COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Monday, 20 October 2025
in the Council Chamber, Level 2, Hunter Building, Kelburn Campus, Wellington
from 11.00 am to 3.00 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:
Ms Jackie Anderson, General Counsel
Dr Logan Bannister, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Students
Ms Rachel Bruce, Chief Financial Officer
Professor Rawinia Higgins, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Māori and Kaitiakitanga
Professor Margaret Hyland, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research
Professor Bryony James, Provost
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 Kate Tibbitts, Chief People Officer
Ms Tina Wakefield, Chief Operating Officer

25.159 WELCOME / ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS / APOLOGIES

Noted:

1 that Professor Brigitte Bönisch-Brednich led the Karakia.

2 the Chancellor welcomed all present and acknowledged that this was the final meeting for Pro-Chancellor, Hon Maryan Street who completes her Ministerial appointment as at 31 October. He highlighted Maryan's contribution over more than four years as Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee; and a member in her capacity as Pro-Chancellor from September 2022 on all other Council Committees including Finance, People & Culture, Te Aka Matua; and Victoria Honours. Particular mention was made of Maryan's role at graduation ceremonies and for stepping in for former Chancellor, John Allen, during December 2024 graduation celebrations. Council agreed that a formal vote of thanks be recorded.

3 that there were no apologies.

Resolved: **that a vote of thanks be recorded to Hon Maryan Street for her service on Council from 22 September 2021 to 31 October 2025.**

Judge/Smith
Carried
250148

25.160 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.

25.161 COUNCIL MINUTES, MEETING HELD 8 SEPTEMBER 2025

Received: the public Minutes of the meeting of Council held 8 September 2025.

Resolved: **that the public Minutes of the meeting of Council held on 8 September be approved.**

Smol/Hanif
Carried
250149

25.162 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 8 September Finance Committee meeting
- chaired the 8 September Council meeting
- Visited Taiawa Wellington Tech Hub with members of Council
- hosted a Luncheon with the Distinguished Alumni Award winners
- co-hosted the Distinguished Alumni Awards event with the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Nic Smith
- attended the Audit & Risk Committee meeting
- attended the Foundation Board of Trustees FRIC meeting
- at an event hosted by Wai-te-ata Press, was a guest judge in the competition to commemorate the centenary of the publication of Montale's Ossi di seppia (1925).
- met regularly with the Vice-Chancellor
- met regularly with the Secretary to Council.

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

Gray/Arnold
Carried
250150

25.163 REPORT FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

Received: a report from the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Nic Smith, dated 13 October 2025 (document VUWC 25/115).

Noted:

1 that the report was taken as read.

2 that the launch of the Vice-Chancellor's Leadership Programme (VCLP), for an initial cohort of 50 students selected from second year and above was highlighted.

3 that in late September, the Vice-Chancellor hosted H.E. Nguyen Trong Nghia, Chairperson of the Party Central Commission for Publicity, Education and Mass Mobilisation of Viet Nam at the Kelburn Campus.

4 that a well-attended Open Day for University Halls of residence took place with a notable uplift in demand, particularly from International students.

5 that efforts continue apace on experiential marketing, working with other organisations, to create experiences to bring life and colour to Te Herenga Waka. This is aimed at attracting students, and engaging with our wider community.

6 that the successful launch of Hēki, the world's first superconducting magnet to be tested in orbit was highlighted. The project, led by the Robinson Research Institute, has met all performance criteria to date.

7 that the University was represented by Dr Matthew O'Meagher on a Universities New Zealand delegation to Paraná, Brazil, establishing collaborations with six state universities and research parks.

8 that Professor Emily Parker is leading a Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment–funded synthetic biology delegation to Europe, and Professor Stephen MacDonell will head a forthcoming AI research mission. These two initiatives form part of a broader effort to expand New Zealand's research presence under Horizon Europe.

9 that the success of the Blues Awards, celebrating student achievement in sport and cultural excellence, was highlighted.

10 that the initiative of staff and students who participated in the Blue September Challenge in support of men's health awareness was commended.

11 that the Teaching Workload Allocation Model (TWAM) has been rolled out across all faculties.

12 that the Trimester 2 pilot of digital law examinations marked a significant step towards technology-enabled assessment.

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

Gray/Bönisch-Brednich
Carried
250151

25.164 FINANCIAL REPORT TO 31 AUGUST 2025

Received: the Financial report to 31 August 2025 from the Chief Financial Officer, Ms Rachel Bruce (document VUWC 25/116).

Noted:

1 that the report was taken as read.

2 that the University remains on track to meet FY25 budget.

3 that a high level of financial discipline continues to be exercised by staff, and the Chair of the Finance Committee confirmed that at this morning's meeting the Committee was satisfied with how the University's financial situation continues to improve.

