

Communique

University Council Meeting C260, 11 December 2025

The University of Canberra Council met for its seventh ordinary meeting of 2025 on Thursday, 11 December.

The Vice-Chancellor Report included that tertiary harmonisation activity is progressing at scale and will strengthen the future student pipeline. Staff engagement has been a priority, with six Town Halls held in 2025 including transparent reporting on the University's finances. The Vice-Chancellor (VC) also highlighted the success of a recent visit to partners in China, which reaffirmed the strength of international education partnerships built over more than 20 years of UC engagement. Within the sector, the VC is advocating for managed growth and equity as key priorities. UC's media coverage in 2025 has been largely positive, with data showing that UC's overall share-of-voice was 12%.

Strategy and Performance: Council agreed in principle for UC to progress an application to the Indian Government's University Grants Commission to establish a branch campus in India with partner ECA, noting this does not commit UC to the proposal at this stage; and noted an International Strategy paper will be provided to Council for consideration in early 2026 before any final decisions are made.

AI Strategy: The Chief Information Officer presented the University's emerging AI Strategy, emphasising the importance of balancing risk management and security with the need to foster innovation and create opportunities for staff and students to experiment. Council also received a presentation from FutureSecureAI on potential AI-driven opportunities for the University. In discussion, members highlighted the importance of first, defining clear strategic goals for AI adoption and then assessing technologies available for educational and operational uses. It was agreed that a small advisory group will be established to refine UC's AI Strategy, identify priority use cases for implementation, and provide Council oversight of AI initiatives.

Risk and Compliance: Council noted the VC's Strategic Risks, and the VC emphasised the need for commercial expertise to mitigate risks associated with development of land. The University's Annual report on the Code of Governance Principles and Practices for Australia's Public Universities was accepted.

Gender-Based Violence (GBV): An update on the University's progress in responding to the new *National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence (Code)* was received. Council noted its responsibility as the governing body to comply with the Code, agreed to establish an ARMC subcommittee on Prevention of GBV including GBV expertise, and considered the draft Action Plan noting that the finalised plan would be circulated for Council endorsement prior to submission.

The Chancellor's Report included an update on the University Chancellors Council Code and the Expert Council on University Governance report. Reporting to TEQSA against the Principles contained in the Expert Council's report will become mandatory. Further, a briefing on the Strategic Review of R&D (SERD) Panel's report (to be released 2026) suggests the report will recommend amalgamation of Commonwealth programs covering industry and research, change to R&D tax incentives; and support for basic research.

The SRC annual report was presented to Council. It outlined progress against five governance review themes and the creation of the ACE Framework (Advocacy, Consultation, Experience). Gains have been made in consultation and experience, and advocacy continues as a priority for 2026. Key priorities for the year included AI with an AI Conference held on campus; and lobbying nationally on international student work visa issues.

Academic Board report included: updates from the TEQSA Conference; Faculty reporting on student experience data; confirmation that all outstanding recommendations from the Academic Governance External Review were now closed; and preparation for the 2026 Academic Governance External Review.

Council Committee reports: The **Audit and Risk Management Committee** report included discussion on internal audit priorities in 2026 including payroll controls for casual staff, cyber security health check and staff psychosocial health. It accepted the TEQSA Risk Indicators report and noted progress on the Risk Appetite Statement.

Finance Committee reported on the predicted end-of-year financial position that reflects discipline across the University (an underlying surplus once redundancy costs are removed). Council agreed the outcome is a significant achievement though stressed the need to maintain expenditure discipline in 2026 as risks around costs and infrastructure remain.

The **Planning and Development Committee** report included the finalisation of the Aged Care development and noted the focus for 2026 will include unlocking value in the Northwest Health Hub.

Acknowledgement of Service: The Acting Chancellor sincerely thanked the outgoing Council members whose terms conclude on 31 December 2025 for their committed service to Council and the University: Professor Elisa Martinez-Marroquin, Academic Board Chair; Professor Benedict Sheehy, Academic Staff Representative; and Mr Peter Carling, Professional Staff Representative,

The resolutions passed during the open session of the meeting follow.

