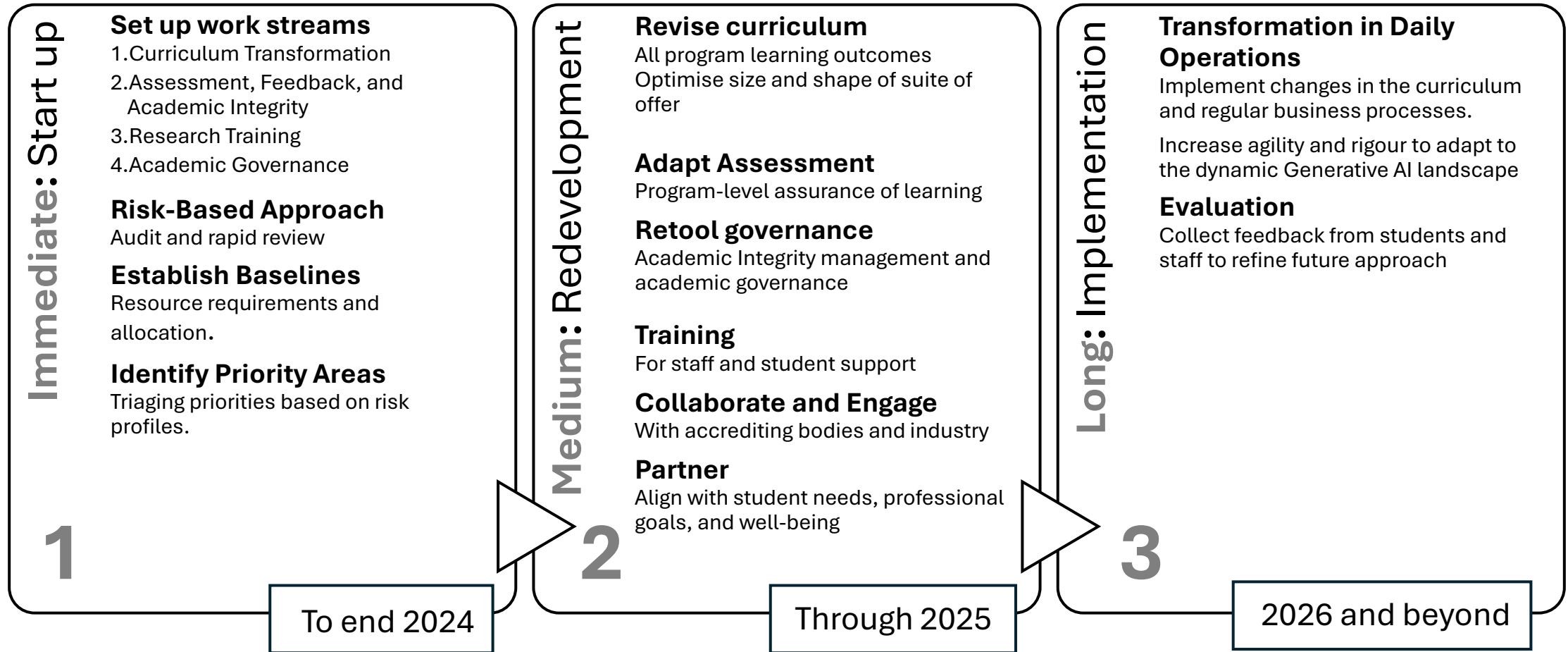
Excellence

Our students are at the centre of our plan as we commit to ensuring graduate outcomes that continue to reward their investment and for us to deliver on our purpose

