Minutes

Academic Board

Meeting No: 4/25

Date and Time:	Tuesday, 15 July 2025, 1:00pm
Location:	Council Chamber, Toowoomba Campus
Board Secretary:	Tracey Tyers, Governance Officer (Academic Board)	07 4631 1912
Members Present:	Professor Alexander Kist (Chair) Associate Professor Eric Ng (Deputy Chair) Professor Karen Nelson Associate Professor Jessica Marrington Professor Lorelle Burton Professor Mark Toleman Professor Glen Coleman Professor Thiru Aravinthan Professor Sherif Mohamed Dr Anita Wheeldon Professor Ren Yi (Zoom) Dr Dianne Stratton-Maher Professor Charlotte Brownlow Professor Polly Burey Professor Jo-Anne Ferreira Dr Rohan Genrich Professor Geoff Slaughter Associate Professor Andrew Hemming Peter Giess Associate Professor Mia O'Brien Charmaine Davis Dr Ahmad Sharifian-Barforoush Brintha Karunarathna Shane Simmons Dr Lindsay Helwig Associate Professor Daniel Terry Dr Douglas Eacersall (Zoom) Associate Professor Alison McCarthy Dr Emerson Zerafa-Payne
By Invitation:	Brett Delaney – UniSQ Council member
Rights of Audience & Observers:	Julie Shinners – University Secretary and Director (Governance) Professor Fabrizio Carmignani – Head of School (Business) Professor Robert Sang – Head of School (Mathematics, Physics and Computing) (Zoom) Associate Professor John Dearnaley – Head of School (Agriculture and Environmental Science) Professor Marion Gray – Associate Director (Health Partnerships) (Zoom) Professor Elizabeth Cardell – Head of School (Health and Medical Sciences) (Zoom) Professor Prasad Yarlagadda – Head of School (Engineering) Dr Tania Leach – Deputy Head of School (Education) Professor Sonja March - Director (Centre for Health Research) Associate Professor Beata Batorowicz – Acting Associate Dean (Research) Emma Phillips – Governance Officer
Apologies:	Professor John Bell, Professor Noeleen McNamara, Dr Julie Lindsay, Associate Professor Lisa Beccaria, Associate Professor Rhiannan Johnson, Dr Sarah McKibbin, Zachary Vellacott, Jade-Bianca Thomas.
Absent:	Nil

The meeting opened at 1:00pm. A quorum was present.

Acknowledgement of Country

Dr Rohan Genrich provided an Acknowledgement of Country and paid respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

Welcome

The Chair welcomed members at the UniSQ Council Chamber and via Zoom and noted the apologies. Chair of the UniSQ Audit and Risk Committee and UniSQ Council member Brett Delaney was welcomed as an observer.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest and Statement of Confidentiality

The Chair invited members of Academic Board to declare any potential, perceived or actual conflict of interest with the matters listed. Members indicated their involvement with submissions for the following proposals:

- Professor Polly Burey – Item 9.4

The Chair advised members that generally Academic Board matters are not confidential. Confidential items will be identified and no discussion of confidential items outside of the meeting is permitted. Members were reminded that the discussion should be contained to the topic, rather than identifying particular individuals.

Starring of Items

Having provided members with an opportunity to star any additional agenda items, it was **resolved** that Academic Board approve or note *en bloc* all remaining items which were not starred.

1. Confirmation of the Minutes

Received: Unconfirmed minutes Academic Board meeting (3/25) 27 May 2025

Resolved:

*Academic Board **confirmed** the minutes of the Academic Board meeting (3/25) held on 27 May 2025, having been circulated and read, as a true and accurate record.*

2. Business Arising from the Previous Meeting

Received: Post meeting actions arising from the previous meeting.

3. Comments from the Chair

The Chair Professor Alexander Kist addressed members and discussed the recent voluntary redundancy round offered as part of the University's Shaping our Future change process. Professor Kist advised members that three current Academic Board members - Professor Mark Toleman, Professor Thiru Aravinthan, and Shane Simmons would be departing the University as part of the change process in the coming months.

Professor Kist advised members that the 2024-2025 Academic Board Self-Assessment Surveys were underway, noting that the Research Committee and Education Committee surveys had closed, and the Academic Board survey would open on 4 August 2025. Members were strongly encouraged to participate in the survey.

