



Convocation Council Strategic Plan 2023-26

31 October 2022

We acknowledge we are situated on Noongar land, and that Noongar people remain the spiritual and cultural custodians of their land, and continue to practice their values, languages, beliefs and knowledge. We pay our respects to the traditional owners of the lands on which we live and work across Western Australia and Australia.



The Covid pandemic has highlighted the important role that universities play in the provision of expert advice and research to address societal needs as well as the benefits that can accrue to a community through collective action and mutually beneficial engagement.

During this challenging time, Convocation Council has reflected on how Convocation can best support these endeavours. How can we assist our University to enhance its capacity to assist UWA's students and graduates to achieve their full potential?

Review & Audit

In order to meet these challenges and plan for the future, during 2020 Convocation Council established a Working Group with a mandate to conduct a comprehensive review of the current and historical role of Convocation and ways of increasing its effectiveness in the future.

After conducting a forensic audit of the role that Convocation Council has played representing its members as the custodians of UWA since its inception in 1913, the Working Group concluded that Convocation is 'a slumbering behemoth' which has yet to achieve its full potential. It found that the current structure of Convocation Council does not meet current requirements and needs to be modified to meet the changed conditions of the 21st century.

Strategic Plan

To awaken this dormant potential, the Working Group recommended that Convocation Council adopt a comprehensive program of reforms which the Council has now incorporated into a new strategic plan entitled 'Convocation Council Reimagined' to be implemented over the next three years from 2023 to 2025. This strategic plan dovetails with UWA's strategic priorities and highlights areas where Convocation Council can assist the University to enhance the student experience through mentoring, internships and Work Integrated Learning.

Vision & Mission

The vision this strategic plan seeks to achieve is 'to have a widespread, committed, enthusiastic membership who make a significant contribution to the advancement of our University, Convocation, higher education and our community'.

In order to achieve this vision, Convocation Council believes that its immediate mission is 'to inspire and engage Convocation members'.

Strategies

Bound together by a common belief that tertiary education has the power to change individuals, communities and the world, members of Convocation Council have pledged to achieve this vision and mission by pursuing four key strategies:

- Revitalising the structure and resources of Convocation Council
- Inspiring the members of Convocation by providing opportunities for meaningful engagement and advocacy.
- Increasing Convocation Council's engagement with UWA Schools, clubs and societies.
- Contributing to the advancement of our University, Convocation, higher education and our community

The Opportunity

In setting this structure for future success, Convocation Council has imagined what could be achieved if Convocation was able to harness the energy and enthusiasm of its 154,000 members working together to support UWA and its graduate community by providing opportunities and experiences that foster personal and professional growth for a lifetime.

To achieve this outcome, Convocation Councillors will become ambassadors sharing information and ideas between the University and Convocation members. To facilitate greater collaboration between Convocation Council and Development & Alumni Relations, with the Chancellor's support, the Joint Committee will be strengthened to become the on-going formal forum for the coordination of graduate and alumni issues.

Recognising that the structure of UWA has changed from Faculties to Schools, Convocation Council has moved to strengthen the links with individual Schools by having each member of Council responsible for liaison with a UWA School or a club or society. The strategic plan also aims to strengthen links between Convocation Council and the UWA Senate by requiring all future Convocation-elected Senators to be ex-officio members of Convocation Council.

Convocation Council believes that Convocation is not just an integral part of UWA that connects with graduates, it is the network of graduates that connects with UWA.

By effectively utilising the combined resources of Convocation members, Convocation Council fervently believes that it can become part of a potent force for change and improvement in our community. To ensure that the membership of Convocation includes all those who wish to contribute to our vision and mission, the strategic plan also envisages a return to the wider range of membership categories which has historically included long serving staff members as well as the holders of adjunct appointments, donors and honorary degree recipients.

Convocation Council has recently re-affirmed its commitment to the ideals expressed in the *Magna Charta Universitatum 2020*, which highlight the potential for higher education to be a positive agent of change and social transformation and states that education is a human right, a public good, and should be available to all.

