

**Submission
No 36**

**INQUIRY INTO THE GOVERNANCE OF NSW
UNIVERSITIES**

Name: Mr Charles Richard Watson

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A Submission to the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into the Governance of NSW Universities by Dr Charles R. Watson, Elected Academic Staff Member to UNE Council

I have been a UNE Council Member since 1 January 2009 and am one of two elected academic staff members. This submission is made in an individual capacity.

1. The UNE Council policy published at <http://www.une.edu.au/policies/pdf/councilpolicies.pdf> clearly describes the Vice-Chancellor's relationship to Council including delegation of policy development, authority over the Vice-Chancellor by majority vote of Council and the Vice-Chancellor's duty to fully inform Council.
2. The UNE Council policy on the power and authority of the Chancellor, published at <http://www.une.edu.au/policies/pdf/chancellordeputychancellorpower.pdf>, describes the Chancellor's duties, including chairing meetings, officiating at graduations, annually reviewing the Vice-Chancellor and encouraging cohesion of Council members and senior staff. UNE Council may reconsider this policy, having an indicative time for review of June 2008.
5. Council should intervene when institutional performance issues cannot be resolved by direct communication between the Vice-Chancellor and Council. The first 2 functions of Council under Section 16 (1B) of the UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND ACT 1993 are: (a) to monitor the performance of the Vice-Chancellor, and (b) to oversee the University's performance.
The University should, within its limited resources, promote scholarship, research, free inquiry, the interaction of research and teaching, and academic excellence. See Section 6 (1) of the UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND ACT 1993. This should be the over-arching object of Council's performance management system.
6. An annual performance review of the Chancellor would be beneficial.
7. Protocols should be considered for addressing poor performance of Chancellors and the possible removal of a Chancellor who does not have the confidence of their Council.
8. Staff and student Council representatives offer direct experience of the core business of the university and hold essential positions on Council. I believe all Council committees should consult openly with all Council members for effective governance of the University.
9. Legislation should be amended to enable members of the governing body to have immediate access to information for making informed decisions.
10. Other related matters are:
 - a) Cross-institutional mentoring of Council members would be advantageous.
 - b) A sitting fee for students and external members may improve productivity and participation.