3.1. Council Report to Academic Board   *HESF 6.2.1.f*

Received: Council Report to Academic Board following the 16 June 2025 Council meeting.

The Chair took the report as read and provided a brief overview of matters of interest to Academic Board arising from the 16 June 2025 meeting of the UniSQ Council which included the Horizon 3 – Future Strategy update presented by the Vice-Chancellor, and the updated University Risk Appetite Statements presented by the Acting Director (Internal Audit) Kris Isles.

A query was raised regarding the UniSQ Union Institute of Language. The Vice-Chancellor Professor Karen Nelson agreed to address the matter as part of the Vice-Chancellor's Report at Item 4.

The University Secretary and Director (Governance) Julie Shinners advised that nominations for membership on the next UniSQ Council are currently open. Ms Shinners advised that being a member of Academic Board does not preclude staff and students from nominating.

4.   Vice-Chancellor's Report   *HESF 6.3.1.a*

Received: Vice-Chancellor's Report to Academic Board.

The report was taken as read. The Vice-Chancellor Professor Karen Nelson introduced the item and provided an update on matters arising since submission of the report:

- **Interim Australian Tertiary Education Commission:** Professor Nelson advised that vice-chancellors attended a briefing with the newly formed Australian Tertiary Education Commission (ATEC) on 1 July 2025. Work is underway to formalise ATEC in legislation. ATEC's work will include a review of the Job-ready Graduates package and construction of a needs-based funding model.

- **Queensland Treasury Corporation Borrowings:** The Vice-Chancellor advised that the Queensland Treasury had approved UniSQ's inclusion in the 2025-2026 State Borrowings Program, with a loan of $33 million over 20 years to fund the Ipswich Allied Health Building. Funds are now available, and construction is expected to be completed by 2027.

- **Australia's Special Envoy to Combat Antisemitism:** The Vice-Chancellor advised members that Australia's Special Envoy to Combat Antisemitism had delivered a report to the Australian Government outlining a range of strategies to address an increase in antisemitism in Australia. Professor Nelson also noted that the Australian Human Rights Commission had released draft survey questions in response to the Universities Accord recommendation for a survey around racism at universities. The survey would be released later in August.

- **UniSQ statement of strategic ambition:** Professor Nelson provided an update around the University's draft statement of strategic ambition and highlighted the commitment to internal and external consultation. Members were encouraged to provide feedback during the consultation period.

- **UniSQ Union Institute of Language:** In response to a member's query, Professor Nelson provided an overview of the UniSQ Union Institute of Language (UIL), advising that the institute was a privately owned English language college until the University's acquisition of the UIL Group in December 2022. Professor Nelson advised that the UIL is now fully owned by UniSQ and is in the third year of a four-year transition period, after which the founding partners will step down.

  The UIL Board, chaired by the University's Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer Cliff Kaye, has been working with the UIL executive team to support this transition. The vision is for UIL to evolve into UniSQ's dedicated international pathway college, enhancing the University's global profile and strengthening its brand in the international education sector.

5.   Education Report   *HESF 6.3.1.a*

Received: Education Report to Academic Board.

The report was taken as read. The Associate Provost Professor Lorelle Burton and the Dean (Learning and Teaching Futures) Professor Jo-Anne Ferreira spoke to this item which provided a high-level update on key sector and University-wide education matters, and updates on the priorities and initiatives set out in the Education Plan 2022-2025.

Professor Burton provided an overview of items in the report relevant to student experience and highlighted the following matters:

- **TEQSA Consultation on Draft Documents:** TEQSA has opened consultation on three draft documents: Representation; Information for prospective and current students; and Information management. UniSQ intends to make submissions on all three draft documents, and members were encouraged to provide feedback to inform the University's submissions.

- **Education Plan Pillars:** Professor Burton highlighted some of the work underway towards the University's Education Plan Pillars, including external professional accreditation updates, recent Student Experience events such as the South-West Regional Roadshow, Trimester 2 Student Expos, Brisbane Careers and Employment Expo and upcoming UniSQ Open Days, and enabling strategies.

- **2025 Student Success Conference:** Professor Burton highlighted the recent 2025 Student Success Conference. The conference was co-chaired by Professor Nelson, and several presentations and workshops were delivered by UniSQ staff.

