

Answers to Question on Notice – Macquarie University

Friday 29 August 2025 Legislative Council

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO. 3 – EDUCATION

QUESTION 1:

The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: Furthermore, **have there been any academic meetings between the respective universities and members of the Iranian embassy in the past year, or any collaboration with Iran on joint research projects with the universities?**

ANNAMARIE JAGOSE: Not to the best of my knowledge.

S. BRUCE DOWTON: It's the same for Macquarie University. I'm certainly not aware that we have had any contact from the Iranian diplomatic corps.

ANSWER: No. Macquarie University has no current research projects with Iran.

QUESTION 2:

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: In the minute I have, perhaps I can pick up from questions from my colleague. I just wanted to confirm, in relation to research collaborations with Iran, I think I understood Professor Dowton that Macquarie has no research collaborations with Iran.

S. BRUCE DOWTON: Correct.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: And, Professor Jagose, is that true of the University of Sydney as well?

ANNAMARIE JAGOSE: As I said, to the best of my knowledge.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: **Is that something that you could perhaps investigate and take on notice because I understand you wouldn't be across the whole research—**

ANNAMARIE JAGOSE: Certainly.

S. BRUCE DOWTON: Also happy to do that.

The Hon. SUSAN CARTER: Perhaps I can put it to everybody here. Could you take on notice if there are any research collaborations with Iran? If you could inform us of those, I'd be very grateful.

S. BRUCE DOWTON: Happy to do that. Macquarie University has no current research projects with Iran.

ANSWER: Macquarie University has no current research projects with Iran.

QUESTION 3:

The CHAIR: We have two minutes for crossbench and two minutes for the Opposition, and then we will go to Government questions. **I have one for all of you. We know there's an enormous and growing mental health crisis, and it's often crashing down on young people of**

university age. We also know that a lot of universities are going through extremely turbulent job cuts and restructures, which puts a huge psychological strain on staff as well. In that context, what are you each doing to monitor and identify deaths on campus and/or suicides amongst staff and student cohorts?

ANSWER:

Student Wellbeing provides free and confidential health and wellbeing services 24/7, available via phone, teleconference or in person. Students receive the specific support they need, from mental health to disability and academic help. We also partner with various organisations to ensure ongoing student wellbeing and support. In 2024, more than 7850 interactions were recorded for over 5000 students in need of wellbeing or psychological support, including for students with complex wellbeing needs. The online and on-demand TalkCampus platform recorded 40,969 engagements, and 7714 after-hours calls were managed through the Nationwide Helpline Service.

The University provides a number of external support services, including free and confidential counselling services for staff and their immediate family members. These services are provided through our Employee Assistance Program provider, TELUS Health, on 1300 360 364. In relation to change proposals, the University is mindful of the impact this can have on staff. In addition to redundancy entitlements, under the University's Enterprise Agreement, staff who have been retrenched can access financial advice and career transition support paid for by the University, as well as time off to support job search activities. Within the University, staff can reach out to their supervisor or HR for support and advice. Staff are also able to seek support from their Union.

In the event of a death of a student or member of staff, the Death of Student or Staff Procedure ensures consistent decision-making and management of information and actions.

QUESTION 4:

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Thank you all very much for appearing today. Before I ask individual questions, I wondered if you all might take on notice to provide your reflections on our progress to the representation of women at the upper echelons of universities in New South Wales.

ANSWER:

In 2024, the University launched the Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Framework 2024–2028, introducing a new governance model to strengthen our ongoing commitment to an inclusive and equitable environment. This framework addresses gender equity by providing a comprehensive plan for embedding principles of inclusion into the university's systems and culture. To enhance data-driven decision-making, we developed a series of dashboards to track five priority metrics. These dashboards will provide accurate, timely and accessible data to inform planning and guide local strategies. A major milestone in gender equity was achieved in October 2024 when we received our first Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE) Cygnet Award – an important step towards Silver accreditation under the Athena Swan Charter. This recognition reflects our sustained efforts to improve gender equity in academic promotions, with a notable rise in applications from women and a consistently high success rate (85–90 per cent for women from 2019 to 2023). Key factors in this achievement included the redesign of the Development, Performance and Review process and a commitment to inclusive promotion frameworks. For

the past two years, the University has maintained Gold Tier Status in the Australian Workplace Equality Index (AWEI) for leadership in LGBTQIA+ inclusion and is well positioned to pursue Platinum recognition. This reflects our ongoing commitment to fostering an inclusive and supportive environment for LGBTQIA+ students, staff and the broader community.

In 2017, the University introduced a strengths-based, transparent promotion framework aligning performance reviews with promotion criteria. The University now values and rewards a broader range of contributions across four scholarship areas – discovery, teaching, application and integration – as well as leadership and citizenship.