

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA
MINUTES OF THE ACADEMIC BOARD MEETING HELD
ON FRIDAY, 27 JUNE 2025
AT 2.15 PM, IN ROOM RR 5-09, ROWLAND REES BUILDING,
CITY WEST CAMPUS

2/2025

ITEM 1 - WELCOME AND OPENING

1.1 PRESENT:

Prof Jon Buckley
(Acting Chairperson)
Prof Craig Batty
Prof Andrew Beer
Dr Ryan Causby
Ms Tracey Coleman
Dr Xin Deng
Ms Jessica Ford
Prof Sanjay Garg
Prof Paula Geldens
Assoc Prof Sheridan Gentili
Assoc Prof Jodie George
Ms Karla Gotting
Prof Tracy Humphrey
Prof Marnie Hughes-Warrington
Mr Phil Johnson
Ms Camilla Liddy
Prof Elspeth McInnes
Prof Peter Murphy
Dr Shashi Nallaya
Assoc Prof Gary Owens
Assoc Prof Lemuel Pelentsov
Dr Fanke Peng
Prof Jacqui Ramagge
Mr Oliver Shephard-Bayly
Prof Deirdre Tedmanson
Prof Rachael Vernon
Assoc Prof Stephen Ward
Mr Peter Cardwell
(Executive Officer)

APOLOGIES:

Prof Amie Albrecht
Assoc Prof Anton Blencowe
Mr Alan Brideson
Prof Tina Brodie
Prof Shane Dawson
Mr Brendan Hughes
Ms Dasuni Imansa Jaburuthugoda
Mr Richard Irons
Mr Edwin John
Dr Masud Karim
Prof Marta Krasowska
Dr Malgorzata Korolkiewicz
Prof David Lloyd
Prof Sandra Orgeig
Mr Yeshaiah Varona
Ms Sibel Yildirimci
Dr Paula Zito

ALTERNATES:

Mr Husan Ara
(for Mr Yeshaiah Varona)
Ms Natasha Boots
(for Mr Brendan Hughes)
Dr Tiernan Cross
(for Prof Tina Brodie)
Ms Katrina Gillespie
(for Mr Tony Dalwood)
Ms Tania Kanellos
(for Mr Richard Irons)
Assoc Prof Sally Plush
(for Prof Sandra Orgeig)
Ms Shaana Sihota
(for Ms Dasuni Imansa Jaburuthugoda)

OBSERVERS:

Ms Julia Atterton
Ms Maggie Cao
Mr Chris Crabbe
Prof Esther May
Ms Anna Schkabaryn

- 1 The Chairperson, Prof Jon Buckley, opened the meeting and welcomed members, alternates, and observers. Prof Buckley also acknowledged that the meeting was taking place on lands never ceded by the Kaurna people, and extended his respect to Kaurna elders past, present, and emerging, as well as Aboriginal people present at the meeting.

1.2 TABLED PAPERS

- 2 There were no tabled papers.

1.3 STARRING OF AGENDA ITEMS

- 3 Agenda Items 1, 3, 4, 5, 7.3, 9.1, 9.4 and 10 were starred for discussion.

1.4 APPROVAL OF UNSTARRED ITEMS

2025/2/22 Academic Board resolved:

that all unstarred items be received and noted or approved without discussion.

Moved: Assoc Prof Gary Owens Seconded: Assoc Prof Stephen Ward

CARRIED

1.4 CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

2025/2/23 Academic Board resolved:

to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2024 as a correct record subject to minor amendment.

Moved: Dr Malgorzata Korolkiewicz Seconded: Prof Andrew Beer

CARRIED

ITEM 2 – BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

- 4 There was no business arising from the minutes.

