

CQUniversity Council Report

The Council of Central Queensland University is the University's governing body. Council's functions, powers, and membership are prescribed in the *Central Queensland University Act 1998* (Qld). Council is responsible for appointing and overseeing the Vice-Chancellor and President, setting the University's strategic direction, and approving its budget and operational plans.

Council respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which it gathers. Council pays their respects to the First Nations people and their Elders, past, present, and emerging, honouring their wisdom, leadership, and the cultural traditions they uphold.

Report from the Meeting held 6 May 2026

VICE-CHANCELLOR AND PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Council noted the Vice-Chancellor's report, which included updates on the sale of the former Yeppoon TAFE site, the appointment of the new Dean for the School of Business and Law, and the progress made on the Development Application for the new Cairns campus.

Council discussed the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) invitation to the University to express interest in a two-year trial of self-accreditation for Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses up to diploma level. If approved, this would significantly improve agility, strengthen VET – Higher Education (HE) pathways, support recognition of prior learning, and position the University as a leader in dual-sector harmonisation. A response to the expression of interest is currently being prepared.

The University's response rate to the Australian Human Rights Commission survey on racism in universities was also noted. It was a relatively low response rate (approximately 4.2%); however, it still represented around 1,500 respondents. The national findings were described as sobering. The University has requested its institution-specific data; however, release has been delayed due to reported methodological disputes between researchers and the Commission regarding potential over-reporting. While disappointing, it was noted that the data, once received, will provide an opportunity for institutional learning and improvement.

FINANCE MATTERS

A professional development session was delivered to Council prior to the meeting on the *Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982* (Qld) (SBFA). The presentation highlighted the SBFA applies to all Queensland universities as statutory bodies and governs financial risk, not academic or operational autonomy, and discussed the approval processes, risk classifications, and implications for current and proposed activities. The Queensland Investment Corporation also provided a brief presentation on their role and mandate and how it performs for the University.

Council discussed the Financial Management Report for the month ended 31 March 2026 and noted the Financial Management Presentation for the month ended 28 February 2026.

ACADEMIC GOVERNANCE MATTERS

Council noted the Central Queensland University Action Plan for the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) Re-registration. An update was provided on outstanding policy matters from the Action Plan.

The ASQA, CRICOS and TEQSA Regulatory Update for February 2026 was also noted.

AUDIT AND RISK MATTERS

Council accepted the University Risk Register 2024 – 2028, which was presented as part of the six-monthly review of the register. Currently, the register contains 30 enterprise risks.

Council also accepted the Occupational Health and Safety Assurance Report for 2025, which outlined the activities and performance of the Safety and Wellbeing team over 2025, along with key focus areas for 2026. An analysis of incidents and trends for 2024–2025 has been undertaken, and the findings have informed the University's planned priorities for 2026.

The Commercialisation Report and the Internal Audit Annual Report 2025 were also noted by Council.

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PROJECTS MATTERS

Council approved the Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan 2025 – 2028 Progress Report for October to December 2025. The report identified that of the applicable deliverables, 92 are on track, 19 have been completed, and eight are behind schedule. Key highlights of the report included the First Nations Workforce Strategy and its continued challenges with fulfilling academic roles, First Nations procurement, and the appointment of a First Nations Employment Officer.

Council accepted the 2025 End-of-Year Acquittal Report of the University Plan 2024 – 2028 and the associated performance measures, which was considered alongside acquittal reports for the divisional plans. Overall progress against the We Change Lives Strategic Plan was reported as strong. Of the 28 strategic initiatives outlined in the plan, 75% were reported as completed, with the remaining initiatives supported by identified forward plans. In addition, performance against the 40 performance measures was reviewed, with 72% achieved.

Council also noted the Estate Annual Report 2025.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE MATTERS

The focus item for the meeting was a session on Artificial Intelligence (AI) Governance, and the best practice considerations for board governance of AI. The session highlighted the significant opportunities associated with AI as well as the material risks for the University. Key risks of AI were identified across five strategic categories: cybersecurity and data privacy; academic integrity; intellectual property protection; ethical use; and data quality and reliability. Information on the University's use of Microsoft Copilot and how it could assist Council members was also provided.

Council approved the Modern Slavery Statement for the period 1 January to 31 December 2025. The Statement is largely consistent with previous years versions, with updates limited to current data and metrics.

Council approved the Council Appointment Framework, following the feedback from the March Council meeting. The Framework provides the operational details of Council's appointment processes for Council and its sub-committees. The Framework was developed to address recommendations made in the 2024 External Review of Corporate and Academic Governance relating to operational aspects of Council membership decisions.

STUDENT MATTERS

Council noted the minutes of the Student Representative Council (SRC) meeting held on 20 February 2026. The Student Member of Council reported the increased engagement of her position as Council's representative on the SRC over the past 12 months has been positive in enhancing communication and alignment between SRC and Council. The Student Member provided an overview of the SRC meeting and current and planned SRC activities.

Council also discussed the impact of global geopolitical events on students, particularly international students. The University has support mechanisms in place, including counselling services and wellbeing initiatives, to assist students in managing stress and concern arising from international events.

Disclaimer

This report is intended to communicate key outcomes from the meeting. This is not an official record of the meeting. This report does not cover matters where confidentiality is required for legal or commercial reasons.