

Minutes

Academic Board

Meeting No: 2/25

Date and Time:	Tuesday, 8 April 2025, 1:00pm	
Location:	Council Chamber, Toowoomba Campus	
Secretary:	Tracey Tyers, Governance Officer (Academic Board) 07 4631 1912	
Members Present:	<div>Associate Professor Eric Ng (Acting Chair)</div> <div><div>Professor Karen Nelson (Zoom)</div><div>Professor Lorelle Burton</div><div>Professor Glen Coleman</div><div>Professor John Bell (Zoom)</div><div>Professor Lyn Alderman</div><div>Professor Jo-Anne Ferreira</div><div>Professor Geoff Slaughter</div><div>Peter Giess</div><div>Zachary Vellacott</div><div>Jade-Bianca Thomas (Zoom)</div><div>Brintha Karunarathna</div><div>Dr Emerson Zerafa-Payne</div><div>Professor Thiru Aravinthan</div><div>Dr Anita Wheeldon</div></div> <div><div>Professor Ren Yi (Zoom - departed item 7)</div><div>Associate Professor Jessica Marrington</div><div>Professor Noeleen McNamara (Zoom)</div><div>Professor Mark Toleman</div><div>Charmaine Davis</div><div>Dr Douglas Eacersall (Zoom)</div><div>Associate Professor Lisa Beccaria</div><div>Professor Polly Burey</div><div>Dr Rohan Genrich</div><div>Associate Professor Rhiannan Johnson</div><div>Dr Ahmad Sharifian-Barforoush</div><div>Shane Simmons (Zoom - arrived Item 5)</div><div>Associate Professor Daniel Terry</div><div>Associate Professor Alison McCarthy</div></div>	
By Invitation:	<div>Tim Davis – UniSQ Audit and Risk Committee external member</div> <div>Professor Pauline Collins – UniSQ Council member</div> <div>Rachel Hunt - Graduate Research School representative (Zoom)</div>	
Rights of Audience & Observers:	<div>Julie Shinnars – University Secretary and Director (Governance)</div> <div>Carmel O'Sullivan – University Librarian and Director (Library Services)</div> <div>Professor Andrea Lamont-Mills – Associate Dean (Research) (Zoom)</div> <div>Associate Professor Peter Cook – Head of School (Education)</div> <div>Associate Professor John Dearnaley – Head of School (Agriculture and Environmental Science)</div> <div>Professor Linda Deravin – Head of School (Nursing and Midwifery) (Zoom)</div> <div>Professor Elizabeth Cardell – Head of School (Health and Medical Sciences)</div> <div>Professor Prasad Yarlagaadda – Head of School (Engineering) (Zoom)</div> <div>Professor Robert Sang – Head of School (Mathematics, Physics and Computing)</div> <div>Cassandra Thomson - Policy Advisor</div> <div>Emma Phillips – Governance Officer</div> <div>Dr Carol Quadrelli - Associate Director (Curriculum Quality and Credit)</div>	
Apologies:	<div>Professor Alexander Kist, Professor Odette Best, Professor Charlotte Brownlow,</div> <div>Dr Lindsay Helwig, Dr Julie Lindsay, Associate Professor Andrew Hemming,</div> <div>Associate Professor Mia O'Brien.</div>	
Absent:	Nil	

The meeting opened at 1:01pm. A quorum was present.

Acknowledgement of Country

The Acting Chair, Professor Eric Ng provided an Acknowledgement of Country and paid respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

Welcome

The Acting Chair welcomed members at the UniSQ Council Chamber and via Zoom and noted the apologies. Invited guests Mr Tim Davis and Professor Pauline Collins were welcomed as observers from UniSQ Council and committee membership.

