



COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Monday, 8 September 2025
in Room RH1210, Level 12, Rutherford House, Pipitea Campus, Wellington
from 11.00 am to 2.55 pm**

PRESENT: Mr Alan Judge (Chancellor) (Chair)
Professor Richard Arnold
Mr William Bell-Purchas
Professor Brigitte Bönisch-Brednich
Ms Pania Gray
Ms Asifa Hanif
Mr David McLean
Professor Nic Smith (Vice-Chancellor)
Mr David Smol
Hon Maryan Street (Pro-Chancellor)
Mr James Te Puni
Ms Caroline Ward (Secretary to Council)

APOLOGIES: Nil

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Liban Ali, VUWSA President
Ms Jackie Anderson, General Counsel
Dr Logan Bannister, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Students
Ms Rachel Bruce, Chief Financial Officer
Ms Kaea Hudson, Co-President Ngā Taurira
Professor Bryony James, Provost
Mr Simon Johnson, Director, Campus Operations
Mr David Lewis, Director, Communications & Marketing
Professor Robyn Longhurst, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic
Mr Reece Moors, Director, Office of the Vice-Chancellor
Mrs Rachel Scott, Director, Governance, Risk, and Assurance
Ms Tina Wakefield, Chief Operating Officer

25.132 WELCOME / ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS / APOLOGIES

Noted:

- 1 that the Chancellor welcomed all present with the meeting being held at Rutherford House for the first time since 2019.
- 2 that Mr William Bell-Purchas led the Karakia.
- 3 that there were no apologies and no attendance via Zoom.

25.133 DECLARATIONS AND DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Received: declarations and disclosure of interests by members of Council.

Noted:

- 1 that there were no additional disclosures of interest since the release of the meeting documentation.

- 2 that Council members were reminded to advise the Secretary to Council of any changes to their disclosure of interests listing between meetings.
- 3 that for item-specific disclosures, the Chancellor asked that Council members alert him at the time.

25.134

COUNCIL MINUTES, MEETING HELD 28 JULY 2025

Received: the public Minutes of the meeting of Council held 28 July 2025

Resolved: that the public Minutes of the meeting of Council held on 28 July 2025 be approved.

**Hanif/Street
Carried
250124**

25.135

REPORT FROM THE CHANCELLOR

Received: an oral report from the Chancellor, Mr Alan Judge.

Noted: that the Chancellor outlined events and activities since his last update to Council:

- attended the 28 July Finance Committee
- chaired the 28 July Council meeting
- visited the New Zealand School of Music on the Kelburn Campus with members of Council
- attended the FRIC meeting of the Foundation
- attended the Te Aka Matua Committee meeting
- chaired the Victoria Honours' Committee meeting
- attended the Scholarships supporters' evening held at Ngā Mokopuna
- attended the UniversitiesNZ hosted Chancellors' meeting and the combined Chancellors & Vice-Chancellors' meeting
- attended the Chancellors' dinner
- joined in Open Day activities and a tour with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Students, Dr Logan Bannister. There was a record turnout, and the University was able to show to best advantage its phenomenal offerings
- attended the Foundation Board of Trustees meeting
- co-hosted the Hunter Fellows ceremony with the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Nic Smith. The three recipients, all of whom are strong supporters of the University, spoke on how their time at Victoria had helped them achieve success in their lives.
- met with Ms Tina Wakefield, Chief Operating Officer, regarding 320 The Terrace;
- met with Ms Rachel Bruce, Chief Operating Officer, regarding the Q2 forecast
- attended the NZSM opera – L'enfant et les sortilèges – with members of Council
- met regularly with the Vice-Chancellor
- met regularly with the Secretary to Council.

Resolved: that the Chancellor's oral report be noted.

**Arnold/McLean
Carried
250125**

25.136

REPORT FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

Received: a report from the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Nic Smith, dated 1 September 2025 (document VUWC 25/97).

