CONFIRMED

Minutes

Academic Board
Meeting No: 1/24

Date and Time:	Wednesday, 21 February 2024, 1.00pmm
Location:	Council Chamber, Toowoomba Campus
Minute Secretary:	Emma Phillips, Governance Officer (Academic Board) | 4631 2188
Members Present:	Chair - Associate Professor Fernando Padró Professor Geraldine Mackenzie Professor Karen Nelson Professor John Bell Professor Odette Best Professor Ren Yi (zoom) (left Item 9) Professor Lyn Alderman (Zoom) Dr Ali Jaquet - Dean (Students) (Acting) Professor Charlotte Brownlow Professor Jo-Anne Ferreira (Zoom) Professor Geoff Slaughter Mark Erickson Professor Alexander Kist Professor Paul Wen Professor Jill Lawrence Dr Naomi Ryan Dr Kieran Balloo (Zoom)	Associate Professor Eric Ng Professor Stewart Riddle (Zoom) Professor Luke van der Laan Professor Gavin Beccaria Shane Simmons Associate Professor David Thorpe (Zoom) Associate Professor Melissa Johnson Morgan Associate Professor Polly Burey (Zoom) Professor Petrea Redmond Bernadette Lynch Associate Professor Lisa Beccaria Tonia Chalk (arrived Item 9) Peter Geiss Adam Schmidt
By Invitation:	Rachel Hennessy – Council Member
Observers:	Julie Shinners, Director (Governance) and University Secretary Cassandra Thomson – Policy Advisor Leanne Midgley - Principal Advisor (Academic Governance and Standards) Gabriela Berger - Academic Policy Coordinator
Apologies:	Professor Glen Coleman Professor Eliza Whiteside Professor Catherine Prentice
Absent:	Lyla Evans – President Student Guild

Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country

The meeting opened at 1.02pm.

The Chair Associate Professor Fernando Padró provided an Acknowledgement of Country.

The Chair welcomed members and invitees to the meeting and provided the following verbal update on Academic Board membership:

- **Bernadette Lynch** and **Associate Professor Polly Burey** were welcomed back from leave and **Associate Professor Jessica Marrington** and **Dr Danielle Gleeson** were thanked for filling in during Ms Lynch and Associate Professor Burey's absence.

- **Peter Giess** has accepted the Chair's offer to extend his membership as an Undergraduate Student Representative on Academic Board for another term commencing 1 April 2024 through to 31 March 2025.
- **Associate Professor Renee Desmarchelier** had returned to her substantive position which means she was is longer eligible to be a member of Academic Board.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest and Statement of Confidentiality

The Chair invited members of Academic Board to declare any potential, perceived or actual conflict of interest with the matters listed. No conflicts of interest were raised.

Members were reminded that if any matters discussed during the course of the Academic Board meeting were to be treated confidentially, they would be identified, and that the Chair may request those with rights of audience and/or observers to leave the meeting when confidential items are discussed. Members were also advised that when discussing an item from an Academic Board meeting, it is preferable that the discussion be contained to the topic, rather than the names of individuals.

Starring of Items

No additional items were starred for discussion.

Resolved:

It was resolved that all unstarred items be approved/recommended for approval en bloc.

1. Confirmation of the Minutes

Resolved:

Academic Board resolved that the minutes of the Academic Board meeting (06/23) held on 14 November 2023, having been circulated and read, be confirmed and signed as a true and accurate record.

2. Business Arising from the Minutes

Members received a copy of the post meeting action sheet for actions arising from the previous meeting (06/23) held on 14 November 2023. The status of items on the post meeting action sheet were noted as actioned and complete, with no further business arising from the minutes.

2.1. Council Report to Academic Board [HESF 6.2.1.f]

The Director (Governance) and University Secretary Julie Shinners introduced the Council Report to Academic Board following the 4 December 2023 Council meeting. Items of interest noted to Academic Board included the approval of the Intellectual Property Policy, the revised Policy and Procedure Framework and changes to the Honorary Awards Committee Terms of Reference. Members were also advised the Provost presented the 2023 Strategic Education Report at the Council meeting which was attached to the agenda for Academic Board to note. Ms Shinners noted a Council meeting was held on 20 February 2024 and the outcomes of that will be reported at the next Academic Board.

