UNE Governance Framework Rule

Section 1 - Overview and Scope

(1) Governance is the framework by which the University is controlled and operates, and held to account. It provides the structure through which the objectives are set, and activity and performance monitored.

(2) Within this Rule:

a. Part A summarises the components of UNE's governance framework;

b. Part B outlines the legislative and policy framework from which authority is derived and exercised;

c. Part C outlines UNE governance structures – the hierarchy of governance bodies and positions;

d. Part D outlines key governance relationships – the interaction between governance bodies;

e. Part E outlines the University's governance functions; and

f. Part F outlines the purpose and scope of each governance function and the associated Policy.

Part A - UNE governance framework overview

(3) The UNE governance framework has four key components – authority, structures, relationships and functions (described in Table 1)

Table 1 – UNE governance framework components

Component	Overview
1. Governance Authority	The legislative and policy framework under which authority is derived and exercised at UNE includes: University of New England Act 1993 (UNE Act) and University of New England By-law 2005 (UNE By-law) The exercise of Governance Authority by Council is consistent with the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021
2. Governance Structures	UNE governance structures have delegated authority for oversight and decision-making. Key structures include: Council (and Council committees) Academic Board (and Academic Board committees) Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer (VC&CEO) and delegates(and Vice-Chancellor approved committees)
3. Governance Relationships	Governance roles, responsibilities and reporting relationships are defined in various University documents including: the UNE Act and UNE By-law Charter or Terms of Reference for governance bodies or committees UNE policies including the UNE Delegations Framework Rule position descriptions for specific roles at the University

Component	Overview
4. Governance Functions	Governance functions include: leadership, strategy and communication academic, administrative and corporate decision making strategic risk management policy development and compliance academic quality definition and standard setting, monitoring, review and assurance financial oversight information governance and reporting performance monitoring and review commercial activities and controlled entities

Part B - Governance authority

(4) The UNE Act, and the UNE By-law are the principal legislative instruments from which authority is derived and exercised at UNE.

a. UNE is a body corporate established by the University of New England Act 1993 (NSW) (UNE Act).

b. The UNE Act and UNE By-law:

i. establishes the University Council as the peak governance body of the University with the control and management of the affairs and concerns of the University and power to delegate its functions and activities to any member or committee of Council or to any authority or officer of the University;

ii. establishes the Academic Board as the peak advisory body to the Council and the Vice-Chancellor regarding teaching, research and educational programs; and

iii. identifies that the key stakeholders to be considered in governance at UNE are the members of the University. University members include University Council members, academic and other staff, graduates and students.

(5) The University Council is authorised to make By-laws, Rules, Policies and Procedural principles under the UNE Act and to delegate the making of these to any member or committee of Council or to any authority or officer of the University and the Vice-Chancellor (as applicable).

a. Rules – are UNE's ordinance, guidance, directives or resolutions made under delegations of authority to support the organisation to operate to the desired standard and in compliance with regulations and obligations. Rules are described in Policy Framework Policy;

b. The UNE Delegations Framework Rule defines how authorities are assigned across roles and governance bodies; and

c. Agreements – include enterprise agreements, research or collaborative agreements or agreements relating to commercial activities (corporate and academic arrangements involving third parties).

(6) In exercising their authorities, the governing bodies of the University consider the University's obligations under key legislation and standards within the University's Compliance framework, including the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 and specific obligations in Section 6 relating to Governance and Accountability.

Part C - UNE governance structures

(7) The University Council is the governing body of the University with control and management of its affairs and concerns. The governance structure to support and discharge these functions is as follows:

a. the University Council is the peak governing body with overarching responsibility for corporate and academic

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governance;

b. the Academic Board, responsible for academic governance, is established by the [UNE Act](#) and under the [UNE By-law](#) has the primary function of advising the Council and the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer on all matters affecting the quality and integrity of the University's academic programs and research activities;

c. the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer has executive responsibility for the management and operations of the University in accordance with the [UNE Delegations Framework Rule](#) and subject to the functions over which control has been retained by Council; and

d. the University Council or the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer has responsibility for the governance of Controlled Entities, commercial activities or other contractual agreements established to support the ancillary functions of the University.