Noted:

- 1 that the report was taken as read.
- 2 that the success of Open Day was a credit to the energy and efforts leading up to it. A record number of registrations was received at 7,147 compared to 5,036 in 2024. The enormous work of Dr Logan Bannister, and Mr David Lewis and their teams was acknowledged.
- 3 that new international collaborations are strengthening the University's global position with the recent signing of a memorandum of understanding with the Beijing University of Civil Engineering and Architecture to establish study abroad pathways in architecture and urban planning; as well as hosting a student and staff delegation from Zhengzhou University in Wellington.
- 4 that the Research Office recently hosted the Prime Minister's Chief Science Advisory, John Roche.
- 5 that working with the VUWSA President, measures continue to be put in place to support student wellbeing. One example is the Winter Energy Grant - applications have more than doubled with 940 students supported this year compared with 437 in 2024.
- 6 that the Faculty realignment is nearing completion with final systems changes taking place. The two new Faculties are Te Pukenga Wai Faculty of Education, Health, and Psychological Sciences; and Te Wāhanga a Manaia Faculty of Science and Engineering.
- 7 that the collaboration agreement, as discussed at the July Council meeting, was formally signed between Victoria, Otago, and AUT. The Vice-Chancellor reinforced his earlier comments that it is a coalition of the willing and all other Universities are welcome to engage.
- 8 that the University Advisory Group (UAG) report was released in the time since the last Council meeting after being delayed on at least two occasions. It was agreed by Council that this will form a large part of the agenda at the 27 January Workshop in terms of what it means for this institution.

Resolved: that the report from the Vice-Chancellor be noted.

Bell-Purchas/Hanif
Carried
250126

25.137

FINANCIAL REPORT TO 31 JULY 2025

Received: the Financial report to 31 July 2025 from the Chief Financial Officer, Ms Rachel Bruce (document VUWC 25/98).

Noted:

- 1 that the report was taken as read.
- 2 that the \$2.6m received in July for 2025 growth has been strategically allocated to activity that will underpin future growth.
- 3 that the University continues to track to budget.

Resolved: that the Financial report to 31 July 2025 be noted.

Te Puni/Smol
Carried
250127

25.138

STUDENT PRESIDENT REPORTS

Received: a report from Mr Liban Ali, VUWSA President (document VUWC 25/99a).
a report from Ms Aria Ngarimu and Ms Kaea Hudson, Ngāi Tauira Co-Presidents (document VUWC 25/99b).

Noted:

- 1 that the reports were taken as read.
VUWSA President
- 2 that students continue to experience cost of living pressures. New hardship support for transport costs, initially funded with \$10,000 from the Vice-Chancellor's Office, has been established, and discussions continue to double the number of subsidised bus trips available to students in 2026.
- 3 that the "Where's the Work?" campaign has drawn national attention to graduate employment challenges and is set to culminate in a student walk-off protest.
- 4 that the process used to set the Student Services Levy was excellent, however rising student numbers are straining the services it funds and a more sustainable approach was called for.
Ngāi Tauira
- 5 that renewed enthusiasm in the Māori student body is evident. There have been kapa haka performances at Open Day and Cultural Night, preparations for the national Māori students' conference Te Huinga Tauira, and the forthcoming Te Ao Mārama issue of Salient published in te reo Māori.
- 6 that there was a recent cultural exchange with the University of Melbourne Law School and ongoing advocacy for Māori accommodation services, emphasising the role of community, language, and cultural connection in student success.
- 7 that the Presidents of both student bodies expressed concern over their non-involvement in the fee-setting process, as opposed to the thorough and effective consultation on the student services fee. Management confirmed that students would be involved in any future fee-setting reviews.

Resolved:

- 1 **that the report from the VUWSA President be noted.**
- 2 **that the report from the Ngāi Tauira Co-Presidents be noted.**

Street/Arnold
Carried
250128

25.139

CONFERMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS

Received: the list of degrees, diplomas and certificates granted on 8 September 2025 (document VUWC 25/100).

Resolved:

- 1 **that Council grants the degrees, diplomas and certificates in this University on the persons listed in document VUWC 25/100, and that their names be entered on the Roll of Graduates on 8 September 2025.**
- 2 **that a motion of congratulations to the Graduates be recorded.**

Hanif/Bell-Purchas
Carried
250129

25.140

2026 DOMESTIC TUITION FEES

Received: a Council paper dated 25 August 2025 from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Students, Dr Logan Bannister, regarding 2026 Domestic Tuition Fees (document VUWC 25/101).

