

University of Melbourne Council Election

Student elected members of Council
Information for candidates



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

Contents

This pack covers:

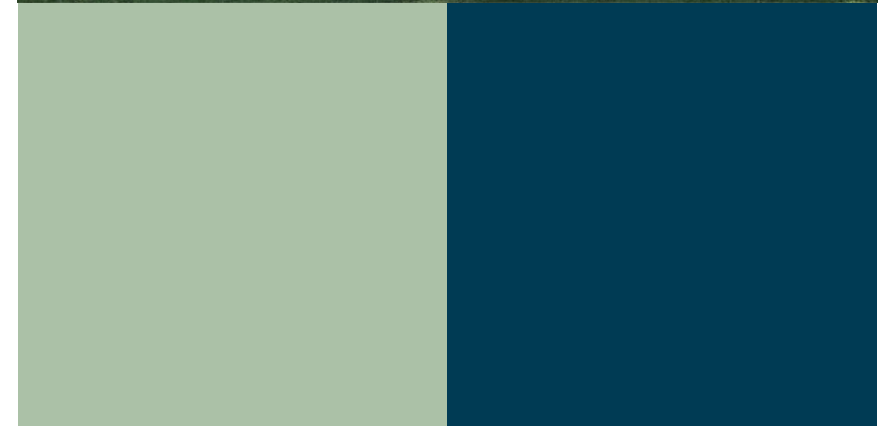
- Your **role** as a **Council member**, including responsibilities and expectations
- An **overview** of **University Governance**



Council's responsibilities

Council is established under section 8 of the *University of Melbourne Act 2009 (Vic)* (the **Act**). Council is the governing body of the University, has general direction and superintendence of the University, and may exercise all the powers, functions and duties of the University.

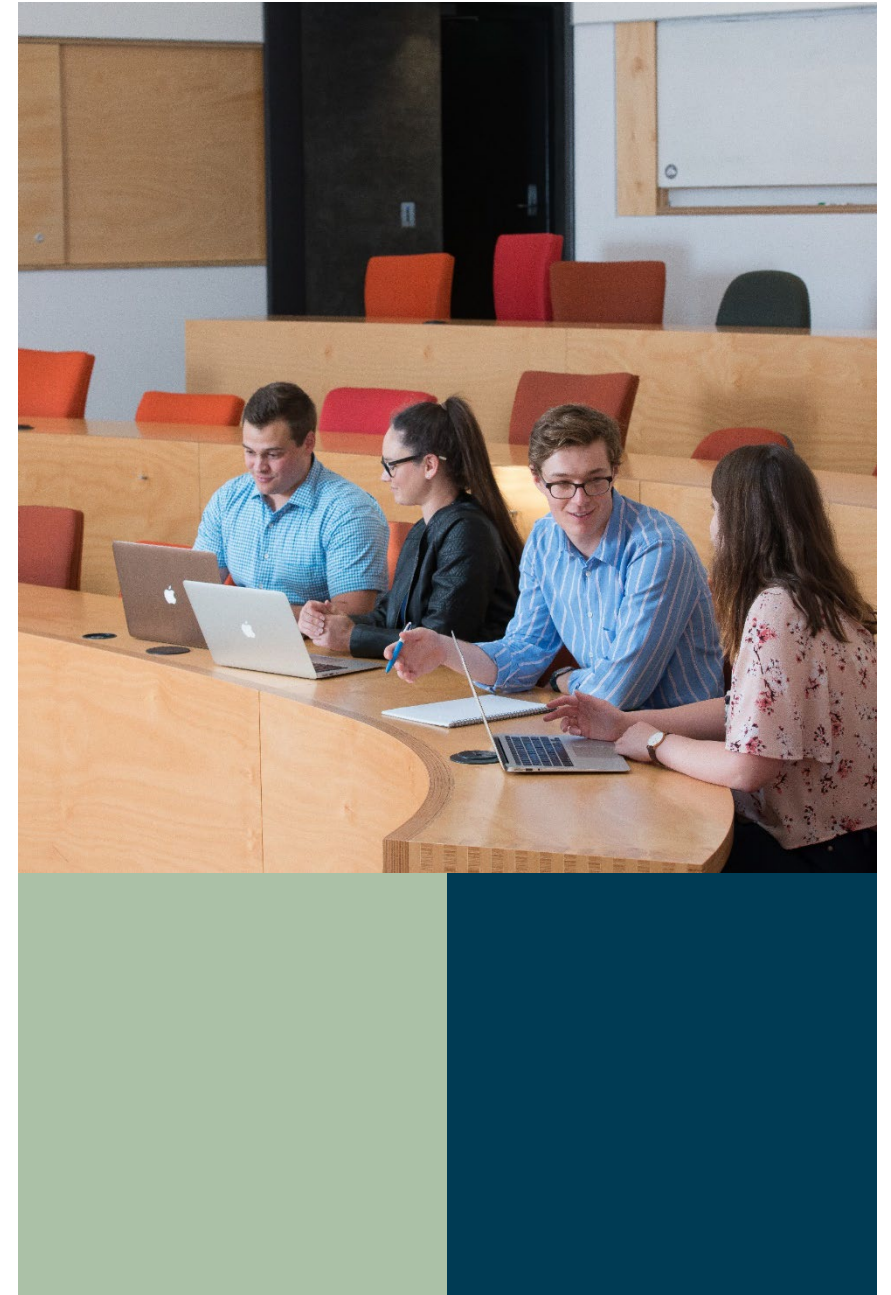
- (3) The **primary responsibilities** of Council are to:
- (a) Appoint and monitor the performance of the Vice-Chancellor
 - (b) Approve the mission and strategic direction of the University, annual budget and business plan
 - (c) Oversee and review the management of the University and its performance**
 - (d) Establish policy and procedural principles
 - (e) Approve and monitor systems of control and accountability (overview of controlled entities)
 - (f) Oversee and monitor the assessment of risk across the University, including commercial activities
 - (g) Oversee and monitor the academic activities of the University
 - (h) Approve any significant university commercial activities



