



OUTCOMES FROM DEAKIN UNIVERSITY COUNCIL MEETING 4, 2020 – 23 JULY 2020

Deakin University Council met on 23 July 2020 by videoconference in accordance with the provisions for approved methods of communication for Council meetings under the *Deakin University Act 2009*. Council dealt with matters as follows in accordance with its legislative responsibilities and 2020 business schedule.

Setting the strategic direction of the University

Council noted that a consultation document on the University's next strategic plan would be released on 3 August 2020. Comments and input will be considered by the University Executive and the draft plan will be presented to Council at its next meeting on 1-2 October.

Monitoring current issues

Major Workplace Change

Council noted that the dispute brought by the National Tertiary Education Union was heard by the Fair Work Commission on 22 and 23 July.

Campus Reactivation

Council considered a report from the Vice-Chancellor and members of the Executive on business recovery from the COVID-19 crisis, in particular the gradual increase in activities on campus under the Campus Reactivation Plan and in line with health advice and Universities Australia guidelines. The Plan takes a consistent approach to all campuses, augmented by the additional requirements pertaining to the Burwood Campus because it is in the Melbourne lock down area. The University is minimising travel by staff across lock down lines. The University has developed COVIDSafe Learning Modules tailored to staff, students and visitors authorised to be on campus.

Overseeing the management and control of finances

Council considered the Financial Report for the first half of 2020. Council also received an update on major projects, a number of which will be completed in the coming months, notably the Law School Building, IISRI Expansion and Building Façade Remediation.

Council noted that due principally to the decline in income from international student fees the University will record a significant deficit in 2020 in stark contrast to the surplus of \$108 million in 2019.

Council was advised that the University's application to the Victorian Government to increase its borrowing limit is proceeding. The timing of any borrowing program will be determined by detailed projections to be made in Outlook 2 2020 in September.

Council considered income projections for the next three years and noted that they underline the fact that the COVID-19 crisis has presented the University with the most challenging situation in its history and that the sector as a whole is facing a severe situation.

Indigenous strategy and innovation

Council considered a presentation from Professor Mark Rose, Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Strategy and Innovation. Professor Rose explained his plans to build on Deakin's strengths in Indigenous

education through an all-of-University approach encompassing education, research, employment and community engagement.

Council thanked Professor Rose for his excellent presentation, expressed strong support for his work and agreed that he should address Council annually about the progress of his plans.

Gender equity plan

Council received a report on the University's gender equity plan and commitment to the SAGE Athena SWAN program. Council was pleased to note the University's commitments and progress against targets.

Overseeing and monitoring of academic activities

Council considered a report from Professor Liz Johnson, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Education, on the outcomes from the fully online delivery of assessment for Trimester 1/Semester 1, 2020 in the context of the COVID-19 situation. Council noted:

- the quick and comprehensive move to fully online delivery and assessment with over 95% of units delivered as scheduled in T1/S1 (1,139 units)
- the sound student progress rates for T1/S1, 2% above T1/S1 2019
- the mixed views among students about changes to the way grades were given (with or without percentage score accompanying the grade of distinction, pass, fail etc) and complaints by a proportion of students about those changes
- that overall feedback from students on T1/S1 through the eVALUate survey was pleasing and indicated no diminution in learning satisfaction compared to previous years.

Council congratulated Professor Johnson, staff and students on these outcomes in the face of difficult circumstances.

University legislation and policy

Council considered a proposal for a major renewal of the University Statutes and Regulations involving:

- streamlining 16 Statutes and 44 Regulations into a single University Statute and three Regulations relating to the roles and responsibilities of Council, the Vice-Chancellor and the Academic Board
- the conferral of authority, currently reserved to Council, on the Vice-Chancellor and the Academic Board to make and amend their Regulations.

Council noted that aside from the power to make their Regulations, the powers of the Vice-Chancellor and Academic Board would remain unchanged and they will remain accountable to Council as at present.

Council further noted that the streamlined legislation was consistent with the University's aims to support nimble and responsive decision-making with clear lines of accountability.

Council approved the introduction of the new legislation, effective from 1 January 2021 subject to Ministerial approval of the Deakin University Statute.

Council acknowledged the excellent work of the Legislation Committee and its Chair, Mr Stephen Bubb, in bringing forward the streamlined legislation.