

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Legislative Council

ASKED BY: Select Committee – UTAS Act 1992

ANSWERED BY: Minister Jaensch

QUESTION:

1. Please provide the Annual Progress Reports around the Partnership Agreement process for 2016, 2017 and 2018, together with details and copies of any reviews that have been undertaken since the commencement of the Agreement.
2. Please provide a diagrammatic framework showing individual connections of the various State Government departments with the various sections/faculties/colleges of the University. This is to demonstrate the overall points of contact the University has with the Government and brief descriptors of the reason for those links.
3. What is the Government's understanding of the exact legal status of the university, and the nature of its legal relationship to the State? (MW)
4. In a situation of the University having to cease operating, what is the Government's understanding of who the owner of the University's assets would be?
5. Please provide details of the recruitment, selection and appointment process for making Ministerial appointments to the University Council, including any documentation that is part of that process.
6. Please provide copies of all documentation and communications between the University/University Council and the Government/Minister/Minister's Office associated with the last two Ministerial appointments to the University Council (with personal details redacted where appropriate).
7. Given the reported implicit understanding that the State is regarded as guarantor to UTAS loans relating to the Hobart CBD move, has the State Government undertaken any analysis regarding the CBD move overall, or any specific aspects of the move (e.g. heritage, traffic management, native habitat, etc)?

8. When was the Government first provided with a copy of a business case for the proposed move to the Hobart CBD, and by whom was it provided? When have subsequent versions or updates of a business case for the proposed move to the CBD been provided to the Government, and by whom?

9. Has State Cabinet formally considered and approved, endorsed or supported business case(s) for the proposed UTAS move to the Hobart CBD? If so, please provide the dates of Cabinet consideration.

10. As Minister, have you been concerned by the considerable public discussion, criticism and airing of concerns relating to UTAS over the past 18 months or more? If you have been concerned, please outline any actions you have taken during your time as Minister in light of that concern (e.g. to inform yourself of the issues, to get specialised advice, to interact with involved/relevant stakeholders, etc)?

ANSWER:

Question 1:

The Progress Reports for the UTAS Partnership Agreement for 2016 and 2017 are attached. UTAS released a revised Strategic Plan in July 2019, which emphasised themes of being place-based and globally connected, right-sized and responsive, regionally networked to provide quality and access to Tasmanians and a commitment to being people-centred.

In this context, preliminary work had commenced discussions on a 'reset' of the Partnership in early-2020. The Agreement was paused – in consultation with UTAS – in March 2020 in response to the COVID outbreak.

Concurrently, the State Government announced a review of the *State Service Act 2020*, with the Final Report and recommendations released in 2021. Recommendation 27 of that Final Report was that the Department of Premier and Cabinet develop an overarching 'ideas' partnership agreement with the University of Tasmania, focused on areas of mutual benefit and with the broad objectives of improving outcomes for Tasmanians.

All recommendations of the State Service Review were accepted in principle by the Government, and it is recognised that the landscape for both UTAS and Tasmania has altered significantly in the interim, with significant ramifications for UTAS's business model, internal structures and service delivery.

Question 2:

The Tasmanian Government and UTAS have a broad and deep range of successful partnerships that span learning and professional training, research and a diverse range of

civic engagement. The intersections between UTAS and Tasmanian Government Departments and divisions are many, deep and far too complex to map diagrammatically.

For example, mapping is complex if one solely focused on work placements, whether Industry-Based Learning placements, Work-Integrated Learning placements, research and project opportunities in a wide range of disciplines. If one included graduate and internship programs between the Tasmanian Government and UTAS, such an approach is difficult.

Examples are outlined in the Annual Statements of Progress, with other key examples of interactions over a number of years provided below.

The Australian Antarctic Program Partnership (AAPP)

This is an Australian Government funded initiative through the Antarctic Science Collaboration Initiative program to better understand the role of the Antarctic region in the global climate system and the implications for marine ecosystems. Partners of the AAPP are the Australian Antarctic Division (AAD), CSIRO, the University of Tasmania (UTAS), and the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM). Other partners include Geoscience Australia (GA), the Tasmanian Government and Australia's Integrated Marine Observing System (IMOS).

The Blue Economy CRC

The CRC brings together 44 industry, government, and research partners from ten countries, including the Tasmanian Government.

Through targeted and industry-focussed research and training, the Blue Economy CRC paves the way for innovative, commercially viable and sustainable offshore developments and new capabilities that will see significant increases in renewable energy output, seafood production and jobs that will transform the future of Australia's traditional blue economy industries.

The Sustainable Marine Research Collaboration Agreement (SMRCA)

This Agreement between the Tasmanian State Government and the University of Tasmania was established to support research on Tasmanian marine resources, including commercial and recreational fisheries, wild harvest and aquaculture.

