

WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY



ACADEMIC SENATE

Meeting 25/01 of the Academic Senate, Western Sydney University was held on Monday 24 February 2025 at, 9:30AM, at, Parramatta South Campus, and via zoom.

Present

Professor Janice Aldrich-Wright, Interim Dean, Graduate Research School
Professor Ian Anderson, Pro Vice-Chancellor Research
Dr Tuki Attuquayefio, School of Psychology (Level A, B or C Representative)
Professor Saba Bebawi, Dean, School of Humanities and Communication Arts
Dr Nathan Berger, School of Education (Level A, B or C Representative)
Dr Maria Bhatti, School of Law (Level A, B or C Representative)
Professor Gawaian Bodkin-Andrews, Director of Indigenous Research (Vice-Chancellor's Nominee)
Mr Glenn Campbell, Chief Executive Officer, The College
Professor Dennis Chang, Director, NICM, representing the University's Research Institutes
Dr Evan Crawford, School of Computer, Data and Mathematical Sciences (Level A, B or C Representative)
Professor Ann Dadich, School of Business (Level D, E Representative)
Professor Gabrielle Drake, Interim Dean, School of Social Sciences
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)
Mr Nabin Gautam, Postgraduate Student Representative (Exited 10:52am)
Associate Professor Emilee Gilbert, School of Psychology (Level D, E Representative)
Ms Jess Gleeson, Director, Data Integrity, Quality and Operations (Arrived 10:06am)
Professor Wendy Hu, School of Medicine (Level D, E Representative)
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)
Professor Sarah Lewis, Dean, School of Health Sciences
Dr Ranjith Liyanapathirana, School of Engineering, Design and Built Environment (Level A, B or C Representative)
Professor Samanthika Liyanapathirana, School of Engineering, Design and Built Environment (Level D, E Representative)
Professor Amir Mahmood, Pro Vice-Chancellor and Provost, Surubya campus
Professor Robert Mailhammer, Chair of Academic Senate
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
Mr Prasad Perera, Higher Degree Research Candidate Student Representative
Dr Ben Perry, School of Science (Level A, B or C Representative)
Professor Alphaia Possamai-Inesedy, Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Success (Exited 11:09am)
Dr Margarite Poulos, School of Humanities and Communication Arts (Level A, B or C Representative)

Professor Catherine Renshaw, Dean, School of Law
Dr Ata Samad, School of Business (Level A, B or C Representative)
Associate Professor Lei Si, School of Health Sciences (Level D, E Representative)
Professor Michele Simons, Dean, School of Education
Dr Erika Smith, School of Social Sciences (Level A, B or C Representative)
Professor Meg Smith, Interim Dean, School of Business
Associate Professor Liesel Spencer, School of Law (Level D or E)
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, Enterprise and Global
Associate Professor Chloe Taylor, Vice-Chancellor's Nominee
Ms Lisa Tyson, Acting Executive Director, Library Services
Associate Professor Jacqueline Ullman, School of Education (Level D, E Representative)
Associate Professor Gabrielle Weidemann, Interim Dean, School of Psychology
Professor Sarah Zhang, Deputy Chair of Academic Senate

Apologies:

Professor Maryanne Dever, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Education
Professor Deborah Hatcher, Dean, School of Nursing and Midwifery
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 Rod McClure, Dean, School of Medicine
Professor Susan Page, Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Education
Associate Professor Alexie Papanicolaou, University Research Institutes Representative
Ms Fiona Salisbury, Executive Director, Library Services
Ms Tiffany Sharpe, Indigenous Australian Student Representative
Professor Michelle Trudgett, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership
Distinguished Professor George Williams AO, Vice-Chancellor and President

Absent:

Mr Prashith Fernando, Undergraduate Student Representative
Ms Alessia Nicolia, Undergraduate Student Representative
Ms Ananta Vig, International Student Representative

In Attendance:

Ms Sophie Buck, Director, Office of Governance Services (Arrived 10:37am)
Ms Shubha Devadasen, Associate Director, Office of Governance Services, Secretariat
Ms Julia Haremza, Director, Risk and Resilience
Professor Freya MacMillan, Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor Research
Associate Professor Slade Jensen, Acting Deputy Dean, School of Medicine
Mr Mario Milanovic, Executive Director Finance (arrived at 11:20am and exited 11:32am)
Dr Nayantara Pothen, Senior Strategy and Projects Officer
Ms Georgia Vasiliadis, Senior Governance Officer

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 and welcomed members and attendees.