Professor Ferreira provided an overview of items in the report relating to the innovative learning and teaching environment and highlighted the following matters:

- **Education Plan Pillars:** Professor Ferreira highlighted some of the work underway relating to the Education Plan Pillars, including the ongoing assessment transformation workshops, the Assessment Heatmap Project, Programmatic Approaches to Assessment Working Party and the Learning Management System Working Party, the rollouts of Engageli and Cadmus, and the pilot of AI chatbot tool, Cogniti.

- **Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME):** Professor Ferreira congratulated the School of Business on becoming a signatory to the Principles of Responsible Management Education (PRME). PRME is a United Nations-approved initiative that provides a framework for teaching business responsibly and aims to raise the profile of sustainability in business school classrooms.

Members raised the following matters:

- Members discussed the low response rate for **mid-trimester student surveys**. A member questioned the value of these surveys and whether the University might be over-sampling. In response, Professor Ferriera emphasised that student evaluation should not rely on a single mechanism, and that academic staff should actively communicate with students about the purpose and importance of evaluations.

6.   Research Report   *HESF 6.3.1.a*

Received: Research Report to Academic Board

The Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) Professor Sherif Mohamed took the report as read and provided an overview of some of the matters included in the paper.

- **UniSQ Total research income** – Professor Mohamed highlighted the University's 2024 total research income of $42,015,836 which represented a 9.5% increase on the previous year's total income. Professor Mohamed also noted the University's total unaudited research income as of 30 June 2025, which was approximately $20.50 million.

- **International rankings:** Professor Mohamed noted some key points around the University's position in the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings 2026 and the US New Global Universities Rankings released in June 2025.

- **Research awards:** Professor Mohamed highlighted that UniSQ PhD student Chundu Gyem Tamang from the Centre for Future Materials was announced as the winner of the Cooperative Research Australia 2025 Early Career Researchers Competition.

Members congratulated UniSQ PhD student Chundu Gyem Tamang on receiving the Cooperative Research Australia Early Career Researcher Award, highlighting the prestige and significance of recognition at this level.

7. Student Representatives Report *(HESF 6.3.3)*

Received: Student Representatives Report

The Student Representatives Report was taken as read. Student Guild representative Peter Giess and HDR student representative Brintha Karunarathna provided an overview of the consolidated UniSQ Student Guild and Academic Board Student Representatives report. Mr Giess advised that the UniSQ Student Guild Report and the Student Representative Report would be submitted individually in the future.

Mr Giess highlighted that representation within the Students as Partners framework involves two major areas: the Student Senate, which serves as the University's highest student governed body, and Academic Student Representatives (ASR) who represent the student voice within academic and governance committees across the University.

Mr Giess and Ms Karunarathna highlighted the following matters of interest from the report:

- **Students as Partners (SaP) – A Practical Guide:** Mr Giess drew members' attention to the *Students as Partners (SaP) – A Practical Guide* which was provided as an attachment to the Student Representatives Report. Mr Giess thanked the Associate Provost Professor Lorelle Burton for her commitment to the Students as Partners team.

- **Inaugural UniSQ Student Roundtable:** Mr Giess advised that the first UniSQ Student Roundtable had been held on 14 May 2025. The event was designed to capture diverse student voices across campuses and study modes. Mr Giess noted that the *UniSQ Student Roundtable – Reimagining Student Connection Consolidated Report* was provided as an attachment to the Student Representatives Report.

- **Student feedback:** Mr Giess highlighted that the Student Senate and ASR are working with the Associate Provost to provide feedback on matters of importance, such as the development of updated UniSQ Academic Transcripts and the timeliness of assessment feedback.

  A key concern raised by Higher Degree by Research (HDR) students is the lack of access to permanent workspaces, with only hot desks currently available. Ms Karunarathna noted that many of her fellow HDR students are feeling disconnected and isolated and have indicated that the absence of dedicated workspaces is impacting their ability to work efficiently. In response, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs) Professor Glen Coleman acknowledged the need for HDR students to have access to personal physical workspaces and undertook to consider the matter further.

  ACTION: Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs)

- **UniSQ Student Guild activities:** Mr Giess noted that while not all information included in the Student Guild Report will be academic in nature, the activities contribute to student wellbeing and engagement which is a key driver to academic success. Mr Giess highlighted some of the student engagement activities facilitated by the Student Guild, including events, student lounges, clubs and societies. A recent bursary round, and an update on student advocacy cases were also highlighted.