Resolved:

a) To **note** the 4 December 2023 Council Meeting Report to Academic Board.

b) To **note** the Strategic Education Report presented to Council.

3.   Comments from the Chair

The Chair addressed members and advised that as part of the TEQSA re-registration process an external review of academic governance was being undertaken between March and May 2024.

4.   Vice-Chancellor's Report

Received: The Vice-Chancellor's Report to Academic Board. The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Geraldine Mackenzie introduced the Report and provided an update to members since the report was provided:

- The Australian Universities Accord Final Report is expected in the coming week. Further information will be provided to the next Academic Board meeting.

- A number of members of senior management will be attending the Universities Australia Annual Conference next week in Canberra.

- The Australian Government's Migration Strategy released in December 2023 has significant implications for universities in terms of granting of international student visas It was noted this will be an ongoing topic of conversation.

- At its meeting on 20 February 2024, Council approved the progression of the new health building at Ipswich which will provide facilities to support learning and teaching for new Allied Health programs and existing Nursing and Paramedicine programs.

- The new Allied Health programs have been successful, with Board advised that the Bachelor of Physiotherapy (Honours) has 33 commencing students in the first year of offer, with an ATAR of 95 being the lowest for this cohort.

Professor Mackenzie expressed her thanks to all members of staff for their support and attendance at the four recent graduation ceremonies, which saw over 1000 graduands processing.

In response to a member question regarding the increase of students within the new Allied Health program being dependant on the new health building at Ipswich, Professor Mackenzie advised the new building will provide additional space and facilities to meet requirements. It was further noted by Professor Nelson that the professional accreditation associated with the Bachelor of Physiotherapy involved capped quotas for student numbers.

Resolved:

a) To **note** the contents of the Vice-Chancellor's Report.

5.   Education Report

Received: The Education Report. The Provost, Professor Karen Nelson took the report as read and spoke to the various initiatives around supporting students through the application and enrolment process, including additional supports which had been put in place in anticipation of the needs of students enrolling late. Professor Nelson spoke to the new UniSQ Let's Go Online Orientation platform, which provides a concentrated and personalised digital experience for students.

Professor Nelson highlighted Item 3.4 - Destination Australia Program Round 5 of her report, noting the $990,000 received in funding for the program was the largest amount received to date and will support 12 international and six domestic student scholarships across a range of programs. UniSQ's new brand, reputation in the market and current research rankings are

helping to identify eligible students to take up these scholarships.

Members raised no further questions.

Resolved:

a) To **note** the contents of the Education Report.

6.   Research Report

Received: The Research Report. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) Professor John Bell took the report as read and highlighted the following matters:

- Increase in Research Block Grant allocation for 2024 as per the report was a result of UniSQ's performance relative to the rest of the sector.

- International demand for PhD is strong however domestic demand is challenging.

- The Australian Research Council is prioritising development of a modern data driven approach for Excellence in Research for Australia informed by expert review for implementation from 2024-25. This will provide both opportunities and challenges.

In response to a member query on how the Research Block Grants allocation of approximately $2 million will be allocated to schools, Professor Bell confirmed this has not yet been implemented in the budget.

Members raised no further questions.

Resolved:

a) To **note** the contents of the Research Report.

7.   Student Representative Report

It was noted a Student Representative Report is scheduled for 9 April 2024 Academic Board meeting.

8.   Review of Student Academic Appeals Committee

Received: Briefing Paper on Proposed Amendments to the Student Academic Appeals Committee Terms of Reference. The University Secretary introduced this item and advised members the proposed changes were an outcome of the recommendations of a review which was undertaken by the Student Ombudsperson in 2023. The proposed changes included:

- Change reporting to bi-annual via an interim and annual report.

- Membership changes which include:
  - o Introduction of a Deputy Chair to ensure the committee can be quorate while the Chairperson is on leave or absent.
  - o Increase to student member pool.

- Clarification of role of Executive Officer to the Committee.

- Minor editorial amendments.

The current Chairperson of the Student Academic Appeals Committee, Shane Simmons spoke to and was in support of the proposed changes.

