

Communique

University Council Meeting C256, 4 September 2025

The University of Canberra Council met for the fifth time in 2025 on Thursday, 4 September.

Council farewelled Mr Jonathan Pheasant, Chief Operating Officer and Vice-President Operations, praising him for his energy, integrity and commitment to the University. Council celebrated the breaking news that Dr Bernd Gruber and Distinguished Professor Arthur Georges had been awarded the 2025 Australian Museum Eureka Prize.

The Vice-Chancellor's Report included: an update on the successful launch of the Reconnected Strategy; advice that the University is rebuilding its Indigenous leadership and community presence, with Dr Phil Duncan appointed Interim PVC Indigenous Leadership; the work underway to actively develop a philanthropy culture at UC; a financial update noting the University is \$5 million ahead of budget, with gross student revenue exceeding expectations, yet third-party and international student recruitment costs remain a challenge, as does research income. Council requested that the research target KPIs be reviewed. Partnership development remained a key focus including with TAFE and adult learner recruitment.

A risk appetite workshop was conducted to gauge Council's appetite across key risk categories and to support alignment between strategic decision-making and the University's values. Outcomes will be considered by the Audit and Risk Management Committee.

An internal review of UCX was discussed to support UCX and better understand its financial position. UCX carries certain expenses on behalf of the University which has balance sheet implications. UCX's strong contribution to the University's culture and student experience was recognised and would be a feature of the review.

The Chancellor reported on recent sector engagement, including attendance at the Universities Australia (UA) President's Press Club Address; and approaches from corporate and not-for-profit stakeholders seeking to partner on education delivery. A response to the University Chancellor's Council Report on Social Licence noted the ARMC will assess how social licence issues are addressed within UC's risk management artefacts, and discussed the need for the sector to focus on what it can control to improve its public value proposition.

The elected student representatives presented a report on behalf of the Student Representative Council (SRC), highlighting the upcoming SRC elections had the highest number of nominations received to date reflecting strong student engagement; the SRC is presenting an AI Conference in October themed from 'Campus to Career'; and regarding the issue facing international students where non-compulsory internships count toward their fortnightly work cap, they met with the National Union of Students and together are writing to Julian Hill MP advocating for policy reform.

The Academic Board Chair discussed the Board's report and her discussion paper regarding the advisory role of the Board - academic staff are seeking stronger connections with Council and executive leadership and early

engagement on matters of strategic importance. The VC and Council were supportive and Council welcomes proactive advice from the Board, particularly around matters such as AI, data and academic quality.

Professor Julian Knowles, Executive Dean Faculty of Arts and Design, presented an update to Council on strategic initiatives, partnerships, and future student load projections. The longstanding partnership with TAFE Queensland continues to be a successful model, and the Faculty is exploring how it can be scaled up. The Tertiary Harmonisation Strategy was outlined. UC is co-chairing the Creative Industries Working Group with CIT and also working with TAFE NSW.

Ms Mara Eversons, Director Student Life presented an overview of Student Life's scope, recent developments, and strategic priorities. Highlights included that the Student Success program has achieved a 96% retention rate for students returning in 2025, UC is well-positioned to comply with the new national code on Gender-Based Violence - policies and procedures are being updated, and a new reporting tool is in development. The Ngunnawal Centre has been newly integrated into Student Life and will continue with its core work. A new Program Manager has been appointed to lead the Snow Scholarships program and all scholars will participate in a three-year development program.

The resolutions passed during the meeting follow.