8. Standing Committee Reports

8.1. Academic Board Executive Committee

Received: Academic Board Executive Committee Unconfirmed Minutes – 1 July 2025.

The unconfirmed minutes of the Academic Board Executive Committee meeting held 1 July 2025 were taken as read.

> **Resolved:**
>
> *Academic Board **noted** the unconfirmed minutes from the Academic Board Executive Committee meeting of 1 July 2025.*

8.2. Student Academic Appeals Committee   *(HESF 6.3.1, 6.3.2)*

Received: Student Academic Appeals Committee Interim Report 2025.

The report was taken as read. The Chair of the Student Academic Appeals Committee Associate Professor Eric Ng introduced this item and provided an overview of the Interim Report for 2025.

Associate Professor Ng highlighted that as of 30 June 2025 there were no outstanding academic appeal applications. A decrease in the number of applications compared to the same period last year was evident, with potential reasons being the transition of all programs to the new flexible academic calendar, along with increased support from the Student Success and Advising team. Associate Professor Ng also suggested that the drop in submissions could be attributed to improved Show Cause submissions, resulting in fewer exclusion decisions.

Associate Professor Ng acknowledged and thanked the Committee members and support staff for their dedication and timely action, which contributed to the efficient resolution of academic appeal submissions.

8.3. Research Committee   *(HESF 6.3.1.a, 6.3.2, 6.3.2.d)*

Received: Research Committee Report to Academic Board – 11 June 2025

The Research Committee Report, which provided an overview of the discussions and resolutions of the Research Committee meeting held 11 June 2025 was taken as read. The Deputy Chair of Research Committee, Professor Polly Burey introduced the report and provided an overview of the recommendations being put forward later in the agenda.

Professor Burey highlighted that Research Committee had two focussed discussions:

- **Academic Workload Model – Transformation Initiative Project:** This discussion was led by the co-leads of the project, Professors Fabrizio Carmignani and Sonja March. It was highlighted that workload allocations would apply to staff from both the Academic Affairs and Research and Innovation Portfolios, aiming to achieve consistency in workload allocations.

- **Developing the next UniSQ Research Plan** – This discussion was led by the Executive Director (Institute for Advanced Engineering and Space Sciences) Professor Peter Schubel,

Executive Director (Institute for Resilient Regions) Professor Celmara Pocock, and Director (Centre for Health Research) Professor Sonja March and key topics included:

- o diversifying the University's Higher Education Research Data Collection (HERDC) funding, with greater focus on Category 3 - *Industry and Other Research Income*,

- o focusing on strategies for funding growth across the University's flagship areas,

- o considering strategies to strengthen the University's relationships with partners and communities, and to build community engagement, particularly with regional stakeholders,

- o strengthening engagement with alumni with a view to developing the pipeline for future research, and

- o shaping the University's research areas to be attractive to specific industry areas, while focusing on existing areas of strength.

Members raised the following matters regarding the Research Committee Report:

- **Graduate Research School Report – HDR commencements:** The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs) Professor Glen Coleman noted concerns about inequity in scholarship allocation, advising that while much of the Research Training Program funding comes from the Schools of Education, Business, Engineering, and Mathematics, Physics and Computing, scholarships are largely awarded within the University's research focus areas. Professor Coleman recommended that this be considered in ongoing discussions.

Resolved:

*Academic Board **noted** the unconfirmed minutes from the Research Committee meeting of 11 June 2025, and:*

- a. ***noted** the Annual Higher Degree by Research Student Grievances Report 2024 (refer Academic Board agenda item 11.2)*

- b. ***noted** the Graduate Research School Report*

- c. ***noted** the UniSQ Human Research Ethics Committee Report*

- d. ***noted** the UniSQ Animal Ethics Committee Report*

- e. ***noted** the Research Training Subcommittee Report from the 12 May 2025 meeting.*

8.4. Education Committee   *(HESF 6.3.1.a, 6.3.2, 6.3.2.c)*

Received: Education Committee Report to Academic Board – 12 June 2025.

The Education Committee Report was taken as read and the Acting Deputy Chair, Dr Rohan Genrich provided an overview of discussions from the meeting held on 12 June 2025. Dr Genrich noted that items considered by Education Committee and recommended to the Board would be discussed separately in the agenda.

