



Board of Trustees Communique

Board of Trustees meeting – 3 September 2026

This communique summarises the non-confidential matters considered by the Western Sydney University Board of Trustees at its meeting on 3 September 2026. It is not a complete record of all decisions taken at the meeting, nor does it include the full details of all discussions. Inquiries and requests for further information can be directed to the General Counsel and University Secretary at governancemeetings@westernsydney.edu.au

The minutes of the previous Board meeting held on [5 June 2026](#) were confirmed.

REPORTS

Chancellor's Report

The Chancellor provided an update on a number of matters, including the increasing regulatory and compliance obligations facing the higher education sector and the University's preparations for implementation of the revised Higher Education Standards Framework. The Chancellor noted the success of the June graduation ceremonies, with recent changes to the format receiving positive feedback from graduates and their families. The Chancellor also highlighted the University's Social Cohesion Initiative, including the recent Social Cohesion Roundtable that brought together leaders from government, law enforcement, education, business and community organisations, as well as broader community engagement activities focused on employment, sport, culture, education, faith and community connection across Western Sydney. An update was provided on the **Stay the Course Walk**, an opportunity for the Western community to come together to support our students and the future of Western Sydney. The Stay the Course Walk will also bring to life Friends of Western Sydney, a strategic initiative that helps students stay on track, strengthens connections with the region, and supports Western Sydney to grow with the skilled local workforce it needs. The Chancellor spoke to the official opening of the Viatris Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Hub and the launch of the Dr Elie Chami Institute for Pharmaceutical Manufacturing, reinforcing the University's leadership in pharmaceutical manufacturing research and industry collaboration.

Vice-Chancellor's Report

The Vice-Chancellor provided an update on several key University matters, including the completion of consultation for the Reset Post Implementation Review, with a draft report to be released to staff in September ahead of the final report in October. An update was provided on service standards and the commencement of the Vice-Chancellor's Leadership Program, which supports succession planning and strengthens the University's capacity to attract, develop and retain high-performing staff. The successful launch of the University's new brand was also noted, with strong early engagement and positive feedback from students and stakeholders. The Vice-Chancellor



highlighted the institution-wide rollout of Microsoft 365 Copilot Premium to staff, including casual employees, and Higher Degree Research students, supported by a comprehensive program of training, communities of practice, a virtual AI hub and consultation on university-wide AI principles. The Vice-Chancellor advised that the University had become the first Sydney-based university to enrol more than 1,000 Indigenous Australian students, reflecting the success of its Indigenous-led approach to student access. The Vice-Chancellor concluded with an update on current regulatory matters, including negotiations with ATEC.

Chair of Academic Senate Report

The report from the Chair of Academic Senate was considered, including an update on the Academic Performance Dashboard, stabilisation of HDR enrolments, the strong performance of The College and Surabaya campus, and compliance under the Higher Education Standard Framework. An update on the University's research strategy was provided, which focuses on strengthening foundational research systems and processes across the institution before identifying and investing in priority research areas.

Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) Amendment Instrument 2026

The Board discussed the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) Amendment Instrument 2026*, which strengthens requirements relating to governance effectiveness, academic governance, risk management, transparency, stakeholder engagement, anti-racism initiatives, workforce planning and public accountability.

The Board discussed the requirement to adopt definitions of racism, including racism towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, antisemitism, Islamophobia and any other forms of racial discrimination and vilification. The definitions will be presented to the Board at the December meeting for approval and implementation by 1 January 2027.

Disability Support Fund: New Commonwealth Governance and Strategy Conditions

The Board discussed the new Commonwealth requirements relating to disability support funding and approved the dedicated Board subcommittee to oversee the Disability Support Fund.

Teaching Quality Framework (TQF) Deep Dive

The Pro Vice-Chancellor, Learning and Teaching attended the meeting and provided an update on the implementation of the Teaching Quality Framework (TQF), noting that there has been strong engagement across the University.

BOARD STANDING COMMITTEES

At each meeting, the Board of Trustees considers reports from its Standing Committees, including the Audit and Risk Committee, Cyber and Information Technology Committee, Finance and Investment Committee, and People and Culture Committee.



Financial Sustainability

The Board received the minutes of the Finance and Investment Committee meeting held on 20 August 2026. The minutes summarised key matters considered by the Committee, including the University's current financial position.

Risk Management

The Board received the minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 18 August 2026. A key discussion at the meeting was the deep dive presentation on Enterprise Risk 5: Student Success.

AI Governance

The Board received the minutes of the Cyber and Information Technology Committee meeting held on 11 August 2026. The minutes summarised key matters considered by the Committee, including an update on AI Governance.

SUMMARY OF APPROVALS

Election of the Chancellor

The Board of Trustees endorsed the reappointment of Chancellor, Professor Jennifer Westacott AC, for a further four-year term, effective 1 January 2027.

Honorary Titles and Awards Conferral

In accordance with the [*Honorary Titles and Awards Policy*](#), the Board of Trustees approved six Emeritus Professor titles, one Doctor of Science (*honoris causa*), four Doctor of Letters (*honoris causa*), and two Honorary Fellow titles.

MATTERS FOR NOTING

The Board of Trustees receives regular reports for noting which provides an overview of significant activities and developments that have occurred across the University between Board meetings. These reports ensure the Board remains informed of key operational, strategic, and governance matters arising during the reporting period.

Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) Update

The Board considered the University's 2025–2026 Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) submission, including key workforce and gender equality outcomes, the University's gender pay gap, and the three targets selected under WGEA's new three-year target-setting framework.

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Prevention and Response Update

The Board received an update on progress to develop the University's Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Response Plan.



NSW Auditor General's Report to Universities 2025

The Board considered the Auditor General's Universities Report to Parliament 2025.

OTHER MATTERS

The Board regularly invites internal and external guest speakers to attend Board meetings and participate in informal discussions on a range of topics relevant to the Board. These sessions provide members with the opportunity to gain insights into emerging issues, industry developments, organisational priorities, and areas of strategic importance.

Mr Paul Harris, CEO, 2050 Alliance attended the meeting to provide an overview of the 2050 Alliance, a recently established group of nine universities focused on advancing the objectives of the University Accord and shaping long-term higher education reforms.

The Chair, Board of Directors, Western Sydney University Student Union (WSUSU) and the SRC President joined the meeting for a Fireside Chat, to discuss priorities of the newly established Western Sydney University Student Union and opportunities to strengthen student engagement with the Board of Trustees.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information on the Western Sydney University Board of Trustees, including its functions, membership and committees, is available through the University's [Leadership and Governance](#) webpage.

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled for 3 December 2026.

Philip Maloney
General Counsel and University Secretary