New student members Zachary Vellacott, Jade-Bianca Thomas, and Brintha Karunarathna were welcomed to their first meeting of Academic Board. Dr Douglas Eacersall was welcomed as a new academic staff member of Academic Board.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest and Statement of Confidentiality

The Acting 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:

- Associate Professor Lisa Beccaria – Item 9.2

The Acting 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 (1/25) 11 February 2025

Resolved:

- *Academic Board resolved that the minutes of the Academic Board meeting (1/25) held on 11 February 2025, having been circulated and read, be **confirmed** as a true and accurate record.*

2. Business Arising from the Previous Meeting

Received: Post meeting action sheet for actions arising from the previous meeting.

3. Comments from the Chair

The Acting Chair Associate Professor Eric Ng addressed members and discussed the UniSQ Change Proposal which was presented to the University on 3 April 2025. Associate Professor Ng encouraged members to engage with the change proposal document and consultation process, and to consider the proposal from an academic governance perspective, such as alignment with the Higher Education Standards Framework, and any potential impacts on the quality of learning, teaching and programs, and the student experience.

Members asked whether students would be involved in the consultation process. The Associate Provost Professor Lorelle Burton advised that consultation with the Student Senate would commence soon.

3.1. Council Report to Academic Board

Received: Council Report to Academic Board following the 17 February 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 February 2025 meeting of the UniSQ Council.

4. Vice-Chancellor's Report

Received: The 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:

- **The Federal election and Federal budget:** The Federal election was called shortly after the Federal budget was handed down, with the election to be held on 3 May. The Vice-Chancellor noted that the Federal Budget had provided little in the way of support for the higher education sector.
- **Expert Council on University Governance:** The University's submission to the Expert Council on University Governance was made last week.
- **UniSQ Change Proposal:** The University Change Proposal was circulated to all staff on 3 April for a consultation period of 14 days. The Vice-Chancellor advised that the University would genuinely consider all feedback received during the consultation period and thematic de-identified feedback will be shared with the University at relevant times across the change timeline. Following the consultation period, affected staff will be informed of the outcome of the University's decision to propose the change.

Noting that the outcomes from the consultation period will determine next steps, the indicative timeframe is for change implementation to commence from 26 May, with detailed structures finalised between 30 June – 31 October and the new structure taking effect from 1 January 2026.

5. Education Report

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 introduced 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 noted the following matters arising since submission of the report:

- **UniSQ Graduation Ceremonies:** The first graduation ceremonies for 2025 were held at the Empire Theatre in Toowoomba last week. Five ceremonies across two days celebrated the achievements of 840 graduating students.
- **UniSQ First Nations Students Cultural Sashing and Completion Ceremony:** The UniSQ First Nations Students Cultural Sashing and Completion Ceremony was presented by the College for First Nations. The ceremony recognised the achievements of UniSQ First Nations students, and the important role of education in improving outcomes for individuals, families and communities.
- **UniSQ Critical Incident Response:** A Critical Incident Response process, a collaborative activity involving several areas across the University, was rolled out in late 2024. The

process has been used recently to support students who have been impacted by extreme weather events such as ex-tropical cyclone Alfred and recent flooding in Queensland's south-west. A quarterly review was part of the process, and these results will be used to improve and refine processes.

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

- **Studiosity / Artificial Intelligence (AI):**

Members discussed the use of Studiosity and where this would fall within the University's levels of permitted AI use. Professor Ferreira noted that the goal is to move towards enabling and encouraging the ethical use of AI.

It was noted that some students object to their work being submitted through AI, and discussion was had around options within Studiosity and Turnitin for a student's work to be reviewed by a human rather than AI.

A member mentioned the need for continued staff training and development around the acceptable use of AI in terms of academic and research integrity. Professor Ferreira highlighted the University's Academic Integrity Framework – which is a process of education, prevention, and detection. Online training has been revised for staff and students as part of the education process, along with the introduction of educational projects such as an AI Pedagogies project, assessment transformation workshops, and development of basic AI modules.

The Dean (Academic) Professor Geoff Slaughter highlighted TEQSA's expectation that universities facilitate and teach their students about the appropriate use of AI.