Dr Genrich drew attention to the curriculum recommendations presented at Item 9 and commended the Education Committee minutes to members as a reflection of the thorough review and consideration process undertaken by the Committee prior to being recommended to Academic Board.

Resolved:

*Academic Board **noted** the unconfirmed minutes from the Education Committee meeting of 12 June 2025, and*

a. **noted** *the Committee's curriculum proposal recommendations (refer Academic Board agenda item 9)*

b. **noted** *the Committee's consideration of the Annual Consolidated Program Quality Report 2024 (refer Academic Board agenda item 11.1)*

c. **noted** *the Committee's consideration of the Annual Student Complaints, Grievances and Appeals Report 2024 (Refer Academic Board agenda item 11.2).*

9. Curriculum Items   *(HESF 6.3.2.c)*

9.1. Comprehensive Program Review - Master of Information Technology (MCTN) | Graduate Diploma of Information Technology (GDTI)

Received: Documentation via CourseLoop Proposal 22098.

The comprehensive program review of the Master of Information Technology program suite was considered at the Education Committee meeting of 1 May 2025 and endorsed for recommendation to Academic Board, subject to amendments being made and approved by the Chair and Deputy Chair of Education Committee. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs) Professor Glen Coleman introduced this item and provided members with a brief overview. The Head of School and Dean (Mathematics, Physics and Computing) Professor Robert Sang was in attendance to address feedback from members.

No questions or concerns were raised.

> **Resolved:**
>
> *Academic Board **approved** the comprehensive program review of the Master of Information Technology (MCTN) and Graduate Diploma of Information Technology (GDTI).*

9.2. Comprehensive Program Review - Master of Data Science (MADS) | Graduate Diploma of Data Science (GDDA) | Graduate Certificate of Data Science (GCDA)

Received: Documentation via CourseLoop proposal 21395.

The comprehensive program review of the Master of Data Science program suite was considered at the Education Committee meeting of 1 May 2025 and endorsed for recommendation to Academic Board, subject to amendments being made and approved by the Chair and Deputy Chair of Education Committee. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs) Professor Glen Coleman introduced this item and provided members with a brief overview. The Head of School and Dean (Mathematics, Physics and Computing) Professor Robert Sang was in attendance to address feedback from members.

Professor Coleman highlighted a move towards offering stackable graduate certificates within the Master of Data Science program suite, which is anticipated to come forward within the resulting major program change proposal.

Professor Sang highlighted the recent increase in load for the Master of Data Science program suite, noting that further substantial growth is expected moving forward.

> **Resolved:**
>
> *Academic Board **approved** the comprehensive program review of the Master of Data Science (MADS), Graduate Diploma of Data Science (GDDA), and Graduate Certificate of Data Science (GCDA).*

9.3. Comprehensive Program Review - Master of Cyber Security (MCYS) | Graduate Diploma of Cyber Security (GDYS) | Graduate Certificate of Cyber Security (GCYS)

Received: Documentation via CourseLoop proposal 21424.

The comprehensive program review of the Master of Cyber Security program suite was considered at the Education Committee meeting of 1 May 2025 and endorsed for recommendation to Academic Board, subject to amendments being made and approved by the Chair and Deputy Chair of Education Committee. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs) Professor Glen Coleman introduced this item and provided members with a brief overview. The Head of School and Dean (Mathematics, Physics and Computing) Professor Robert Sang was in attendance to address feedback from members.

No questions or concerns were raised.

> **Resolved:**
>
> *Academic Board **approved** the comprehensive program review of the Master of Cyber Security (MCYS), Graduate Diploma of Cyber Security (GDYS), and Graduate Certificate of Cyber Security (GCYS).*

9.4. Major Program Change (Including Program Discontinuations) - Bachelor of Science (BSCI) | Diploma of Science (DPSC) | Diploma of Wine (DWIN)

Received: Documentation via CourseLoop proposal 31112.

The major program change proposal for the Bachelor of Science, Diploma of Science, and Diploma of Wine was endorsed by Education Committee at its 12 June 2025 meeting. As recommendations for the discontinuation of programs were incorporated into the major program change, the proposal was endorsed by the Committee for recommendation to Academic Board for approval.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs) Professor Glen Coleman introduced this item and provided a brief overview of the proposal, highlighting that the changes to the Bachelor of Science program suite are proposed in response to recommendations from the 2024 comprehensive program review.