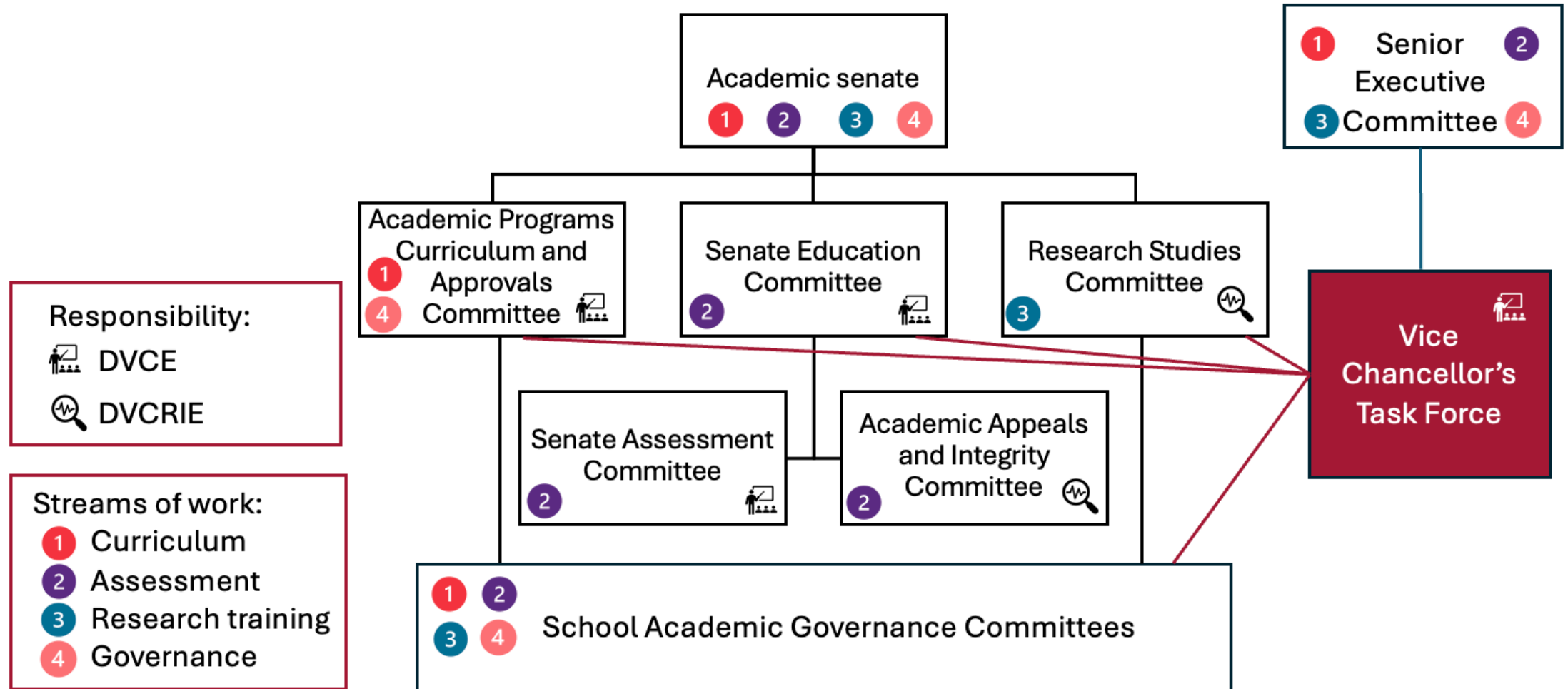


OUR PLAN
AND HOW WE
WILL PUT IT
INTO ACTION

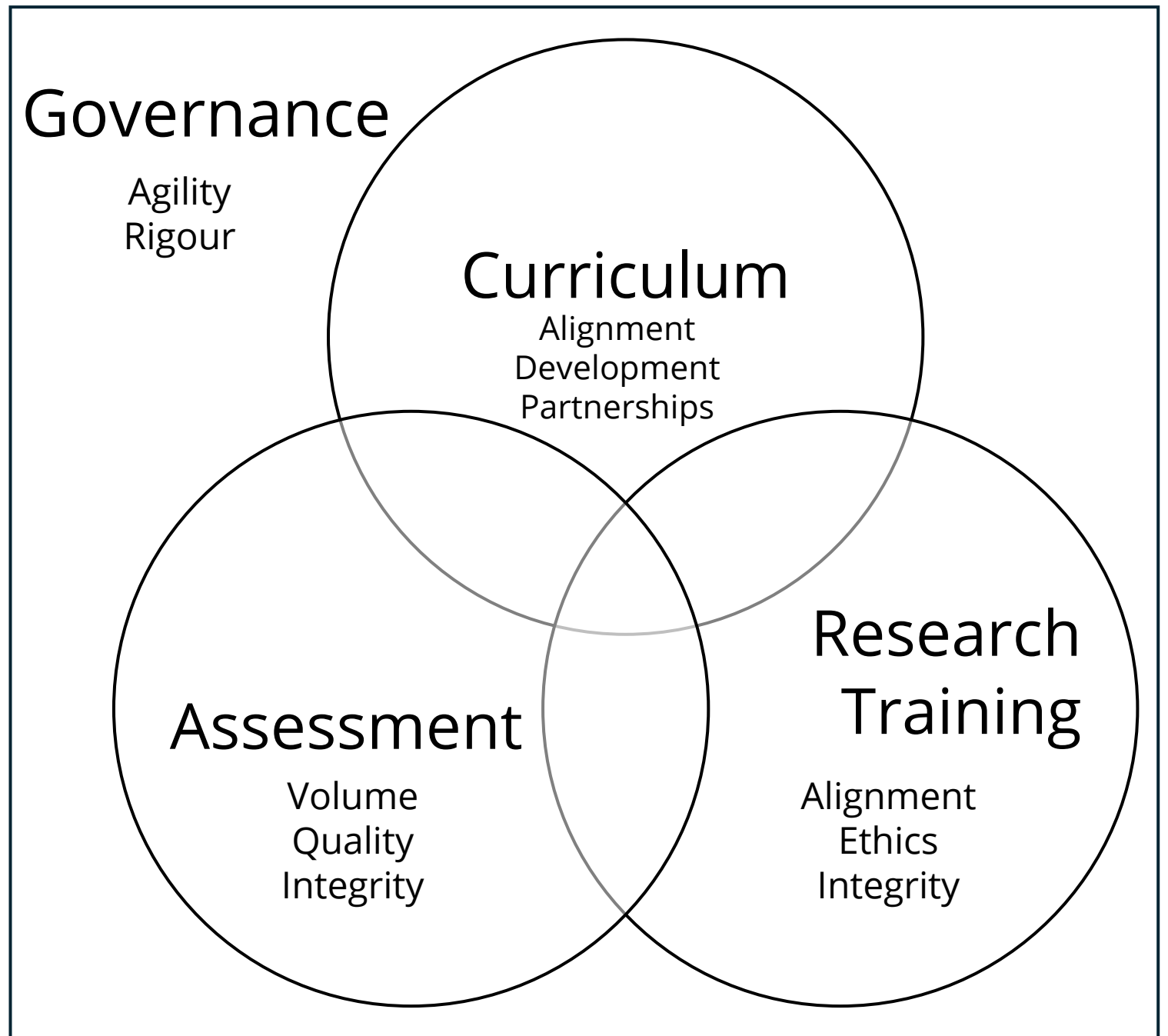
Our Plan: Takes a phased approach



Our plan: Getting it done and holding ourselves to account



Our plan:
four
interconnected
work streams



Curriculum

Alignment

Review

Revision

Assurance

Development

Training

Support

Accountability

Reward

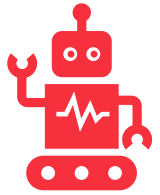
Partnership

Industry

Students

Community

Curriculum Transformation



The emergence and rapid evolution of generative AI is reshaping both our industry and those our graduates aspire to enter



We must update our curriculum and pedagogical strategies to continue to deliver excellent student learning experiences and outcomes



We need to maintain a flexible and responsive curriculum that is agile and adaptive to the changing requirements of industry and the professions



This will require upskilling of our staff and students
We will draw on the strength of our existing partnerships with industry, community and students

Assessment

Volume

Practicability

Cost

Wellbeing

Quality

Validity

Reliability

Authenticity

Equity and accessibility

Integrity

Security and attribution

Assurance of learning

Transparency

Assessment Transformation



Changes to the curriculum affect learning requirements

Comprehensive reset of assessment and feedback strategies, and student performance tracking



Shift in approach and attitude, and the systems used for managing assessments.

Assessments are both valuable learning prompts and measures of achievement



Transition towards programmatic and systemic assessment

Reduce overall volume and remove unnecessary assessment



Assessments design validly measures student learning and ensures authenticity

New methods to secure assessments and promote an educational culture of integrity

Continue to ensure all students have equal opportunities to demonstrate their learning, irrespective of their background

Research training

Alignment

Review

Revision

Examination

Ethics

Data and records

Verifiability

Legality

Integrity

Security and attribution

Falsification and fabrication

Replicability

Research Training Transformation



Ensuring the integrity of research preparation and training awards, as well as supporting enrolled candidates.



Share all aspects of curriculum and assessment work streams



Specific aspects unique to research training awards and candidates

Academic Governance

Agility

Policy

Systems

Process optimisation

Rigour

Delegation

Documentation

Accountability