Professor Mailhammer acknowledged Professor Ian Anderson, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research and Associate Professor Gabrielle Weidemann, Interim Dean, School of Psychology.

Professor Kevin Dunn delivered the Acknowledgement of Country.

Professor Mailhammer noted that this would be the last meeting of Academic Senate for Professor Sarah Zhang, Deputy Chair of Academic Senate and thanked her for her contributions to Senate and her work as Deputy Chair. He also advised Senate that Associate Professor Mourad Tayebi was the incoming Deputy Chair.

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 2.1 Academic Planning and Curriculum Approvals Committee
- Item 4.1 Chair's Report
- Item 4.2 Vice Chancellor's Report
- Item 4.3 Student Report
- Item 4.4 External Review of Academic Senate Implementation
- Item 4.6 2025 Work Plan
- Item 4.7 Academic Risk Framework
- Item 4.8 TEQSA Risk Assessment
- Item 4.9 TEQSA Re-registration Update
- Item 5.10.3 Academic Planning and Curriculum Approvals Committee
- Item 5.10.4 Senate Education Committee
- Item 5.10.5 Senate Assessment Committee
- Item 5.10.6 Academic Senate Policy Committee
- Item 5.10.7 Research Committee
- Item 5.10.8 Research Studies Committee
- Item 5.10.9 Third Party Provider Committee

It was resolved (AS 25/01:01):

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

It was resolved (AS 25/01:02):

That Academic Senate confirmed the minutes of the Senate meeting held on Friday 6 December 2024, (meeting 24/06) 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 are requested to report on any developments in relation to the items.

Action 24/06:3.8 | TEQSA Risk Assessment

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

Update: Item 4.7 TEQSA Risk Assessment
Item closed.

24/05: 3.3 | Student Report

Professor Maryanne Dever to talk through AI document with Mr Ashes Niroula and Mr Nabin Gautam.

Update: Professor Dever was an apology. Update to be provided at the April meeting.

24/05: 3.3 | Student Report

Mr Ashes Niroula to talk to Professor Brian Stout, regarding an end date for the Academic Integration Module (AIM).

Update: No further updates than those provided at the December 2024 meeting of Academic Senate, where it had been noted that there was no end date to AIM and that it was not compulsory for students to re-take the module. It was determined that student representatives would be able to revisit this, if there were additional questions.

Item closed.

24/03: 3.3.2 | Postgraduate Student Report

Mr Prasad Perera to provide regular updates on the PhD Scholarship Stipend.

Update: The HDR stipend was increased in January 2025. The Academic Senate was informed that the PVC-Research was looking at the GRS and their processes. This item would be revisited in the broader scope of the HDR strategy.

Item Closed.

2. APPROVALS

Professor Mailhammer advised Senate that changes would be implemented due to external review of Senate. These changes include the introduction of:

- A summary with more details on new proposed programs to be included in the agenda and access to relevant documentation.
- The Chair to provide a one-page summary of their Standing Committee's most recent meeting and speak to that summary.
- Papers from Standing Committee meetings to be made accessible to members of Academic Senate.

- Biannual Standing Committee delegate reports of the decisions made and an affirmation that its decisions were taken under scope of delegation and consistent with relevant University policies.

2.1 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

It was resolved (AS25/01:03):

That Academic Senate noted the report of the Academic Planning and Courses Approvals Committee e-meeting held on 15 October 2024 (meeting e24/03) and approved one new subject, HUMN1074 – The Entrepreneurial Self.

2.2 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

2.2.1 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

There was no Academic Senate Policy Committee update report for noting.