The Head of School and Dean (Mathematics, Physics and Computing) Professor Robert Sang was in attendance to address questions from members.

9.4.1. Major Program Change - Bachelor of Science (BSCI) | Diploma of Science (DPSC) | Diploma of Wine (DWIN)

Professor Coleman highlighted two key principles driving the proposed major program change: to create an identity for the program as the leading flexible online Bachelor of Science in the country; and to simplify enrolment patterns and consolidate load. Moving to an 8+8+8 program structure will align the program with the Coursework Curriculum Design and Structure Schedule - the eight-unit core providing students with fundamental science skills common to all disciplines, plus the ability to undertake a double major. Many of the 14 proposed majors exist within other UniSQ programs, and will result in a diverse, high value Bachelor of Science program that also aligns with the University's research flagships, strengthening the HDR student pipeline.

Members raised the following matters for discussion:

- **Residential schools:** It was confirmed that the Bachelor of Science will maintain both online and on-campus components, including residential schools. Professor Sang highlighted the importance of offering a Bachelor of Science to those unable to near a university campus.

- **Discontinuation of current program codes:** Members were advised that the discontinuations of the existing Bachelor of Science and Diploma of Science program codes is required to enable effective administration of students currently enrolled in the program, such as the teach out or transition to new programs.

- **Teach out and transition arrangements:** Members were assured that teach-out and transition arrangements are in progress to ensure existing students are not disadvantaged.

- **Professional accreditation:** Members were advised that computing major within the Bachelor of Science will no longer be externally accredited. Students seeking ACS certification should enrol in the Bachelor of Information Technology.

Members commended the School on its vision for the proposed program suite, particularly around their approaches to assessment and Work Integrated Learning.

Resolved:

*Academic Board **approved:***

a. *the major program change proposal for the Bachelor of Science, including the change of program code to BSCN and subsequent discontinuation of program code BSCI, effective from Trimester 1 2026, and*

b. *the major program change proposal for the Diploma of Science, including the change of program code to DSCN and subsequent discontinuation of program code DPSC, effective from Trimester 1 2026.*

9.4.2.   Program Discontinuation - Bachelor of Science (BSCI) | Diploma of Science (DPSC)

The Board agreed that the discontinuation of a program code for administrative purposes only does not require Academic Board approval. As a result, the administrative discontinuation of program codes for the Bachelor of Science and Diploma of Science were approved as part of the resolution for Item 9.4.1.

9.4.3.   Program Discontinuation - Diploma of Wine (DWIN)

The proposal for discontinuation of the Diploma of Wine was considered with the major program change submission for the Bachelor of Science at Item 9.4.1. above. Professor Coleman noted that as the University's affiliation with the Queensland College of Wine and Tourism would be ceasing, discontinuation of the Diploma of Wine was proposed.

No further questions or concerns were raised.

Resolved:

*Academic Board **approved** the discontinuation of the Diploma of Wine (DWIN) from Trimester 1 2026.*

ACTION: Governance Officer (Academic Board)
Circulate resolutions for curriculum proposals to stakeholders

10. Policy and Procedure   *(HESF 6.3.2.a)*

10.1. Academic Quality Policy and Procedure Report

Received: Academic Quality Policy and Procedure Report

The Academic Quality Policy and Procedure Report was received and noted by the Board.

11. Academic Quality Reports

11.1. Annual Consolidated Program Quality Report 2024   *(HESF 6.3.2.e, 6.3.2.g, 6.3.2.h)*

Received: The Annual Consolidated Program Quality Report 2024

The Annual Consolidated Program Quality Report 2024 was presented for consideration and forwarding to Council in accordance with the 2025 UniSQ Business Schedule. The Dean (Academic) Professor Geoff Slaughter introduced this item and provided an overview of the report.

Professor Slaughter advised that refinement of the report is ongoing and commended the previous Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching) Associate Professor Tania Machin, and Kate Middleton for compiling the 2024 report and highlighted the following matters of interest:

- Options to strengthen oversight of discontinued programs in teach-out are being explored, given the absence of a formal monitoring process. A minor amendment to the Coursework Program Quality Assurance and Review Procedure will be proposed to include discontinued programs with active enrolments in the program review process. This information will be reflected in future iterations of the report.

