

Report from Monash University Council meeting 4/2026 held on 11 June 2026

Monash University Council met on 11 June 2026. Key matters considered included an update from the Faculty of Education, development of the University's next strategic plan, graduation model reform, capital investment in learning spaces, and governance, integrity and risk matters including external governance developments and changing geopolitical and research security developments.

Education, Strategy and the Student Experience

Council received an update from the Dean of the Faculty of Education on the Faculty's performance, priorities and future directions. Discussion included demand for teachers, regional education initiatives, international partnerships, research performance, and the use of artificial intelligence in teaching and learning.

The Vice-Chancellor updated Council on a range of matters, including:

- student enrolments;
- the launch of the MAVERIC AI supercomputer;
- consultation processes to inform the University's next strategic plan;
- developments relating to university governance and the work of the Australian Tertiary Education Commission (ATEC);
- appointment of the inaugural Vice-Chancellor's distinguished professors; and
- the Vice-Chancellor's statement to the Royal Commission on Antisemitism and Social Cohesion in response to questions from the Commission.

Council approved changes to the University's graduation model that will separate the conferral of awards from graduation ceremonies. The changes will allow awards to be conferred monthly while maintaining graduation ceremonies as an important public celebration of student achievement. Council also noted that from 2027, there will be no separate charges for graduation ceremonies.

Council received an update from the Chief Operating Officer on key transformation initiatives across the portfolio. The update focused on work to strengthen operational effectiveness and financial sustainability, including in the areas of legal services, construction and maintenance, workplace health, safety and wellbeing, and human resources. Council also noted work on the development of a University-wide parking and transport strategy.

Financial Performance and Capital Investment

Council considered the monthly financial report and noted continued moderation in international postgraduate enrolments compared with 2025. Council also noted positive performance at Monash University Malaysia and updates regarding operations in Indonesia.

Council approved a \$43 million investment in Stage 2 of the Adaptive Reuse Learning Space Redevelopment program across the Clayton, Caulfield and Peninsula campuses. The project will continue the conversion of existing learning spaces into more contemporary teaching environments and forms part of the approved Capital Development Plan.

Council received a report from the Finance Committee, including updates on financial planning, investment performance, and a tender process for the University's principal external investment advisory firm.

Governance, Integrity and Risk

The Chancellor updated Council on governance developments across the higher education sector, including recent reviews and investigations at other Australian universities, and reflected on lessons for governance and decision-making.

Council also received updates on the University's response to recommendations arising from the Australian Human Rights Commission's *Respect@Uni* survey (including establishment of working groups on both antisemitism and Islamophobia and anti-Arab sentiment) and on progress in developing the submission for renewal of the University's registration with the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA).

Council discussed the implications of changing geopolitical conditions for the University, including impacts on international student demand, research collaboration and international partnerships.

Related, Council considered recommendations arising from a review of the University's arrangements for international and research security in the context of evolving government expectations. Council noted measures being implemented to strengthen institutional coordination, oversight and capacity in this area.

Council also considered the review of the Monash Indigenous Congress and noted changes to enlarge its membership, including the incorporation of student members, and enhance community engagement and transparency. Council also discussed ways to strengthen its relationship with the Congress.

Council received a report from the Risk & Audit Committee including updates on cyber security, risk management, internal audit activity and compliance matters.

Council received an update on implementation of the University's Quality Assurance Program in relation to staff remuneration (including back payments for historic scheduled student consultations) and the Enforceable Undertaking to the Fair Work Ombudsman. Council noted implementation activities and that the People, Selection and Remuneration Committee and the Risk & Audit Committee will continue to monitor progress and associated change management activities.

Council noted that the Commonwealth Department of Education had assessed Monash's Prevention and Response Action Plan under the National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence as "sufficiently compliant", the highest assessment rating awarded by the Department and achieved by approximately 20 per cent of Australian universities.

Council also approved the University's 2025 Annual Information Statement for lodgement with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC).

Academic Governance and Student Matters

Council received reports from the Academic Board and the University Student Ombudsman.

The President of the Academic Board reported on the Board's annual workplan, self-evaluation activities and quality assurance processes. Council noted positive trends in learning and teaching quality measures.

The University Student Ombudsman (USO) presented his annual report to Council. The USO reported that complaint volumes remained relatively stable and low relative to the size of the University. Council also received an update on the operation of the National Student Ombudsman and the interaction between national and University complaint processes.

Committee Matters

Council received reports from the Governance and Nominations Committee and People, Selection and Remuneration Committee.

The next meeting of Council is scheduled for 5 August 2026.