ITEM 3 – CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT

- 5 In the absence of the Chair of Academic Board, who was overseas on university business, the Acting Chair, Prof Jon Buckley, presented Prof Deirdre Tedmanson’s report. He reported that since the previous Board meeting in March 2025, Prof Tedmanson had attended the May UniSA Council meeting at which there was a presentation from the Adelaide University Deputy Vice Chancellor (International and External Engagement), Prof Jessica Gallagher, as well as a number of reports on transitional arrangements, including budgetary and risk assessments, Governance and Nominations Committee reports leading to the foreshadowing of a number of honorary awards. Prof Tedmanson had also attended the June UniSA Council meeting at which there were presentations regarding the Research and Enterprise Portfolio from UniSA Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Enterprise), Prof Peter Murphy, the University of South

Australia Student Association (USASA), as well as reports on transitional arrangements and governance matters, and Audit and Risk reports. The April and May meetings of the Adelaide University Transition Council were strongly preoccupied with transition matters, and particularly the appointment of the new Vice Chancellor. The Adelaide University Transitional Academic Board, of which Prof Tedmanson was co-chair, had also met in March, May and June with the focus on progressing academic program, course, and research transition to Adelaide University. In addition, along with the co-chair of the Transitional Academic Board she had met with Independent Advisor, Emeritus Professor Ian O'Connor, on Academic Board matters.

2025/2/24

Academic Board resolved:

to receive and note the Chairperson's Report.

Moved: Prof Jon Buckley (from the Chair)

CARRIED

ITEM 4 – VICE CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

- 6 The Provost and Standing Acting Vice Chancellor, Distinguished Professor Marnie Hughes-Warrington AO, introduced the Vice Chancellor's report, which was taken as read, by drawing member's attention to the following matters:
- 6.1 The Adelaide University Transition Council had announced the appointment of Prof Nicola Phillips as the new Adelaide University Vice Chancellor to take up office on 12 January 2026 and lead the new university through its formative years. Prof Phillips brought a depth of knowledge with 30 years of experience in the higher education sector across Australia and the United Kingdom. She was currently the Provost and had served as Acting and Interim Vice Chancellor of the University of Melbourne.
- 6.2 Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) had released its World University Rankings by Subject for 2025. Rankings were compiled using five key indicators: academic reputation; employer reputation; citations per paper; h-index; and international research network (by broad faculty area). This would be the last time UniSA would be ranked as a university, with the QS Subjects Ranking 2026 providing a ranking for the new Adelaide University. UniSA was ranked in the top 100 in the World in two subjects: Nursing and Sports related subjects. UniSA was ranked in the top 10 in Australia in two subjects: Architecture and Built Environment and Hospitality and Leisure Management. UniSA ranked number one in South Australia for: Architecture and Built Environment, Sports and related subjects, and Hospitality and Leisure Management. UniSA ranked in the top 100 in the World for citations in eight subject areas: Nursing (ranked 6th), Hospitality and Leisure Management (ranked 6th), Sports and related subjects (ranked 28th), Education (ranked 42nd), Law (ranked 42nd), Arts and Humanities (ranked equal 55th), Accounting and Finance (ranked 58th), and Social Sciences and Management (ranked 82nd).
- 6.3 UniSA's Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Grant performance was excellent with four successful research projects winning more than \$2.4 million in funding. Prof Martin Shanahan had won \$903,456 with Dr John Wilson and University of Adelaide colleague Dr Florina Ploeki, in collaboration with colleagues from two other universities, and four community groups, for a project to digitise over three million public records. The records would be used to compare life-course outcomes for two generations of 19th century Tasmanians and South Australians, examining intergenerational mobility and inequality. Dr Zehong Cao had won \$643,052 for a project aiming to develop AI-enabled collaborative autonomy for complex spacecraft systems. Prof Jun Ma had won \$300,420 for a project which would develop strong,

sustainable rubber materials replacing fossil-based filters with plant-derived cellulose nanofibers. Assoc Prof Thong Pham had won \$584,833 for a project aiming to develop an advanced form of 'green concrete' by combining calcined halloysite clay with recycled plastic fibres, all optimised using artificial intelligence. GO8 analysis on the back of the Linkage outcomes which combined UniSA and University of Adelaide outcomes placed the new Adelaide University 4th nationally in ARC Linkage Grant performance.

