



COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Monday, 27 July 2026
in Room AM103, Alan McDiarmid Building, Kelburn Campus, Wellington
from 12 noon to 3.20 pm

- PRESENT:**
- Mr Alan Judge (Chancellor) (Chair)
 - Mr William Bell-Purchas
 - Professor Brigitte Bönisch-Brednich *via Zoom*
 - Ms Megan Evans
 - Ms Pania Gray (Pro-Chancellor)
 - Ms Asifa Hanif
 - Professor Bryony James (Vice-Chancellor)
 - Ms Mei Fern Johnson
 - Mr David McLean *via Zoom*
 - Mr James Te Puni
 - Ms Caroline Ward (Secretary to Council)
- APOLOGIES:**
- Professor Richard Arnold
 - Mr David Smol
- IN ATTENDANCE:**
- Dr Logan Bannister, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Students
 - Mr Graham Beever, Acting General Counsel
 - Ms Rachel Bruce, Chief Financial Officer
 - Ms Fiona Clarkson, Head of Strategic Communications
 - Ms Rochelle Gribble, Manager, Strategic Projects
 - Ms Susan Hockley, Associate Director, Business Partnering & Financial Control
 - Professor Rawinia Higgins, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Māori & Kaitiakitanga
 - Ms Shannon Hughes, Student
 - Mr Clinton Jenkins, Associate Director, Planning and Performance Management
 - Dr Ryan Kerr, Director, Strategy and Planning
 - Professor Robyn Longhurst, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic
 - Professor Sally McArthur, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research
 - Ms Megan McPherson, Director of Communications, Marketing, and Digital Engagement
 - Mr Reece Moors, Director, Office of the Vice-Chancellor
 - Mrs Rachel Scott, Director, Governance, Risk, and Assurance
 - Ms Tina Wakefield, Chief Operating Officer

26.106

WELCOME / ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS / APOLOGIES

- Noted:**
- 1 that Ms Mei Fern Johnson led the Karakia.
 - 2 that the Chancellor welcomed everyone to the meeting, and particularly acknowledged Professor Brigitte Bönisch-Brednich attending via Zoom from the northern hemisphere which involved a challenging time zone difference.
 - 3 that the Chancellor congratulated Professor Robyn Longhurst on her appointment as Provost.

- 4 that apologies were received from Professor Richard Arnold and Mr David Smol.

Resolved: that the apologies from Professor Richard Arnold and Mr David Smol be sustained.

260098

26.107 DECLARATIONS AND DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Received: the declarations and disclosure of interests register.

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

26.108 COUNCIL MINUTES, MEETING HELD 15 JUNE 2026

Received: the public Minutes of the meeting of Council held 15 June 2026.

Resolved: that the public Minutes of the meeting of Council held on 15 June 2026 be approved.

260099

26.109 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 as follows:
- attended regular meetings with the Vice-Chancellor
 - attended regular meetings with the Secretary to Council
 - chaired the University Council meeting on 15 June 2026 which was held at the University's marae
 - chaired the Victoria Honours Committee meeting on 22 June 2026
 - attended the Te Aka Matua Committee meeting on 22 June 2026
 - met with the VUWSA President, Aidan Donoghue
 - met with the Chief Operating Officer, Tina Wakefield, regarding options for 320 The Terrace site
 - attended the New Zealand Investment forum 2026 in Auckland in capacity as a VUW Foundation Board of Trustees member
 - met with Mairangi Campbell, Ngāi Tauira Co-President
 - attended the Matariki dinner with iwi partners at Ngā Mokopuna

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

260100

26.110 REPORT FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

Received: a report from the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Bryony James, dated 16 July 2026 (document VUWC 26/76).

- Noted:**
- 1 that the report was taken as read.

- 2 that the figures for international recruitment have now exceed pre-COVID numbers. The work led by Dr Logan Bannister and her team was commended.
- 3 that the University's two Matariki celebrations had both been wonderful and the Matariki Hākari where mana whenua partners joined for a feast and evening of connection was a particular highlight.
- 4 that a full review of the Canvas incident will take place and the Audit & Risk Committee will be briefed at its next meeting. A Business Continuity for Learning and Teaching Group has been convened, led by Professor Stephen Marshall of CAD. This group, drawn from Digital Solutions and all faculties, will develop a framework for ensuring planning is coherent, comprehensive and coordinated across the University.
- 5 that the VicStart programme has continued to grow with 200 students enrolled. This provides students with the opportunity to take a Level 100 paper whilst still at school (typically year 13) and is an increasingly important part of the University's future learner pipeline.
- 6 that recent Australia alumni visits to Canberra, Melbourne, and Sydney had been a great success.
- 7 that winter energy grants help support students with power bills and community sponsors match dollar for dollar if the University's contribution reaches a certain level. This is a couple of thousand dollars short, and a campaign will start this week aimed at making up the difference.
- 8 that the Research environment remains challenging and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research is keeping a close eye on the funding environment.
- 9 that Wellington UniVentures secured two successful Tier 2 projects in the final KiwiNet funding round.
- 10 that the Kelburn Student Service Hub was opened in time for the start of Trimester 2 and has been well received by students.
- 11 that the YourVoice survey for staff will commence next week.

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

260101

26.111 FINANCIAL REPORT TO 30 JUNE 2026

Received: the Financial report to 30 June 2026 from the Chief Financial Officer, Ms Rachel Bruce (document VUWC 26/77).