The strategic approach to the SMRCA attempts to balance the economic, social and environmental factors that contribute to ensuring a sustainable and productive future and engages with industry and other partners for the long-term prosperity of both Tasmania and the broader Australian community.

Grant to the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies

In 2010, the Government entered into the Sustainable Marine Research Collaboration Agreement with the University of Tasmania's Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies to assist aquaculture and fisheries research. The Government provides its contribution to the joint venture by way of an annual grant.

Grant to the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture

The Government provides an annual grant to the University of Tasmania for the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture to undertake agricultural research, development, extension and education.

Example of Various Scholarships provided -past or ongoing

- **Education Inspiration Scholarship:** A scholarship to support educational attainment by students at risk of leaving the education system. Recipients receive \$1,000 in Year 11, \$1,000 in Year 12, and \$5,000 a year for up to four years of their undergraduate degree, subject to their continued commitment to their studies. This is not an ongoing program – the first cohort of students was awarded in the 2017-18 Financial Year (commencing Year 11 in 2018), and the final cohort of students was awarded in 2020-2021 (commencing Year 11 in 2021).
- **Endowed Perpetual Honours Scholarship:** \$10,000 scholarship awarded annually to a student commencing their Honours year at UTAS to reward academic merit.

Menzies Centre

There are many associations with the Menzies Centre, including with the Tasmanian Cancer Registry, which collects, collates and reports the incidence of all malignant neoplasms in Tasmanian residents. The Tasmanian Cancer Registry is funded by the Department of Health.

Consultation on a Wellbeing Framework for Tasmania

The Tasmania Government, in Partnership with UTAS, has commenced consultation on what wellbeing means to Tasmanians.

Question 3:

The University is established under the *University of Tasmania Act 1992* but does not form part of the Total State Sector.

Under the Administrative Arrangements Order (No. 4) 2022, the Minister for Education, Children and Youth is the Minister responsible for the administration of the Act.

Question 4:

The *University of Tasmania Act 1992* does not prescribe the process for the wind-up of the University, nor where surplus assets would be distributed.

The potential wind-up of Tasmania's only university is an extremely hypothetical question which would also require significant consideration from the Commonwealth Government as the primary funder and regulator of higher education.

Question 5:

Under the UTAS Act, section 8 (d), the responsible Minister appoints two members to the University Council, each of whom must not be a student or member of the academic staff or professional staff and of whom at least one must be a graduate of the University.

The appointment term is for up to three years (Schedule 1 (1)(a) and Schedule 4 (6)). Appointed members are accountable to the University Council not the Minister (Section 8 (3)).

Before appointing members to the University Council, the Minister and the Council must give public notification of the vacancy; undertake consultation with the Council about any intended appointment; and have regard to the balance of skills and experience, regional representation, and appropriate gender balance (Section 8 (5)(a)-(c)). There are no parameters for the Minister's appointments and

There is currently a process underway for new members of the University Council.

Attachment I and Attachment Ia describe this process in sufficient detail and give effect to the requirements of the Act.

Question 6:

In addition to Attachment I and Ia and the answer provided to Question 5, Attachments 2,3,4 and 5 cover the 2019 and 2021 Minister's appointments.

Question 7:

No guarantee exists in relation to the University's borrowings.

Question 8:

In 2019, UTAS announced its intention to relocate most of its southern campus to Hobart CBD, following a review of their needs and community consultation.

In 2019, the Hobart City Deal supported UTAS in preparing a project plan for an enhanced science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) presence in Hobart, taking into consideration the housing and transport needs of both students and staff.

In 2021, UTAS finalised its masterplan known as "Reimagine Sandy Bay" and released their draft masterplan for the Southern campus move.

Question 9:

This question relates to the deliberations of Cabinet which are confidential.

Question 10:

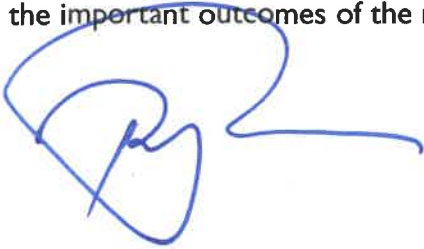
As the only university in Tasmania, UTAS has a particularly important role to play in influencing the economic, social, and cultural development of our State.

As Minister, I have regular engagements with the Vice-Chancellor where the full range of UTAS' activities are discussed.

As Minister for Education, Children and Youth, UTAS' Initial Teacher Education courses are of particular importance as are their newly established Speech Pathology and Occupational Therapy courses.

The Premier, the Hon Jeremy Rockliff MP, and former Education Minister established the Education Workforce Roundtable. UTAS is a critical member of this important group.

I have also met with members of the Save UTAS Campus group on 3 occasions and more broadly, the Government continues to listen closely to Committee's proceedings and to the important outcomes of the national University Accord process.



