

Council Bulletin August 2026

Message from the Chancellor

Dear colleagues,

Council held its fourth meeting of the year on the Toowoomba campus in August. Prior to the meeting, Council members participated in a professional development session focused on the responsible use of artificial intelligence (AI) by governing bodies. The session was facilitated by Chief Digital Information Officer Luke Hellowell and Associate Director (IT Business and Service Assurance) Dr Jasmine Thomas. The discussion highlighted both the opportunities and challenges AI presents for universities and their governing bodies and reinforced the importance of appropriate governance and oversight as this technology continues to evolve.

During the meeting, Council considered a range of strategic and governance matters, including progress on First Nations initiatives, student engagement, organisational sustainability, risk management, and higher education sector reforms. Council also reflected on lessons learned through delivery of the University's 2021-2025 Strategic Plan and discussed how these insights can inform implementation of our current strategic priorities.

Council continues to monitor developments in national higher education policy and funding reform. Discussions at both institutional and sector levels reinforce the importance of ensuring regional universities maintain a strong voice in shaping future policy settings and advocating for the needs of our communities and students.

A particular highlight of the meeting was a presentation from our Pro Vice-Chancellor (First Nations), Professor Linda Deravin, who provided an update on progress against UniSQ's First Nations strategic priorities. Council was encouraged by the significant achievements across First Nations student success, workforce participation, research activity, community engagement, and cultural capability initiatives, and commended the substantial work being undertaken across the University.

On behalf of Council, thank you for your continued contribution to the University's success. Your commitment to our students, communities and strategic objectives remains fundamental to achieving our vision and strengthening UniSQ's reputation as Australia's leading regional university.

Please feel free to contact me via email to chancellor@unisq.edu.au if you have any ideas or thoughts you'd like to share.

Kind regards,

John

Dr John McVeigh, Chancellor

COUNCIL MEETING INFORMATION

A meeting of the Council of the University of Southern Queensland was held on the Toowoomba Campus B205 and via Zoom, on Monday 17 August 2026, commencing at 12.30 pm AEST. Current Council member information is available on the [12th Council Membership](#) website.

STRATEGIC PRESENTATIONS AND REPORTS

First Nations Strategy Update

Pro Vice-Chancellor (First Nations), Professor Linda Deravin presented an update on implementation of the University's First Nations Strategy and enabling strategies. Council noted significant progress across governance participation, workforce development, student support, community engagement, and research capacity. Council also acknowledged strong outcomes in student success, scholarship participation, workforce representation and cultural capability initiatives.

Council Representative on UniSQ Student Guild Board Report

Council received the annual report from Helen Nolan, its outgoing representative on the UniSQ Student Guild Board. The report highlighted effective governance arrangements within the Guild, a strong collaborative relationship between the Guild and the University, and successful student support initiatives. Council acknowledged the important contribution the Guild makes to enhancing student experience and engagement, and thanked Ms Nolan for her service to the Student Guild Board, as she departs the University after 15 years of service. Professor Lorelle Burton is the new Council representative on the Student Guild Board.

Strategic Plan 2021-2025 Strategic Insights

Council reviewed key outcomes and lessons arising from the completion of the University's Strategic Plan 2021-2025. Discussion focused on achievements in student outcomes, research impact, financial sustainability and First Nations participation. Council reflected on the importance of maintaining strategic agility, financial adaptability and a continued focus on student success as the University progresses its current strategic priorities.

COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS

Council resolved to approve the following items:

- Establishment of a Disability Governance Committee as a committee of Council, effective from 1 January 2027, together with its Terms of Reference. This committee is in response to a new requirement of the Federal Government.
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- Re-categorisation of the Contracted Senior Positions Appointment Procedure from a University Procedure to a Governance Policy, which will ensure Council oversight of senior appointments and remuneration.
- Council and committee self-assessment survey instruments, which will be administered later in the year to assist Council in its commitment to continuous improvement.
- Adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism, together with related amendments to the University's Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech Policy, Code of Conduct Policy, and Student General Conduct Policy. Council noted that these policy amendments had been subject to a gazettal process across the University.

REPORTS TO COUNCIL

Chancellor's Update

Council received and noted the Chancellor's update, including recent sector engagement activities, developments relating to higher education reform, community engagement initiatives, graduation ceremonies, and progress on the University's external governance review.

Vice-Chancellor and President's Report

- Successful Open Day events across all campuses, with increased attendance and application activity
- Engagement with government stakeholders regarding higher education policy and funding.
- International engagement activities, including visits from Malaysian government, university and industry representatives.
- Institutional rankings and reputation opportunities.
- Infrastructure maintenance and campus facilities.
- Risk management relating to international research partnerships.

Academic Board Report

Academic Board Chair Professor Alexander Kist presented the Academic Board Report. Key discussions included:

- Assessment design and assurance of learning.
- The impact of artificial intelligence on teaching, learning and research.
- Academic risk governance and integration with institutional risk frameworks.
- Foreign interference and research partnership considerations.
- Ongoing development of AI governance approaches.

Finance and Facilities Committee Report

Finance and Facilities Committee Chair Amanda Kenafake presented the Finance and Facilities Report to Council. Items received included:

- Finance and Facilities Committee Meeting Minutes July 2026
 - Finance Flash Report – July 2026
 - Monthly Financial Report as at 30 June 2026
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Audit and Risk Committee Report

Audit and Risk Committee Acting Chair Tim Davis presented the Audit and Risk Committee Report to Council. Items received and discussed included:

- Audit and Risk Committee Meeting Minutes July 2026
- Queensland Audit Office activities
- The internal audit program.
- Risk Management Report
- Cybersecurity Quarter 2026 Report

Chancellor's Committee Report

Chancellor's Committee Chair and Chancellor Dr John McVeigh presented the Chancellor's Committee Report to Council. Items received included:

- Chancellor's Committee Meeting Minutes July 2026
- The proposed Research and Innovation Park naming initiative
- The 2025 Report on the Prevention of Discrimination, Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Misconduct (Students)

The 2026 University Meeting Schedule is available on the [Council and Committee Terms of Reference](#) webpage. Guidelines for the Conduct of Council and Committee Meetings require agenda papers to be distributed at least seven days prior to the meeting. For further information please contact the [Governance Secretary](#).

The University of Southern Queensland acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands and waterways where the University is located. Further, we acknowledge the cultural diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.



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