Council members' responsibilities

Your responsibilities as a **Council member** are set out in section 15 of the Act:

- (1) In exercising his or her responsibilities and carrying out his or her functions and duties, a member of the Council must—
 - (a) act in **good faith, honestly** and for **proper purposes** consistent with the objects and interests of the University;
 - (b) exercise **reasonable skill, appropriate care** and **diligence**; and
 - (c) take reasonable steps to **avoid all conflicts of interest** unless they are declared...
- (2) A member of the Council must not make improper use of his or her position as a member, or of information acquired because of his or her position as a member, to gain, directly or indirectly, an advantage for the member or for another person.



Council members' responsibilities

The **Standing Resolutions of Council** include more detail on expectations of your **conduct** and **behaviour** as a Council member.

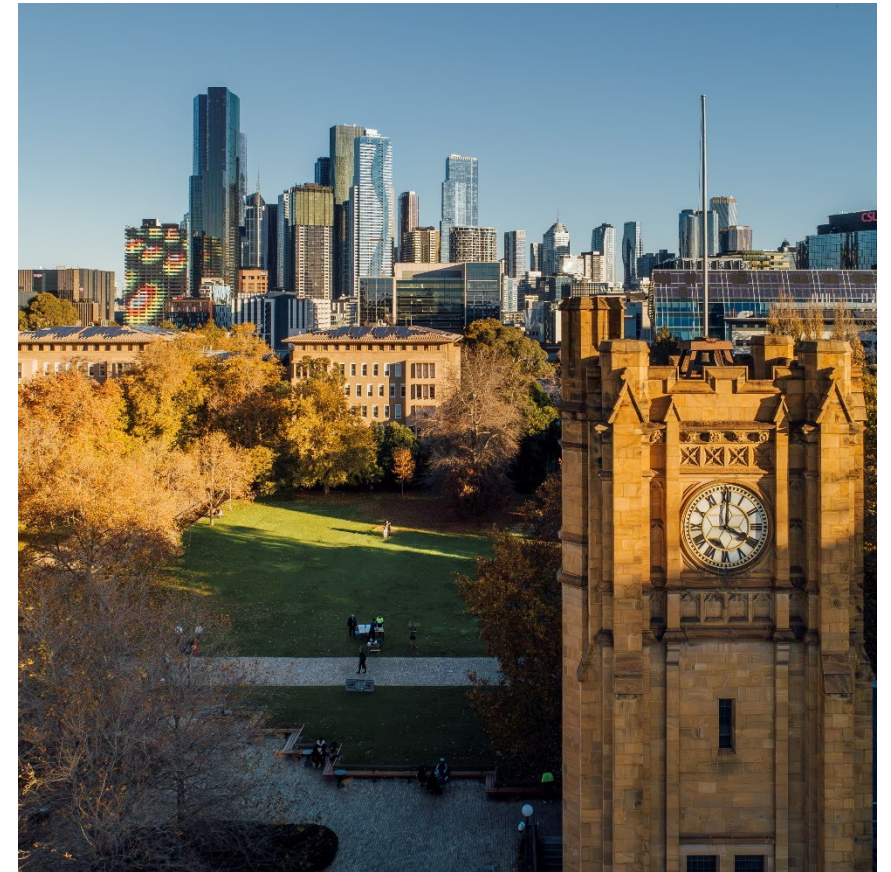
The **Council Charter** in Part 2 of the Standing Resolutions states that Council members must at all times:

1. Act in the best interests of the University as a whole, with this obligation to be observed in priority to any duty a member may owe to those electing or appointing him or her. Whilst members of Council are elected as representatives for particular bodies they do not serve on Council as delegates of those bodies.
2. Act in good faith, honestly and for a proper purpose.
3. Exercise reasonable skill, appropriate care and diligence in decision making.
4. Not improperly use their position to gain an advantage for themselves or someone else
5. Avoid or disclose conflicts of interest (in accordance with the Act, any procedures established for that purpose by the University).
6. Not make improper use of his or her position as a member, or of information acquired because of his or her position as a member, to gain, directly or indirectly, an advantage for the member or for another person.
7. Maintain confidentiality in all matters and ensure any information and advice received as a member of Council is not shared or used in any other context.
8. Act in a financially responsible manner.
9. Ensure compliance with all matters prescribed by law.
10. Recognising their duty of loyalty to the University and to the Council, accept collective responsibility for Council decisions and support the letter and the spirit of Council decisions when dealing with other parties.
11. Otherwise not conduct themselves in a manner likely to cause harm or damage to the reputation of the University.
12. Strive for the highest standards of personal behaviour in their dealings with other members of Council, with University management, and with other members of the University community. Council members must listen respectfully to other members' contributions and otherwise support the orderly conduct of meetings. Council members are entitled to expect that the same standards and principles will guide the treatment they receive from other members and University management.

Council members' responsibilities

The Standing Resolutions also include information on:

- Your **due diligence responsibilities**, including to attend and contribute to Council meetings, briefing sessions, planning conference and meetings of Council committees on which they are nominated to serve, and to critically read all agenda documents and papers before each meeting.
- The **relationship between Council and management**, including protocols for communications.
- That you must **act on behalf of the best interests of the University** and not of any group that elected you.
- The **confidentiality** of Council and Committee papers, discussions and outcomes, and that **public statements** on behalf of Council are restricted to the Chancellor or nominee.
- How Council **business** and **meetings** are conducted, including standing orders and general procedure.



Obligations

There are a number of other obligations you should be aware of as a Council member:

Freedom of Information

As a public agency in Victoria, the University is subject to legislation such as the *Freedom of Information Act 1988*. The FOI Act facilitates the right of the community to access information held by public agencies. Important to be aware that your Council related emails, documents etc can be the subject of an FOI request.

Financial and Health and Safety Responsibilities

Council members have specific financial and workplace health and safety responsibilities that cannot be delegated.

Whistleblower Obligations

As a Council member, you can make and receive disclosures under the [Whistleblower Protection Policy](#). Disclosures about Council members should be made to the Chancellor.



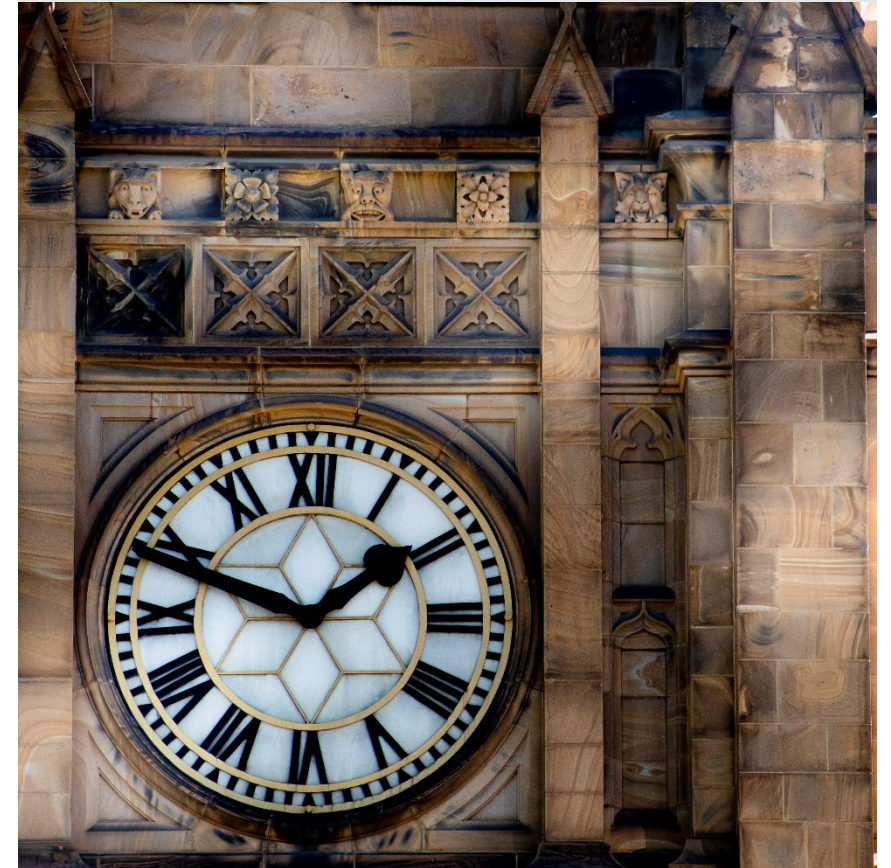
Time commitment

Your duties as a member of Council will involve a commitment across at least 12-15 days each year, which would typically include attendance at:

- 6-8 regular Council meetings
- 6 strategy Council meetings
- meetings of any Council Committee you may be appointed to

In addition, you will be expected to devote appropriate preparation time ahead of each meeting and to attend such ad hoc meetings as may be necessary.

