



Griffith Council News – August 2025

Dr Rebecca Voisey

Head, Corporate Governance (Council Secretary)

Council News is a high-level summary for staff of some of the key items and outcomes from the most recent ordinary Council meeting.

VICE CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

- 1) Council **noted** the *Vice Chancellor's Report to Council*, which had been circulated with the papers and was taken as read. The Vice Chancellor highlighted notable achievements and events since the last meeting.
 - The University was notified on 6 August 2025 that TEQSA had renewed its registration under the *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011* (TEQSA Act) for a period of 7 years until 5 August 2032 and without conditions. This was a significant achievement and the result of work led by the Provost, Professor Liz Burd and strongly supported by the Council Secretary, Dr Rebecca Voisey. TEQSA had advised that it was an excellent submission.
 - Professor Yongsheng Gao's project 'Enabling Technology beyond Human Capability for Automated Farming' was one of eight new projects announced under the prestigious Australian Research Council's (ARC) 2025 Industry Laureate Fellowships research funding scheme.
 - Four projects at Griffith across diverse fields of research were successful in the latest round of ARC Linkage Projects scheme, totalling \$2,133,837, making Griffith the fourth most successful university in Australia for the 2024 Linkage applications.
 - Griffith researcher Professor James St John and his team were set to commence Phase 1 of a world-first human clinical trial to treat chronic spinal cord injury using nasal cells. This research carries on the legacy of the late Professor Emeritus Alan Mackay-Sim AM. 180 people had already signed up for the trial, with only two people needed.
 - The University had hosted a number of recent significant events including the 50th Anniversary Oration and the July graduation ceremonies, and the Vice Chancellor thanked members for attending.
 - Open Day was held on Sunday 10 August and had been successful, with good attendance though down on previous years. Feedback had been positive, particularly engagement with parents and carers when compared with other universities.
 - The inaugural Professional EDGE conference for professional staff at Griffith, created by staff, was delivered mid-August with close to 400 attendees, with places filled within an hour of registration opening, and a significant waitlist. It was a huge success, with lots of positive feedback received from those who attended, marking the beginning of a new era of professional learning for Griffith.
 - The Vice Chancellor, in her role as Chair of Universities Australia (UA) and the Chancellor were involved in the Treasurer's Economic Reform Roundtable (Chancellor) or preparatory roundtables (Vice Chancellor). There had been lots of ideas and enthusiasm, particularly around innovation and technology, and good conversation about industry engagement with universities.

- The new Environmental Laboratories Building (N81) was officially opened by the Queensland Minister for the Environment and Tourism and Minister for Science and Innovation on 22 July 2024 at the Nathan campus. The G12 Undergraduate Laboratories building was formally launched by Queensland Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Youth The Honourable Sam O'Connor MP on 25 July 2025. The Vice Chancellor thanked Council members for their attendance.
 - The Vice Chancellor had recently travelled to the United Kingdom to host a 50th anniversary event with European based alumni and guest speaker, former Prime Minister the Honourable Julia Gillard AC. The Chancellor had travelled to the United States to host a 50th anniversary alumni event in Washington, with alumni and guest speaker Australia's Ambassador to the United States of America and former Prime Minister, His Excellency the Honourable Dr Kevin Rudd AC.
 - The Vice Chancellor will be delivering a speech at the National Press Club on 27 August, before travelling to India with the Queensland Premier at the end of the month.
 - Under embargo at the time of the meeting – Griffith had signed an exclusive partnership with the Australian Olympic Committee (AOC) to establish Griffith as the only AOC Pathway University in Australia until 2027. The partnership would see the AOC and Griffith working together to continue to support Olympians and aspiring Olympians and was an exciting partnership in the lead up to the 2032 Brisbane Games.
- 2) The Chancellor thanked the Vice Chancellor for the presentation, and congratulated and thanked the Provost, Professor Liz Burd and the team involved in the TEQSA registration renewal, including the Head of Corporate Governance (Council Secretary) Dr Rebecca Voisey for their excellent work.

HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

- 1) Council **noted** the *Quarter 2 2025 Health, Safety and Wellbeing Report*, which had been circulated with the papers and was taken as read. The following was highlighted:
- Low Lost Time Injury Frequency Rate (LTIFR) for Quarter 2 at 0.83, which had decreased from Quarter 2 2024, with both well below the sector benchmark of 2.5. This resulted in a low injury claim rate.
 - Safety leadership training remained a focus, including with Academic Group Health and Safety Committees.
 - The transition from GSafe (the University's safety management system) to ServiceNow has been time consuming and resource intensive.
 - A silica dust exposure incident in Griffith's dental clinics, noting remediation work had been undertaken to ensure safe work practices were being followed and hazards controlled.
- 2) Members discussed the report, and one member sought clarification that a new critical risk that had been identified for dropped objects that could lead to a fatality had not been the result of an incident, which it had not.
- 3) A member made an enquiry about an incident that had occurred in the G40 building at the Gold Coast and members noted the actions taken by authorities and in support of the victim.
- 4) The Council **noted** the findings detailed within the Quarter 2 2025 Health, Safety and Wellbeing Report. The Chancellor advised that health and safety would remain a key focus for Council.

INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY AND PARTNERSHIPS

- 1) The Chancellor introduced the item and welcomed the Vice President (Global), Ms Marnie Watson, who spoke to the submission titled *International Strategy and Partnerships*, which had been circulated with the papers and was taken as read.
- 2) The Vice President (Global) highlighted the following key points:
- The impact on international student load as a result of regulatory changes, including Ministerial Direction 111 and the New Overseas Student Commencement (NOSC) allocation specifying the number of students a university can enrol, and visa processing and its prioritisation.
 - While to date Griffith had underperformed compared with other Australian universities in attracting international students, there was capacity for growth while remaining within our NOSC.

- Griffith's market share declined from 2024 and continued into 2025, remaining below 2019 levels. Student intake would need to grow, and Griffith would need to increase its market share to support financial sustainability.
- Griffith had responded with tactical short-term and longer-term activities, including a rigorous focus on student offer to arrival conversion, review of entry requirements, broadening of scholarship eligibility and offerings, enhanced agent engagement, review of the recruitment team, retention of commenced students and consideration of TNE opportunities.
- Broadly speaking, Australia had a reputation issue to turnaround and needed to change perceptions in the global market, and Griffith needed to be clearer about its value proposition and to make it easier for prospective students.

3) Members discussed the following:

- Perceptions of Griffith in international markets, noting that Griffith had an excellent reputation but that there was work to be done on Griffith's service-related responses (which needed to be faster).
- Reasons for the drop in international student numbers, and the impact of market diversification into high-risk markets and slower visa processing. Retention was also an issue with high-risk cohorts.
- Griffith's tier 2 status and its impact on visa processing.
- A focus on improving rates of application to conversion by reducing the barriers for prospective students to engage with Griffith through the process.
- The role of agents and how Griffith engages them.

4) Council **noted** the international student load status and related action plan.

The Vice President (Global) Ms Marnie Watson left the meeting.

MID-YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT ON 2025 UNIVERSITY STRATEGIC KPIS

- 1) The Vice Chancellor spoke to the submission titled *Mid-Year Performance Report on 2025 University Strategic KPIS*, which had been circulated with the papers and was taken as read.
- 2) Members discussed the performance report and commended management on an excellent outcome, noting only two of the reported KPIS were below target.
- 3) Improvement in Indigenous student retention was discussed and the programs in place that had supported this uplift, particularly those offered through GUMURRII. The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Indigenous) would provide more information about these programs and their success at the October Council meeting.
- 4) The proportion of low SES in domestic student retention figures was discussed, noting that retention rates were not as good but that it remained a key focus and that additional supports were being provided.
- 5) Council **resolved to approve** the report on the University's performance against the 2025 University KPIS.

CAPITAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM: MAJOR PROJECTS UPDATE

- 1) The Chief Operating Officer spoke to the submission titled *Capital Infrastructure Program: Major Projects Update*, which had been circulated with the papers and was taken as read. He provided a brief update on key projects, including the Treasury building, HATRIC, the N13 demolition and the Science Enabling Works. Difficulties with implementation of the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System project were noted, but remediation was underway, and the project was back on track.
- 2) Members were informed of a potential partnership with Logan City Council, which was seeking a third-party investor to build an Olympic baseball stadium on the Logan campus. The University would provide the site and would gain improved public transport and an entertainment venue as legacy assets.
- 3) An update on the Mt Gravatt campus exit was provided. All learning and teaching would be moved to Nathan campus by the end of 2025, but oversight of sports infrastructure may require extension. Members emphasised a focused approach with the government.

- 4) The Chancellor commended the team on the fly-through of the refurbished Treasury Building that was presented at the University's 50th Anniversary Oration.
- 5) On the recommendation of the Finance and Infrastructure Committee, Council **noted** the status update on the Strategic Infrastructure Program.

OTHER REPORTS TO COUNCIL

Council also **noted** the following:

- Reports from the following Committees
 - Academic Committee 3/2025 (July) meeting
 - Finance and Infrastructure Committee 3/2025 (July) meeting
 - Griffith University Elders and First Peoples Knowledge Holders Advisory Board 2/2025 (June) meeting
- Annual Council Strategic Retreat Program.

Council **resolved to approve** the following:

- the Council Crisis Management Committee (CCMC) constitution (2025/0001070) and **delegated authority** to the Council Crisis Management Committee to have executive powers and delegated financial responsibility to act on behalf of Council as required of a crisis situation and where convening Council is not practicable or feasible, as set out in the constitution
- new budget process and timeline
- Organisational Review – Department of Accounting Finance, and Economics (2025/0000907) and Implementation Plan (2025/0000908)
- the amendments to the Griffith University Gold Coast Student Guild Constitution, which took effect from the date of approval, Monday 18 August 2025 as per s43(3) of the Act.

POLICY CHANGES APPROVED

Council **resolved to approve**:

- the amended Elections Policy (2025/0001086) and amended Elections Procedure (2025/0001087), which took effect from 18 August 2025, with a new review date of 2028.

AUGUST 2025