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

Te Puni/McLean
Carried
250152

25.165 CONFERMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS

Received: the list of degrees, diplomas and certificates granted on 20 October 2025 (document VUWC 25/117).

Resolved:

1 that Council grants the degrees, diplomas and certificates in this University on the persons listed in document VUWC 25/117, and that their names be entered on the Roll of Graduates on 20 October 2025.

2 that a motion of congratulations to the Graduates be recorded.

Hanif/Bell-Purchas
Carried
250153

at 11.25 am the Chancellor, Mr Alan Judge, left the meeting
at 11.25 am the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Nic Smith, assumed the Chair

25.166 APPOINTMENT OF COUNCIL MEMBER

Received: a Council paper dated 13 October 2025 from the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Nic Smith, regarding the appointment of a Council member, Mr Alan Judge (document VUWC 25/118).

Noted:

1 that the Council paper was taken as read.

2 that the Vice-Chancellor confirmed that at its last meeting Council had discussed and unanimously supported the reappointment of Mr Judge, the current Chancellor, to a third term. Mr Judge had kindly confirmed his availability and willingness to serve a further term, as long as Council wishes him to continue as Chancellor.

3 that as it is Council's expectation under clause 7.4 of the membership statute that no member would be appointed on more than two occasions, if this expectation is not met, when the appointment is announced, an explanation of the reasons why must be published.

4 that the reasons, to be published via these minutes on the website are as follows:
In the current membership of Council, with two new ministerial appointments pending the need for experience and some continuity in the senior leadership of Council is paramount. Mr Judge brings nearly eight years of Council institutional knowledge, and financial skills relevant to the challenges facing the tertiary sector in the near term.

5 that Council acknowledged the generosity of Mr Judge in agreeing to a further term and when he re-joined the meeting this was conveyed along with recognition and appreciation of his work and contribution over nearly 8 years on Council.

Resolved: **that on the recommendation of the Vice-Chancellor:**

in accordance with clause 5.1(d) of the Council Membership Statute, Mr Alan Judge be appointed to Council for a further four-year term from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2029.

Te Puni/McLean
Carried
250154

at 11.25 am the Chancellor, Mr Alan Judge, re-joined the meeting and re-assumed the Chair

25.167 APPOINTMENT OF FOUNDATION TRUSTEE

Received: a Council paper dated 8 October 2025 from the Chancellor, Mr Alan Judge, regarding the appointment of a Foundation Trustee, Mr John McCay (document VUWC 25/119).

Noted:

1 that the Council paper was taken as read.
2 that there is currently quite a lot of change in the Foundation, with Trustees thinking about succession and additional potential appointees.
3 that a new Chair, following Dame Kerry Prendergast leaving the role earlier in the year, will be elected at an upcoming Board of Trustees meeting.
4 that the work of Souella Cummings as Acting Chair has been greatly appreciated by the Chancellor, and the Board of Trustees.

Resolved: **that on the recommendation of the Chancellor:**

Mr John McCay be appointed as a Trustee of the Victoria University of Wellington Foundation under rule 2.4 of the First Schedule to the Trust Deed for a term of office commencing on 1 November 2025 and concluding on 31 October 2028.

Judge/Gray
Carried
250155

25.168 DVC MĀORI AND KAITIAKITANGA UPDATE

Received: a Council paper dated 13 October 2025 from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Māori and Kaitiakitanga providing the Māori and Kaitiakitanga update (document VUWC 25/120).

Noted:

1 that the Council paper was taken as read.
2 that Māori student enrolments continue to grow, with the percentage of students sitting at 13.3% Commencing EFTS are 626, up from 550 at the same time last year. To date 94 Māori students have graduated in 2025.
3 that 72 graduates have registered for the December Te Hui Whakpūmau graduation celebration and to accommodate this there will be two ceremonies at Ngā Mokopuna on Friday, 12 December; with a pōhiri being held at 10.00 am on Thursday 11 December.
4 that two Faculties have made apointments to the role of Poukairangi-Associate Dean Māori.
5 that in addition to the events detailed in the report, Ngā Mokopuna recently hosted the 50th anniversary of the Waitangi Tribunal conference.
6 that the refreshed Mai i te Iho ki te Pae Māori Strategic Outcomes Framework has been considered by Te Hiwa and Te Aka Matua and is now ready to be socialised amongst Faculties. Indicators are still being worked through.
7 that Council asked if the University tracks Māori student withdrawal rates to identify patterns. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Students confirmed she would be happy to look at the data to determine if any trends can be identified, including indicators that are more positive around retention. There was also a request for information as to how Te Herenga Waka is tracking against the other Universities, acknoweldging that there are contextual factors around this information. The Chancellor noted that there will be a demographics discussion at the Council's January Workshop.
8 that further information was sought on what feedback has been received on the Teaching and Learning spaces in Ngā Mokopuna from students; and if

there any insights into how to continue to leverage this space to consider at Council's workshop in January.