Council members are provided with an annual calendar of meetings in December for the following year.



Remuneration

Council members are generally eligible for remuneration consistent with Band A1 of the [Victorian Appointment and Remuneration Guidelines](#) (effective Nov 2025). The University pays Council members at the lowest end of the remuneration band, consistent with principles of fiscal responsibility and in the context of a constrained financial environment.

Information for students on student (subclass 500) visas

Student visas are subject to conditions which allow limited work in Australia. Your role as a Council Member is regarded as ‘work’ for the purposes of your student visa. Further details are available [here](#).



Induction

An induction session will take place with the University Secretary prior to your first Council meeting. This gives you an opportunity to ask questions; receive briefings on Council's major items of current business and concern; identify any specific areas in the operations of Council and the University of interest to you; and give information on the support available to attend appropriate national conferences, briefing on relevant legislative requirements or other development programs.

You will be provided with a comprehensive induction pack including information on members of Council and senior officers of the University; the University regulatory framework; Standing Resolutions; current planning and accountability publications; charts of University structures, including Council committees, terms of reference, and minutes of recent Council and Council committee meetings; and details of member indemnity and insurance.



Governance Overview

- Higher Education Legislative Framework
- Regulatory Framework
- University Regulations
- Delegated Decision Making
- Delegations Framework
- Policy Framework
- Decision-makers:
 - Council
 - Academic Board
 - Vice-Chancellor



Introduction

The University is founded by the State of Victoria under the *University of Melbourne Act 2009 (Vic)*.

The University is governed by Council and its committees, including the Academic Board, and is led by the Vice-Chancellor and the executive leadership team. Portfolios and faculties operate in accordance with legislation, policies and delegations of authority.

The purpose of this overview is to inform the University community about higher education governance requirements and the University of Melbourne's governance structures that support best practice decision making.



University of Melbourne Act 2009

Most of Australia's universities are established as entities under state legislation, which define the governance framework applying to each university.

The *University of Melbourne Act 2009 (Vic)* establishes the Council.

The Act places very similar duties on University Council members to those duties applying to directors and other officers of a company.

It also confers on Council the power to make statutes and regulations to govern the University.



Higher Education Legislative Framework

The Higher Education Legislative Framework encompasses obligations under both State and Commonwealth Legislation



State Legislation

University Acts and subordinate legislation are set up under State Legislation.

The *University of Melbourne Act 2009* (Vic) is the latest version of our University Act, the first of which was passed in 1853.

State legislative frameworks guide many University activities, including, for example:

- [Financial Management Act 1994](#)
- [Audit Act 1994](#)

Joint Legislation

There are a range of issues governed jointly by State and Commonwealth legislative regimes, such as:

- Freedom of Information
- Workplace Health and Safety
- Privacy
- Child Protection

Commonwealth Legislation

Under its constitutional powers, the Commonwealth has authority for key aspects of higher education, in particular relating to fees and national quality regulation.

The main pieces of Commonwealth legislation are:

- [Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011](#)
- [Higher Education Support Act 2003](#)
- [Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000](#)

Other relevant Commonwealth legislation includes the *Australian Research Council Act 2001* and the *Fair Work Act 2009*.

Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA)

TEQSA's [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#) set out how universities should be governed, as outlined in Domain 6 – Governance and Accountability.

Specific University governance obligations include those set out in the **[Code of Governance Principles and Practice for Australian Public Universities](#)**

Developed by the University Chancellors' Council (UCC), the Code sets standards for best practice University Governance which universities attest to in their Annual Reports.

In 2025, the **Expert Council on University Governance** published **Governance Principles** which have been endorsed by Government and which will replace the UCC Code of Governance.