(8) UNE Representatives, students and members of the University community, have opportunities to participate in University governance and decision making through representation on governance bodies and committees, through informal and formal consultation and other feedback fora.

(9) Table 2 and Table 3 detail the governance structure and bodies . The UNE [Organisational Chart](#) depicts the overall structure of the University and reporting lines to governance bodies.

Table 2 – UNE governance structure

UNE Stakeholders / Members / NSW & Federal Government Authorities				
UNE Council				
Council committees	Academic Board	Controlled Entities	Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer	
	University committees (Legislative/Code based)		Senior Executive	Key committees of the Vice-Chancellor
	Convocation		Faculties	Divisions, Directorates, Units
			Schools	

Table 3 – UNE governance structure, bodies and membership

Governance Structure	Governance Bodies / Membership
Council Committees	Audit and Risk Committee Finance and Infrastructure Committee Honorary Degrees Titles and Tributes Committee Innovation & Development Committee Nominations Committee Remuneration Committee Standing Committee of Council Temporary or Occasional Committees
Academic Board	Academic Board Standing Committee Curriculum Committee Research Committee Teaching and Learning Committee Other Committees established by Academic Board
Controlled Entities	Agricultural Business Research Institute (ABRI) UNE Foundation UNE Life UNE Partnerships
University Committees (Legislative/Code based)	Animal Ethics Committee Human Research Ethics Committee Joint Consultative Committee

Governance Structure	Governance Bodies / Membership
Senior Executive	Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer Deputy Vice-Chancellor Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research Chief Financial Officer Chief Operating Officer
Key Committees of the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive	Executive Team (ExT) Academic Portfolio Executive Committee (APEC) UNE Safety/WHS Committees University Collections Committee Other Committees (Authorised by the VC&CEO)
Faculties/Schools	Deans Associate & Deputy Deans Heads of Schools Other titles assigned to roles of academic leadership Committees (Authorised by the VC&CEO on recommendation of the DVC) Faculty/Directorate Education Committee Faculty Research Committee
Divisions, Directorates, Units	Directors or Heads Managers/Supervisors

Part D - Key governance relationships

(10) UNE's organisational culture is shaped by governance relationships and the effectiveness of the areas of the University working, communicating and interacting with UNE's governing bodies.

(11) Key University governance relationships, specific roles and responsibilities are defined in:

   a. the UNE Act and UNE By-law;

   b. Charters or Terms of Reference of each governance body or committee;

   c. UNE Policies, including UNE Delegations Framework Rule and Conflicts of Interest Policy;

   d. position descriptions for governance and leadership roles at the University; and

   e. constitutions and other governance documents of Controlled Entities.

(12) UNE Representatives, students and researchers contribute to the effectiveness of governance relationships by:

   a. applying the UNE Governance, Integrity and Standards Policy;

   b. adhering to the UNE Council Charter;

   c. adhering to the Codes of Conduct;

   d. following meeting protocols;

   e. following policy for governance committees; and

   f. applying appropriate learnings from inductions, networking and professional development opportunities.

Part E - Governance functions

(13) Governance functions support the leadership of:

   a. strategic decision making, planning and communication;

   b. managing and anticipating change and risk;

   c. developing and implementing policy, systems and processes;

   d. monitoring performance and compliance;

e. providing accountability to stakeholders; and

f. building organisational culture.

(14) Governance functions establish and maintain frameworks to support the University, including:

a. people and culture development;

b. safety and physical environs;

c. academic governance and quality assurance;

d. financial governance; and

e. information governance.

Part F - Purpose and scope of governance functions

Planning and communication

(15) Planning and communication functions support the university by providing the foundation for management and oversight, setting strategic direction and managing key stakeholder relationships.