2.3 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 (AS25/01:04):

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

New Donor Coursework Scholarship for Approval

- Perera Foundation Scholarship
- J. Wyndham Prince Civil Engineering Scholarship for Women
- Professor Ross Hawker Scholarship in Medicine

New Donor Research Scholarship for Approval

- Bob and Norma Ingham PhD Scholarship in Medicine

Amendments to Existing Scholarships

- Podiatry Professionals Scholarship – One year
- Dean’s Western Sydney Local Health District Master of Art Therapy Indigenous Scholarship
- Refugee Scholarships – where permanent Humanitarian Visa are accepted

New Donor-Funded Prizes for Approval

- SoCLA Academic Excellence Award
- SoCLA Research Excellence Award

2.4 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*

2.4.1 CONFERRAL OF AWARDS

It was resolved (AS25/01:05):

The Academic Senate:

- i. approved the award of degrees with distinction to graduands listed Attachment A – Graduands for awards with distinction*
- ii. noted the conferral of awards to graduates with pass or honours coursework degrees as listed in Attachment C - Graduates with pass degrees approved within SAC delegation*

2.4.2 POSTHUMOUS AWARD

There were no posthumous awards for noting.

3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

There was no business arising from previous meetings.

4. GENERAL BUSINESS

4.1 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 gave an overview of recent activities undertaken, including the current review of schools, courses and programs, the new strategic plan and the recommendations from the external review of Academic Senate. He noted that all the work was taking place concurrently. Professor Mailhammer also noted the significant work associated with Progression Show Cause and revocation panels, drawing Senate's attention to the increase in Progression Show Cause cases.

Professor Mailhammer advised Senate of the benchmarking work on academic risk that he and Ms Julia Haremza had done, noting that there were differences in how other universities are managing academic risk and what was considered academic risk.

The Chair relayed that he is an external board member at ACU. He stated that it would be beneficial to have an external member as this would benefit both universities. Having an external member would give Western access to benchmarking and gives Western an outside reference point.

4.2 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*

Professor Kevin Dunn delivered the report as the Vice-Chancellor had sent his apologies. The Vice-Chancellor's report had a different format and feedback was requested. The report included achievements and excellence awards, recognising people for their contributions.

Professor Dunn noted that this was an exciting period both nationally and internationally, as the first cohort of students had completed their first period of study at the Surabaya campus with 100% retention. The University was undertaking work towards a campus in India, having signed an MOU with a state government in India.

Professor Dunn said Government policy was the biggest variability for universities in Australia. Changes to visa processing had impacted all universities including Western. The overall discourse was dissuading international students from coming to Australia.

The Provost also emphasised that there was also a lot of discussion and interest in university governance. He said that Western was moving towards stronger governance due to external review of the Board of Trustees (Board) and Academic Senate, and the changes being made to both committees.

Senate queried the statement made last year that equity funding would benefit Western, providing extra funding. Professor Dunn relayed that the details of equity funding are still in progress. He noted that retention is the University's highest priority with the aim being 83% retention, pointing to the financial benefits of increased retention.

Senate also queried whether the brevity of the report meant omitting important content, and whether a list of standard items for inclusion in the report was warranted. A standardised report could also be beneficial for TEQSA re-registration. It was suggested that the Vice-Chancellor's report could perhaps be presented at alternate Senate meetings.

New action:

Chair to talk to the Vice-Chancellor for the introduction of a standard report of information in the Vice-Chancellor's Report. The updated format could be implemented for the April 2025 meeting of Academic Senate.

4.3 STUDENT REPORT

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

Mr Prasad Perera summarised his paper and explained the significant pressure international PhD students are under, faced with the prospect of losing their fee waiver after the expiration of their scholarships. He argued for a fee waiver for the full four-year period of candidature.

Professor Janice Aldrich-Wright advised Senate that she had already spoken to Mr Perera. She noted that the HDR Policy clearly explained the requirements for HDR students, domestic and international. Tuition fee and scholarship conditions are also clearly articulated in the letter of offer. She said Schools had the discretion to waive fees not the GRS.