Prepared by:		Submitted by:	
Name	Stephanie Payne	Name	Patricia Kelly PSM
Position	University Secretary	Position	Acting Chancellor
Date	December 2025	Date	December 2025

Council Resolutions C260, 11 December 2025

RESOLUTION C260/3	The Council resolved to confirm as a true and accurate record the Unconfirmed Minutes of C259 held on 6 November 2025, subject to the agreed amendment.
RESOLUTION C260/4	The Council resolved to adopt the resolutions of all items not starred in the C260 Agenda of 11 December 2025.
RESOLUTION C260/5	The Council resolved to accept the Vice-Chancellor's Report.
RESOLUTION C260/6	The Council resolved to: 1. agree in principle for UC to progress an application to the Indian Government's University Grants Commission (UGC) to establish a branch campus in India with partner ECA, with the below milestones to follow:

	<p>a. March 2026 - Council consider UGC application in light of an overall TNE Strategy. If agreed:</p> <p>b. May 2026 – Council consider final business case.</p> <p>c. July 2027 – courses commence</p> <p>2. note:</p> <p>a. In August 2025 UC and ECA signed a non-binding Letter of Intent to examine the proposal.</p> <p>b. The Vice-Chancellor will visit India in February 2026 as part of a trade delegation led by the ACT Chief Minister and will also visit the proposed ECA site and meet with UGC representatives.</p> <p>c. The Vice-Chancellor will advise the Chancellor in the event any material changes arise prior to the March 2026 Council meeting.</p> <p>d. The Vice-Chancellor will present the final UGC application to Council for approval in March 2026 that will include key costs, benefits and risks.</p> <p>e. Alternative approaches outlined in the paper.</p>
RESOLUTION C260/7	The Council resolved to accept the Enterprise AI update and note the meeting presentation.
RESOLUTION C260/8	The Council resolved to note the summary of the Code and its inherent obligations.
RESOLUTION C260/9	<p>The Council resolved to:</p> <p>a. note the report on compliance with the Council’s obligations under the Code; and</p> <p>b. agree to the recommended actions regarding standards 1.2 and 3.1/3.8.</p>
RESOLUTION C260/10	<p>The Council resolved to:</p> <p>a. note the draft Action Plan: National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender Based Violence; and</p> <p>b. note that the finalised Plan will be circulated via Flying Minute to Council for endorsement prior to submission.</p>
RESOLUTION C260/11	The Council resolved to accept the report on compliance with the Code of Governance Principles and Practice for Australia’s Public Universities and to note that a paper on compliance with the new mandatory Principles would come to Council’s March meeting.
RESOLUTION C260/12	Council resolved to approve the revised Charter of Conduct and Values.
RESOLUTION C260/13	The Council resolved to approve the issuance of a letter of support for UCX Ltd.
RESOLUTION C260/14	Council resolved to approve the 2026 annual work plan
RESOLUTION C260/15	The Council resolved to approve the reappointment of Ms Patricia Kelly PSM as a member of the Audit and Risk Management Committee for the period 1 January 2026 to 12 March 2026.
RESOLUTION C260/16	<p>Council resolved to:</p> <p>a. note that the Deputy Chancellor, Ms Patricia Kelly PSM, will act as Chancellor from 2 December 2025 until such time as that the Chancellor is ready to resume her position; and</p> <p>b. approve the appointment of Mr Medy Hassan OAM to the role of acting Deputy Chancellor for the same period.</p>
RESOLUTION C260/17	The Council resolved to accept the Chancellor’s Report.

RESOLUTION C260/18	The Council resolved to accept the SRC Annual Report, including the three relevant recommendations for UC action.
RESOLUTION C260/19	The Council resolved to note the Academic Board report including the Faculty Student, Experience and Outcomes reports.
RESOLUTION C260/20	The Council resolved to: a. note the ARMC Report b. accept the Unconfirmed Minutes ARMC2025/4 11 November 2025 c. note the Policy Review update.
RESOLUTION C260/21	The Council resolved to: a. note the Draft Minutes FC2025/7 12 November b. note the Year End Forecast #3 c. accept the Financial Management Reports for October 2025 d. note the University Investment Brief.
RESOLUTION C260/22	The Council resolved to: a. note the Draft Minutes PDC2025/8 12 November 2025 b. note the Campus Development Update c. accept the 2025 PDC Annual Report.
RESOLUTION C260/23	The Council resolved to note the Chancellor's approval of the conferral of awards.