

# Student Safety and Wellbeing Committee Charter

## 1. Introduction

1. The Australian National University (ANU) Council has established the Student Safety and Wellbeing Committee (“the Committee”) in accordance with section 18 of the *Australian National University Act 1991*.
2. This Charter sets out the Committee’s objective, authority, composition and tenure, roles and responsibilities, reporting and administrative arrangements.

## 2. Objective

3. The objective of the Committee is to monitor and advise Council on the University’s management of matters concerning the safety and wellbeing of students enrolled at the University, consistent with the University’s pursuit of excellence in all aspects of its work as outlined in the Strategic Plan (ANU 2025), including in addressing sexual assault and sexual harassment at the ANU.

## 3. Authority

4. The Council authorises the Committee, within the scope of its role and responsibilities, to:
  - obtain any information it needs from any employee and/or external party (subject to their legal obligation to protect information);
  - discuss any matters with external parties (subject to confidentiality considerations);
  - request the attendance of any ANU employee, officer of a controlled entity, or Council member at Committee meetings; and
  - obtain external legal or other professional advice, as considered necessary to meet its responsibilities, at the University’s expense.

## 4. Composition and Tenure

5. The Committee will consist of up to nine members appointed by the Council, as follows:
  - a Chair, who may be a member of the Council, but not the Chancellor or Vice-Chancellor, nor a student or employee of the University;
  - up to three other Council members;

- Up to three ANU students (gender balanced, not members of Council), at least one of whom must be a resident in ANU student accommodation at the time of appointment;
- up to two external members, with any one or more specific skills and senior leadership experience, including in the context of:
  - Large-scale gender based violence prevention strategies.
  - Compliance frameworks and reporting to regulatory/governing bodies.
  - Whole-of-organisation cultural change programs.

6. The Committee may appoint a Deputy Chair from among its members.

7. Members will be appointed for up to three years and are eligible for re-appointment.

8. The Council will have regard to a balanced membership, including with respect to background, gender, geographic location, culture and identity, and the need for both continuity and regular renewal when filling positions on the Committee.

## 5. Roles and Responsibilities

9. The Committee exercises such functions, responsibilities and authorities as may be assigned or delegated to it by Council from time to time, but only such powers as are explicitly delegated to it.

10. The Committee's responsibilities, subject to revision by Council, are to monitor, review and, where appropriate, make recommendations to Council in respect of:

- a. The safety and wellbeing of ANU students;
- b. Student safety and wellbeing strategies and plans;
- c. Data reporting concerning student safety and wellbeing;
- d. Compliance reporting regarding student safety and wellbeing;
- e. Policy relating to student safety and wellbeing; and
- f. Any other matter relevant to supporting the work of the Committee or the Council.

## 6. Responsibilities of Members

11. Members of the Committee are expected to understand and observe the legal requirements of the *Australian National University Act 1991* and the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

12. Members are also expected to:

- a) act always in the best interests of the university as a whole, with this obligation to be observed in priority over any duty a member may owe to those appointing them;

- b) act in good faith, honestly and for a proper purpose;
- c) exercise appropriate care and diligence;
- d) not improperly use their position to gain an advantage for themselves or someone else; and
- e) disclose and avoid conflicts of interest.<sup>1</sup>

## 7. Reporting

13. The Committee will regularly, but at least once a year, report to the Council on its operation and activities. The report should include:

- a summary of the work it performed to fully discharge its responsibilities during the preceding year;
- details of meetings, including the number of meetings held during the relevant period, and the number of meetings each member attended.

14. Where the Committee identifies issues of possible concern relating to the financial management of the University, it shall refer (including by informal means and/or during the meeting agenda preparation phase) such matters to the Finance Committee for consideration. Similarly, where it identifies issues that may present a risk to the University or its interests, it shall refer such matters to the Audit and Risk Management Committee for consideration.

15. The Committee may, at any time, report to the Council any other matter it deems of sufficient importance to do so.

## 8. Administrative Arrangements

### 8.1 Meetings and Planning

16. The Committee will meet at least three times per year on dates determined by the Committee.

17. The Chair is required to call a meeting if asked to do so by the Council and decide if a meeting is required if requested by another Committee member.

18. A forward meeting plan, including meeting dates and key agenda items, will be agreed by the Committee each year. The forward meeting plan will cover all its responsibilities, as detailed in this Charter.

19. The Chair will be regularly updated on significant issues relating to student wellbeing by the relevant member of the executive (usually, a Deputy Vice-Chancellor), and/or the relevant Director/s most responsible for student safety and wellbeing.

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<sup>1</sup> As outlined in the *Voluntary Code of Best Practice for the Governance of Australian Universities (2018)*  
Student Safety and Wellbeing Committee

## **8.2 Attendance at Meetings and Quorums**

20. A quorum will consist of 50 per cent of Committee members (rounded up to the nearest whole number) who hold office for the time being.
21. Meetings can be held in person or by digital means.
22. Members of the University Executive and other relevant persons may, subject to Committee direction, attend or be required to attend meetings and contribute to deliberations.
23. The Chair of the Committee may request any ANU employee and/or external party to attend Committee meetings or participate in certain agenda items.
24. On request, Council Members shall be provided with committee meeting papers and supporting material and may also attend committee meetings.

## **8.3 Secretariat**

25. The Corporate Governance and Risk Office (CGRO) will provide secretariat support to the Committee.
26. The Student and University Experience portfolio will be responsible for the development and preparation of reports and other papers concerning student safety and wellbeing matters to be presented to the Committee. Such reports and papers will be submitted to the Corporate Governance and Risk Office for inclusion in the meeting papers.
27. In supporting the preparation of agenda papers, CGRO will provide procedural and contextual advice and drafting support, especially in respect of recommendations being presented to the Committee or Council.
28. CGRO will ensure the agenda and supporting papers for each meeting are circulated at least 7 days before the meeting.
29. CGRO will ensure the minutes of the meetings are prepared and maintained. Minutes must be authorised by the Chair for circulation to members of the Committee for consideration prior to approval being sought from the Committee at the next meeting.

## **8.4 Conflicts of Interest**

30. Upon joining the Committee and then once a year thereafter, Committee members will provide written declarations to the Council declaring any material personal interests that could preclude them from being members of the Committee. External members will be asked to consider past employment, consultancy arrangements and related party issues in making these declarations. Council will need to be satisfied that there are sufficient processes in place to manage any real, perceived, or potential conflict.

31. Committee members must declare any material personal interests at the start of each meeting or before discussion of the relevant agenda item or topic. Details of material personal interests declared by Committee members, and actions taken, will be appropriately recorded in the minutes.

### **8.5 Induction**

32. CGRO will maintain a program of induction, training and awareness-raising for Committee members, with the objective of enabling the Committee to keep abreast of contemporary developments and leading practice to assist Members to meet their Committee responsibilities. Other areas of the University will assist CGRO in this task whenever requested.

### **8.6 Assessment and Review**

33. The Chair of the Committee will initiate a review of the performance of the Committee and this Charter at intervals of two years with the outcomes to be reported to Council. The review of performance will be conducted on a self-assessment basis unless otherwise determined by the Council.

*Approved by resolution of the ANU Council on 3 June 2022.*