



OUTCOMES FROM DEAKIN UNIVERSITY COUNCIL MEETING 7, 2020 – 10 DECEMBER 2020

Deakin University Council met on 10 December 2020 and dealt with matters as follows in accordance with its legislative responsibilities and 2020 business schedule.

New University Statute and Regulations

The University's General Counsel advised Council that the Hon Gayle Tierney, MP Minister for Training and Skills and the Minister for Higher Education had approved the new Deakin University Statute and that it would come into effect on 1 January 2021. This followed Council approval of new legislation at its meeting on 23 July 2020: the Deakin University Statute, the Council Regulations, the Academic Board Regulations and the Vice-Chancellor Regulations.

The new Regulations will come into effect concurrently with the Statute on 1 January 2021. They are unchanged from the versions endorsed by the Academic Board and Council at earlier meetings.

The new Statute and three Regulations replace the existing 16 statutes and 44 regulations. They significantly streamline the University's regulatory documentation and improve alignment with University policies.

Monitoring current issues and actions

Foreign Relations Act

Council noted that the Commonwealth Parliament had passed the *Foreign Relations (State and Territory Arrangements) Act*. Along with other universities Deakin is assessing the implications for international collaborative agreements.

Review of the Adoption of the Model Code on Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom

Council noted that Emeritus Professor Sally Walker's review of the adoption of the Model Code on Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom was released on 8 December 2020 and it concluded that adoption across the sector had been patchy. Deakin is among four universities categorised as 'partly aligned, significant areas not aligned'. There are six universities categorised as 'not aligned' and a further six still working on their response to the Model Code.

Council noted that a working party of the Academic Board will examine the Walker review and specifically those areas deemed to be out of alignment with the Code. The results of this work will be reported to Council for consideration. The Chancellor noted that this matter will also continue to be monitored and discussed by the University Chancellors Council.

Enrolments

The Vice-Chancellor reported to Council on:

- campus reactivation as COVID-19 restrictions are eased
- enrolment numbers: overall student numbers for 2020 are slightly above 2019 numbers. Increased domestic demand has offset the decline in commencing international students in terms of numbers but not in terms of revenue. Domestic demand for 2021 is strong.

Overseeing the management and control of finances

Financial Report to November 2020

Council considered the Finance Report for the year-to-date to 31 November 2020. Council noted that the end of year position is projected to be more favourable than forecast at Outlook 2. This is due predominantly to continuing cost-constraint measures and to better than expected revenue from strong domestic demand, including a 20 % increase in full fee-paying postgraduate enrolments compared to 2019. Council noted that this will delay but not obviate the need for the University to undertake borrowings in 2021 and 2022 due to the decline in revenue from international student fees.

Commercial Activities and Entities policy and procedure

Council approved amendments to the Commercial Activities and Entities policy and procedure and consequential amendments to the Delegations policy in line with the University's commercialisation objectives.

Endowment Fund

Council approved amendments to the University's arrangements for the financial stewardship of endowments in line with the University's objective to attract more endowments.

Major Projects

Council considered the Major Projects Report to 31 October 2020. Council was pleased to note that the major project to remediate flammable cladding has been completed.

Council approved a change request to complete stage 1 of the Geelong Future Economy Precinct. The changes arose from requirements relating to the Epworth Place road extension.

Human resources and occupational health, safety and wellbeing

Council considered:

- the 2020 presentation on human resource matters by the Chief Operating Officer, Kean Selway
- the University's 2020 Gender Equity Report from Mel Martinelli Executive Director, Diversity and Inclusion
- a briefing from the University's General Counsel, Shirley Rooney on legislation establishing the offence of workplace manslaughter.

Council noted continuing University actions to narrow the gender pay gap, to maintain strong health, safety and wellbeing performance and to accommodate staff combining on-campus and off-campus work.

Overseeing and monitoring of academic activities

The Chair of the Academic Board, Professor Chris Hickey, reported on the Board meeting on 25 November 2020 and on actions taken by the Board during the year to uphold academic freedom, standards and quality. This included the annual report on Deakin's Academic Standards Risk and Compliance Framework.

Council thanked Professor Hickey for his high standard, informative reporting at this meeting and throughout the year.

Council considered the 2020 report from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, Alfred Deakin Professor Julie Owens, on the performance of University research institutes.

Council approved a new approach to the appointment of Emeritus Professors. Future appointments will no longer require the approval of Council but will be decided by a newly formed Emeritus Professors Committee and will be reported to the Academic Board and Council.

Council's own affairs

Fulfilment of business for 2020

Council received reports recording that Council and its committees had fulfilled their governance responsibilities during the year under relevant legislation and codes of practice:

- *Deakin University Act 2009* (Vic)
- Deakin University Council Charter
- corporate governance and accountability standards specified by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA)
- Voluntary Code of Best Practice for the Governance of Australian Universities.

Council also received the 2020 report on actions taken under delegations conferred by Council.

Acknowledgement of outgoing members

Council acknowledged with acclamation the service of members concluding their terms on 31 December 2020:

- Peter Niblett, the first Deakin alumnus appointed to Council, past Alumnus of the Year and member of Council for the maximum term of 12 years
- Alice Di Pasquale, elected staff member of Council since 2016
- Maryam Hasanova, elected student member in 2020.

Conclusion of year's business

In concluding its business for the year Council expressed its deep appreciation of the work of University staff, the University Executive and the Vice-Chancellor in 2020.

The Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor expressed great confidence that, despite the many challenges to come, the University was strongly positioned to deliver on the ambition and the objectives of the new strategic plan *Deakin 2030: Ideas to Impact*.

Council agreed that 2020 will be seen as a watershed year for Deakin. Despite the difficulties of the year Deakin can look to the future with confidence that the vision of *Deakin 2030* will be realised and will deliver significant benefits to the University's communities.