Noted:

- 1 that the Council paper was taken as read.
- 2 that the Finance Committee had considered the paper in detail at its meeting this morning.
- 3 that Council members acknowledged the effect this increase will have on students in the current cost of living crisis, however the University is impacted by wider policy settings which are beyond its control.
- 4 that the student presidents expressed concern that this is the first time they have been aware of the fee setting paper and while understanding the constraints under which the University must operate, they would like to have a deep conversation with the government about the sustainability of the tertiary system, and how to fund it more equitably.
- 5 that the Chancellor acknowledged the students' comments and agreed with the sentiments, however in order to maintain institutional stability and protect the delivery of student support services, the fee increase cannot be avoided.

Resolved: **that on the recommendation of the Finance Committee, Council approve:**

- 1 a 6% increase to the domestic (government-funded) tuition fee rates for 2026, in line with the confirmed Annual Maximum Fee Movement (as per Appendix 1)
- 2 the proposed domestic (government-funded) tuition fee rates for new courses and fee exceptions as per Appendix 2.
- 3 the proposed international (full-fee) tuition fee rates for new courses and fee exceptions as per Appendix 3.

McLean/Bönisch-Brednich

Carried

250130

Abstain: Hanif

Abstain: Bell-Purchas

25.141

2026 STUDENT SERVICES FEE

Received: a Council paper dated 18 August 2025 from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Students, Dr Logan Bannister, regarding the 2026 Student Services Fee (document VUWC 25/102).

Noted:

- 1 that the Council paper was taken as read.
- 2 that the paper was discussed in detail at this morning's Finance Committee meeting.
- 3 that a thorough consultation process had occurred and the student presidents had accepted the need for the proposed 5% increase to the Student Services Fee.
- 4 that the fee is used mainly for non-academic support mechanisms, particularly in the wellness and health space.

Resolved: **that on the recommendation of the Finance Committee, Council approve:**

- 1 a 5% increase to the Student Services Fee price per point for 2026 (refer page 7);
- 2 that the Student Hardship Fee for 2026 remains at \$32.

Bell-Purchas/Street
Carried
250131

25.142 APPOINTMENT OF COUNCIL MEMBER – ELECTED STUDENT

Received: a Council paper dated 21 August 2025 from the Chancellor, Mr Alan Judge, regarding the appointment of a Council member following the recent student election (document VUWC 25/103).

Noted:

- 1 that the Council paper was taken as read.
- 2 that Mr Bell-Purchas was congratulated on his success in the student election which had resulted in a significant win.

Resolved: that in accordance with clause 5.1(c) of the Council Membership Statute, Mr William Bell-Purchas be appointed to Council for a two-year term from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2027.

McLean/Arnold
Carried
250132

25.143 PROPOSED SCHOOL NAME CHANGE

Received: a Council paper dated 25 August 2025 from Professor Bryony James, Provost, regarding a proposed School name change (document VUWC 25/104).

Noted:

- 1 that the Council paper was taken as read.
- 2 that the proposed name change had been under consideration for some time and had been thoroughly debated at the Academic Board which had reached agreement at its last meeting.

Resolved: that on the recommendation of the Academic Board, Council approve:

that School of Arts and Media Te Kura Kōmanawa be the new school names for School of English, Film, Theatre, Media and Communication, and Art History in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences/Te Kura Tānga Kōrero Ingarihi, Kiriata, Whakaari, Pāpāho, Whakawhiti Kōrero, Tāhuhu Kōrero Toi

Bönisch-Brednich/Te Puni
Carried
250133

25.144 ELECTION OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF TO THE ACADEMIC BOARD

Received: a Council paper dated 1 September 2025 from Professor Robyn Longhurst, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic regarding the election of professional staff to Academic Board (document VUWC 25/105).

Noted:

- 1 that the Council paper was taken as read.

- 2 that this request follows a tie in the recent election of two professional staff members to the Academic Board.
- 3 that at its August meeting, the Academic Board unanimously agreed to seek Council approval for a third professional staff member to sit on the board during the current two-year term.
- 4 that it was confirmed that there is no issue deviating from the Statute in this case because it is a one-off request and will not be a permanent arrangement.

Resolved: that on the recommendation of the Academic Board, Council approve:

that for the current two-year period from 15 July 2025 to 15 July 2027, Academic Board's membership allow three professional staff.

Street/Mclean
Carried
250134

25.145

FORTHCOMING EVENTS AND NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

Received: a Council Paper from the Secretary to Council, Ms Caroline Ward, dated 18 August 2025 regarding Forthcoming Events (document VUWC 25/106).

