

Academic Board Bulletin July 2026

The Academic Board held its fourth meeting for 2026 on Tuesday 28 July 2026, chaired by Professor Alexander Kist. The Board considered a range of matters relating to academic quality, curriculum, assessment, research governance and sector reform.

Reports to Academic Board

The following reports were received at the 28 July 2026 Academic Board meeting.

Academic Board Chair's Update

The Chair provided an update on emerging regulatory developments, including recent changes to the Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF) and TEQSA guidance regarding learning and assessment in a generative artificial intelligence environment. Members discussed the University's preparations for compliance with the revised standards, ongoing work to integrate AI into teaching and learning, and opportunities for future professional development for Academic Board members. The Chair also encouraged participation in the Academic Board self-assessment process and ongoing efforts to strengthen academic governance.

Council Report to Academic Board

The Board received an update on the recent joint session between Council and the Vice-Chancellor's Executive, noting the value of the engagement in strengthening governance, strategic oversight and shared understanding between governing bodies and University leadership.

Vice-Chancellor and President's Report

Vice-Chancellor and President Professor Paul Mazerolle provided an update on significant national and institutional developments. Academic Board noted:

- Preparations for compliance with revised HESF requirements effective from January 2027.
- Ongoing Australian Universities Accord reforms and sector submissions regarding proposed higher education legislation.
- Planning for the University's 2027 Mission-Based Compact discussions with the Australian Tertiary Education Commission (ATEC).
- Expansion of Commonwealth Practical Placement Payments to additional allied health disciplines.

- Outcomes from the University's fifth annual Regional Tour, including engagement with regional communities, study hubs, schools and industry partners across Southern Queensland.

Students and Education Portfolio Report

The Board received an update on key initiatives across the Students and Education portfolio, including:

- Continued development of the Academic Quality Framework.
- Introduction of a cultural safety module for students undertaking work-integrated learning and placements.
- Impacts of proposed Commonwealth funding changes on the Southern Queensland Rural Health program.
- Ongoing implementation of Commonwealth placement payments and associated administrative requirements.
- Progress towards a formal partnership agreement with TAFE Queensland.
- Strong enrolment outcomes in the partnership program with Lanzhou University, exceeding commencement targets.

Academic and Research Portfolio Report

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and Research) Professor John Bell highlighted several notable achievements and developments, including:

- Successful accreditation of the University's Pharmacy program.
- Strong enrolment demand for the new Space Technology major, with 41 commencing students.
- Continued success of the University's iLAUNCH initiative and preparations for Open Day events.

Student Guild Report

Academic Board received an update from the Student Director (Student Guild) Peter Giess, including work to progress improvements to student services and campus experience.

Academic Board Student Representative Report

The Board received feedback from the Academic Board student representative regarding improvements to support for Higher Degree Research (HDR) students. Members noted actions taken by the Graduate Research School to address access to research resources and improve support arrangements for HDR candidates.

Research Committee Report

Academic Board received the report from the Research Committee and:

- Endorsed the revised Higher Degree by Research Student Scholarship Procedure.

- Endorsed the revised Higher Degree by Research Supervision Procedure for approval by the Vice-Chancellor, subject to minor revisions.

Discussion focused on scholarship transparency, supervisory arrangements, wellbeing support for HDR candidates, supervisory team composition and changes to paid employment expectations for HDR scholarship recipients.

Education Committee Report

The Board received reports on:

- The Library Annual Report.
- The Assurance of Learning Approach.
- The Annual Student Grievances and Appeals Report.

Discussion focused on implementation of the University's Assurance of Learning framework, assessment security, program learning outcomes, and the increasing influence of generative AI on curriculum and assessment practices. Members highlighted the importance of clear guidance, staff capability building and consistent approaches to assessment design across the University.

Academic Quality and Student Experience

Academic Quality Framework

Academic Board received an update on progress with the Academic Quality Framework Review. Members noted extensive consultation activities underway and the importance of ensuring that First Nations perspectives are appropriately embedded within curriculum quality assurance and review processes.

Student Experience and Graduate Outcomes

The Board considered results from the Student Experience Survey (SES) and Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS). Discussion highlighted:

- The importance of the first-year student experience.
- Opportunities to strengthen student belonging, engagement and progression.
- The need to support students throughout the entire student lifecycle.
- Strong graduate employment outcomes and opportunities to better communicate links between study, graduate attributes and career readiness.
- Improved integration of institutional data to support evidence-based decision making and targeted interventions.

Academic Programs

Pathways Program Reviews

Academic Board approved comprehensive reviews of the following Pathways programs:

- English for Academic Purposes (EAPS).
- UniPrep (AEPP).
- English Language Preparatory Courses for Domestic Students (ELDS).
- UniSQ Ready (ACEQ) and Tertiary Preparation Pathway (TPPG).

The Board noted the significant role these programs play in supporting access to higher education, student success and participation by regional, underrepresented and diverse learner cohorts.

Bachelor of Paramedicine Review

Consideration of the comprehensive review of the Bachelor of Paramedicine was deferred pending further information relating to curriculum mapping and demonstration of accreditation requirements, including cultural safety and mental health education.

Major Program Changes

Academic Board approved:

- A major program change to the Master of Organisational Project Management involving the discontinuation of the Construction Management and Digital Construction specialisations.
- A major program change establishing the Bachelor of Medical Science (Medical Pathway), Associate Degree of Medical Science and Diploma of Medical Science.
- The discontinuation of the Bachelor of Biomedical Science (Medical Pathway).

The Board noted the strategic importance of the revised medical pathway in supporting regional workforce development, student recruitment and participation by students from regional and remote communities.

Master of Business Administration

The Board considered further information regarding the proposed Master of Business Administration major program change. Members supported referral of the proposal to the Academic Board Executive Committee for consideration of approval.

Governance

Terms of Reference Working Group

Academic Board received an update from the Terms of Reference Working Group, which is reviewing Board membership, representation and responsibilities in light of recent amendments to the Higher

Education Standards Framework and evolving academic governance expectations. A draft proposal will be presented for consultation later in the year.

Strategic Discussion

Assessment Approaches in a Changing Higher Education Environment

Academic Board participated in a strategic discussion on assessment.

Discussion considered:

- The role of assessment in shaping the student experience.
- Emerging sector trends including authentic assessment, competency-based assessment and assurance of learning.
- The implications of artificial intelligence for learning, assessment integrity and graduate capability.
- The importance of feedback and meaningful student engagement.
- Opportunities to strengthen assessment approaches that mirror professional practice and improve graduate employability.
- The need to ensure assessment practices remain inclusive and accessible for diverse student cohorts.
- Potential development of a distinctive institutional assessment approach aligned with the University's mission, values and graduate attributes.

Members agreed that further discussion and engagement on assessment strategy would be valuable as curriculum renewal and Academic Quality Framework initiatives progress.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of Academic Board will be held on **Tuesday 22 September 2026** in the Council Chamber, Toowoomba Campus

2026 Academic Board Meetings

Academic Board meetings for the remainder of 2026 are scheduled as follows:

- Meeting 5 – 22 September 2026
- Meeting 6 – 24 November 2026

If you wish to attend Academic Board as an observer, please forward your request to attend to Academic.Board@unisq.edu.au a least three business day prior to the meeting.