6. Research Report

Received: Research Report to Academic Board

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) Professor John Bell took the report as read and provided an overview of some of the matters included in the paper. Professor Bell reiterated comments made by the Vice-Chancellor earlier in the meeting, noting that the Higher Education and Research sectors are under significant pressure due to challenges such as Government funding constraints, issues around international student visas, and the challenges being faced by industry.

7. Student Representatives Report

The Student Guild student director Peter Giess introduced this item and gave a verbal update on behalf of the Academic Board student members, noting his change in position on Board from undergraduate student representative to the ex-officio member from the UniSQ Student Guild.

Mr Giess highlighted that all student representative positions on Academic Board had been filled, which was very positive.

Mr Giess provided an update on the Student Senate, noting that the Senate has entered its third year and currently has only one student representative vacancy. The Student Representative Committee has been incorporated into the Senate, providing student representation from each school.

The Student Guild also has a full contingent of student directors and is continuing to work collaboratively with different areas of UniSQ on several new strategies. Mr Giess noted that the advocacy team reported a decrease in cases for Quarter 1, 2025 noting that the main areas of student concern being presented to the Student Guild continue to be matters relating to academic appeals and academic integrity.

The Associate Provost Professor Lorelle Burton advised that she is enjoying working with the Student Senate and student representatives across the University and will continue to work collaboratively to ensure that the student voice is heard.

8. Standing Committee Reports

8.1. Academic Board Executive Committee

Received: Academic Board Executive Committee Unconfirmed Minutes – 25 March 2025

The unconfirmed minutes of the Academic Board Executive Committee meeting held 25 March 2025 were taken as read.

Resolved:

- *Academic Board **notes** the unconfirmed minutes from the Academic Board Executive Committee meeting of 25 March 2025.*

8.2. Research Committee

Received: Research Committee Report to Academic Board – 5 March 2025

The Research Committee Report, which provided an overview of the discussions and resolutions of the Research Committee meeting held 5 March 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 considered and discussed the Annual Research Integrity Report 2024, which was presented to Academic Board for consideration and forwarding to UniSQ Council.

Professor Burey also noted that the Committee had considered and endorsed proposed changes to the Higher Degree by Research Student Scholarship Guidelines (PhD and MRES).

Members raised no questions.

Resolved:

*Academic Board **notes** the unconfirmed minutes from the Research Committee meeting of 5 March 2025 and:*

- notes** the Committee's consideration and noting of the Research Integrity Annual Report 2024 (refer AB agenda item 13)*
- notes** the Graduate Research School Report and the Committee's endorsement of proposed changes to the Higher Degree by Research Student Scholarship Guidelines (PhD and MRES)*
- notes** the Human Research Ethics Committee Report*
- notes** the Animal Ethics Committee Report*
- notes** the Research Training Subcommittee Report from the 3 February 2025 meeting.*

8.3. Education Committee

Received: Education Committee Report to Academic Board – 6 March 2025.

The Education Committee Report was taken as read and the Deputy Chair of the Committee, Professor Noeleen McNamara provided an overview of discussions from the meeting held 6 March 2025. Professor McNamara noted that items considered by Education Committee and recommended to the Board would be discussed separately in the agenda.

Professor McNamara highlighted that Education Committee had commenced a new process for the review of curriculum proposals. It was advised that the receipt of curriculum proposals is expected at least two weeks prior to each meeting. This is to enable sufficient time for Committee members to thoroughly review the proposals and for feedback to be circulated to the responsible officers to enable preparation of a considered response prior to the meeting.

No questions were raised.

Resolved:

*Academic Board **notes** the unconfirmed minutes from the Education Committee meeting of 6 March 2025, and **considers** the curriculum proposal recommendations for approval (refer Academic Board agenda item 9).*

9. Curriculum Items

9.1. Comprehensive Program Review - Master of Public Health (MPUH) | Graduate Diploma of Public Health (GDPH) | Graduate Certificate of Public Health (GCPU)

Received: Documentation via CourseLoop proposal 28261.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs) Professor Glen Coleman introduced this item and provided members with a brief overview, highlighting that the proposals had been scrutinised in depth at Education Committee and details were captured in the minutes of the meeting attached at Item 8.3. The Head of School and Dean (Health and Medical Sciences) Professor Elizabeth Cardell was in attendance to address feedback from members.