Noted:

- 1 that the Council paper was taken as read.
- 2 that Council members were encouraged to participate in the upcoming John Allen Staff/Student debate later this week.
- 3 that the Distinguished Alumni Awards on 18 September at Ngā Mokopuna promise to be a very special celebration of five of Victoria's highly successful graduates. A good number of Council members have confirmed their attendance at this event.

Resolved: that the Council paper on Forthcoming Events and the date and details of the next Council meeting to be held on Monday, 20 October 2025 at 11 am in the Council Chamber, Level 2, Hunter Building, Kelburn Campus m be noted.

Arnold/Bell-Purchas
Carried
250135

25.146

COMMITTEE AND ACADEMIC BOARD MINUTES

Received: the following Committee and Academic Board minutes:

- Academic Board, 15 July 2025
- Finance Committee, 28 July 2025
- Te Aka Matua Committee, 11 August 2025

Resolved: that the public Committee and Academic Board minutes be noted.

Te Puni/Arnold
Carried
250136

25.147

RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Received: a recommendation that certain items be taken with the public excluded (document VUWC 25/107).

Resolved: 1 that the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely agenda items 17-27.

The general subject of each matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter, and the specific grounds under section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution are as follows:

General subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter The public conduct of each item below would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding would exist under the sections of the OIA identified below.		Ground(s) under section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution
17. Minutes of previous meeting held 28 July 2025	Privacy, commercial prejudice, commercial activities.	s9(2)(a), s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(i), and s9(2)(ba)(i)	LGOIMA s48(1)(a)(ii)
18. Health, Safety, and Wellbeing – oral report	Privacy, commercial prejudice, commercial activities, confidential basis.	s9(2)(a), s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(i), and s9(2)(ba)(i)	LGOIMA s48(1)(a)(ii)
19. Vice-Chancellor's report	Privacy, commercial prejudice, commercial activities, confidential basis.	s9(2)(a), s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(i), and s9(2)(ba)(i)	LGOIMA s48(1)(a)(ii)
20. KPI implementation framework presentation	Commercial prejudice, commercial activities, confidential basis.	s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(i), and s9(2)(ba)(i)	LGOIMA s48(1)(a)(ii)
21. Financial report to 31 July 2025	Commercial prejudice, commercial activities, Confidential basis	s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(i), and s9(2)(ba)(i)	LGOIMA s48(1)(a)(ii)
22. 2026 Budget and Targets update	Commercial prejudice, commercial activities, Confidential basis	s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(i), and s9(2)(ba)(i)	LGOIMA s48(1)(a)(ii)

23. Strategy Topic – Student Accommodation review	Commercial prejudice, commercial activities, confidential basis	s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(i), and s9(2)(ba)(i)	LGOIMA s48(1)(a)(ii)
24. Wellington UniVentures action item response	Commercial prejudice, commercial activities, confidential basis	s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(i), and s9(2)(ba)(i)	LGOIMA s48(1)(a)(ii)
25. Rescinding qualification	Privacy	s9(2)(a)	LGOIMA s48(1)(a)(ii)
26. Committee and Academic Board minutes	Privacy, commercial prejudice, commercial activities, confidential basis.	s9(2)(a), s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(i), and s9(2)(ba)(i)	LGOIMA, s48(1)(a)(ii)
27. Council only time	Privacy, commercial prejudice, commercial activities, confidential basis.	s9(2)(a), s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(i), and s9(2)(ba)(i)	LGOIMA, s48(1)(a)(ii)

In relation to each of the above items, no public interest consideration has been identified favouring disclosure of the particular information in public proceedings of the meeting that would override the need to withhold the information.

This resolution is made in reliance on section 48(1)(a) of the Local Government Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the particular interest or interests protected by section 6 or section 7 or section 9 of the Official Information Act 1982, as the case may require, which would be prejudiced by holding of the whole or the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting in public are set out above.

- 2 that such members of the senior leadership as the Chancellor and the Vice-Chancellor request be permitted to remain at this meeting, after the public has been excluded, with the exception of agenda item 27, because of their knowledge of the relevant matters identified above which will be of assistance in relation to those matters.

Street/Smol
Carried
250137