Regulatory Framework



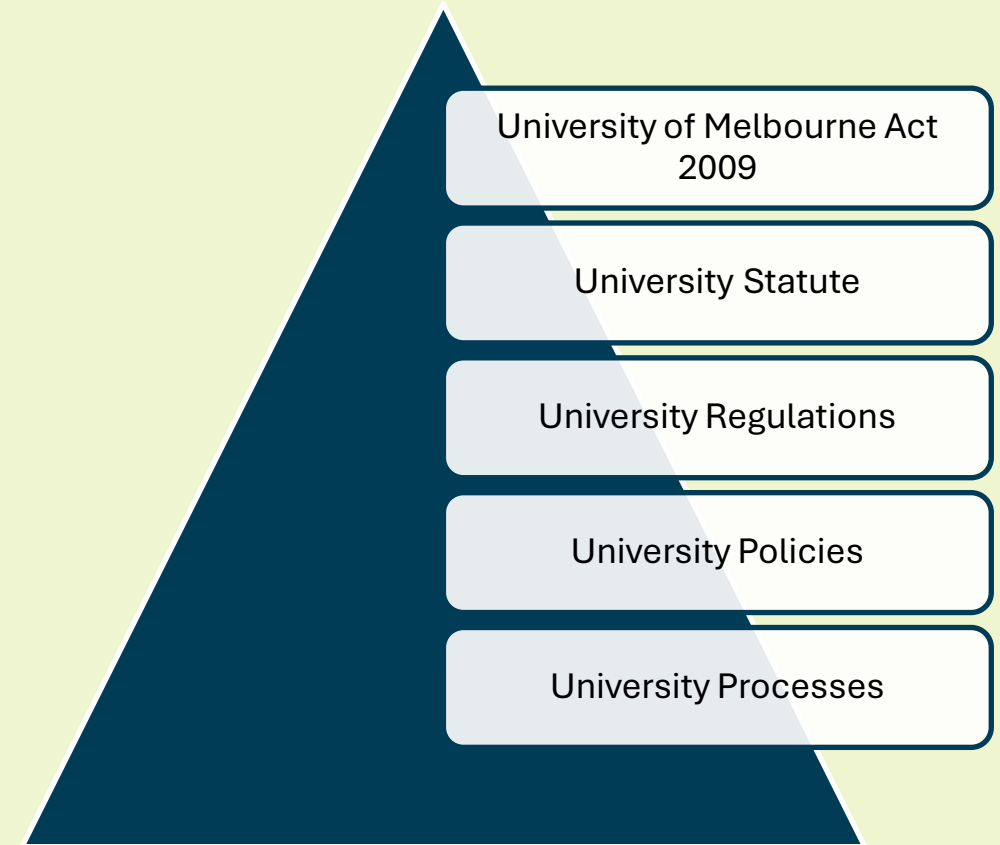
The University of Melbourne governs its operations through a hierarchy of instruments, collectively referred to as the Regulatory Framework.

The *University of Melbourne Act 2009 (Vic)* establishes the University, its governing body (Council) and its core functions. The Act empowers the University to enact subordinate legislation (statutes and regulations) and to act through resolutions of its governing body or by decisions of its authorised officers.

The Act also provides for the Minister to approve Commercial Activities Guidelines.

The Act, statutes and regulations are complemented by University policies and processes, which provide either more detailed requirements than those specified in legislation or address new areas of operation not expressly covered by formal legislation. Policies must not contradict higher-level legislation.

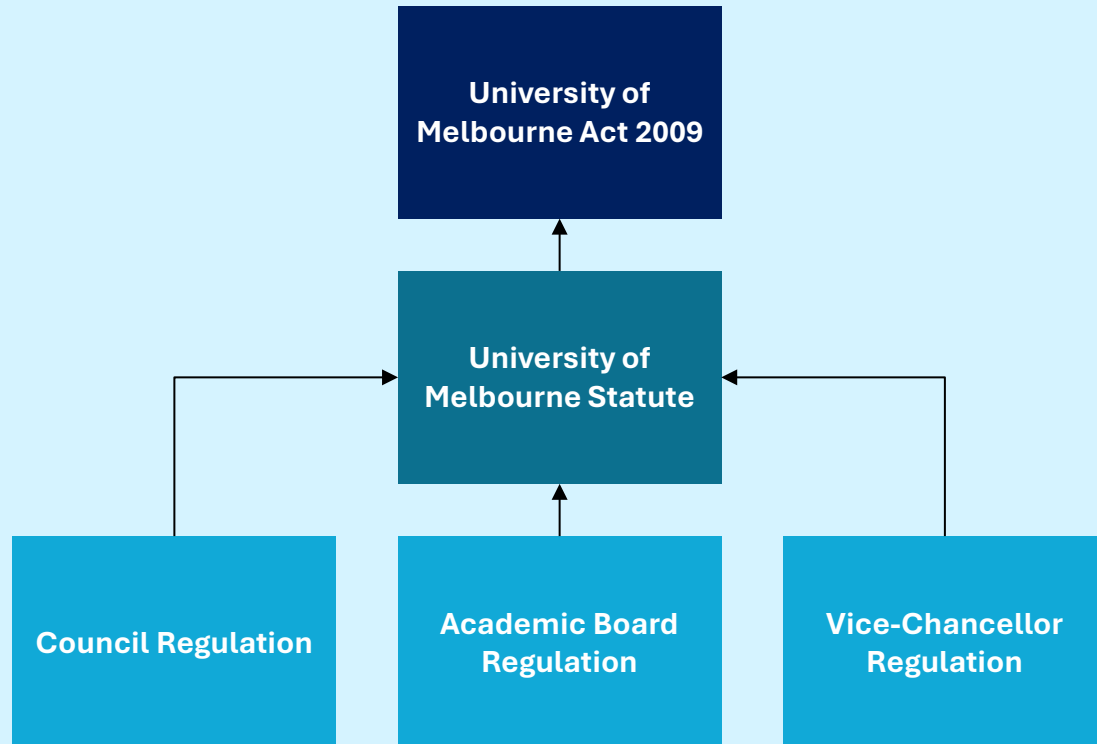
As noted earlier, for some areas of operations (e.g. occupational health and safety, human resources, equal opportunity), additional government legislation also applies and informs the development of relevant University policies and processes.