No concerns were raised.

Resolved:

- *Academic Board **approves** the comprehensive program review of the Master of Public Health (MPUH), Graduate Diploma of Public Health (GDPH), and Graduate Certificate of Public Health (GCPU).*

9.2. Comprehensive Program Review - Master of Nursing (MNSG) | Graduate Diploma of Nursing (GDNG) | Graduate Certificate of Nursing (GCNG)

Received: Documentation via CourseLoop proposal 28257.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs) Professor Glen Coleman introduced this item and provided members with a brief overview, highlighting that the proposal had been considered in depth at the Education Committee meeting and details were captured in the minutes of the meeting attached at Item 8.3. The Head of School and Dean (Nursing and Midwifery) Professor Linda Deravin was in attendance to address questions from members.

No concerns were raised.

Resolved:

- *Academic Board **approves** the comprehensive program review of the Master of Nursing (MNSG), Graduate Diploma of Nursing (GDNG), and Graduate Certificate of Nursing (GCNG).*

ACTION: Governance Officer (Academic Board)

10. Policy and Procedure

10.1. Academic Quality Policy and Procedure Report (HESF 6.3.2.a)

Received: Academic Quality Policy and Procedure Report

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

11. Academic Quality Reports

There were no items received for consideration.

12. Academic Board Working Group Updates

No updates were received by the Board for consideration.

Current working groups include:

- Academic Board Terms of Reference Review Working Group
- Academic Risk Register Working Group.

13. Research Integrity Annual Report 2024

Received: Research Integrity Annual Report 2024

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) Professor John Bell introduced this item and provided an overview of the report, which was presented to the Board for noting and forwarding to UniSQ Council for consideration.

ACTION: Governance Officer (Academic Board)

Professor Bell highlighted the following matters from the report:

- **Research Integrity Advisors:** 17 new Research Integrity Advisors were recruited during 2024.
- **Policy and Procedure:** Following a thorough review of research related policies and procedures undertaken as part of the University's TEQSA re-registration, work is continuing around the development and update of several policy instruments.
- **Systematic issues:** During the review and consideration of research integrity matters, areas were identified for future improvement to increase awareness and mitigate future risk. The related action plan is included in the report.

Members raised the following matters:

Supervisory teams: Discussion was had around HDR supervisor capacity and expertise, and the size of supervisory teams. Professor Bell advised that there is no limitation on the maximum number of supervisors in a team, but there must be a minimum of two supervisors. Supervisors are approved within the relevant school or research centre, therefore ensuring appropriate expertise and capability.

Proposed HDR Student Academic Misconduct Procedure: Members discussed whether a separate research misconduct procedure is required, or if academic misconduct by an HDR student is covered in the existing Student Academic Misconduct Procedure. Professor Bell advised that a perceived gap in this area had been identified, and options were being investigated.

14. Flexible Academic Calendar Project Update

The Flexible Academic Calendar Project Update is expected to be presented at the next meeting of Academic Board.

15. Strategic Discussion | Modes of Teaching and Learning at UniSQ

Received: Delivery Modalities (PowerPoint Presentation)

The Dean (Learning and Teaching Futures) Professor Jo-Anne Ferreira presented the **attached** slides and led strategic discussion around how the University engages with students across the modes of delivery and what this means from a governance perspective.

Professor Ferreira highlighted that mode of delivery is historically discussed as 'mode of study' and 'mode of attendance'. The Australian Government provides definitions for the following modes of attendance:

- **Internal:** Study is undertaken through attendance at the higher education provider on a regular basis. For HDR students, where regular attendance is not required, the student attends on an agreed schedule for supervision and instruction.
- **External:** Lesson materials, assignments, etc. are delivered to the student. Any associated attendance at the institution is of an incidental, irregular, special, or voluntary nature.
- **Multi-modal:** Study is undertaken partially on an internal mode of attendance and partially on an external mode of attendance.