- 6.4 UniSA's National Reconciliation Week (NRW) program across metropolitan, regional campuses and hubs from 27 May to 3 June had been the most successful ever held. A dedicated group of university staff and students worked together to create the program with a variety of free in-person and online meaningful events, including *Nunga* screening 2025, around the theme of *Bridging Now to Next*, which reflected the ongoing connection between past, present and future calling on all Australians to step forward together, to look ahead and continue to push forward with past lessons as a guide. Special acknowledgement went to the NRW Steering Group and Working Groups, with particular to the co-chairs Anna Schkabaryn, Manager: Wurringka Services, and Chris Crabbe, Manager: Student Life from the Student Engagement Unit for their leadership.

2025/2/25 **Academic Board resolved:**

1. **To receive and note the Vice Chancellor's Report.**
2. **To congratulate and thank all staff, students and community partners who had contributed their time energy and commitment to planning and delivering the successful 2025 UniSA National Reconciliation Week program.**

Moved: Prof Jon Buckley (from the Chair)

CARRIED

ITEM 5 - MATTERS FROM RESEARCH LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE (RLC) 2/2025

5.1 RESEARCH DEGREE COMPLETION OF REQUIREMENTS (UNSTARRED ITEM)

2025/2/26 **Academic Board resolved:**

to receive and note the report from Research Degrees Committee.

5.2 UPDATES TO RESEARCH LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE (UNSTARRED ITEM)

2025/2/27 **Academic Board resolved:**

to approve the amendments to the Research Leadership Committee Terms of Reference.

5.3 COOPERATIVE RESEARCH CENTRES (CRC) -CATEGORY 4 – PLAN ON A PAGE

- 7 The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Enterprise), Prof Peter Murphy, provided an update on the progress of strategies to maximise the benefits of participation in the Commonwealth Government's Cooperative Research Centres (CRC) Program, which was a very real vehicle for industry engagement. He reported that UniSA had completed its CRC Strategy, with all items now finalised, and summarised progress against the plan over previous years and key outcomes, in addition to recommendations to guide the transition to the new university structure. Between 2019 and 2023 UniSA had been involved in 143 CRC projects. UniSA was ranked 8th nationally for CRC income (HERDC Category 4) and following the establishment of the new Adelaide University in 2026 we would be ranked 1st in the nation for CRC engagement.
- 8 UniSA was working closely with the University of Adelaide CRC Committee to align with the Adelaide University research strategy. To enable a more strategic approach moving toward the new university, the UniSA CRC Advisory Committee would continue attending joint meetings throughout 2025 with the expectation that an Adelaide University Advisory Committee would be formed commencing in January 2026. Proposed considerations moving forward included: joint review of new and existing CRC opportunities; identifying potential synergies between bids; strategically assessing future bid prospects; establishing a joint decision-making governance mechanism; adopting a shared communication and bid-filing strategy; implementing a joint Notice of Intent and Business Case template; implementing current internal CRC processes; and engaging Business Development Managers.

2025/2/28 Academic Board resolved:

to receive and note the 2025 CRC Plan on a Page Update

5.4 RANKINGS 2025 UPDATE (UNSTARRED ITEM)

2025/2/29 Academic Board resolved:

to receive and note the final retrospective of UniSA's achievements in global rankings, prior to the opening of Adelaide University.

5.5 ABORIGINAL RESEARCH STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE (UNSTARRED ITEM)

2025/2/30 Academic Board resolved:

to receive and note the progress of action items in the Implementation Report against the Aboriginal Research Strategy 2019-2025.

5.6 HIGHER DEGREE BY RESEARCH CANDIDATE DEVELOPMENT REPORT Q1 2025 (UNSTARRED ITEM)

2025/2/31 Academic Board resolved:

to receive and note the Higher Degrees by Research Candidate Development Report , Quarter 1 2025.

5.7 IAN WARK RESEARCH MEDAL WINNER (UNSTARRED ITEM)

2025/2/32 Academic Board resolved:

to note the winner of the 2024 Ian Wark Research Medal.