Professor Nelson clarified to members that the Student Academic Appeals Committee was separate from the Student Academic Misconduct Appeals Committee, noting that the former

committee was previously refashioned to separate the functions. It was agreed at that time there would be a post implementation review, of which these proposed changes have resulted from.

In response to a member query about availability of training and resources available to members of the committee, it was noted training had been run by the Student Ombudsperson with assistance from the Student Grievance Resolution Unit, and the training materials were being transitioned to an online format to be accessed when required.

No further questions or concerns were raised by members.

Members voted to approve the proposed changes to the Student Academic Appeals Committee Terms of Reference. The motion was carried, noting the abstention of Shane Simmons.

Resolved:

a) Academic Board **approves** the changes the Student Academic Appeals Committee Terms of Reference as per the briefing paper.

Action: Governance Officer (Academic Board)

9. Review of Academic Board and Standing Committees Membership

Professor Ren Yi left during this item.

Tonia Chalk joined the meeting during this item.

Received: Briefing Paper on Proposed Amendments to the Membership of Academic Board, Education Committee and Research Committee. The University Secretary shared a presentation outlining the proposed changes to Academic Board, Research Committee and Education Committee.

It was noted that the term of the current Board ends prior to the July 2024 meeting, and thus the new Board needs to be fully constituted by the July 2024 meeting. As such any changes to the Terms of Reference needed to be approved by Council in time to allow the election process to be undertaken, as per the election schedule provided.

There was a robust discussion amongst members regarding the proposed changes to each Terms of Reference, with the following issues raised:

- Some members noted insufficient time to consider the changes and anticipated impact.

- A member felt there appeared to be a lack of consultation with the Board members on the proposed changes. It was suggested there should be discussion on how future consultation will take place with key stakeholders and how the broader community can have input as we have with policy consultation.

- Representation of categories within the Academic Board Terms of Reference requires further discussion and consideration.

- Gender representation and diversity more broadly, how this can be addressed via membership categories and the election process. It was noted removing the specificity around gender had been a topic of conversation at previous Academic Board meetings.

- Need for certainty on membership structure prior to calling the election.

In response to a member query regarding lack of student representatives to fill the student representative positions, Professor Nelson suggested this be raised through the Student Senate

as part of the Students as Partners implementation for discussion on how students could be encouraged and supported to participate.

Following discussions, members were supportive of the following changes:

Education Committee Terms of Reference:

1. Changes to wording regarding the delegation of the role of Chair, in line with the Council Delegations Schedule.

2. Addition of the Associate Director (Academic Program Support Services) as an ex officio member in line with functional responsibilities for matters relating to the business of the Committee.

3. Replacement of current elected member categories 13 and 14 (4 members in total) with one broader category of membership (4 members in total)

4. Addition of four elected academic staff members, which will enable interested staff to gain governance committee experience as a potential precursor to Academic Board nomination.

5. Increase of elected undergraduate student members from 1 to 2.

6. Correction of titles for several ex officio members.

7. Updating use of 'First Nations' as a common term throughout all terms of reference.

8. Amendments to wording under 4.7 absences to provide clarification.

9. Minor editorial changes.

Research Committee Terms of Reference:

1. Changes to wording regarding the delegation of the role of Chair, in line with the Council Delegations Schedule.

2. Addition of the new position of Dean (Research Infrastructure) as an ex officio member.

3. Correction of title of ex officio member.

4. Clarification of wording in categories 2 (Deputy Chair) and 8 (noting no actual change to membership numbers or category)

5. Amendment of wording of categories 13, 14 and 15 to remove 'researcher' and replace with 'academic staff member'.

6. Addition of one elected academic staff member position to ensure balance of elected and ex officio members.

7. Updating use of 'First Nations' as a common term throughout all terms of reference.

8. Amendments to wording under 4.7 absences to provide clarification.

9. Addition of one undergraduate student, elected by and rom the students of the University.

10. Minor editorial changes.

Academic Board Terms of Reference:

1. Removal of all gender-based representation within categories 14, 15, 16 and 17.

2. Amendments to wording of 3.1.21-23 regarding student elections to state 'elected by and from the students of the University'.

3. Amendments to wording around election and appointment of Chair and Deputy Chair.

It was agreed that the Chair and Deputy Chair would establish a working group to discuss other changes of concern including representational units and to discuss a process for consultation, noting that any changes to the membership would need to be approved by Council, via the Chancellor's Committee meeting of 28 March 2024.