APPROVED/NOT APPROVED

Roger Jaensch MP
Minister for Education, Children and Youth

Date: 9/7/23

The Hon Roger Jaensch MP
The Minister for Education, Children and Youth
Level 11, 15 Murray Street
HOBART TAS 7000

By email: roger.jaensch@dpac.tas.gov.au

Dear Minister,

As discussed at our recent meeting on 11 May 2023, the University Council currently has two vacancies in the membership category of “*up to 6 persons appointed by the Council*”.

In accordance with s8(5) of the *Act*, before making any appointment to the Council, the Minister and the Council must –

- a) give public notification of the vacancy; and
- b) consult with each other about any intended appointment; and
- c) have regard to the balance of skills and experience, regional representation, and an appropriate gender balance.

To complement and balance the existing skills and experience of members on the University Council, key capabilities have been identified and will be sought from potential nominees. These include appointing a Tasmanian Aboriginal person of high standing to Council to enhance Indigenous participation in university governance and a person experienced in people and culture.

Attached is an advert calling for nominations on behalf of you as Minister and the University which we intend to publish in all three major newspapers across the State and on the University’s website this week. Nominations will close on 28th July 2023 with all applications received to be considered in August by the University’s Extended Nominations Committee. The Committee will then make appropriate recommendations to Council for consideration at its meeting on 30 August 2023.

At its recent meeting, Council appointed Mr Alexander McKenzie as the third independent member of the Extended Nominations Committee joining Tim Bullard and Brett Torossi. Alexander is a Director at McLean, McKenzie and Topfer, a respected leader in his community, has strong and deep connections to the Northwest of Tasmania and is currently President of the Tasmania Council of Social Services. The University Council is pleased that Alexander has accepted this invitation.

Noting our conversation in May regarding the current Ministerial appointees to Council, Tara Howell and Sheree Vertigan, I can confirm that the end date of their current term is 1st April 2024.

I will write again to advise you of the outcome of this process and should you wish to discuss any of the details further please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Yours sincerely



Ms Alison Watkins AM
Chancellor

3 July 2023

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Council of the University of Tasmania

Appointments by the Minister for Education and by the University Council

The University of Tasmania was founded to serve the entire State of Tasmania and its people. Our mission is to make a difference for Tasmania and from Tasmania to the world through learning, teaching, research, creative production, and engagement.

The University Council is the governing body of the University, established under the *University of Tasmania Act 1992* and has responsibility for high-level strategic direction, major financial planning and monitoring management performance and compliance. It is comprised of up to 14 members, six of these members are external to the University (neither staff nor students) and are appointed by Council.

Council maintains a balance of members with skills and experience across a range of areas, including Governance, Strategy, Finance and People and Culture. It values the unique contributions of all its members and encourages Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people from culturally diverse backgrounds and those from regional areas of the State to participate in the governance of the University.

The Minister for Education and the University invites interested people to nominate for two (2) vacant positions on the University Council in the category of Council appointed members. Applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and/or individuals with skills and experience in the areas of People and Culture are strongly encouraged to apply in this round.

People considering nominating should obtain a **nomination form** by accessing the University Council website at <https://www.utas.edu.au/university-council> along with further information on the role of the Council, its committee structure, and its current membership.

Please contact the Chancellor, Alison Watkins at chancellor@utas.edu.au if you would like to obtain more information on nominating for membership of the Council.

DETAILS

Nominations:

Those wishing to nominate should complete the **nomination form** and provide a **short cover letter** outlining the reasons for the nomination along with a relevant **curriculum vitae** and send to:

University Secretary, University of Tasmania

Private Bag 51, Hobart Tasmania 7001

Email: uni.council@utas.edu.au



Closing date: Friday 28 July 2023 at 5:00pm.

The Hon Jeremy Rockliff MP
Minister for Education and Training
Level 11, 15 Murray Street
HOBART TAS 7000

Dear Minister

I write to inform you of necessary changes to the Council of the University of Tasmania. In accordance with the *University of Tasmania Act 1992* (the Act), before making an appointment to the Council there must be:

- public notification of the vacancy
- consultation between the Minister and Council about any intended appointment
- regard given to the balance of skills and experience, regional representation and an appropriate gender balance.

As part of Council succession planning activities, consideration has been given to the current and expected desired skills and attributes required by Council in light of the strategic direction of the University.