Professor Aldrich-Wright stated that the quality of work is not associated with a timeframe, rather, it is the question researched for the doctorate. All PhD candidates are given the same information regarding PhD requirements. Additionally, the supervisory panel also needs to be realistic on what can be achieved.

Senate members noted that blanket fee waivers might be difficult to implement if the student's sponsor or the home country government might have conditions and requirements. It was argued Schools and Instituted needed to find ways to support the student completing their doctorate within the agreed timeframe, by e.g. upskilling academics. It was also asserted that a doctorate was a three-year degree. There were benefits to students completing within this timeframe, such as spending that time in the workforce or continuing their research post-completion. However, Senate members also warned against such compressed PhD degrees, giving students insufficient time to produce high-quality work, publications for the University and not setting them up for a meaningful career. Senate requested student data regarding completion of PhD in 3 years versus 4 years. Members also queried if there are disciplinary differences and where any fee waivers were in fact granted.

Moreover, Senate members raised concerns that illness could result in the need for an extension, therefore there was a need for avenues to assist candidates. International students might also be impacted by psychological issues and isolation and required time to acclimatise. Software licensing, upgrades and changes could also impact duration and delay a candidate's completion date. Senate noted that alternate avenues and solutions to support students should be explored.

New Action

The Research Studies Committee is tasked with examining this issue on the basis of data on fee waivers, average PhD completion times by discipline, reasons for extensions and to report back to the Academic Senate. Professor Aldrich-Wright to talk to Deans about alternative support options.

Ms Jess Gleeson arrived 10:06am.

4.4 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

Professor Kevin Dunn, Chair of the advisory External Review Implementation Panel, relayed that the external review is timely as there is currently significant focus on university governance. The review included affirmations, commendations and recommendations for Board and Senate. The direction that the University would take had been noted in the papers. Some of the recommendations to be implemented include:

- Update the functions of Senate as noted in the TOR, including Standing Committees;
- changes to the Chairs of Standing Committees;
- increase to resourcing for Senate support;
- development of a comprehensive induction for new members;
- changes to the composition of Academic Senate.

Senate members asserted that there was a need for more academic representation in the External Review Implementation Panel.

It was resolved to establish a Senate Working Group to undertake mapping of the TOR to HESF, as well as benchmarking and drafting proposals and TOR. It was clarified that Senate would also be responsible for the decision regarding the structure of Standing

Committees, while the Board was responsible for the review and update of the Academic Governance Policy.

It was pointed out that the regulator TEQSA expected a timely implementation of the recommendations.

New Action:

Chair of Academic Senate to send an EOI for the Senate Working Group.

Attachment 1: External Review of the Board of Trustees and Academic Senate

Ms Sophie Buck arrived at 10:37am.

Mr Nabin Gautam exited at 10:52am.

4.5 2025 WORKPLAN

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

Professor Mailhammer advised Senate of the implementation of a forward-looking calendar format and explained that the draft contained the Higher Education Standards together with actions against them. What remained to be done was to review these actions and discuss dates and relevant actions.

Senate reviewed the 2024 Workplan reconciling items that had been completed, were in progress or needed attention.

The systematic reporting on disability matters in the SAC annual reports was noted as requiring attention. SACs were strongly advised to include reporting on disability matters in their annual reports.

There were several items which are in progress, which were noted in amber in the papers. The Chair provided updates on several items.

It was suggested that a review of the workplan take place mid-year to track progress, enabling completion of outstanding items.

The Chair advised that the 2025 Workplan document is a preplan as orienting the workplan to align to the HESF was a primary focus. Discussion and feedback from Senate members would be incorporated in the 2025 Workplan

It was suggested that a discussion of key academic issues could include the HESF and TEQSA Guidance Notes. Members could be tasked with presenting overviews for discussion at Academic Senate.

New Action

Chair to send EOI regarding review of HESF.

Senate noted that the work done in the Senate Education Committee and Senate Assessment Committee impacted the Schools, and more information regarding what the work undertaken at these Committees would be welcome.

