

Griffith University Council News

Report of Outcomes – 5/2025 (20 October)

Council News is a high-level summary of outcomes from the most recent ordinary Council meeting, excluding confidential, sensitive and legally privileged items.

Meeting details	<p>Date: 20 October 2025</p> <p>Time: 2.00pm to 5.30pm</p> <p>Location: Council Chambers (Room 2.02) in Bray Centre (N54), Brisbane South (Nathan) campus</p> <p>Mode: Hybrid, majority in person and some online via Microsoft Teams.</p>
About the Council	<p>Council has overall responsibility to provide leadership, good governance and oversight of the University. Council approves the University’s strategic direction, monitors the University’s progress, and approves the University’s budget, policies and delegations of authority.</p> <p>https://www.griffith.edu.au/about-griffith/corporate-governance/university-council</p>

Vice Chancellor’s Report

The Vice Chancellor delivered the report in two parts, commencing with notable highlights and events since the last meeting:

- Griffith was back in the top 300 in the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings – sitting at 290 (up from last year) and ranked 14th in Australia.
- Griffith was named one of Australia’s Best Employers and ranked 32nd out of 2,000 employers in TIME Magazine’s inaugural list for 2025, placing the University in the top 2% of organisations nationwide.
- Associate Professor Victoria Kain from Griffith’s School of Nursing and Midwifery had received the 2025 Global Triple E – SDG Impact Award for her work to transform newborn care in rural Nepal.
- Griffith had been shortlisted as finalists for four Engagement Australia 2025 Excellence Awards, including: Building Counselling Capacity in Papua New Guinea for Excellence in International Engagement; Lead with Impact for Excellence in Student and/or Alumni Engagement; LiveWorm: Work Integrated Learning Design Incubator for Outstanding Engagement for Student Learning; and The Clinician Entrepreneurship Change Agent Program (CECAP) for Excellence in Industry Engagement.
- Professor Katherine Andrews and Associate Professors Danielle Stanisic and Rohan Davis of the Institute for Biomedicine and Glycomics received \$3 million in NHMRC funding for their Centre of Research Excellence in Vaccine Adjuvant Discovery and Development (CRE-Vaccine-ADD).

- Professor Naomi Sunderland, Director, Creative Arts Research Institute and team received \$866,853 in ARC Discovery Grant funding from the Indigenous grant scheme for the project 'Intergenerational Healing: A Creative First Nations Approach to Wellbeing.'
- An engagement lunch at the Gold Coast to celebrate Griffith's 50th anniversary had an excellent address delivered by the Deputy Chancellor, Ms Rebecca Frizelle OAM, an inspiring keynote speech from Griffith Alumnus and Westpac Group, CEO Anthony Miller, and was attended by Pro Chancellor, Ms Amelia Evans and the Gold Coast Mayor Mr Tom Tate.
- The first Impact Leadership Summit, delivered by the Griffith Business School in partnership with the Blackmore Family Foundation was held at Spicers Retreat, and was attended by the Vice Chancellor and Vice President (Advancement) and hosted CEOs and founders from Australia and New Zealand.

The Vice Chancellor provided an update on other matters:

- Recruitment had commenced for the new Deputy Vice Chancellor (Indigenous).
- Continued government focus on university governance and policy settings signalled a general move to centralise power and accountability to the government.
- The Commonwealth government had signed off on the University's request for more places, which included more First Nations medical places and more international student places.
- Plans to transition the Griffith-run childcare centres at the Nathan campus to a third-party provider, and work to improve the change proposal and minimise impact for parents and employees.

Council **noted** the Vice Chancellor's Report to Council.

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Report

The Chief Operating Officer delivered the *Q3 2025 Health, Safety and Wellbeing Report*, which was based on data from July – August 2025. The following matters were highlighted:

- Only one of the three reported IMTs was still active, which related to risk management of a safety issue with N34.
- Overdue incident/inspection/audit actions had come down, with none that were high risk.
- There had been a small increase in lost time injuries since the report, related to slips, trips and falls, but there were no trends and the rate remained low.
- Transition to the new Health and Safety Management system would occur from October through to December to deliver a more integrated system, improving incident reporting and tracking. The transition had been complex and resource-intensive and had resulted in the assurance program running at a reduced pace due to diversion of resources.
- The issue of asbestos in N34 had been resolved following an independent assessment that deemed it suitable for human occupation and found there had been no harm to individuals. A more recent issue in N34 related to a mandatory shut-down and de-energisation of the building so degraded live power feeds to the building could be remediated. Further information was provided as part of the *Capital Infrastructure Program: Major Projects Update*.

Council **noted** the *Q3 2025 Health, Safety and Wellbeing Report*.

Annual SASH Update and Safe Campuses Report

The Provost presented the *Annual SASH and Safe Campuses Report*. The Provost provided an overview of the context for the report, noting it had aimed to balance the ongoing activities of the Safe and Respectful Communities 2025 Action Plan with implementation of the *Universities Accord (National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence) Act 2025* and the related Consequential Amendments Act which were passed on 25 August 2025, to take effect from 1 January 2026. It was noted that a consequence of the new National Code that it would be the last of these reports, which would be replaced by six-monthly reports to Council in accordance with National Code requirements.