The University of Melbourne Regulatory Framework

University Regulations

The Regulations empower Council to direct and facilitate the tripartite division of powers essential to the University's operations.



The **Council Regulation** sets out rules for Council operations, including elections; meetings; establishment of faculties and other bodies; and the conferral of awards, including honorary doctorates.

The **Academic Board Regulation** governs membership, meetings and procedures of the Academic Board; accreditation of courses; the awarding of degrees and other qualifications; selection, admission and assessment requirements; academic progress and fitness to practice; matters relating to academic integrity; and student appeals relating to grievances, academic misconduct, general misconduct, academic progress, fitness to practice and selection.

The **Vice-Chancellor Regulation** defines the powers, functions and duties of the Vice-Chancellor as the University's principal leader, manager, and administrator. The Regulations also provide for certain powers and responsibilities of the Vice-Chancellor and, in some circumstances, the deans. These include staffing; the establishment of University departments; conduct rules for researchers and students; and the setting of fees and penalties.

Delegated Authority and Decision-making

1. Delegations Instruments
2. Policy Library
3. **Committees of Council and Management**

Council Committees

Audit and Risk Committee, Finance Committee, Investment Management Committee, Human Resources, Remuneration and Employment Compliance Committee, Governance and Nominations Committee, Gift Committee

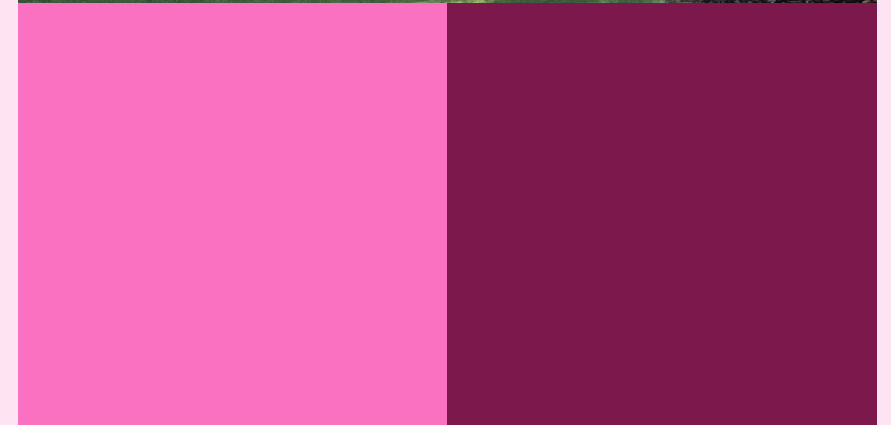
Academic Board and its Committees (Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance, Academic Programs, Selection Procedures, Higher Degrees by Research)

Vice-Chancellor's Committees

Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Group (VCAG), University Executive and its Committees (Resources and Operations (ROSC), Employment Compliance Oversight (ECOSC), Risk Management and Compliance (RMCC), Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEISC))

More information:

- **Committee Approval and Reporting Pathways**
- **Standing Resolutions of Council** (includes the Council Charter and Standing Orders)



Delegations Framework



The *University of Melbourne Act 2009 (Vic)*, together with statutes, regulations, the terms of reference of key governance and management committees, and University policy, establish the conditions under which delegation of authorities are exercised within the University by its committees or officers.

The Delegations Framework ensures that, within the scope of a role, its allocated budget, and area of operation, the appropriate level of authority for specific activities is assigned. These delegations complement the responsibilities set out in job descriptions and are formally recorded to support transparent, accountable, and risk- managed decision-making within the University's legislative, policy, and management structures.

The Delegations Framework consists of the following:

Council Instrument of Reservation and Delegation

Defines Council's reserved powers, its delegations to committees, and authorities conferred on the Vice-Chancellor. It also sets out additional delegations in relation to the Commercial Activities Guidelines.

Vice-Chancellor Instrument of Delegation

Outlines delegations of authority related to:

- Management of finances and treasury
- Academic and professional staffing
- Approval of transactions/contracts (with and without expenditure)
- Policy matters.