- The University Sentinel Indicators are used to monitor program enrolments, viability, and attrition and provide a starting point for identifying where improvement strategies are required. While the data varies, the trend in 2024 reflects an overall improvement to outcomes shown by the sentinel indicators.

Members raised the following matters:

- **University Sentinel Indicators:** Members discussed the University's Sentinel Indicators, noting the importance of incorporating data such as student experience and program cost viability. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs) Professor Glen Coleman advised that sentinel indicators will be considered as part of the upcoming Academic Quality Framework review. A member observed that several program quality reviews in the report already include Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT) data, which enhances the depth of analysis. Professor Slaughter confirmed that the guiding questions provided to Schools recommended inclusion of this data and agreed to place greater emphasis on this for future iterations.

  The Chair agreed to include the University Sentinel Indicators as a topic for strategic discussion at an upcoming meeting of the Board.

  ACTION: Governance Officer (Academic Board)

- **Sentinel indicators across program suites:** Professor Coleman emphasised the importance of reviewing data at the program suite level to ensure that sentinel indicators are met across the suite, rather than within individual programs. Professor Coleman noted that this information is captured in the report table and recommended its inclusion in the summary document for greater visibility.

- **Excluded programs:** Members noted that some program suites do not appear within the report. It was highlighted that programs undergoing an interim or comprehensive review are excluded from the Annual Consolidated Program Quality review process, and this is highlighted in the report's Executive Summary. Members suggested including a table of the programs undergoing interim or comprehensive reviews within the annual report for clarity.

- **Data accuracy:** A member raised concern around accuracy of the data provided in the report. Professor Slaughter agreed to review the data prior to forwarding the report to Council.

  ACTION: Dean (Academic)

- **Attrition rates in Higher Degree by Research programs:** The Dean (Graduate Research School) Professor Charlotte Brownlow noted that attrition measurement in Higher Degree by Research (HDR) programs differs from coursework programs, as students do not re-enrol after submitting for examination. This can lead to conflated attrition data for HDR programs included in the report.

11.1.1. Annual Equivalence of Experience and Expertise with Academic Qualification Levels Report 2024

The Annual Equivalence of Experience and Expertise with Academic Qualification Levels Report 2024 was received within the Annual Consolidated Program Quality Report 2024 and was commended to the Board for noting in accordance with reporting requirements for the Equivalence of Experience and Expertise with Academic Qualification Levels Procedure.

The Dean (Academic) Professor Geoff Slaughter provided an overview of the report, advising the Board that a process review was underway to improve quality and consistency of applications for equivalence.

A member sought clarification regarding the validation period and were advised that an equivalence review is required every three years, unless otherwise specified. It was also noted that individuals approved for equivalence are expected to continue working towards obtaining the relevant qualifications.

Academic Board noted the Annual Equivalence of Experience and Expertise with Academic Qualification Levels Report 2024.

11.2. Annual Student Grievances and Appeals Report 2024   *(HESF 6.3.1.a, 6.3.1.d, 6.3.2.d, 6.3.2.g, 6.2.3.h)*

The 2024 Annual Student Grievances and Appeals Reports for both coursework and Higher Degree by Research student cohorts were received for consideration and forwarding to Council in accordance with the UniSQ Council Business Schedule 2025.

11.2.1. 2024 Student Grievance Resolution Unit Annual Report

Received: 2024 Student Grievance Resolution Unit Annual Report

The Associate Provost, Professor Lorelle Burton took the paper as read and provided an overview of the 2024 Annual Student Grievances and Appeals Report.

Professor Burton highlighted a significant increase in student appeal and grievance submissions between 2023 and 2024, noting multiple contributing factors, such as a greater student awareness of the grievance resolution process, the introduction of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) and its impact on academic integrity, and challenges created for students with the implementation of the Flexible Academic Calendar. It was noted that submissions focussed on teaching quality, including areas such as course management, study desk disorganisation, and unclear assessment expectations. Professor Burton highlighted greater student engagement with the University's student ombudsperson since the previous year.

Professor Burton advised that key areas of focus for the Student Grievance Resolution Unit in 2025 include the escalation of recurrent issues, early resolution, quality assurance of processes, data and reporting improvements, and the timeliness of outcomes.