Resolved:

a) To **approve** the changes the **Education Committee** Terms of Reference, as detailed above.

Action: Governance Officer (Academic Board)

b) To **approve** the changes the **Research Committee** Terms of Reference, as detailed above.

Action: Governance Officer (Academic Board)

c) To **endorse,** for consideration by Council, the proposed changes to the Academic Board Terms of Reference, as detailed above, noting any further proposed amendments suggested by the working group be approved via flying minute by Academic Board members prior to consideration by Council.

Action: Director (Governance) and University Secretary

10. Standing Committee Reports

10.1. Academic Board Executive Committee

The unconfirmed minutes of the Academic Board Executive Committee meeting from its meeting of 6 February 2024 were taken as read.

Resolved:

d) To **note** the unconfirmed minutes of the Academic Board Executive Committee meeting from its meeting of 6 February 2024.

10.2. Student Academic Appeals Committee

Student Academic Appeals Committee Chair Shane Simmons introduced this item. The de-identified committee minutes were taken as read and Mr Simmons provided members with an overview of the Report which covered the period 1 January-31 December 2023.

It was noted that the number of appeals received from international students was in line with expectations. A member noted the numbers were consistent with other appeal committees they had been part of and the University's approach very supportive and educative.

It was noted that as agreed under Item 8 Review of Student Academic Appeals Committee, the reporting of the Student Academic Appeals Committee would be biannual via an interim and annual report.

Resolved:

a) To **note** the de-identified minutes from the Student Academic Appeals Committee meeting of 14 December 2023.

b) To **note** the 2023 Student Academic Appeals Committee Annual Report.

10.3. Research Committee

Received: Research Committee Report 31 January 2024 to Academic Board. The Deputy Chair of the Research Committee Professor Petrea Redmond took the Research Committee Report 31 January 2024 as read and advised members that the Early Career Research (ECR) Report will be presented at the next Research Committee for onforwarding to the next Academic Board meeting.

Members raised no concerns.

Resolved:

a) To **note** the Research Committee Report of the meeting held 31 January 2024

b) To **note** the Graduate Research School Report (including 2023 completions for HDR programs; HDR commencements for 2023, and 2024; and the update on the HDR Scholarship round for 2024)

c) To **note** the Research Training Subcommittee Report of the meeting of 23 October 2023

d) To **note** the Human Research Ethics Committee Report

e) To **note** the Animal Ethics Committee Report

f) To **note** the UniSQ Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) Annual Report dated 24 January 2024

10.4. Education Committee

Received: Education Committee Report 1 February 2024 to Academic Board.

Associate Professor Padró advised members that the Expedited Pathway Working Group, comprising of Professor Karen Nelson, Professor Alexander Kist, Associate Professor Padró, Professor Glen Coleman, Associate Professor Renee Desmarchelier, Shane Simmons, Mark Erikson and Professor Lyn Alderman, had met to discuss a number of programs for 2024 implementation, subject to final Academic Board approval. The Dean (Academic) noted that the programs considered via the Expedited Pathway Working Group had previously been considered at the Academic Program Committee. Members raised no questions or concerns regarding these curriculum items.

The Deputy Chair of the Education Committee Professor Alexander Kist took the remaining items and attached reports as read. In the absence of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic Affairs) Professor Glen Colman, Professor Kist provided members with a brief overview of the proposed partnership with Lanzhou University and sought feedback from members. A member made comment regarding granting credit for capstone projects and ensuring that in doing so this meets the requirements of the graduate attributes for the program being awarded. No further feedback was provided on this proposal.

It was noted an update on artificial intelligence will be provided at the next Education Committee meeting by the Dean (Learning and Teaching Futures). An Artificial Intelligence Rapid Response Group has been established to lead the University's response to AI from an Education and Assessment perspective. A written report is intended for the subsequent Education Committee on 2 May. These updates will be forwarded to Academic Board.

A member sought clarification regarding Section 5.5 of the Academic Integrity Framework Report around moderation and consistency of moderation across the schools in identifying academic integrity with the removal of the workload allocation for moderation. It was noted that the role of moderation was also raised at Education Committee.

