

Frequently Asked Questions regarding VU Council Elections

1. Are the staff and student elected positions new positions?

These positions are not new and exist in accordance with the Victoria University Act 2010.

Once elected:

1. The **student elected member** will participate as an observer from 20 May 2024 to 31 December 2024, with their official two year term commencing from 1 January 2025
2. The **staff elected member** will participate as an observer from 1 August 2024 to 31 December 2024, with their official two year term commencing from 1 January 2025.

2. Which staff and students qualify to nominate?

Staff who qualify to nominate must be a member of staff of the University who is currently employed at a minimum of 0.5 fraction of full time employment and is based at a Victorian Campus of the University.

Students eligible to nominate must be enrolled in a minimum of a 0.5 fraction of the full time study load applicable to an award course at a Victorian campus of the University. The student must also be a resident in Victoria.

Upon ensuring interested parties meet the above criteria, we encourage applications from individuals of all ages, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with disabilities, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and LGBTIQ+ people.

3. How do staff and students nominate?

Staff and students nominate by completing a nomination form that will be available on the Governance website at <https://www.vu.edu.au/about-vu/leadership-governance/governance/council-academic-board-elections> upon the opening of nominations on Monday 4 March 2024.

Staff candidates must complete a nomination form and have two VU staff members nominate them as outlined in the nomination form in addition to completing the candidate declaration within the nomination form. Appointments are subject to satisfactory completion of probity requirements.

Student candidates must complete a nomination form and have two VU students nominate them as outlined in the nomination form, in addition to completing the candidate declaration within the nomination form. Appointments are subject to satisfactory completion of probity requirements.

Candidates will receive an email advising them that their nominations have been received. Time permitting, candidates will be advised whether they have completed the nomination form as required. **Incomplete nominations will be deemed invalid.** Candidates are encouraged to lodge their nominations as soon as possible to enable sufficient time to resubmit in the event the nomination is invalid.

4. When do the nominations open and close?

For staff, the nominations open at 9.00am AEST on **Monday, 4 March 2024** and close at **4.00pm**

AEST on Friday, 15 March 2024. Nominations received **after the deadline will not be accepted.**

For students, the nominations open at 9.00am AEST on **Wednesday, 3 April 2024** and close at **4.00pm AEST on Wednesday, 17 April 2024.** Nominations received **after the deadline will not be accepted.**

5. When will an election be called?

An election for the staff category will be called if there is more than 1 staff nomination received.

An election for the student category will be called if there is more than 1 student nomination received.

For staff, if an election is required it will commence at 9.00am AEST on **Monday, 8 April 2024** and close at **4.00pm AEST on Friday, 19 April 2024.**

For students, if an election is required it will commence at 9.00am AEST on **Monday, 29 April 2024** and close at **4.00pm AEST on Friday, 10 May 2024.**

6. Who is eligible to vote in the election?

All VU staff will be eligible to vote in an election for a VU staff member on Council.

For VU staff, if you believe that you should be on an electoral roll for voting in the staff election, and have not received an email from Big Pulse by Tuesday 9 April 2024, (the email address will be noreply@bigpulse.com) please contact the People and Culture Employee Experience team by lodging a Service Request in VU People First. The team will clarify your eligibility on the electoral roll.

All VU students (excluding students undertaking a non-award course) will be eligible to vote in an election for a VU student member on Council. This includes VU students not at a Victorian campus.

7. How often does Council meet?

Council currently meets five times a year, the 2024 Council meetings will be held in person at Victoria University Footscray Park campus.

The meetings for 2024 are:

- 21 March from 8:30am to 1:00pm
- 28 May from 8:30am to 1:00pm;
- 13 August from 8.30am to 1.00pm;
- 8 October from 8:30am to 1:00pm; and
- 3 December from 8:30am to 1:00pm

Members are also required to attend Council forums usually held the evening before the Council meeting at VU's City Flinders campus. The forums for 2024 are:

- 23 February 2024
- 22 April 2024
- 8 July 2024
- 21 October 2024

Members will also be enrolled in and required to attend the [Foundations of Directorship Program](#), which is a 3 day course being held in Melbourne on the 24th, 25th and 26th of June 2024. Further details will be provided once a member is elected.