New Action:

The Chairs of the Senate Education Committee and Senate Assessment Committee to organise annual presentations at School meetings, reporting on the work undertaken by their respective Committee.

New Action:

Senate members to submit their suggestions on what Senate should be doing to the Committee Secretary.

Reviewing the tasks noted in the 2025 Workplan, Senate members suggested that the Workplan could be a multi-year plan, rather than an annual one. Additionally, some of the work was done by the Standing Committees. These Committees could then report their progress to Senate.

Professor Alpha Possamai-Inesedy exited at 11:09am.

4.6 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 pointed to the connection between academic and strategic/enterprise risk. She said work was in progress to incorporate and map the HESF to academic risk and cross-reference with strategic risk. A timeline would be brought to the April 2025 meeting of Academic Senate.

Mr Mario Milanovic arrived 11:20am.

4.7 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 Cath Ellis noted that the final TEQSA Risk Assessment was received in October 2024.

Mr Mario Milanovic relayed to Senate that the financial followed a standard used across the whole sector, but which did not necessarily reflect the practices of each institution. Generic advice was given by TEQSA when asked to provide details on how the metrics worked. Mr Milanovic stated that the University was sustainable.

The TEQSA Risk Assessment report was provided annually as a snapshot of a particular point in time. It does not incorporate any significant changes made after that time.

New Action:

Present the TEQSA Risk Assessment report annually at Academic Senate.

Mr Mario Milanovic exited 11:32am.

4.8 TEQSA RE-REGISTRATION UPDATE

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

Professor Cath Ellis, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Quality and Integrity, reported to Senate that the initial draft of the submission was now complete and under consultation. The Steering Committee would review the updated version, with further feedback to be

collected, before the final version submitted to the Board of Trustees for their approval. There were no delays reported. The Academic Senate requested that the submission would be tabled at the April meeting.

New Action

The TEQSA re-registration submission (self-assurance reports) to be presented at the April 2025 meeting of Academic Senate, with the proviso that sensitive information would require attention when presented.

4.9 SCHOOL REVIEW UPDATE

*Higher Education Standard(s): 5.3
Mitigation against risk(s) in Academic Senate Risk Register: 3*

Professor Kevin Dunn, Chair of the Advisory Board relayed to Senate that a paper was being prepared in response to the Issues Paper released in late 2024. The paper titled, *What We Have Heard*, was expected to be released in March 2025. He said the report provided recommendations for easily rectifiable situations as well as recommendations for bigger picture items. The focus was on staff and especially students, with the Chancellor having declared 2025 to be “the year of the student”. Professor Dunn said that the timeline planned for an approval of relevant changes by June 2025 for an implementation in 2026.

The attached slides were presented to Senate members, which included positive and negative feedback. Senate members noted that the Divisions had an equal number of staff as the Schools and queried the position of the Institutes in this structure. Senate was advised that the Institutes are an academic organisation unit under Research Division.

Professor Dunn said the report flagged the possibilities of change, and the Executive would put forward a plan in that event. He advised that any organisational changes would need to be taken to the Board of Trustees, which had requested an update at their next meeting. Any changes with academic implications would be brought to Academic Senate.

Senate members queried whether there would be a comprehensive risk analysis and whether there was a plan for the transitions with the relevant risk analysis. Senate was assured that the School Review changes were a strategic risk for the University and would be monitored through the Risk Framework before implementation.

Senate was advised the current enterprise bargaining had only just started and so connections to a future enterprise agreement were yet uncertain.

Attachment 2: Schools Review

4.10 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 and Institutes.

4.11 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE/HOT TOPICS

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

5. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

5.1 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*

There were no Senate Executive Committee minutes for noting.

5.2 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*

There were no Academic Planning and Curriculum Approvals Committee (APCAC) minutes for noting.

5.3 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 unconfirmed minutes of the Senate Education Committee meetings held on 28 November 2024 (meeting 24/06) were appended for noting.