- Noted:**
- 1 that the report was taken as read.
 - 2 that things are tracking as expected and recent confirmation of TEC funding linked to performance and priority provision was welcomed and gives a bit of breathing space. The CFO emphasised that this is not baselined and the University's core business remains finely balanced in a challenging and uncertain environment which is being experienced across the tertiary education sector.
 - 3 that revenue was favourable to budget by \$1.6m, primarily due timing of research revenue, partially offset by lower tuition fees due to the timing of full fee discounts.
 - 4 that expenditure was unfavourable to budget by \$0.8m, primarily due to timing of research related expenditure, partly offset by lower utilities and reactive maintenance costs.
 - 5 that the Consolidated Group deficit of \$6.6m included the Foundation surplus.
 - 6 that the Foundation surplus of \$10.9m was favourable to budget by \$5.8m, driven by higher donation revenue and unrealised investment gains and lower transfers to the University.

Resolved: that the Financial report to 30 June 2026 be noted.

2600102

26.112 CONFERMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS

Received: the list of degrees, diplomas and certificates granted on 27 July 2026 (document VUWC 26/78).

Resolved:

- 1 that Council grants the degrees, diplomas and certificates in this University on the persons listed in document VUWC 26/78, and that their names be entered on the Roll of Graduates on 27 July 2026.
- 2 that a motion of congratulations to the Graduates be recorded.

Bell-Purchas/Hanif

260103

26.113 DVC MĀORI AND KAITIAKITANGA REPORT

Received: a Council paper dated 13 July 2026 from Professor Rawinia Higgins, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Māori and Kaitiakitanga providing the DVC Māori and Kaitiakitanga report (document VUWC 26/79).

Noted:

- 1 that the Council paper was taken as read.
- 2 that Professor Higgins advised that the presentation had been given at the recent Te Aka Matua Committee meeting at which it was agreed that it be shared with the full Council.
- 3 that Council members were thanked for attending the Matariki Hākari event which despite extremely challenging weather conditions went ahead with 68 people in attendance at Ngā Mokopuna.
- 4 that there was discussion on course completion rates and theories as to why there may have been a dip in 2025 which could be linked to the impact on students who commenced during the COVID pandemic years.
- 5 that the team was congratulated on the continuing lift in the number of Māori students at Te Herenga Waka.
- 6 that Council acknowledged that market share and course completion can be blunt measures.
- 7 that beyond the blunt measures, there are more qualitative things to consider. The great pride for Māori and International students who elect to celebrate their graduation at Te Hui Whakapumau where the challenges overcome and trade-offs made are apparent as they gather with whanau is one of these.

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

260104

26.114 KING'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS

Received: a Council paper dated 14 June from the Chancellor, Mr Alan Judge, regarding the 2026 King's Birthday Honours (document VUWC 26/80).

Noted:

- 1 that the Council paper was taken as read.
- 2 that the Chancellor acknowledged all those on the list, and highlighted Professor Rawinia Higgins mother, Te Ripowai Higgins, who was honoured in this year's awards.

- 3 that the awards demonstrate the impact our graduates and staff have in the wider community.

Resolved: that Council conveys its congratulations to all Victoria University of Wellington graduates and staff honoured in the 2026 King's Birthday Honours.

260105

26.115 FORTHCOMING EVENTS AND NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

Received: a Council Paper from the Secretary to Council, Ms Caroline Ward, dated 13 July 2026 regarding Forthcoming Events (document VUWC 26/81).

- Noted:**
- 1 that the Council paper was taken as read.
 - 2 that the Open Day on 21 August was highlighted, as well as this week's Wellington Alumni Event, and the upcoming Scholarship Supporters reception on 11 August.
 - 3 that the next meeting of Council will take place on Monday, 14 September 2026 at 11 am in Room RH12, Level 12, Rutherford House, Pipitea Campus.
 - 4 that Council meetings during the remainder of 2026 will be held at venues as follows:
19 October, Council Chamber
30 November, Rutherford House, Level 12

Resolved: that the Council paper on Forthcoming Events and the date and details of the next Council meeting on 14 September 2026 be noted.

260106

26.116 COMMITTEE AND ACADEMIC BOARD MINUTES

Received: the following minutes:

- Academic Board, 9 June 2026
- Te Aka Matua Committee, 22 June 2026

Noted: that the minutes of both meetings were taken as read.

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

260107

26.117 RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Received: a recommendation that certain items be taken with the public excluded (document VUWC 26/82).

Resolved: 1 that the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely agenda items 13-24.

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
13. Minutes of previous meeting held 15 June 2026	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)
14. Health, Safety, and Wellbeing report including Critical Risk deep dive – Psychosocial	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)
15. 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)
16. Financial report to 30 June 2026, and CFO report	Commercial prejudice, commercial activities, Confidential basis	s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(i), and s9(2)(ba)(i)	LGOIMA s48(1)(a)(ii)
17. Deep dive – Benchmarking	Commercial prejudice, commercial activities, Confidential basis	s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(i), and s9(2)(ba)(i)	LGOIMA s48(1)(a)(ii)
18. Honorary Doctorate recommendation	Privacy Confidential basis	s9(2)(a) s9(2)(ba)(i)	LGOIMA s48(1)(a)(ii)
19. Honorary Doctorate recommendation	Privacy Confidential basis	s9(2)(a) s9(2)(ba)(i)	LGOIMA s48(1)(a)(ii)
20. 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)

21. Accommodation quarterly dashboard report Q2 2026	Commercial prejudice, commercial activities, confidential basis.	s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(i), and s9(2)(ba)(i)	LGOIMA s48(1)(a)(ii)
22. Foundation quarterly report to 30.6.26	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)
23. Committee and Academic Board minutes	Commercial prejudice, commercial activities, confidential basis.	s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(i), and s9(2)(ba)(i)	LGOIMA s48(1)(a)(ii)
24. 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 24, because of their knowledge of the relevant matters identified above which will be of assistance in relation to those matters.

260108

at 12.40 pm the meeting adjourned for lunch until 1 pm