Some examples of modes of study from across the sector were also provided. Members were asked to consider the government and current UniSQ modes of attendance and whether they accurately and adequately represent teaching at UniSQ now and into the future. Professor Ferreira highlighted the need to be innovative when considering modes of teaching, with a focus on strengthening student engagement in learning.

The UniSQ Campus Master Plan 2022 identifies the four UniSQ campuses: the Digital Campus, Toowoomba, Ipswich, and Springfield. The UniSQ Learning Spaces Infrastructure Management Plan proposes the following learning modes:

1. Online (fully online, both content and teaching)
2. On Campus (content online, teaching face-to-face - includes intensive/residential schools)
3. Hybrid (content online, teaching face-to-face and online, simultaneously)
4. Situated (placements, fieldwork, practicums, Work Integrated Learning)
5. HyFlex (content online, teaching is per students' choice)

The item was opened for discussion and the following matters were raised:

- **Definitions and socialisation:** It was stressed that clear definitions are needed for each mode of learning to ensure clarity for students, staff and external stakeholders. The importance of socialising the categories of learning modes and differences between them with students and staff was highlighted, noting that this should be a collaborative process involving areas across the University to ensure alignment across different elements, such as the flexible academic calendar, handbook, Study Desk, and CourseLoop.
- **Student voice:** Members were advised that a student survey is being prepared and will be undertaken in consultation with the Student Senate. The aim is to gain an understanding of how students want to learn, and the modes of learning that will best align. A member suggested additional mechanisms, such as student forums or focus groups to encourage a broad representation and feedback.

- **External and regulatory requirements:** Discussion was had around ensuring that programs can be delivered in accordance with the external requirements, such as Government reporting, CRICOS, and professional accreditation providers. Professor Ferreira suggested that the delivery modes should be determined at a school level to ensure the most suitable offerings for each program.

The Dean (Academic Transformation) Professor Lyn Alderman raised concern about maintaining compliance with regulatory reporting requirements for the University's modes of delivery, noting that online teaching is not timetabled, therefore there is no dataset for the proposed Online mode. The Associate Provost Professor Lorelle Burton advised that online timetabling is currently being trialled for Trimester 1 2025. Upon clarification of the new learning modes, it is expected that online timetabling will be implemented across all programs from 2026.

- **Academic staff training and professional development:** Discussion was had around providing professional development and training for academic staff to help maximise online engagement and ensure a quality learning experience for students.
- **Incarcerated students:** A member queried whether an individual delivery mode would be required for the incarcerated student cohort. It was advised that incarcerated students are identified as external, and the Study Desk is modified accordingly to accommodate the requirements for this cohort.
- **Student communications:** The importance of ensuring clarity around learning modes at all levels of student interaction was highlighted. Members discussed the use of pop-up definitions for students at the point of enrolling into a course, along with providing clear information at the program level around the learning modes, student expectations, etc.
- **Infrastructure:** Members noted that the University's existing infrastructure will not fully support the HyFlex mode.
- **Limitations:** A member noted difficulty teaching a traditional course in a non-traditional mode, for example teaching engineering in HyFlex mode.

Professor Ferreira advised that the main goal is to have a defined set of learning modes in place with clear definitions that are not open to interpretation by students or staff. Work will be undertaken to ensure compatibility with current systems such as CourseLoop, the Flexible Academic Calendar, and the handbook to ensure an efficient implementation process. Upon completion of the initial consultation, a proposal will be circulated University-wide for formal consultation with a view towards implementation in 2026.

16. Other Business

No other business was raised.

17. Next Meeting

The next Academic Board meeting will be held at 1.00pm, Tuesday 27 May 2025, Council Chamber, Toowoomba Campus.

18. Close

The meeting closed at 3:34pm.