5.4 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 21 January 2025 (meeting 25/01) were appended for noting.

5.5 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 28 November 2024 (Meeting 24/05) were appended for noting.

5.6 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 unconfirmed minutes of the Research Studies Committee meeting held on 9 December 2024 (Meeting 24/13) were appended for noting by the Senate.

5.7 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 were no Academic Senate Policy Committee minutes for noting.

5.8 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

There were no Third-Party Provider Committee minutes for noting.

5.9 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled for 9 April 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

5.10 2024 ANNUAL REPORTS

The purpose of this item was for Senate to ensure that all Standing Committees of Academic Senate are carrying out their functions in accordance with their Terms of Reference.

Chairs of the Senate Standing Committees provided brief updates regarding the committee.

5.10.1 ACADEMIC SENATE

The 2024 Academic Senate Annual Report was appended for noting.

5.10.2 SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The 2024 Senate Executive Committee Annual Report was appended for noting.

5.10.3 ACADEMIC PLANNING AND CURRICULUM APPROVALS COMMITTEE

The 2024 Academic Planning and Curriculum Approvals Committee Annual Report was appended for noting.

Professor Cath Ellis relayed that the report mentions the review of the program review to be discussed at the March 2025 of the committee.

5.10.4 SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The 2024 Senate Education Committee Annual Report was appended for noting.

Professor Brian Stout provided an update on behalf of the Chair and the Deputy Chair. He noted that Professor Dever was committed to providing a one-page summary for every meeting. TEQSA changes in 2024 had resulted in increased discussion as the Committee reviewed the updates. The Committee was re-building the committee's workplan for 2025 with the inclusion of AI in teaching and teaching quality.

Professor Stout noted that student representation was an issue. He said the student voice was important, and work needed to be done on how students can be more involved and engaged.

Members concurred that student representation and participation is a problem for all committees. Professor Meg Smith stated that the School of Business had introduced a forum for the student voice which had resulted in higher engagement from HDR students, as they feel more confident to participate in forums. Professor Smith noted that the School was still experiencing significant challenges with undergraduate representation and participation.

New Action:

Senate Education Committee to provide an update on Credit for Prior Learning.

5.10.5 SENATE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

The 2024 Senate Assessment Committee Annual Report was appended for noting.

The committee chair, Professor Brian Stout, conveyed that the focus for the Committee in 2024 was AI and misconduct. He also pointed to the high levels of distress students experience during a misconduct investigation, and the backlog of cases. A targeted work group had been formed to address these issues with work being ongoing. Professor Stout pointed to resubmission of assessment items as one avenue to explore. More generally, he reflected on the need to look at the assessments and program design in areas with a large number of misconduct matters.

5.10.6 ACADEMIC SENATE POLICY COMMITTEE

The 2024 Academic Senate Policy Committee Annual Report was appended for noting.

Professor Kevin Dunn relayed that the comprehensive HDR suite of policies had been completed in 2024 and that currently there was a policy suite review underway.

5.10.7 RESEARCH COMMITTEE

The 2024 Research Committee Annual Report was appended for noting.

Professor Deborah Sweeney noted that 2024 had been a very active year for the Research Committee, as they worked through the Accord, ARC review, and the government focus on industry and commercialisation. The Committee also reviewed its Terms of Reference to ensure that the committee activities are aligned.

Professor Sweeney reported that there had been several Research Quality Forums with wide discussion on topics such as grant strategy, ethics update, foreign arrangements, ethical research arrangements and the challenges facing Early and Mid-Career Researchers. She said that in 2025, the Committee would be resetting strategy and looking at new targets across the next 5 years, as well as School/Institute collaborations. The Research Scorecard would be further developed.

Senate raised concerns that humanities appeared to have been overlooked in the research themes. They were appraised that there had been a revitalisation on the 2025 themes, with six themes. An EOI would be sent out for colleagues interested in becoming a global lead.