9 that the Chair of Te Aka Matua advised Council members of the items on the agenda for the Committee's November meeting, including an update from the DVC, Students on Māori recruitment. Council members were reminded that they are always welcome to attend Te Aka Matua.

Resolved: **that update report from the DVC Māori and Kaitiakitanga be noted.**

McLean/Arnold
Carried
250156

25.169 FORTHCOMING EVENTS AND NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

Received: a Council Paper from the Secretary to Council, Ms Caroline Ward, dated 6 October 2025 regarding Forthcoming Events (document VUWC 25/121).

Noted:

1 that the Council paper was taken as read.

2 that Council members were encouraged to attend December graduation events which include a parade, three Michael Fowler Ceremonies, and two Ngā Mokopuna ceremonies.

4 that the next meeting of Council will take place at 11 am on Monday, 1 December 2025, in the Council Chamber, Level 2, Hunter Building, Kelburn Campus, Wellington.

Resolved: **that the Council paper on Forthcoming Events and the date and details of the next Council meeting be noted.**

Bell-Purchas/Smol
Carried
250157

25.170 COMMITTEE AND ACADEMIC BOARD MINUTES

Received: the following Committee and Academic Board minutes:

- Academic Board, 19 August 2025
- Finance Committee, 8 September 2025
- Audit & Risk Committee, 22 September 2025
- Academic Board, 23 September 2025

Noted:

1 that the 23 September 2025 Academic Board meeting was mostly focussed on a constructive and respectful dialogue regarding a *Boycott, Divestment, Sanction motion.* There was agreement on a statement from Academic Board noting that while the board does not make statements on all issues of international justice, it asserts its belief that Israel's actions in Gaza have reached a level that demands condemnation.

2 that Professor Arnold acknowledged the Vice-Chancellor for his chairing of this discussion which ensured that all voices and points of view were respectfully heard. He queried two directives to Council that had been deleted in the draft motion and the Vice-Chancellor confirmed that he will raise this at the next Academic Board meeting, and report back to Council.

3 that it was confirmed that the University currently has no formal collaboration with Israeli Universities and this will continue until there is satisfaction that issues of international justice are addressed.

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

Arnold/Smol
Carried
250158

25.171 RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Received: a recommendation that certain items be taken with the public excluded (document VUWC 25/122).

Resolved: **1 that the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely agenda items 14-28.**

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**
14. Minutes of previous meeting held 8 September 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)
15. 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)
16. 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)
17. Financial report to 31 August 2025	Commercial prejudice, commercial activities, Confidential basis	s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(i),and s9(2)(ba)(i)	LGOIMA s48(1)(a)(ii)
18. 2026 Budget update	Commercial prejudice,	s9(2)(b)(ii),	LGOIMA s48(1)(a)(ii)

	commercial activities, Confidential basis	s9(2)(i),and s9(2)(ba)(i)	
19. Strategic Topic – Curriculum review	Commercial prejudice, commercial activities, confidential basis.	s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(i),and s9(2)(ba)(i)	LGOIMA s48(1)(a)(ii)
20. Wellington UniProfessional update	Commercial prejudice, commercial activities, Confidential basis	s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(i),and s9(2)(ba)(i)	LGOIMA s48(1)(a)(ii)
21. Capital restructure of VictoriaLink Limited (Wellington UniVentures)	Commercial prejudice, commercial activities, Confidential basis	s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(i),and s9(2)(ba)(i)	LGOIMA s48(1)(a)(ii)
22. Everton Hall – revised business case	Commercial prejudice, commercial activities, confidential basis	s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(i),and s9(2)(ba)(i)	LGOIMA s48(1)(a)(ii)
23. 320 The Terrace update – oral report	Commercial prejudice, commercial activities, confidential basis	s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(i),and s9(2)(ba)(i)	LGOIMA s48(1)(a)(ii)
24. Preliminary view on new earthquake regulation announcements – oral report	Commercial prejudice, commercial activities, confidential basis	s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(i),and s9(2)(ba)(i)	LGOIMA s48(1)(a)(ii)
25. National Music Centre quarterly report	Commercial prejudice, commercial activities, confidential basis	s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(i),and s9(2)(ba)(i)	LGOIMA s48(1)(a)(ii)
26. Digital Roadmap quarterly report	Commercial prejudice, commercial activities, confidential basis	s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(i),and s9(2)(ba)(i)	LGOIMA s48(1)(a)(ii)
27. Committee and Academic Board minutes	Privacy, commercial prejudice, commercial	s9(2)(a), s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(i), and s9(2)(ba)(i)	LGOIMA, s48(1)(a)(ii)

	activities, confidential basis.		
28. 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 28, because of their knowledge of the relevant matters identified above which will be of assistance in relation to those matters.

Street/Smol
Carried
250159