‘An educated, enlightened & informed population is one of the surest ways of promoting the health of a democracy.’ Nelson Mandela

To assist the principles outlined in the *Magna Charta Universitatum 2020* to be upheld in Western Australia, one initiative of the new strategic plan is to establish an Advocacy Committee. It aims to highlight issues from existing and emerging tertiary education policy and practice to better inform Council and Convocation members, particularly on those issues that relate to UWA, its staff, students and graduates.

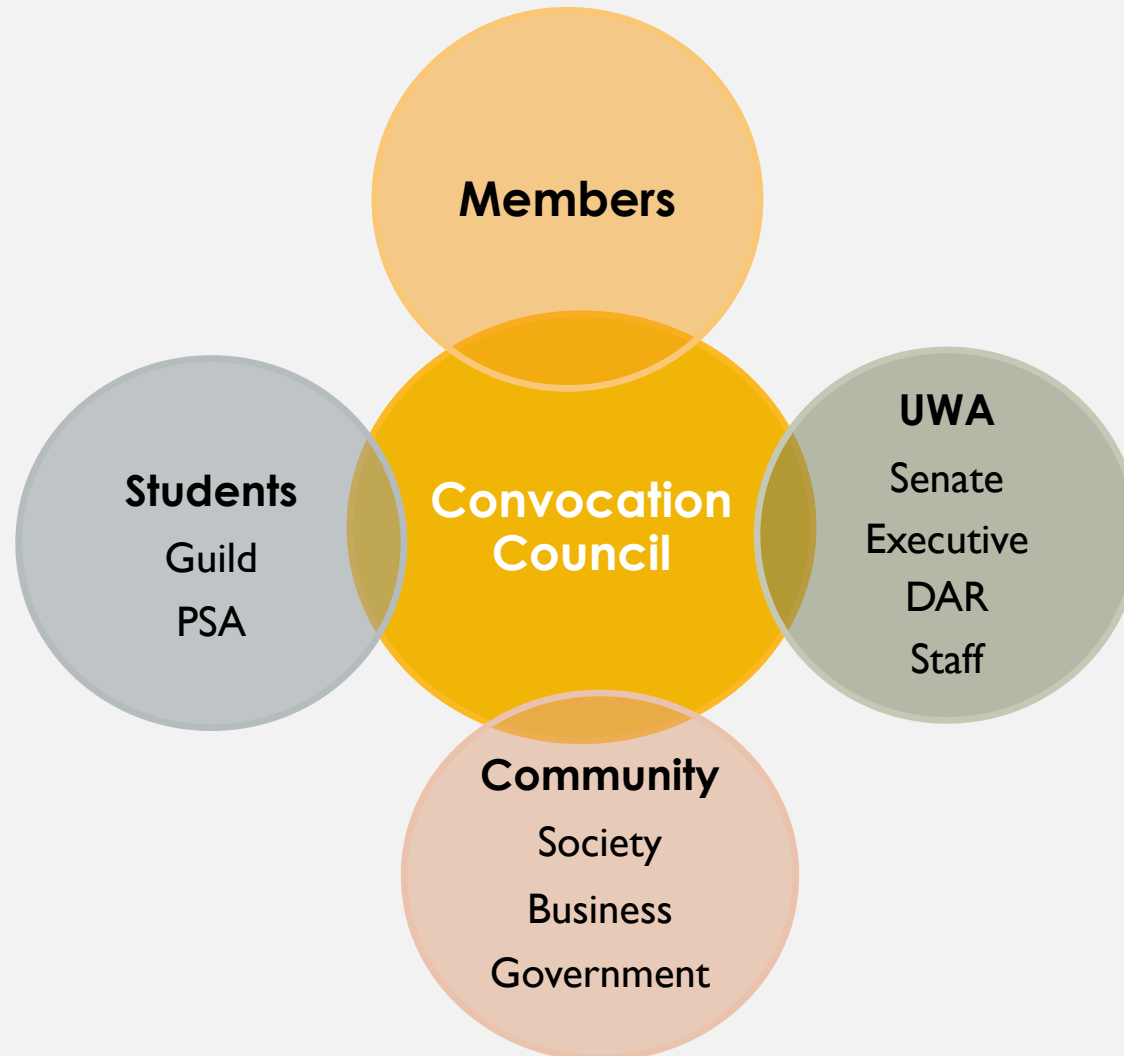
While Convocation's role is now unique amongst Australian universities, Convocation Council believes that the full potential of this exceptional attribute has not yet been achieved. Many members of Convocation still do not realise that they are legally life-long members of the University with rights and privileges unique amongst university graduates.