Academic Delegations Schedule

- Changes to courses, programs and subjects can be made by the Academic Board or by a dean, as delegated by Council.
- The delegation schedule specifies who is authorized to make such changes and the timelines involved.
- Delegations are approved by Council on the recommendation of the Board.
- Any matter not listed in the schedule by default rests with the Board.

Policy Framework



The [Policy Framework](#) sets out the requirements for the establishment of University policy. Policies provide the principles for the implementation of governance and management requirements across University operations. These principles are informed by University legislation, strategy and Australian law. Faculty, School, or Departmental practices/guidelines must not be inconsistent with any document contained within the regulatory framework, including policies.

Policy Library - Current University policies are available in the [Policy Library](#).

Policy Steward - Each policy has a designated steward responsible for advising on approved policies, overseeing amendments, consulting with key stakeholders (including Legal and Risk as required), and making drafts available to the University community for feedback via the [Policy Consultation Hub](#).

Policy Template - Policies and amendments are drafted using the [approved University policy template](#).

Policy Approver	Policy Area	Policy Steward
Council	University-wide Governance	University Secretary
Academic Board	Academic Governance including quality assurance	Academic Secretary
Vice-Chancellor	Leadership, management, administration, human resources	Various subject matter experts in Chancellery

Council

Chancellor Jane Hansen AO
Council Chair



COUNCIL

Section 8 *University of Melbourne Act 2009 (Vic)*

- (1) There is established a Council.
- (2) The Council
 - (a) is the governing body of the University;
 - (b) has the general direction and superintendence of the University;**
 - (c) subject to this Act, the university statutes and university regulations, may exercise all the powers, functions and duties of the University.**
- (3) The **primary responsibilities** of the Council:
 - (a) appointing and monitoring the performance of the Vice-Chancellor as chief executive officer of the University;
 - (b) approving the mission and strategic direction of the University and its annual budget and business plan;
 - (c) overseeing and reviewing the management of the University and its performance;**
 - (d) establishing policy and procedural principles for the operation of the University consistent with legal requirements and community expectations;
 - (e) approving and monitoring systems of control and accountability of the University, including those required to maintain a general overview of any entity over which the University has control within the meaning of section 3 of the Audit Act 1994;
 - (f) overseeing and monitoring the assessment and management of risk across the University, including university commercial activities;
 - (g) overseeing and monitoring the academic activities of the University;
 - (h) approving any significant university commercial activities.

Academic Board

Professor David Shallcross
President of Academic Board



ACADEMIC BOARD

Section 20 of the *University of Melbourne Act 2009 (Vic)*

Council must establish an academic board and must determine its powers, functions and membership and the method of appointment for a president of the academic board.

Section 10 of the University of Melbourne Statute sets out the Academic Board's Terms of Reference, which include:

- Ensuring quality assurance in academic activities including maintenance of high standards in teaching, learning and research.
- Overseeing academic policies, course approval, selection requirements for prizes, scholarships and other forms of academic recognition, final appeal body for student grievances.
- Contributing to achievement of strategic plans approved by Council and objects of the University.

The Academic Board comprises Professors of the University, Heads of academic departments and schools, other academic staff who are members of Academic Board committees, members of Council, and others as listed in Section 5 of the Academic Board Regulation

See [here](#) for more information on the Academic Board.

Vice-Chancellor

Professor Glyn Davis AC



VICE-CHANCELLOR

Section 26(6) and (7) of the *University of Melbourne Act 2009 (Vic)*

(6) Subject to this Act, the Vice-Chancellor—

- (a) is the chief executive officer of the University **generally responsible for the conduct of the University's affairs in all matters**; and
- (b) has the functions, powers and duties conferred or imposed upon him or her—
 - (i) by or under this Act or any other Act; or
 - (ii) by or under any university statute or university regulation; or
 - (iii) by the Council.

(7) Subject to this Act, the university statutes and the university regulations, the Vice-Chancellor may delegate any of his or her functions, powers and duties to—

- (a) any appropriately qualified member of staff; or
- (b) any committee established from appropriately qualified members of staff

Council Members 2026



Official Members



Jane Hansen AO
Chancellor



Professor Glyn Davis AC
Vice-Chancellor



Professor David Shallcross
President of the Academic
Board

Council Appointed Members



Nadia Carlin



Professor Andrew
Cuthbertson AO
Deputy Chancellor



Andrew Sisson AO

Government Appointed Members



Dr Raphael Arndt AO



Mark Leibler AC
(Ministerial)