Key priorities for 2025 had been identified, and it was observed that the 2025 report had shown a reduction in complaints compared to the previous reporting period. Efforts were underway to broaden the Sexual Harassment and Gender-based Violence Prevention Plan to fulfil National Code requirements, which incorporated a Gender Equality Action Plan. A presentation regarding the National Code and its corresponding Action Plan was submitted to Council for further discussion and approval.

Council **resolved to approve** the Safe Campuses Annual Report 2025 and **noted** the impacts of the proposed National Code.

Draft 2026 University Strategic KPIs

Council **noted** the approach to monitoring outcomes across three layers: publicly, at Council and at Executive Group, and **resolved to approve** the Draft 2026 University Strategic KPIs, noting that they would be returned to the December meeting for final approval once the Student Experience and Indigenous Flourishing measures had been finalised.

Draft 2026 Vice Chancellor KPIs

Council **resolved to approve** the Draft 2026 Vice Chancellor's KPIs.

2026 - 2028 Budget Outlook

The Chief Financial Officer Mr Alister Whitta joined the meeting for this item.

The Chief Financial Officer presented the *2026-2028 Budget Outlook*. He provided an overview of the fundamental assumptions that would underpin the budget, noting that the 2025-28 Budget set out a path to return the University to financial sustainability by 2028. The challenges and risks in the operating environment were highlighted and included student numbers and regulatory changes, plus CPI and salary rate growth, noting they were expected to continue across 2026-28 with the introduction of Managed Growth government funding for domestic students and continued management of international student visas limiting student growth. Scenario planning had been done to look at how to deal with the uncertainty. Following performance in 2025, the step off point for the budget was looking more positive, with full year performance on track to exceed budget (estimated operating deficit between \$30m to \$50m better than budget). A positive net result was likely to be possible should favourable investment income continue.

On the recommendation of the Finance and Infrastructure Committee, the Council **resolve to approve** the 2026-28 Budget Outlook including retaining the objective of returning EBITDA and Operating Surplus to financially sustainable KPI ranges by 2028.

Report on Indigenous Matters and the Logan Community

The Director, Student Equity and Diversity, Mr Shane Drahm joined the meeting for this item.

The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Indigenous) presented the *Report on Indigenous Matters and the Logan Community*. He started by highlighting the components of the new Strategic Plan around Indigenous flourishing, which articulated a vision for Griffith to be the university of choice for Indigenous staff and students—a place where Indigenous people flourish in their studies and careers, creating opportunity for leadership, social capital and social mobility, and where Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing are celebrated across curriculum, research, and institutional culture. An Indigenous flourishing plan was being developed that would implement Griffith’s strategic commitments to First Peoples and would align and intersect with the other supporting plans – the Research and Innovation Plan, Education and Student Experience Plan, and the People Plan. Key achievements of the last twelve months were highlighted and ongoing challenges discussed.

The Director, Student Equity and Diversity, Mr Shane Drahm, spoke to a presentation that provided a five-year overview of the development and evolution of the GUMURRII Student Success Unit. The changes in structure and approach over time, informed by data, had led to a dedicated and successful Tutoring for Success (TSP) program. The progress of cohorts was also being tracked, with notably improved outcomes for students who had participated in the TSP.

Council **noted** the Report on Indigenous Matters and the Logan Community.

Draft Research and Innovation Plan

The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) presented the submission titled *Research and Innovation Plan – draft post Stage 1 consultation*. He provided an overview of the key pillars of the Plan, which aligned with the Strategic Plan, with the addition of Platforms. The consultation process was described as was the feedback received and considered, which had largely been positive. Sessions had featured discussions about how the plan would be implemented, but the Plan itself would remain a high-level direction-setting document – highlighting those things that the University wants to hold itself accountable to. Stage 2 consultation would be undertaken with Griffith staff, HDR candidates and representative external stakeholders, with edits made in response to feedback, before finalisation and submission for final approval.

Council **discussed** and **provided feedback** on the draft Research and Innovation Plan 2025-2030.

Capital Infrastructure Program: Major Projects Update

Capital Infrastructure Program

The Chief Operating Officer presented the *Capital Infrastructure Program: Major Projects Update*, and the following major projects were highlighted:

- *N34 – Science Enabling Works*: Asbestos issues identified in N34 had been remediated and were no longer deemed a risk. A new issue had arisen relating to degradation of the coating of electrical wires that power the building, making the building unsafe and requiring all work to stop. As N34 holds a lot of services that connect to much of the Sciences precinct, a detailed de-energisation plan was being developed to allow the building (and linked buildings) to be successfully de-energised, remediation works completed, and then re-energised. The plan would include separation of connections to most other Sciences buildings. It was complicated work that would happen over the

coming months, with workplace health and safety remaining a priority. The University's data centre was also housed in the building, and so generators were being brought in during the de-energisation period. As the building was wide open extra security would be installed.