The aim of the 2022-25 Strategic Plan is to empower Convocation Council to inform members of their unique opportunity to utilise the organisation created by history and happenstance in a way that enables the members of Convocation to express their identity, strengthen their connection to UWA, and includes them in the primary role of the University — the seeking of wisdom and the creation and sharing of knowledge.



Convocation Council Reimagined

CONVOCATION COUNCIL STAKEHOLDERS



CONVOCATION COUNCIL SOAR* STRATEGIC PLANNING ANALYSIS

Strengths	Opportunities	Aspirations	Results
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Embedded in UWA Act & Statute 2. Long rich history 3. Large educated membership 4. Elected Council 5. Autonomy to represent members 6. Discretionary reserves 7. Authority to raise funds 8. Authority to promote interaction between membership, UWA, and community 9. Provision of awards, scholarships to students 10. Chancellor's Joint Committee of Council and DAR to broker cooperation/ mutual support 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Give Council members portfolios relevant to their expertise to form connections with clubs, societies, schools, staff and students 2. Define roles of Council & DAR, develop forum for cooperation/support 3. Improve financial resources to further support students & other initiatives 4. Inspire members to provide mentoring, internships to students 5. Connect with interstate/overseas members 6. Utilise members' nostalgia for UWA and campus 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reformed Council 2. Permanent Chancellor's Joint Committee 3. Stakeholders value outcomes 4. Improved financial resources 5. Members motivated to assist UWA graduates 6. Assist UWA to fulfil its mission 7. Council as valued advocate for UWA & tertiary education, as contributor to UWA initiatives and as a constructive critic 8. Council as engagement hub for members, clubs, societies, schools, students 9. Members actively engage, network and celebrate. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revitalise Council 2. Inspire our Members 3. Engage our Members 4. Support the intellectual, cultural cultural and financial prosperity of the University 5. Contribute to the advancement of our University, Convocation, higher education and our community

* Jacqueline Stavros & Gina Hinrichs, *The Thin Book of SOAR: building strengths-based strategy*, 2009

CONVOCATION COUNCIL'S MISSION & VISION

Mission: To inspire and engage Convocation members.

Vision: To have a widespread, committed and enthusiastic membership who make a significant contribution to the advancement of our University, Convocation, higher education and our community.



STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE OUR RESULTS

STRATEGY ONE

Revitalise our Council

STRATEGY TWO

Inspire our members

STRATEGY THREE

Engage our members

STRATEGY FOUR

Contribute to the advancement of our University, Convocation, higher education and our community

Strategy One: REVITALISE OUR COUNCIL

➤ Reformed Convocation Council to improve performance & diversity

Council Composition

- 1) Council to be comprised of 17 members
- 2) Warden to be elected by Convocation members for one-year term
- 3) Deputy Warden, to be elected by Councillors for one-year term. Deputy Warden to become Warden until next election if Warden steps down
- 4) Convocation Senators (2) each to be elected by Convocation Council for three-year term
- 5) The majority of Councillors to be elected
- 6) Councillors (9) each to be elected by Convocation members for a three-year term
- 7) Co-opted members (5) each to be chosen by Convocation Council for up to a three-year term
- 8) Co-opted Councillors to have same rights as other Councillors
- 9) All Councillors to be limited to nine-year term
- 10) Each Candidate for Council election to set out brief bio, stating why they are standing for the office, what they bring to the office and what they hope to achieve

Strategy One: REVITALISE OUR COUNCIL

➤ Reformed Convocation Council to improve performance & diversity

Responsibilities of Councillors

- 1) Each Councillor to have a portfolio relevant to their expertise to develop membership networking and collaboration with staff and students of a UWA School, club or society
- 2) Each Councillor to be a member of at least one Convocation Committee
- 3) All Councillors, Warden, Dep Warden and Convocation Officer to receive annual peer performance feedback