With reference to the annual research performance data, Senate queried that ICS had a lot of publications with philosophy, and the researchers listed as ICS staff are also School researchers. Members were advised that there were guidelines on membership explaining how academics could be in a School but also members of an Institute. Institute Directors and Dean were provided with monthly reports, and the policy was currently being reviewed to ensure good School/Institute collaboration.

Senate requested that the summary from the Research Quality Forums be brought to Senate.

New Action:

The Research Quality forum be presented to Academic Senate following its presentation at the May 2025 meeting of the Research Committee.

5.10.8 RESEARCH STUDIES COMMITTEE

The 2024 Research Studies Committee Annual Report was appended for noting.

Professor Janice Aldrich-Wright noted the scholarship uplift in January 2025 and the expanded scholarships. She advised that first round of applications had closed and would be processed that week.

She said that the review of the Master of Research (MRes) would be undertaken in 2025. As the Research Studies Committee had been very busy with robust thesis discussions that did not allow time for discussions on other matters, it had now scheduled monthly research exam meetings and bi-monthly meetings for other matters.

Concern was raised that the Institute for Culture and Society were considering designing an MRes program. Assurance was provided regarding a broad consultation process on how to revitalise the MRes program before any implementation. It was also queried whether the intention was to build a pipeline from undergraduate to MRes to PhD or at least MRes to PhD, where students who did extremely well in their MRes would have an automatic place in the PhD program. Professor Aldrich-Wright noted that high achieving MRes students received a letter asking them to apply for a PhD program and noted that the MRes review would include the option of automatic placement for high achieving MRes students.

5.10.9 THIRD PARTY PROVIDER COMMITTEE

The 2024 Third Party Provider Committee Annual Report was appended for noting.

Dr Nicolene Murdoch relayed that the Committee had been reviewing partnerships. Work on governance would continue in 2025. Dr Murdoch advised Senate that the first resulting period for Surabaya had been completed and there was work being done on how to manage resulting from external providers.

Dr Murdoch introduced Dr Nayantara Pothen who will be working in the global portfolio space.

5.10.10 GRADUATE RESEARCH SCHOOL SAC

The 2024 Graduate Research School SAC Annual Report was appended for noting.

5.10.11 SCHOOL OF BUSINESS SAC

The 2024 School of Business SAC Annual Report was appended for noting.

5.10.12 SCHOOL OF COMPUTER, DATA AND MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES SAC

The 2024 School of Computer, Data and Mathematical Sciences SAC Annual Report was appended for noting.

5.10.13 SCHOOL OF EDUCATION SAC

The 2024 School of Education SAC Annual Report was appended for noting.

5.10.14 SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING, DESIGN AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT SAC

The 2024 School of Engineering, Design and Built Environment SAC Annual Report was appended for noting.

5.10.15 SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES SAC

The 2024 School of Health Sciences SAC Annual Report was appended for noting.

5.10.16 SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND COMMUNICATION ARTS SAC

The 2024 School of Humanities and Communication Arts SAC Annual Report was appended for noting.

5.10.17 SCHOOL OF LAW SAC

The 2024 School of Law SAC Annual Report was appended for noting.

5.10.18 SCHOOL OF MEDICINE SAC

The 2024 School of Medicine SAC Annual Report was appended for noting.

5.10.19 SCHOOL OF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY SAC

The 2024 School of Nursing and Midwifery SAC Annual Report was appended for noting.

5.10.20 SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY SAC

The 2024 School of Psychology SAC Annual Report was appended for noting.

5.10.21 SCHOOL OF SCIENCE SAC

The 2024 School of Science SAC Annual Report was appended for noting.

5.10.22 SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES SAC

The 2024 School of Social Sciences SAC Annual Report was appended for noting.

5.10.23 2024 ANNUAL SHOW CAUSE PROGRESSION REPORT

The 2024 Annual Show Cause Progression Report was appended for noting.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

If raised at the meeting.

7. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Academic Senate Committee (25/02) will be Friday 11 April 2025 at 9:30am at Parramatta South Campus, Boardroom 1 (PS-EB.2.02).

The meetings scheduled for 2025 is as follows:

- 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 12:21pm.