Prepared by:		Submitted by:	
Name	Stephanie Payne	Name	Lisa Paul AO PSM
Position	University Secretary	Position	Chancellor
Date	September 2025	Date	September 2025

Council Resolutions C256, 4 September 2025

RESOLUTION C256/6	The Council resolved to confirm as a true and accurate record: i. Unconfirmed Minutes C255, 15 10 July 2025. ii. Flying Minute C2025/FM 5 Reconnected 2025-2027.
RESOLUTION C256/7	The Council resolved to adopt the resolutions of all items not starred in the C256 Agenda of 4 September 2025.
RESOLUTION C256/8	The Council resolved to accept the Vice-Chancellor's Report.
RESOLUTION C256/9	The Council resolved to: i. approve the Response and Recovery Framework. ii. accept the response and recovery report.
RESOLUTION C256/10	The Council resolved to approve the Foreign Arrangements and Foreign Interference Policy.
RESOLUTION C256/11	The Council resolved to approve the revised Fraud and Corruption Control Plan.
RESOLUTION C256/12	The Council resolved to approve the Whistleblowing (and Public Interest Disclosure) Procedure.
RESOLUTION C256/13	The Council resolved to:

	<p>i. approve the appointment of Ms Anne-Marie Lansdown as a member of the Planning and Development Committee effective immediately for the remainder of her term on Council.</p> <p>ii. approve the reappointment of Mr Adrian Harrington as a member of the Planning and Development Committee for the period 17 March 2026 to 16 March 2028.</p> <p>iii. approve the reappointment of Ms Annabelle Pegrum AM as a member of the Planning and Development Committee for the period 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2027.</p>
RESOLUTION C256/14	The Council resolved to approve the recommended revision in the Delegations Schedule to Administrative Delegation AD.03.11 External Funding (research related).
RESOLUTION C256/15	<p>The Council resolved to note the status of the in-progress review and endorse the undertaking of an internally managed UCX financial review, led by the COO and CFO to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess revenue and expenditure (salary and non-salary). • Identify costs and contributions external to UCX (e.g. capex, internal transfers). • Provide a five-year financial outlook. • Compare UCX-delivered services with potential in-house or outsourced models. • Assess structural options and potential benefits.
RESOLUTION C256/16	The Council resolved to approve the list of Course Program fees increasing by more than 10% in 2026.
RESOLUTION C256/17	The Council resolved to accept the Chancellor's Report.
RESOLUTION C256/18	The Council resolved to note the University's current position regarding social licence.
RESOLUTION C256/19	The Council resolved to accept the Student Report.
RESOLUTION C256/20	<p>The Council resolved to:</p> <p>i. accept the Academic Board Report.</p> <p>ii. note the unconfirmed Academic Board minutes of the meeting held on 27 August 2025.</p>
RESOLUTION C256/21	The Council resolved to note the discussion on the Academic Board's advisory role at the AB meeting of 27 August 2025 when addressing Chubb's recommendation to review the Academic Boards's advisory role.
RESOLUTION C256/22	<p>The Council resolved to:</p> <p>i. note the ARMC Report.</p> <p>ii. note the Unconfirmed Minutes ARMC2025/3 5 August 2025.</p> <p>iii. note the work commenced on the Strategic Risk Register - Reconnected 2025-2027.</p> <p>iv. note the Cyber Security Risk Update and the AMRC's endorsement of limited adoption of the Australian Government's Protective Security Policy Framework (PSPF), and the target of Maturity Level 1 of the 'Essential Eight' under that framework for cyber security risk management.</p> <p>v. note the UFIT Update Report.</p> <p>vi. note the Directors' and Officer's Insurance Update.</p> <p>vii. note the Emerging Risks Report</p>

RESOLUTION C256/23	<p>The Council resolved to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. note the Unconfirmed Minutes FC2025/5 6 August 2025. ii. accept the Financial Management Report July 2025. iii. note the report on Cash and Debt Position. iv. note the Year End Forecast #2. v. note the Q2 Workforce Profile Report vi. note the Exercise of Financial Delegations Report
RESOLUTION C256/24	The Council resolved to note the Draft Minutes PDC2025/5 7 August 2025.
RESOLUTION C256/25	The Council resolved to note the Faculty of Arts and Design update.
RESOLUTION C256/26	The Council resolved to note the Student Life update.
RESOLUTION C256/27	The Council resolved to note the Chancellor's approval of the conferral of awards.