



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO. 3 – EDUCATION

## **BUDGET ESTIMATES 2024-2025**

### **Supplementary questions**

Portfolio Committee No. 3 – Education

**University of Wollongong**

Hearing: Monday 10 March 2025

**Answers due by: 5.00 pm Friday 4 April 2025**

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**BUDGET ESTIMATES 2024-2025**  
**SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS**

<b>Questions from Ms Abigail Boyd MLC</b>
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- (1) How many reasonable adjustments, accommodations and/or special considerations were applied for, in each calendar year from 2018?
  - (a) Of these, how many were granted?
- (2) I understand that UOW cut a number of subjects and disciplines in 2024, based on a 'viability study' of subject enrolments 'over time'. One reported case involved a subject with low enrolments that had not been offered the year before. Can you confirm that staff provided extensive feedback on the inaccuracies and systemic bias in the data used but that cuts were made regardless?
- (3) Are you aware of action recently taken via the Fair Work Commission which forced Management to release data on all disciplines?
  - (a) Why was this data not made available initially?
- (4) Why are restrictions being imposed on Research Grant expenditures as a cost saving measure, particularly noting that this research money is for the conduct of research and often involves contractual relationships with third parties?
  - (a) Have you evaluated the potential risk of reputational damage that these restrictions may incur, including the risk that researchers will take their grants elsewhere to avoid the obstacles being placed on expenditures?
- (5) Is it correct that management has created an additional DVC role while it was contemplating a further \$30M in cuts, including to jobs?
  - (a) Did you conduct a risk assessment in relation to setting up yet another highly paid Senior Exec role?
- (6) I understand that from mid 2023 to today, most of the Senior Executive positions (DVCS, VCs, Executive Deans) have been held in an Acting or Interim capacity. Why did management make the decision to halt merit based, competitive appointments for such a long period of time?
  - (a) Did you conduct a risk assessment in relation to this?

- (7) In relation to the recent restructure of the University, can you confirm the total number of staff positions that were lost in the restructure?
- (8) Did the university engage any consultants in the development of the new operating model 'One UOW'?
  - (a) If yes, which consultancy firm was engaged, and what was the total cost?
- (9) Can you please provide all consulting reports prepared in relation to the recent Transformation project?
- (10) Can you explain the purpose, role and responsibilities of the University Internationalisation Committee?
- (11) If the Transformation was based on projected impacts of MD107, why has there been no change to the proposed approach since December 2024?
- (12) How many new Academic staff have been employed in 2025 so far, broken down by type of contracts?
- (13) Is there an intention to replace expensive senior staff with cheaper salaried staff who are required to do double the amount of teaching?
  - (a) Have you considered the potential long-term risk this may pose to UOW's research capacity?
- (14) Do you think that there are appropriate measures in place to deal with Senior Executives and COI?
  - (a) Given the recent case of interim Vice-Chancellor John Dewar continuing to work for consultancy firm KordaMentha during his tenure, what confidence do you have in the work that KordaMentha has done at UOW given the issues raised?
- (15) When management refers to engaging with and consulting with students, does it generally mean the Student Advisory Council?
- (16) On how many occasions has management engaged with the student elected body, the Wollongong Undergraduate Students Association?
- (17) Does the University Council require members to sign non-disclosure agreements?
  - (a) Does the University Council use any other kind of confidentiality agreement?
- (18) What consequences are there for Council members when poor management or financial decisions are taken?

(19) What was the process that was undertaken in order to arrive at the job cuts?