Resolved:

a) To **note** the Education Committee Report of the meeting held 1 February 2024.

b) Academic Board **approves** the programs considered by the Expedited Pathway Working Group meeting of 30 November 2023:

- major program changes to the **Master of Strength and Conditioning (MASC), Graduate Diploma of Strength and Conditioning (GSCD) and Graduate Certificate of Strength and Conditioning (GSCC)** effective Trimester 1, 2024.

- comprehensive review of the **Bachelor of Science (Honours) (BSCH) and Bachelor of Science (Honours) (Psychology) (BSHP)** effective 1st January 2024 with a recommended next comprehensive review date of 31st December 2029, but no later than 31st December 2030.

- major program changes to the **Bachelor of Science (Honours) (BSCH)** effective Trimester 1, 2024.

- major program changes to the **Diploma of Human Services and Development (DHSD)** effective Trimester 1, 2024.

- major program changes to two majors within the **Bachelor of Science (BSCI) - Information Technology** and **Computing** effective Trimester 1, 2024

- major program changes to the **Master of Spatial Science Technology (MSPT) suite** effective immediately

ACTION: Governance Officer (Academic Board)

c) To **note** the Academic Integrity Framework Report 2023.

d) To **note** the 2023 Annual Program Accreditation Activity Report.

e) To **note** the External Reference Points and Benchmarking Reports (2020-2023).

f) To **note** the proposed partnership with Lanzhou University.

11. Curriculum Items (Standing Item)

There were no curriculum items for consideration.

12. Policy and Procedure

12.1. Policy Framework Overview

Due to time constraints the overview of the Policy Framework was held over to a future meeting.

12.2. Academic Quality Policy and Procedure Report (HESF 6.3.2.a)

Received: Academic Quality Policy and Procedure Report. The Provost, Professor Karen Nelson took the Academic Quality Policy and Procedure Report as read and advised members the report is inclusive of all current activity and has a link to the SharePoint site where feedback is always welcome.

No questions or concerns were raised by members.

Resolved:

a) To **note** the update on Academic Quality Policy key activities.

b) To **note** the editorial amendments to Academic Quality policies and related procedures and schedules published during Q4 2023.

13. TEQSA Re-registration Project Update

Received: Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) Re-registration Project Update. The Provost, Professor Karen Nelson provided a brief overview of the report and welcomed feedback from members as well as opening an invitation to interested members to attend the Steering Committee as observers.

Members raised no questions or concerns.

Resolved:

a) To **note** the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) Re-registration Project update

14. Strategic Discussion

14.1. Academic Risk Register

Received: Draft Academic Risk Register (last updated 30/10/2023).

Professor Nelson introduced this item noting the Academic Risk Register had been developed to incorporate the management of academic risk within the existing management framework and is intended to provide a mechanism for the Board's oversight of academic risk.

Principal Advisor (Academic Governance and Standards) Leanne Midgley, as key lead of the project, advised members the draft provided was an outcome of the workshops held in 2023 and whilst granular in detail it provides an overview of academic risk at operational level which will inform strategic level issues to come forward to Academic Board. It was noted the contents will be transferred to the current risk register template.

It was further noted a workshop was held on 20 February 2024 with Professor Kist attending as an Academic Board representative. Professor Kist advised members the workshop was facilitated by an external consultant and members of the group analysed and discussed the identified risks in further detail.

A member of the Board commended the team on the progress of the Academic Risk Register. Associate Professor Padró advised members he would be sending an expression of interest to Academic Board members to form a working group to provide input on the Academic Risk Register.

Resolved:

a) To **note** the draft Academic Risk Register.

15. Flexible Academic Calendar Project Update

The Flexible Academic Calendar Project Update No. 13 was taken as read.

Resolved:

a) To **note** the Flexible Academic Calendar Project Update No. 13.

16. Other Business

Associate Professor Padró advised members this would be the last Academic Board meeting for Academic Registrar Mark Erickson and thanked Mr Erickson for his input and contributions to Academic Board.

17. Items for Information

There were no items for information.

18. Next Meeting

The next Academic Board meeting will be held at 1.00pm, Tuesday 9 April 2024, Council Chamber, Toowoomba Campus.

19. Close

The meeting closed at 4.02pm.