

VU Council Membership: Jethro Pugh - Statement of Policy

Dear colleagues,

When VU was founded in 1916, it adopted the image of the "Door of Opportunity." More than a century later, that purpose still defines us, and it is why I am standing for election as the Staff Member on VU Council.

Since joining VU, my work has spanned school engagement, program delivery, and now leading student recruitment strategy across our colleges and VU TAFE. Throughout, I have worked at the edge of the technologies that are reshaping how students discover, choose, and experience higher education. The change this brings creates real opportunity, and real pressure on staff, systems, and ways of working. That ground-level understanding of how strategy lands across a complex, dual-sector institution is the perspective I would carry into Council.

The teams I have led have been recognised across five consecutive years through VU Staff Awards, national education awards, and international design recognition, for sustainability, First Nations inclusion, community and industry engagement, and cross-institutional collaboration opening new doors for VU. The common thread has been technology as a tool for inclusion: creating experiences that bring people into VU who might not otherwise find their way here. The approach behind each is the same: investing in people, giving them the right tools and environment to thrive, and trusting them to deliver. When staff are supported to do their best work, better student outcomes follow. That is the leadership philosophy I would bring to Council.

As Staff Member on Council, my focus would be on ensuring staff perspectives actively shape strategic and operational decisions, keeping workload and delivery sustainability visible at the governance level, strengthening alignment between strategy and what is achievable on the ground, and protecting VU's commitment to equitable access for the communities we serve. The Staff Member role means representing staff interests within a governance responsibility that extends to the whole university. I would bring a perspective grounded in how this institution operates across TAFE and higher education, professional and academic functions, and an ability to interrogate the data behind strategic decisions, committed to ensuring that breadth informs every decision.

VU has a clear purpose, and I am proud to be part of an institution so deeply rooted in Melbourne's west. Good governance depends on decisions that are strategically sound, operationally viable, and informed by the people closest to delivery. That has been my world at VU. I would be honoured to have your support.

Kind regards

Jethro Pugh

Associate Director Student Recruitment

Phone +61 401 977 288

Email Jethro.pugh@vu.edu.au