- *CBD Campus – Treasury Building*: The project was at a pivotal stage, and key terms for the main works contract would be brought to the next Council meeting. The team was collaborating with FDC on the detailed design, which was 80% complete. Recent weeks had revealed latent conditions, raising questions about whether to prioritise value management or increase the budget to maintain quality if costs exceed the budget.
- *N13 Demolition*: Structural demolition of the building had commenced with demolition equipment on site. Council were being asked to approve a budget increase for the N13 demolition work, noting that it was within the Capital Management Plan (CMP) envelope.

On the recommendation of the Finance and Infrastructure Committee, the Council:

- **noted** the status update on the Strategic Infrastructure Program
- **resolved to approve** a budget increase for demolition works to N13, to be funded from the Capital Management Plan (CMP), noting funding for the make-good works will be incorporated into the 2026-2030 CMP approval.

Mt Gravatt DOGIT Exit

The Chief Operating Officer presented *Mt Gravatt DOGIT Exit* submission and provided a verbal update on the progress of the exit and ongoing negotiations with the State government about the surrender of the Deed of Grant in Trust (DOGIT).

The progress of negotiations was noted, and the importance of maintaining good relationships to secure the best outcome for all stakeholders. It was agreed that the Vice Chancellor and Chief Operating Officer should continue with planned meetings, noting some recent and promising signs that an agreement may soon be reached.

On the recommendation of the Finance and Infrastructure Committee, Council **discussed** the options for exiting the Deed of Grant in Trust (DOGIT) for Mount Gravatt and **delegated authority** to the Vice Chancellor and the Chief Operating Officer to notify Griffith University's intention to resign as Trustee of the Mount Gravatt DOGIT if judged necessary because other options were infeasible.

Council Skills Matrix

The Pro Chancellor and Chair of the People, Nominations and Remuneration Committee presented the *Council Skills Matrix* and provided an overview of the major review that had been undertaken. The review had been informed by internal and external drivers, with a comprehensive assessment completed to ensure the Matrix would meet governance obligations and the strategic needs of the University.

Council **noted** the implementation of a dual-format Matrix: an administrative version with member names for internal use, and a public-facing version with de-identified data for transparency and reporting.

On the recommendation of the People, Nominations and Remuneration Committee, the Council **resolved to approve** the:

- amended Council Composition and Skills Matrix (2025/0001106) subject to minor amendments to ensure alignment with the National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence requirements
- annual review of the Council Composition and Skills Matrix and its inclusion on the PNRC Work Plan, and the new process for review of Council member survey responses.

Consideration had been given to the Final Report and Principles of the Expert Council on University Governance and a briefing paper would be brought to the December meeting for discussion.

Reports from Committees

Council **received** reports from the following committees:

- *Academic Committee*
Council **noted** a verbal report from the Chair, the executive summary and draft minutes of the 4/2025 (September) meeting.
- *Audit and Risk Committee*
Council **noted** a verbal report from the Chair for the 3/2025 (August) meeting and **noted** the draft minutes of the 3/2025 (August) meeting and the 2/2025 (May).
- *Finance and Infrastructure Committee*
Council **noted** agenda of the 4/2025 (September) meeting and **received** a verbal report from the Chair and **noted** the approved minutes of the 3/2025 (July) meeting.
- *People, Nominations and Remuneration Committee*
Council **received** a verbal report from the Chair and **noted** the draft minutes of the 3/2025 (September) meeting and the draft minutes of the 3/2025 (September) meeting and the approved minutes of the 2/2025 (June) meeting.
- Griffith Elders and First Peoples Knowledge Holders Advisory Board
Council **received** a verbal report from the Chair and **noted** the draft minutes of the 3/2025 (August) meeting and the approved minutes of the 2/2025 (June) meeting.

Items for noting

Council **noted** the following:

- *Annual Provisional TEQSA Provider Risk Assessment*
- Annual Cyber Security Briefing
- External Academic Governance Review Update and TEQSA Re-Registration Outcome
- 2025 Council Strategic Retreat notes and the results of the Council Strategic Retreat feedback survey

Items for formal approval

Council **resolved to approve** the following items.

- *Griffith University Postgraduate Student Association (GUPSA) Constitution*

- *School of Applied Psychology Review Report (2025/0000968) and Implementation Plan (2025/0000969)*

Honorary Awards and Titles

Council **conferred the title of Professor Emeritus** on:

- Professor Bela Stantic, effective from 20 October 2025, after a distinguished career in Big Data Analytics and Artificial Intelligence.
- Professor Xu Yi-Chong, effective from 7 July 2026, following a distinguished career in the fields of comparative politics, energy governance, and international organisations.

Items for information

Council **noted** the following items:

- 2025 Council Work Plan and Council Resources
- 2026 Council and Key Committee Meeting Dates
- 2027 Council and Key Committee Meeting Dates

[October 2025]