



Outcomes from Macquarie University Council meeting 23 October 2025

The Macquarie University Council met on 23 October 2025 in the Council Room at the Wallumattagal Campus and addressed matters in accordance with its governance responsibilities and the [annual agenda plan](#).

Final report from the expert council on university governance

Given the direct changes in government policy and external factors affecting the higher education landscape, the Council concentrated its attention and discussions on addressing the current landscape of the sector during its October meeting.

The Chancellor led a discussion on the findings of the final report from the Federal Government's Expert Council on University Governance (ECUG). The ECUG has communicated a clear message about Council responsibilities in governance and have recommended eight Governance Principles that universities should adopt.

While Macquarie University's practices generally align with the ECUG's proposed Governance Principles, it was acknowledged that improvements are needed. An action plan will be presented at the December Council meeting, and a communication regarding the Final Report will be shared with the University community and the Minister. The Council also stressed the need for improved engagement and transparency among students and staff, and members were encouraged to participate more frequently in Academic Senate meetings.

Federal Funding for Student Places and International Student Load

As part of the Vice-Chancellor's Strategy and Enterprise performance reporting, Council discussed the impact of government policy on the University's strategy and received an update from the Vice-Chancellor on the negotiations with the interim Australian Tertiary Education Commission (ATEC) on load allocations, which have resulted in a 2.6% increase in Commonwealth Supported Places (CSP) for 2026. Additionally, the University has been granted an uplift from 4500 to 5250 International student places. The outlook beyond 2026 remains very unclear and future policy and funding arrangements await the appointment of the permanent ATEC commissioners and senior staff. The University's 2026 budget and 2027-2030 forecasts will be presented to the Finance and Facilities Committee in November and to Council in December.

Research: Response to the National Policy and Regulation Landscape

Council considered a comprehensive analysis from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) regarding ongoing changes to the national policy and regulatory landscape that may impact research at Macquarie, and the University's response to these challenges.

Self-Review of Council Performance

The Council also discussed the upcoming 2025 Self Review of its performance, an annual activity that takes place unless an external review is being conducted. The proposed survey questions for this review have been updated to address emerging Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) issues, including antisemitism, racism, and modern slavery. The survey will be conducted in November, and the findings will be presented to the Council in December.

Report from Academic Senate

The Academic Senate is established under *the Macquarie University Act 1989*, and its role is to oversee the quality of teaching, learning, research, and research training. Accordingly, the Council receives a report from the Academic Senate at each meeting. The Chair of the Academic Senate presented the report from the Senate meeting held on 30 September 2025, which included three nominations recommended for Emerita/Emeritus Professor titles. The Council approved these nominations.

Council also reviewed the quality and standards review reports for the Higher Education Standard Framework (HESF) Domain 5 (Institutional Quality Assurance) and Part B1 (Criteria for Higher Education Providers) and considered the half-yearly update on Student Conduct and Discipline matters.

Finance and Facilities Committee Report - 23 September 2025 Meeting

The Council received a detailed report from the Acting Chair of the Finance and Facilities Committee (FFC), the sub-committee of Council that has been established to assist Council in fulfilling its responsibilities relating to the acquisition, development, and maintenance of University buildings and grounds, information management and technology systems, and the financial and investment planning and performance of the University. The report highlighted areas that the Committee considered, including the financial performance report and the investment and debt facilities report. Additionally, the FFC approved amendments to the financial delegations following the annual review conducted by the Office of the Vice-President, Finance and Resources. The Committee also endorsed the establishment of a Faculty of Medicine, Health and Human Sciences endowment fund arising from targeted philanthropic funds aimed at supporting access to and participation in medical and health education. The specific details of the fund will be discussed at a future meeting of the FFC.

Reports from the Faculty of Science and Engineering and the Faculty of Arts

To ensure the Council is informed about the critical work of the core activities of teaching, learning, and research, it regularly receives presentations from Faculties on key strategic issues. At the October meeting, Council received strategic presentations from the Faculty of Science and Engineering, and the Faculty of Arts.

Review of 8-year Campus Development Plan and Debt Funding Plan

The Council evaluated the implementation of both the Campus Development Plan (CDP), designed to revitalise the campus, and the underpinning Debt Funding Plan, approved to fund the works, comparing the results to the original expectations set in the proposal approved by Council at its strategy meeting in February 2018. The major building works carried out over this time under the CDP included:

- ❖ Arts Precinct
- ❖ 1 Central Courtyard
- ❖ Michael Kirby Law Building
- ❖ Hospital L5 (TOI)¹
- ❖ Bio Innovation Hub
- ❖ Clinical Education Building
- ❖ Student Accommodation
- ❖ Lincoln Building upgrade
- ❖ 18WW upgrade
- ❖ Engineering and AAO building

The Vice-President, Finance and Resources, presented a report indicating that the program has not only met the goals outlined in the 2018 plan but also exceeded expectations in debt management. While 2025 was projected to be the peak year for debt, it is now anticipated that this peak will be significantly lower than initially forecast. The Council congratulated the team for their successful implementation of the program over an extended period. The findings from this review will help inform discussions at the annual strategy session in February.

Policy developments on racism (including antisemitism)

The Council reviewed a draft of the proposed *Equality and Community Safety policy*, seeking in-principle agreement on the suggested approach. This policy addresses recommendations from the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights, as well as reports from Australia's Special Envoys for combating Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia. The Council agreed in principle with the proposed approach and noted that Management will consult with key stakeholders within the University community, including the Academic Senate, the Student Representative Council (SRC), and representatives of Jewish and Muslim students along with the wider university community. After these consultations, a final version of the policy will be presented to the Council for approval.

Information Management and Technology Special Purpose Committee (IMTC)

The IMTC was established by Council in 2022 as an initiative to report to Council through the Audit and Risk Committee on the oversight of information management and information technology-specific matters. Given the heightened cyber risks impacting the sector and the importance of strategic initiatives such as the Student 360 Program, Council resolved to approve the extension of the term of the Information Management and Technology Special Purpose Committee for a further two years.

It also resolved to endorse the Macquarie University Council and Reporting Committees Calendar of Governance 2026-2028, noting that amendments may be made to meeting dates on an as-needed basis.

Disclaimer: This report provides an overview for the University community of the Council's decisions and actions at the relevant meeting. It is not intended to cover every decision made at the meeting or the full detail of decisions and discussions. Inquiries and requests for further information can be directed to the University Council Secretary at councilsecretary@mq.edu.au.

¹ Noting that the University' contribution was shell space and that no university funds entered into this project.