There are currently seven members on Council whose terms conclude at 31 December 2018. These are comprised of:

- The Chair of Academic Senate, which is an *ex officio* role on Council. An internal election has been conducted in accordance with University Ordinance requirements. Professor Anthony Koutoulis was elected unopposed for a three-year term concluding on 31 December 2021. Professor Koutoulis will take up the position on 1 January 2019.
- One academic and one professional staff member which, in accordance with the Act, are elected positions on Council. The elections for these positions were conducted in November 2018 with Professor Jamie Kirkpatrick successful as the Academic staff member and Mr Corey Peterson successful as the Professional staff member. The terms of office are for a two-year period commencing on 1 January 2019.
- A student member which is appointed by Council. Following an expression of interest and election process, Council formally considered this appointment at the November 2018 meeting. The student member appointed for 2019 was Ms Ella Hilder.
- Three members appointed by the Council. These members are Mr Harvey Gibson, Mr Rhys Edwards and Mr Paul Gregg. As at 31 December 2018, Mr Edwards will have served as a member of Council for 12 years and is not seeking reappointment at the conclusion of his current term. A call for nominations for these roles was issued in early November 2018. Mr Gibson and Mr Gregg have both nominated for a further term. A formal process to consider nominations is currently in progress and Council will consider recommendations for appointments at the 14 December 2018 meeting.

In addition, I would like to acknowledge receipt of your notification of the appointment of Mr Mike Blake as a ministerially appointed member on University Council following the recent resignation of Ms Jenny Gale. During due diligence processes, due to a perceived conflict of interest with his position as Chair of the TasTAFE Board, Mr Blake has resolved to withdraw his nomination for appointment to Council. Accordingly, prior to giving public notification of this vacancy, I seek your advice in respect to potentially suitable candidates for Ministerial appointment to University Council.

Should you have any concerns in respect to these matters, or would like further discussion, I would be grateful if you could contact me as soon as practicable so that we can resolve appointments in a timely manner.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Michael Field', is positioned above the typed name.

The Hon Michael Field AC
Chancellor

11 December 2018

Deputy Premier
Minister for Education and Training
Minister for Infrastructure
Minister for Advanced Manufacturing and Defence Industries

Level 10 15 Murray Street HOBART TAS 7000 Australia
GPO Box 123 HOBART TAS 7001 Australia
Ph: +61 3 6165 7754
Email: Jeremy.Rockliff@dpact.tas.gov.au



31 JAN 2019

Mr Alastair McDougall
Executive Director University Governance
University of Tasmania
alastair.mcdougall@utas.edu.au

Dear Mr McDougall

Thank you for your correspondence of 30 January 2019, regarding the Ministerial appointed vacancy on the University Council.

I have reviewed the applications and after careful consideration nominate Ms Jennifer Burgess as the selected applicant.

I note that Ms Burgess will be formally acknowledged by Council at the 14 February 2019 meeting.

Many thanks for your assistance in this process.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeremy Rockliff".

Jeremy Rockliff MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Education and Training

10 March 2021

The Hon Jeremy Rockliff MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Education and Training
Level 11, 15 Murray Street
HOBART TAS 7000

By email: jeremy.rockliff@parliament.tas.gov.au

Dear Minister,

Further to recent correspondence and meetings I would like to confirm arrangements in respect to appointments to the University of Tasmania's Council.

Following our meetings, and in accordance with the University of Tasmania Act 1992 (the Act), the University advertised six vacancies on 26 September 2020. Two positions for appointment by the Minister for Education and four positions for appointment by the University Council. Applications for this position closed on 12 October 2020 with 26 applications received by that date.

Members appointed by the Minister of Education

Accordingly, this is to confirm the following individuals as the agreed ministerially appointed members of Council for a period of three years ending 1 April 2024:

- Ms Tara Howell
- Ms Sheree Vertigan

Council will confirm these appointments via circular in March 2021. Ms Vertigan and Ms Howell will attend their first Council meeting on 30 April 2021.

Appointments by the University Council

As previously advised Council appointed the following members at its meeting on 4 December 2020:

- Ms Pip Leedham for a further 1-year term ending 31 December 2021
- Mrs Susan Chen for a 1-year term ending 31 December 2021
- Professor Kwong Lee Dow for the first meeting of Council 2021 (12 February)

Council will be considering Professor Lee Dow's replacement at its meeting on 30 April 2021 and will provide advice regarding a decision once confirmed.

Should you wish to discuss further please contact me directly on my mobile.

Yours sincerely,



Hon Michael Field AC
Chancellor

Deputy Premier
Minister for Education and Training
Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing
Minister for Disability Services and Community Development
Minister for Trade
Minister for Advanced Manufacturing and Defence Industries



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Email: Jeremy.Rockliff@dpac.tas.gov.au

25 March 2021

The Hon Michael Field AC
Chancellor
University of Tasmania
Email: chancellor@utas.edu.au

Dear Chancellor

Thank you for your letter of 10 March 2021 advising of newly appointed members to the University of Tasmania Council.

I welcome Ms Tara Howell and Ms Sheree Vertigan future contributions to the Council and wish them well at their first meeting on 30 April 2021.

Once again, thank you for your advice and in continuing our shared efforts to improve educational outcomes for Tasmania.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeremy Rockliff".

Jeremy Rockliff MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Education and Training