

What happened @ Academic Board

8 APRIL 2026

1. WELCOME AND APPOINTMENTS

Academic Board met for its second meeting of 2026, welcoming several new members.

Dr **Merilyn Childs** was formally welcomed as the newly appointed **Lived Experience Representative**, following her appointment by Council on 30 March 2026. Dr Childs brings extensive experience in higher education governance, learning and teaching, curriculum transformation, and current advisory work in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dementia training initiatives.

The Board also welcomed Ms **Eliza Ross Smith** as a new Student Representative. Eliza is a second-year Masters of Counselling and Psychotherapy student. Mrs **Dilek Demir Jalil** was acknowledged as a newly appointed Student Representative and her apologies for the meeting were noted.

Kelly Scolari was welcomed as the new Academic Board Secretary, with thanks extended to Camilla Nicoll for her long-standing contribution to the Board.

2. KEY DECISIONS/ACTIONS BY THE ACADEMIC BOARD

Course Standards Committee

The Academic Board noted and supported the Course Standards Committee report from 18 March 2026, including:

- Minor assessment changes across counselling and psychotherapy programs
- Clearer and more consistent placement unit outlines
- Amendments to the Doctor of Psychology (D.Psych) to allow a **part-time final year research component**, supporting student progression, completion, and retention

Policies

- **Foreign Interference Policy, Procedure and Decision Tree**
Policy amendments were supported, including clearer reference to Academic Freedom Policy and Procedure and revised timing of risk assessments. These documents will now progress to the Governance Committee.
- **Schedule A – Delegations Policy – Register of Responsibility for Academic Student Matters**
The updated Schedule A was noted. Further work will focus on strengthening clarity around academic integrity and misconduct processes.

3. ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER REPRESENTATION

Expressions of Interest for an **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Academic Board member** are underway. Discussion emphasised the importance of respectful and accurate terminology, with agreement to avoid abbreviations in favour of full terminology.

Actions underway include:

- Continued relationship-based outreach through established networks
- Review of terminology used in EOIs and related documents
- Development or adoption of a guide to respectful Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander terminology, drawing on national resources

4. STUDENT OUTCOMES AND ADMISSIONS

Student Outcomes Report

Academic Board noted:

- Strong growth in enrolments, increasing from **519 to 729 students**
- Academic performance remaining stable despite expansion
- Overall attrition remaining low at **1.9% in 2025**
- Grade distributions consistent with a predominantly postgraduate cohort

Future reporting will focus on clearer presentation, including improved unit naming, course identification, and incorporation of qualitative placement feedback where appropriate.

Student Admissions Report

The Board noted:

- Continued growth in applications and enrolments
- Successful early and rolling offer strategies
- Average entry WAMs remain above minimum standards
- Effective monitoring of conditional offers

Student Services and academic teams were commended for their work managing increased demand and supporting student engagement.

5. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE UPDATE

The Student Representative reported that early uncertainty following staffing changes in counselling and psychotherapy programs has largely been resolved. Improved communication has strengthened student confidence, with strong attachment noted to the programs' philosophy and delivery model.

6. REPORT FROM THE DEAN

Key updates included:

- **APAC accreditation** submission completed, with the site visit scheduled for late June / early July
- National psychology pathway reform continues to represent a significant sector risk

- Ongoing **AI integrity mitigation strategies**, including expanded use of interactive oral assessments
- Positive early outcomes from oral assessments, including reduced AI misuse and improved assessment authenticity

7. VET AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Highlights included:

- Continued growth in VET and short courses
- Strong performance of Commonwealth-funded programs
- Graduation planning progressing well, with strong international student engagement

8. REPORT FROM STUDENT SERVICES

- Semester 2 intake is now open
- Strong recruitment and admissions activity continues
- Ongoing system and CRM enhancements to improve student experience
- Graduation attendance trends remain positive

9. OTHER BUSINESS

- **Student Complaints** will now be a standing item on Academic Board agendas to strengthen oversight, transparency, and accreditation readiness.
- Standing written reports will be introduced for:
 - Lived Experience Representative
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Representative

These will become regular agenda items from the next meeting.

10. MEETINGS IN 2026

- Wednesday 11 February (Online)
- Wednesday 8 April (Onsite)
- Wednesday 10 June (Online)
- Wednesday 5 August (Onsite)
- Wednesday 7 October (Online)
- Wednesday 25 November (Online)