Council Meetings

- 1) 6 regular meetings per annum with reserve dates for special strategic meetings
- 2) Warden's report to be circulated monthly to keep Councilors informed
- 3) Agenda to be structured to assist in implementing strategic plan. Procedural matters to be accepted *en bloc* unless an item is raised with Warden prior to the meeting.
- 4) Standing Orders to be developed for the conduct of Council meetings and committees

Council Invitees (non-voting)

- 1) Guild President
- 2) Post Graduate Association President
- 3) Convocation Senators
- 4) Chief Advancement Officer

Strategy One: REVITALISE OUR COUNCIL

Financial Resources

- 1) Strategic Planning Working Group to make recommendations on use of existing discretionary funds to facilitate growth of Convocation and achievement of strategies adopted by Convocation Council
- 2) Strategic Planning Working Group to propose a defined purpose for the General Reserve Fund to determine the circumstances in which it will be called upon.

Council Committees

- 1) Convocation Council to support and participate in a discussion with University and student bodies to establish a program to provide mentorships, internships, assistance with employment and career advancement for undergraduates and new Convocation members
- 2) An Executive Committee be formed composed of Warden, Deputy Warden, Convocation Officer and key Committee Chairs to co-ordinate the execution of Council directives, implementation of the strategic plan and deal with issues arising between meetings. The majority of Executive members should be elected Councillors
- 3) An Advocacy Committee to be formed
- 4) A Communications Committee to be formed to focus on communication and particularly electronic communication with members in co-operation with the University.

Strategy One: REVITALISE OUR COUNCIL

Council Committees (cont.)

- 5) A Nominations Committee to be formed
- 6) Continuation of existing committees:
 - i. Awards Committee
 - ii. Events Committee
 - iii. Finance Committee
 - iv. Governance Committee
 - v. Honours Committee
 - vi. Information Technology Committee
 - vii. Membership Committee
 - viii. Resources Committee (formerly fund-raising)
 - ix. Strategic Planning Committee
- 7) All committees to be encouraged to co-op members to supplement skills of Council members
- 8) Warden and Chairs of Council Committees to be responsible for developing and executing an induction process and Council training for new Council and Committee members

Council Committees (cont.)

Financial Resources Committee

- 1) Agree on fund raising protocols with DAR and UWA defining who and when Convocation or DAR should approach when fund raising.
- 2) Financial Resources Committee to include members, including co-opted non-Council members, who are comfortable with and have the ability to raise and generate funds
- 3) Fund raising to be managed by the Chair of the Financial Resources Committee and UWA/DAR
- 4) Examine case for engaging in commercial enterprises such as sale of memorabilia etc. for presentation to Council
- 5) Continue to examine case for the General Reserve Fund and part of the General Purpose Fund to be transferred from the Short Term pool to the Long Term Pool
- 6) Conduct a review of current expenditure and Council activities to identify any cost savings and improve efficiency

➤ Stakeholders value outcomes

General Meetings of Convocation

- 1) Refresh format of Convocation's two Ordinary General Meetings
- 2) Move meeting date to Wednesday or Thursday night
- 3) Invite a UWA graduate 'star' speaker who appeals to early and mid career members
- 4) Drop the term 'Ordinary' from name of Convocation's General meetings
- 5) Continue to use hybrid model (in person and virtual) for meetings
- 6) Questions without notice to be allowed
- 7) Questions to VC and answers to be published on website or in newsletter
- 8) Survey monkey to be used after General Meetings to assess stakeholder views of meeting
- 9) Facilitate communication of research and teaching of UWA Schools at General Meetings of Convocation, as appropriate

Strategy Two: INSPIRE OUR MEMBERS

➤ Stakeholders value outcomes

Advocacy

- 1) Advocacy Committee to be established to keep Convocation members informed of matters relating to the future well-being of UWA, including matters of potential threat to UWA, to 'support the intellectual, cultural and financial prosperity of the University'
- 2) Code of Practice to be developed to guide the preparation of material for distribution to ensure it is fair and constructive and based on fact or clearly expressed as opinion
- 3) Resources to be made available to enable program to provide high level communication from a range of sources and distributed in a variety of methods
- 4) UWA graduate groups to be encouraged to communicate with Council and express both supportive or critical views on education
- 5) Discussions with Institute of Public Policy and Institute for Advanced Studies to be commenced for mutual support and cooperation in establishment of program

