

GOVERNING BODY REPORT OF OUTCOMES



COU 3/2026 #306 – Thursday, 4 June 2026

The Council meeting (**#306**) was held on **Thursday, 4 June 2026** at **VU Footscray Park Campus**, 70–104 Ballarat Road, Footscray.

Victoria University (VU) is established under the VU Act 2010. VU's moral purpose is to transform the lives and communities it serves through the delivery of education and research with real-world impact, undertaken in partnership with industry and the community.

VU Council is the University's peak governing body, and is responsible for overseeing the University's operations, strategy, performance and risk, and for ensuring the proper management and control of the University in the public interest.

STRATEGIC FOCUS

STRENGTHENING GOVERNANCE AND COUNCIL EFFECTIVENESS

Council advanced a significant program of governance uplift, approving the implementation plan arising from the external review of corporate governance in late 2025 and endorsing a new [Council Charter](#) and [Governance Framework](#) designed to consolidate the role and functions of Council into a single, authoritative source of truth. Council emphasised that focused and concise papers, and stronger alignment with regulatory expectations are essential to effective oversight, and committed to continuing to support this work as legislative and regulatory changes are confirmed.

Council discussed the targeted capability uplift is being progressed to strengthen the clarity, focus and concision of governance papers and support more effective Council oversight.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY IN A CHANGING EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

Council gave close attention to the University's financial position, accepting the first-quarter forecast while examining the implications of a sector-wide decline in demand for certain programs. Council supported the diversification of revenue, the disciplined refinement of modelling and scenario analysis, and a more detailed budgeting process to inform strategic decisions, recognising the importance of protecting the University's long-term sustainability in the interests of students, staff and the communities it serves.

KEY MATTERS

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Council considered the University's year-to-date financial performance within a challenging external environment. Members examined a significant shift in student funding and assessed the risks of replacing revenue from a program that has historically delivered strong margins. Council noted that the University's cash position remains stable in the short term, supported by investment returns, and emphasised the importance of diversifying revenue, monitoring demand, and migration pathways, and where possible improving productivity, including through the responsible and ethical use of artificial intelligence. Council supported a more detailed budgeting process and further scenario analysis, with the Finance and Investment Committee to examine detailed options and report back to Council.

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS

Council reviewed the mid-year progress of the 2026 University Operational Plan and was satisfied that key priorities and drivers remained closely aligned to the Strategic Plan, noting a strong correlation between the University's flipped campus model and graduate employment outcomes. Council considered the strategic review of the University's Work Integrated Learning (WIL) program and supported a move to a more centralised and systematised model that strengthens oversight, supports the monitoring of student completion and outcomes, and promotes equity and predictability in the allocation of placements across both Higher Education and TAFE.

Council noted progress on key milestones to operationalise the University's India campus, including academic appointments, infrastructure approvals, and regulatory inspection, with undergraduate and postgraduate programs planned to commence in August 2026 subject to the required regulatory approval.

Council further noted the Tertiary Education Portfolio Plans and progress updates on academic quality assurance relating to placements and staff qualifications.

RESEARCH STANDARDS

Council emphasised the importance of clearly communicating the University's research performance and impact and requested that performance reporting be expanded beyond student data to incorporate research impact stories and research highlights. Council noted plans to enhance the University's research environment, including the fit-out of the New Footscray Hospital Research Building space, and supported the continued leveraging of research strengths through collaborative sector partnerships.

RISK & COMPLIANCE

Council exercised active oversight of the University's risk and compliance environment. Council approved changes to the Risk Management Policy and noted associated revisions to the supporting procedure and likelihood criteria and agreed that the appointment of the internal auditor should rest with Council on the recommendation of the Audit and Risk Committee, with relevant terms of reference to be updated accordingly. Council discussed the Risk Management Report and approved a simplified Business Resilience Program, emphasising the importance of embedding resilience at the leadership level and integrating it within governance, risk, and compliance systems with clear escalation pathways.

Council gave particular attention to data security, recognising the need to prioritise the institutional data security program, with interim mitigations in place while longer-term enhancements are progressed.

Council approved the 2025 Modern Slavery Statement and noted continued work to address modern slavery risks across the supply chain and in support of international students. Council also considered the biannual student complaints and integrity report, noting the implementation of a consolidated complaints system, the external role of the National Student Ombudsman, and the value of contextualising complaint volumes against enrolments to support informed interpretation.

UNIVERSITY CULTURE

Council reflected on its role in leading and driving the University's culture and supported strengthening governance language to make this responsibility explicit. Council considered the University's position in racism efforts, noting alignment/expectations with emerging regulatory and policy expectations.

Council welcomed the accessibility focus of improvements to the Council Chamber.

Council also discussed the responsible and ethical adoption of artificial intelligence, underlining the importance of providing staff with clarity and education on supported tools so that opportunities are realised while risks are managed.