Dr Helen Szoke AO
Deputy Chancellor

Elected Members

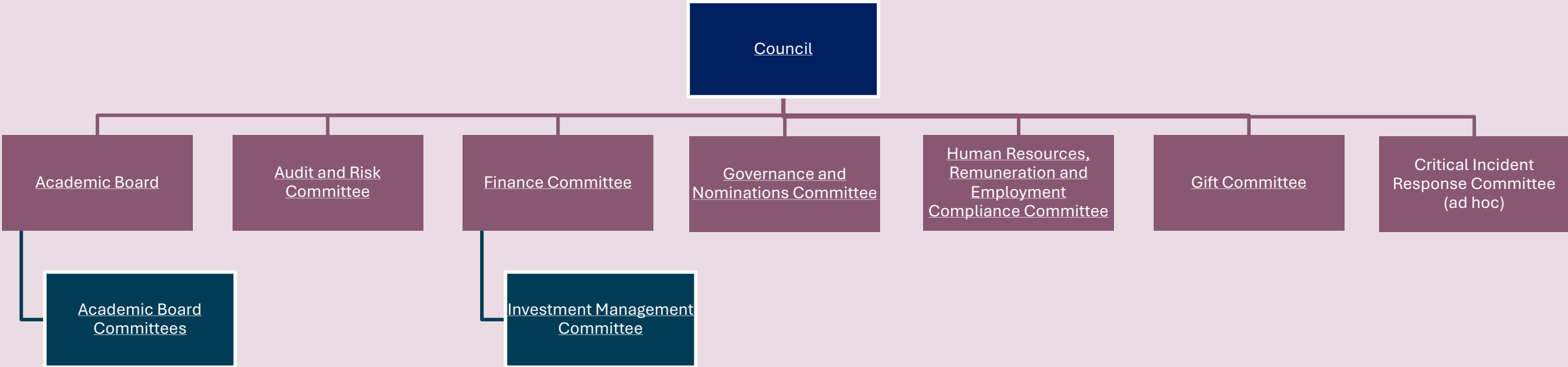


Associate Professor Matt Harrison
Staff Elected

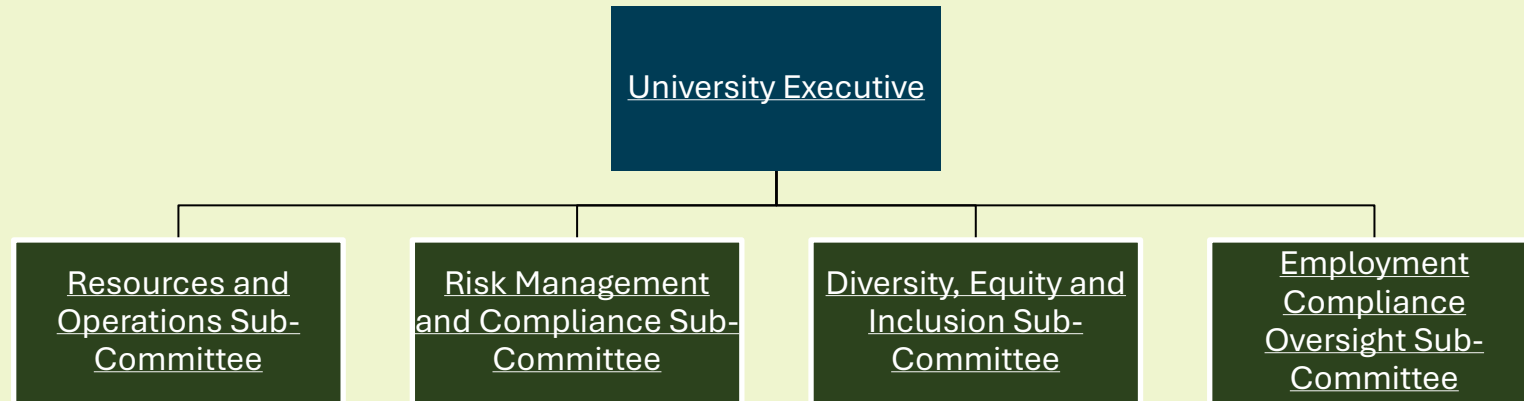


Kevin Li
Student Elected

Council Committees



Management Committees



University Executive



What does University Executive do?

The University Executive is the University's principal management committee. The committee is responsible for overseeing matters relating to University strategy, management and administration-including the finalisation of the University's strategic plan and the preparation of the annual University budget. University Executive also monitors divisional performance against approved plans and budgets, the University's capital program, and major projects.

Delegations

As an advisory committee to the Vice-Chancellor, University Executive advise on all matters related to the strategy, management and administration of the University.

University Executive holds limited delegations from the Vice-Chancellor, including authority to:

1. Approve the University's student profile and set course fees;
2. Approve the University's supporting strategies; and
3. Approve other matters as delegated by the Vice-Chancellor from time to time.

Membership

- Members of the University's senior executive;
- President of the Academic Board; and
- Deans.

Standing attendees: General Counsel and the Vice-Chancellor's Chief of Staff

Questions?

University Governance website:

<https://about.unimelb.edu.au/strategy/governance>

Contact: uni-elections@unimelb.edu.au