➤ **Redefine our members**

- 1) To expand membership beyond graduates and members of the Senate, to include all stakeholders of the University (including senior academic and professional staff members, including clinical, adjunct and honorary appointees who have served UWA for over 5 years, so it is more inclusive of the University community using dot point three of the Act (Persons who Senate admits)
- 2) To base this widening on the pre-2016 scope but to ensure that as time progresses and as the higher education sector changes, this list (or Annex to a Senate agreement) can be updated.
- 3) That the Annex be reviewed by Council every 2 years to ensure it remains contemporary and relevant to the University community.
- 4) That these members are to have the same rights and responsibilities as other members.
- 5) That the Membership Committee be requested to develop an efficient mechanism by which anyone from the categories of eligible people can apply easily for membership to be ratified through Council for recommendation to Senate. The aim is to ensure a smooth efficient approach.

- **Members actively engage, network and celebrate**
- **Council as engagement hub for members, UWA clubs, societies, school alumni groups, and students**
 - 1) Ensure Convocation Council has access to a database of engaged members.
 - 2) Expand Convocation Day in association with DAR to encourage members to engage, network and celebrate
 - 3) Investigate the financial sustainability of the 50th Anniversary Lunches in view of increasing size of each cohort and explore alternatives
 - 4) Engage with the Guild and PSA to promote Convocation networking as a natural bridge to retain graduates in a relationship with UWA after their graduation.
 - 5) Seek appointment of Council member *ex officio* to the University Club Board to help activate the relationship between the two organizations.
 - 6) Warden or Deputy Warden to forge a strong link with the leaders of Young Alumni and Overseas Alumni groups.
 - 7) Conduct a survey or focus group panels of Convocation members to see what they want from Convocation and UWA, what they are prepared to bring to Convocation and UWA to help and assess how Convocation Council is doing.
 - 8) Convocation to review the case for re-establishing on campus volunteer guides and the extension program.

- **Members actively engage, network and celebrate**
- **Council as engagement hub for members, UWA clubs, societies, school alumni groups, and students**

Communications

- 1) Develop multiple streams of communications to inform the members of Convocation
- 2) Promote Convocation awards, activities and events.
- 3) Facilitate communication of research and teaching of UWA Schools at General Meetings of Convocation, as appropriate.
- 4) Investigate evidence-based assessment methods to determine whether an alternative 'brand' or 'business' name should be used in conjunction with 'Convocation' to better engage members.

Events

- 1) Continuation of role of Events Committee.
- 2) Investigate new events to engage members

Strategy Four: CONTRIBUTE TO THE ADVANCEMENT OF OUR UNIVERSITY, CONVOCATION, HIGHER EDUCATION & OUR COMMUNITY

➤ Assist UWA in fulfilling its mission

Relationship with UWA / DAR

- 1) Convocation Council to determine what Convocation can do better or more efficiently for UWA than UWA can do for itself and present the case to DAR.
- 2) Establish Chancellor's Convocation/DAR Joint Committee permanently to provide an on-going forum for discussion, collaboration and to manage and co-ordinate joint Convocation/DAR initiatives agreed by the parties.
- 3) Joint Committee could be composed of members from UWA/DAR, members nominated by Convocation Council and possibly co-opted members with relevant experience. The committee should report to Senate.
- 4) Utilise the Chancellor's Convocation/DAR Joint Committee as a forum (with the approval of Council) to establish a well-defined allocation of the roles and resources of DAR and Convocation Council to best engage Convocation members.
- 5) Agree fund raising protocols with DAR and UWA defining who and when Convocation or DAR should approach members when fund raising.

Strategy Four:

CONTRIBUTE TO THE ADVANCEMENT OF OUR UNIVERSITY, CONVOCATION, HIGHER EDUCATION & OUR COMMUNITY

- **Support the intellectual, cultural and financial prosperity of the University**
- **Develop supportive and motivated networks of members to assist UWA graduates**
- **Council to be a valued advocate for UWA & tertiary education, as a contributor to UWA initiatives and as a constructive critic.**



Convocation Council Reimagined