8. What support and training will be provided to elected members?

Elected members will be required to undertake the [Foundations of Directorship Program](#) with the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD), as well as being provided with an induction and a mentor.

The training will, among other things, outline the importance of respecting the confidentiality of Council decisions and documents as well as understanding that the elected members' responsibility is to consider the best interests of the University when making Council decisions.

9. What is the role of Council Members and the required attributes?

This information is provided to inform the University Community of the attributes, competencies, values, and behaviours that enable Councillors to be effective contributors. Elected members will be provided with relevant training, induction and mentoring.

Role of all Council members:

Council Members act as fiduciaries on behalf of the University's stakeholders through the strategic direction and control of the University. Council Members are subject to the [University Council – Conduct of Council Business and Standing Orders Procedures](#) and the [University Council Regulations 2021](#). In particular

Council Members are responsible for:

- a. attending and contributing to all meetings of Council and meetings of Committees on which they serve;
- b. being informed about issues affecting the tertiary education sector and governance of the University;
- c. complying with all relevant laws, including the Act, and University statutes, regulations, policies and procedures;
- d. informing themselves about their obligations as members of Council and members of Committees;
- e. reading, questioning and understanding written materials and financial statements distributed to Council;
- f. maintaining the confidentiality of confidential information and deliberations of the Council;
- g. supporting and respecting the majority decisions of Council regardless of personal views;
- h. representing the University and the Council in external and internal forums, including attending ceremonial functions where appropriate; and

- i. participating in the Council's evaluation processes.

In performance of their functions, Council Members must always:

- a. exercise their functions with the best interests of the University being paramount over personal interests;
- b. act in good faith, ethically, honestly and for proper purposes;
- c. exercise due care and diligence in all dealings and activities;
- d. not improperly use their position to gain an advantage for themselves or someone else, or to cause detriment to the University or someone else;
- e. respect the views of others and raise difficult issues in a respectful inclusive and open manner;
- f. welcome diversity and transparency and be willing to interact with others productively and without prejudices; and
- g. disclose all relevant interests and avoid conflicts of interest; and maintain confidentiality; in line with the [University Council – Conduct of Council Business and Standing Orders Procedures](#).

Required attributes of all Council members

All members of Council are required to have the following competencies and attributes:

- a. Knowledge and experience of corporate governance and of the delineation between the role of the Council and the role of management;
- b. Strategic expertise and commercial acumen;
- c. Financial literacy and ability to constructively interrogate high level financial statements including balance sheets, cash flow statements and overall University finance reports;
- d. Knowledge of the principles of effective risk management and compliance reporting;
- e. Stakeholder communication skills to enable effective communication with key stakeholders and strategic partners;
- f. Demonstrated capacity to utilise networking skills that will benefit the University; and
- g. Creativity and innovation in a commercial or academic setting.

At least one member of Council must have a specialist competency within the categories set out below such that in combination with the specialist competencies of other Council members, collectively all of specialist competencies in the categories set out below are represented across the Council:

- a. Finance - professional qualifications and appropriate high-level management experience;
- b. Human Resources - practical experience in organisational restructure and cultural reform in large, complex organisations;
- c. Domain expertise within higher education - contemporary knowledge and experience at a senior executive level within the higher education sector;
- d. Technology/eLearning - high-level skills in new technologies relevant to education and the infrastructure and/or eLearning environments of a university;
- e. Legal, compliance and risk management experience within complex operating environments;

- f. Organisational development - has sufficient experience and expertise gained in a complex business environment to be able to contribute viable new ideas to the University, and suggest ways to shape and improve proposals presented to the Council across most aspects of the University's activities (including commercial operations, marketing, people management and systems and processes);
- g. Industry/Community connection — to provide in depth networks contributing information to expectations of, and opportunities for, employment and research across the University; and
- h. Knowledge of the student experience — in-depth knowledge and understanding of the staff and student experience and the staff requirements to deliver an outstanding experience for students.

As a whole, the Council member group should reflect:

- a. Ethnic diversity;
- b. Gender diversity in line with State Government Guidelines;
- c. Age diversity; and
- d. Outstanding candidature.

10. Where do I go if I have more questions?

You can email gov.sec@vu.edu.au