5.8 NORTON JACKSON MATERIAL SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING MEDAL WINNER (UNSTARRED ITEM)

2025/2/33 Academic Board resolved:

to note the winner of the 2024 Norton Jackson Material Science and Engineering Medal.

ITEM 6– BUSINESS

6.1 HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS (UNSTARRED ITEM)

2025/2/34 Academic Board resolved:

to approve the Human Research Ethics Committee appointments for a two-year period as specified.

6.2 AUTA GROUP CIVIL ENGINEERING SCHOLARSHIP (UNSTARRED ITEM)

2025/2/35 Academic Board resolved:

to approve the new Auta Group Civil Engineering Scholarship.

6.3 HELPING HAND ALLIED HEALTH STUDY SUPPORT GRANT (UNSTARRED ITEM)

2025/2/36 Academic Board resolved:

to approve the new Helping Hand Allied Health Study Support Grant.

6.4 KAREN THOMAS MEMORIAL HEALTH STUDY SUPPORT GRANT (UNSTARRED ITEM)

2025/2/37 Academic Board resolved:

to approve the new Karen Thomas Memorial Health Study Support Grant.

ITEM 7 – FOR INFORMATION

7.1 HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY UPDATE

9 The Provost and Standing Acting Vice Chancellor, Distinguished Professor Marnie Hughes-Warrington AO, provided an update on some higher education policy issues. She reported that the Prime Minister had announced the new Cabinet on 12 May, retaining Richard Marles as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence, Penny Wong as Foreign Minister, Jim

Chalmers as Treasurer, and Jason Clare as Education Minister, for an unchanged senior ministry. The full suite of education elections announcements included plans to reduce HELP debt by 20% for 3 million students with loans, and the intention to formally establish the Australian Tertiary Education Commission (ATEC). The United States (US) Trump administration had cut or paused funding to seven Australian universities, which potentially put \$600 million in joint research efforts at risk. The US was the biggest overseas funder of research in Australia, with 25% of Australia's publications in biomedical and clinical sciences involving US collaborators. The institutions affected were the Australian National University, Monash University, the University of Technology Sydney, the University of New South Wales, Charles Darwin University, Macquarie University, and the University of Western Australia.

2025/2/38 Academic Board resolved:

to note the Higher Education Policy update.

7.2 ACADEMIC BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2024 (UNSTARRED ITEM)

2025/2/39 Academic Board resolved:

to receive and note the Academic Board Annual Report 2024.

7.3 YAITYA WARRA-ITYA ANNUAL REPORT 2024

2025/2/40 Academic Board resolved:

to receive and note the Yaitya Warra-itya Annual Report 2024.

7.4 UNISA RISK STATUS REPORT & UNI-WIDE RISK REGISTER (UNSTARRED ITEM)

10 The Senior Risk and Compliance officer with Risk and Assurance Services, Ms Maggie Cao, reported that the UniSA risk status report and risk register provided Academic Board with the institution's risk profile with a focus on the academic risks as at June 2025. To meet TEQSA requirements, the report included a risk assessment of compliance against the Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF), highlighting the standards that were at elevated risk of breach due to the Transition Program activity, and how the University was managing this risk. Inputs from Academic Board would be captured and included in the master risk status report that was provided to the Enterprise Leadership Team (ELT), Audit, Finance and Risk Committee (AFRC) and Council.

2025/2/41 Academic Board resolved:

to note the UniSA Risk Status Report & Uni-Wide Risk Register.

ITEM 8 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

11 Members' attention was drawn to the pressures on UniSA teaching academics and the current strains on the University's Academic Integrity Officers (AIOs). The critical role AIOs played was noted and Academic Board expressed appreciation for the work they did.

ITEM 11 – CLOSURE

- 12 The Chairperson thanked members for their attendance and closed the meeting at 3.15 pm.
- 13 The next meeting of Academic Board would be held on Friday, 26 September 2025, at 2.15 pm in Room RR 5-09, Rowland Rees Building, City West Campus. Closing date for papers – Monday, 15 September 2025.

PETER CARDWELL
EXECUTIVE OFFICER