

Federation University Australia Council

Meeting 01/2026 | 18 March 2026

The Federation University Australia Council met on Wednesday 18 March 2026 at the Mt Helen Campus. This communiqué provides a summary of the key decisions and strategic discussions from the meeting.

Strategic Discussions

Council addressed the most significant strategic priorities and challenges facing the University, focusing on sustainability, inclusion, student experience and long-term planning.

Responding to Challenges in International Education

Council discussed the growing external challenges facing the international education sector, particularly ongoing volatility in international student visa settings.

Council considered the impact of these changes on international student recruitment, revenue certainty and forward planning, noting that these impacts are felt more acutely by Federation as a regional university with a strong focus on social equity.

In response to these conditions, Council formally noted changes to the University's senior leadership structure, including the decision to disestablish the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Global, Engagement and Quality) role and cease recruitment for a Provost position at this time.

Council also discussed mitigation actions underway, engagement with Council committees on forecast financial impacts, and the University's continued advocacy to the Commonwealth Government for funding reform that ensures the sustainability of regional universities.

Action to Combat Racism and Discrimination

Council noted national initiatives underway aimed at strengthening accountability and transparency across the sector, including:

- the Antisemitism Report Card process, led by the Australian Government's Special Envoy to Combat Antisemitism
- the Racism@Uni Survey, led by the Australian Human Rights Commission.

Council recognised that expectations in this area are evolving and likely to be embedded within the Higher Education Standards Framework, which sets the requirements providers must meet to be registered as higher education providers in Australia.

The meeting also noted progress toward establishing the Respect@Fed Committee, which will oversee whole-of-University cultural and behavioural change.

Student Experience Survey results

Council discussed the latest Student Experience Survey results, noting continued improvement in the quality of the undergraduate educational experience and the University's focus on lifting postgraduate student satisfaction and peer engagement. Council requested that future

reporting provide insight into the experiences of Higher Degree by Research and Masters by Coursework students.

Campus and Digital Planning

Council was briefed on the next phase of planning to support delivery of the University's strategy, including campus development, digital transformation and the way people, systems and assets are used.

The discussion emphasised that clear prioritisation would be critical to focus investment on areas of greatest strategic impact, particularly student experience, growth and the management of ageing infrastructure.

Key areas of discussion included:

- the importance of sequencing and prioritisation to focus investment on areas of greatest strategic impact, particularly with ongoing financial constraints
- the relationship between campus planning, learning and teaching, and digitally enabled engagement.

Council noted that Berwick campus was the only campus requiring expansion, with existing sites able to support the University's planned growth to 2030. Discussion focused on the need for staged investment, improved utilisation of existing space and exploring partnerships to support longer-term growth.

Further detailed proposals will be progressed through the Resources Committee.

Key Decisions

Approval of 2025 Audited Financial Statements and Annual Report

Council approved the University's 2025 Annual Audited Financial Statements and the Annual Report for tabling in the Parliament of Victoria on a date to be confirmed by the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions.

Awarding of the University Medal

Council approved the awarding of the Federation University Medal to an eligible graduand in recognition of outstanding academic achievement, following recommendation from the Academic Board.

Strategic Plan Delivery (2021–2025)

Council approved the report on the University's progress against its 2021–2025 Strategic Plan, recognising the collective efforts of staff across the University in delivering strong outcomes for students and communities, particularly given the challenging operating environment over the period.

Emeritus Professor Appointment

Council approved a nomination for the award of Emeritus Professor, recognising the distinguished service and leadership of a departing Professor of the University.

Governance and Committee Matters

Council discussed a range of governance and strategic matters considered by its standing committees, including:

- oversight of academic integrity and emerging risks, including artificial intelligence, alongside the University's response through innovative assessment approaches (Academic Board Chair's Report).
- implementation of the new governance principles, the [University's submission](#) to the Victorian University Governance Inquiry and an update on the accreditation processes for University's proposed new medical program (Governance and Strategy Committee).
- the Vice-Chancellor's 2026 key performance indicators, annual performance and remuneration reviews for the Vice-Chancellor's Senior Team and Council remuneration arrangements. Council discussed aligning executive performance measures with strategic delivery and noted the focus on accountability at the executive level. Council also noted consideration of Council membership, skills and succession planning (Senior Appointments and Remuneration Committee).
- attestations relating to fraud, academic freedom and freedom of speech, and increased focus on emerging risks such as childcare operations and artificial intelligence (Audit and Risk Management Committee).
- the recent Employability.Life Board delegation to India. Council discussed opportunities arising from the model in relation to international recruitment, pathways and transnational education (Resources Committee).

Finally, Council approved the appointment of two new staff representatives to Inclusion Committee and endorsed the reappointment of two Governor-in-Council members of Council.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of Council will be held on Wednesday 27 May 2026 at the Gippsland (Churchill) campus.

Further Information

For further information on Federation's governance, see [Governance | Federation University](#) or contact council@federation.edu.au.
