

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 Governance, Academic and Student Affairs Statute 2013 (GASA). The term of office for these positions is due to commence on 1 August 2020 and will conclude on 31 July 2022.

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.

3. How do staff and students nominate?

Staff and students nominate by completing a nomination form.

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. Additionally candidates must complete the probity undertaking attached to the nomination form.

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. Additionally candidates must complete the probity undertaking attached to the nomination form.

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?

The nominations open at 9.00am AEST on Thursday, 26 March 2020 and close at 4.00pm AEST on Wednesday, 8 April 2020.

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.

If an election is required it will commence at 9.00am AEST on Tuesday, 21 April 2020 and close at 4.00pm AEST on Monday, 4 May 2020.

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.

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, with most meetings held at VU's Footscray Park campus.

The meetings for the balance of 2020 are:

- 19 May from 8:30am to 1:30pm;
- 11 August from 8:30am to 1:30pm;
- 18 September (Retreat) from 8.30am to 6.00pm
- 27 October from 8.30am to 1.30pm; and
- 1 December from 8:30am to 1:30pm.

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 the balance of 2020 are:

- 8 May from 6:00pm to 9:00pm;
- 10 August from 6:00pm to 9:00pm; and
- 26 October from 6:00pm – 9:00pm;
- 30 November (Council Dinner) from 6:00pm – 9:00pm.

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

Elected members will be required to undertake the Foundation in Directorship course 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 are the required competencies and behaviours for Council Members?

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

Required behaviours and values of all Councillors

- (1) All Councillors are required to model the following behaviours and values:
 - a. Integrity – always puts the University’s interests before personal interests and always acts ethically and honestly, in accordance with relevant Codes of Conduct, and with appropriate confidentiality;
 - b. Courage and engagement – acts independently, asks questions and is prepared to challenge and address difficult issues in an open and respectful manner;
 - c. Interpersonal skills – works well in a group, is inclusive of others, listens well and communicates clearly but tactfully;
 - d. Broad thinking – able to rise above the detail and focus beyond operations;
 - e. Analysis and insight - is able to get to the crux of the issue quickly and can identify opportunities and risks at an early stage; and
 - f. Energy and capacity – has the capacity and the willingness to put in the work required to effectively discharge the responsibility of a member; is an active contributor to discussions; and is an enthusiastic participant in University activities.

Required generic competencies of all Councillors

- (2) All Councillors are required to have the following competencies:
 - a. Corporate governance – has a clear understanding of the responsibilities of a councillor, gained through relevant previous board experience and/or professional training. Understands the delineation between the role of the Council and the role of management;
 - b. Strategic expertise – is able to understand and enunciate the strategy of the University and review it through constructive questioning and suggestions;
 - c. Financial Literacy – is able to comprehend and constructively interrogate high level income statements, balance sheets and overall University finance reports;
 - d. Risk management – understands the principles of effective risk management, the key areas of risk to the University and the processes in place to mitigate those risks;
 - e. Stakeholder communication – knows the value and the principles of effective communication and is able to represent the University well with key stakeholders and strategic partners;
 - f. Networking – has extensive personal networks and can utilise them well for the benefit of the University; and
 - g. Creativity and innovation – able to understand a complex business in a changing and challenging environment and contribute new ideas.

Required specialist competencies of at least one Councillor

- (3) The Council must consist of at least one Councillor with the following specialist competency, and all competencies must be represented in the Council as a whole:
- a. Finance - professional qualifications and appropriate high level management experience (ie. CFO in a large corporation or company). Able to direct/drive the finance function (in conjunction with the Resources Committee and Vice Chancellor);
 - b. Human Resources - rich, practical experience in organisational restructure and cultural reform in large, complex organisations;
 - c. Domain expertise within tertiary education - contemporary knowledge and experience at a senior executive level within the tertiary sector;
 - d. Technology/eLearning - high-level skills in new technologies relevant to education and the infrastructure and/or eLearning environments of a university;
 - e. 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);
 - f. Industry/Community connection – to provide in depth networks contributing information to expectations of, and opportunities for, employment and research across the University; and
 - g. 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.

Required attributes across Council member group as a whole

- (4) The following attributes are required across the Council member group as a whole:
- a. Gender diversity, including compliance with all applicable gender diversity requirements

Desirable attributes across Council member group as a whole

- (5) The following attributes are desirable across the Council member group as a whole:
- a. Ethnic diversity;
 - b. Age diversity; and
 - c. Outstanding candidature.

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

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