STAKEHOLDER EXPECTATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

Council considered the University's engagement with external stakeholders and the wider sector, including its appearance before the Victorian parliamentary inquiry into university governance, where discussion focused on transparency, Council membership composition, and representation. Council noted that the implications of the inquiry, including potential considerations regarding student representation, would be assessed following the release of the inquiry's report.

Council recognised the value of collaboration through sector alliances as an opportunity to share strengths and pursue collective benefit and noted the external avenue available to students through the National Student Ombudsman. Members emphasised the importance of maintaining a strong, student-focused approach within a diverse institutional community.

WORKFORCE STRATEGY

Council noted the submission of the University's Gender Equality Action Plan to the relevant commission and acknowledged the continued progress being made across the organisation. Council discussed the relationship between the gender pay gap and institutional support, noting the range of initiatives available to staff, including career development workshops, counselling services, and a leadership capability uplift program to support academics. Council also noted workforce developments associated with the University's strategic initiatives, including appointments connected to the India campus.

REMUNERATION STRATEGY

Council noted that the Remuneration Committee had considered and provided assessment of the Vice-Chancellor's longer-term performance indicators and had supported the Vice-Chancellor's assessment of executive direct reports. Council was satisfied with the reports they received, and appropriate processes remain in place to oversee senior executive performance and remuneration.

COUNCIL MATTERS & PERFORMANCE

COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

Council oversaw a range of membership matters to maintain the strength and balance of its committees. Council approved new appointments to the Audit and Risk Committee, the Finance and Investment Committee and the Infrastructure and Planning Committee from amongst its membership, re-appointed members to support continuity, and noted a further appointment to the Remuneration Committee. Council noted the outcomes of the staff and student elections for the 2027–2028 term and acknowledged the valuable contributions of those members. Council adopted a policy position supporting a maximum tenure of ten years for appointed members, and approved a refreshed set of Council specialist skills to better align membership with the University's strategic needs.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT (STAFF, STUDENT & COMMUNITY)

Council maintained a strong focus on engagement with students, staff, and the community.

Council considered the importance of meaningful student representation and engagement, noting expected legislative changes affecting student membership and the value of aligning student engagement with the University's

governance. Council also considered the mechanisms that support staff and students, including the University's complaints framework, equity in access to learning and placement opportunities, and initiatives that promote inclusion and wellbeing.

OTHER MATTERS

Council noted the status of items on its action register, including the closure of completed actions. Council noted that the University is piloting the use of artificial intelligence within its Academic governance committees and progressing improvements to the clarity and timeliness of papers to support effective decision-making.

DISCLAIMER

The Governing Body Report of Outcomes is provided for transparency and information purposes only. It summarises governing body oversight activities and outcomes during the reporting period and does not constitute a complete record of Council deliberations. It does not cover all matters discussed or the full detail of decisions or discussions. The Expert Council's Principles recognise that, while the communication of the work and the decisions of the Governing Body is crucial, there are legal and commercial reasons for maintaining confidentiality.

COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

THE HONOURABLE DR. STEVE BRACKS AC, *Chancellor*

KATE ROFFEY AM, *Deputy Chancellor*

PROFESSOR ADAM SHOEMAKER, *Vice-Chancellor*

PROFESSOR ZORA VRCELJ, *Chair of Academic Board*

PRUE DIGBY, *Ministerial Appointment*

SUNNY GOMBOSO, *Student Elected*

PROFESSOR THE HONORABLE JILL HENNESSY, *Government Appointment*

EMERITUS PROFESSOR LIZ JOHNSON, *Council Appointment*

PROFESSOR ALEX PARKER, *Staff Elected*

ADRIAN POZZO, *Council Appointment*

FIONA SCHUTT, *Council Appointment*

JOSH SMITH, *Government Appointment*

JEN STOCKWELL, *Council Appointment*

FELICITY TOPP, *Council Appointment*

GREG TUCKER, *Government Appointment*

FURTHER INFORMATION

COUNCIL

[VU Act 2010](#)

[VU Governance](#)

OTHER USEFUL LINKS

[Council Regulations 2021](#)

[Council Terms of Reference](#)

COUNCIL COMMITTEES

[Audit and Risk Committee](#)

[Finance and Investment Committee](#)

[Infrastructure Planning Committee](#)

[Nominations Committee](#)

[Remuneration Committee](#)

ACADEMIC GOVERNANCE

[Academic Board](#)

[Academic Board Executive Committee](#)

[Courses Committee](#)

[Learning & Teaching Quality Committee](#)

[Research & Research Training Committee](#)

2026 COUNCIL MEETINGS

Council Meetings	Meeting Times	Location
Tuesday, 18 August	8:30am – 1.00pm	Footscray Park Campus, 70–104 Ballarat Road, Footscray
Tuesday, 13 October	8.30am – 1.00pm	Footscray Park Campus, 70–104 Ballarat Road, Footscray
Tuesday, 1 December	8.30am – 1.00pm	Footscray Park Campus, 70–104 Ballarat Road, Footscray

Table 1: 2026 Council Meeting Schedule