Members were advised that projects are underway, with staff across the University working collaboratively to refine processes and enhance the student experience.

11.2.2. Higher Degree by Research Student Grievances Report 2024

Received: 2024 Student Grievance Resolution Unit Annual Report

The Dean (Graduate Research School), Professor Charlotte Brownlow took the paper as read and provided an overview of the inaugural Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Student Grievances Report for 2024 which was presented to Academic Board in accordance with the Student Grievance Resolution Procedure. Professor Brownlow noted that the main areas of student grievance related to denial of admission or readmission into an HDR program.

Professor Brownlow highlighted that the Graduate Research School will continue to collaborate with schools and colleges to enhance consistency and alignment in the assessment of program admissions and readmissions, and to ensure clarity and consistency when conveying outcomes of important decisions to students.

No questions or concerns were raised. Academic Board noted the Student Grievances and Appeals Reports 2024 for forwarding to UniSQ Council.

ACTION: Governance Officer (Academic Board)

12. Academic Board Working Group Updates

12.1. Academic Board Terms of Reference Review Working Group

An update is expected at a future meeting of Academic Board.

12.2. Academic Risk Register Working Group

An update is expected at a future meeting of Academic Board.

13. Strategic Discussion | Potential Implications of the New Academic Workload Model on Academic Quality

Received: Academic Workload Model Transformation Initiative – PowerPoint Presentation.

Co-leads of the Academic Workload Model Transformation Initiative, Professors Fabrizio Carmignani and Sonja March led discussion around the work undertaken by the group and the impact of the proposed new Academic Workload Model on academic quality. Professor Carmignani highlighted the core intent of the initiative has been to create a single workload model to better integrate education and research. Design of the new model focussed on three key elements:

- **Work profiles:** Three work profiles will be proposed – the Teaching and Research Profile, Education Specialist Profile, and the Research Specialist Profile.

- **Simplified teaching allocation:** Reduced granularity will streamline the allocation of teaching and improve administration efficiency.

- **Strengthened research allocation:** Research allocation will remain similar to the current model, with strengthened links to the University's key research productivity outputs.

Professor Carmignani highlighted the addition of clear provisions which will enable schools to adjust allocations according to discipline-specific context and complexities resulting in greater flexibility.

The discussion focused on the impact of the new Academic Workload Model on Academic Quality and the Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF) requirements, and Professor Carmignani highlighted the following points in the presentation:

Impact on Academic Quality and HESF requirements:

- Reducing granularity and focusing on outcomes will provide greater autonomy and increased accountability for academic staff, supporting innovation and excellence and improving academic quality in both learning and teaching and research.

- Allowing the course coordinator to determine time allocations within the teaching envelope will result in providing a high-quality learning experience for students. Professor Carmignani stressed that the time allocations will not be reduced in the new model.

- Allowing flexibility for different configurations of the teaching team will assist to ensure quality staffing for each course.

- Recognising HDR supervision as a research activity aligns with HESF requirements and will foster quality supervision and timely completions.

- A focus on outcomes will facilitate greater attention to feedback and promote continuous improvement, ensuring academic quality.

Professor Carmignani highlighted that the proposed new Academic Workload Model has been developed through a highly consultative process across the University. Feedback has been considered and reflected in changes and will be submitted to the initiative control group for consideration. An implementation working party is being established to set up systems and processes for the new workload model, with a view to implementation by 2026.

A member sought clarification regarding the process moving forward. Professor Carmignani noted the extensive consultation process that has been undertaken noting that feedback is currently under review. Any resulting amendments to the proposal will be referred to the initiative control group for further consideration. Based on the control group's advice, the new workload model will either be finalised for implementation or, if substantive concerns are raised, returned to the Academic Workload Model Transformation Initiative working group for further review.

Members acknowledged that a less prescriptive workload model would require clearer expectations, and mechanisms for monitoring accountability and to close the loop.

Members congratulated the working group for creating a simplified workload model, giving agency to staff and providing flexibility on delivery methods.

14. Other Business

No other business was discussed.

15. Next Meeting

The next Academic Board meeting will be held at 1.00pm, Tuesday 9 September 2025, Council Chamber, Toowoomba Campus.

16. Close

The meeting closed at 3:47pm.