Table 4 – Planning and communications functions, purpose and responsibilities

Purpose	Responsibilities
The planning governance function leads and determines the future focus of the University.	The approval of the University's strategic priorities, business plan and budget by the UNE Council (refer Council Charter). The Council is supported in its determination of UNE's strategic direction by the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer and consideration of the University community and stakeholders. The University adopts a tiered approach to its planning to support UNE Representatives in actioning the University's strategy: i. UNE Strategic Plan (approved by Council) ii. UNE Business Plan and Budget (approved by Council) iii. Other plans at portfolio, faculty and operational unit level (approved by Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer or relevant Senior Executive) iv. Individual performance plans (agreed by individuals and their managers).
The communication governance function supports understanding, and alignment with strategy by UNE Representatives.	Communication of decisions of the Council is via the Chancellor, or in the absence of the Chancellor, the Deputy Chancellor. Focused communications to staff and stakeholders regarding the implementation and actioning of key strategic priorities to achieve desired outcomes, is led by the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer and their leadership team. Providing timely and balanced disclosure and reporting. Managing relationships and communication with University stakeholders.

Decision making and risk management

(16) The decision making and risk management functions support the University to ensure present and future focused decisions are made that are informed, ethical and responsible, whilst recognising and managing risk.

Table 5 – Decision making and risk management functions, purpose and responsibilities

Purpose	Responsibilities
The decision making governance function provides frameworks for the internal and external integrity of corporate and academic activities.	Promoting professional and ethical decision making and conduct. Declaring and avoiding conflicts of interest (see Conflicts of Interest Policy). Having clear terms of reference, functional responsibilities and/or delegated authorities (see UNE Delegations Framework Rule). Making decisions considering the 'whole of institution' perspective and involving stakeholders in decisions that affect them. Leveraging collective decision-making to consider diverse views and experiences, including providing students with the opportunity to participate in governance activities. Establishing effective meeting protocols. Ensuring decision making is informed by all available evidence, through provision of quality and transparent reporting, including an assessment of risks (see Risk Management Policy).
The risk management governance function provides frameworks for recognising and managing corporate and academic risk and meeting internal and external obligations.	Implementing and supporting systems for the identification, elimination, minimisation, management and monitoring of risks (see Risk Management Policy). Maintaining risk registers and plans, covering external, strategic, operational including academic or tactical (project) risks. Establishing sound risk audit practice and monitoring corporate risk controls. Fostering a risk aware culture.

Policy and compliance

(17) The policy and compliance function supports the University to meet its internal and external compliance obligations applying consistent and effective standards of practice.

Table 6 – Policy and compliance functions purpose and responsibilities

Purpose	Responsibilities
The policy governance function provides contextual guidance on UNE's Rules and standards of conduct for corporate and academic activities.	Providing and maintaining a thematic, University-wide approach to the management of policy approved by the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer. (see Policy Framework Policy, Compliance Rule) Ensuring policy is developed, implemented and managed in transparent and effective manner. Providing access and support for UNE Representatives and students to meet their obligations. Keeping records of policy effectiveness and compliance. Reporting to the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer and to the Audit and Risk Committee of Council regarding policy status and/or issues.
The compliance governance function provides contextual guidance on UNE's legal (laws, regulations, standards) obligations and responsibilities for corporate and academic activities.	Defining and implementing the compliance methodology and obligations for UNE, and the design of business processes and systems (see Policy Framework Policy and Compliance Rule). Maintaining the University's Compliance Register. Coordinating and monitoring compliance responsibilities across the University's operations. Providing access and support for UNE Representatives and students to meet their compliance obligations. Reporting to the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer and to the Audit and Risk Committee of Council regarding compliance status and/or issues.

Performance monitoring and review

(18) The performance monitoring and review function supports the University to meet its internal and external performance and quality assurance obligations by:

a. informing future planning and design activities (including changes to governance frameworks or controls and new organisational strategies or operational practices); and

b. fostering a culture of evidence based, quality focused performance evaluation, institutional learning, continuous improvement and growth.

Table 7 – Performance monitoring and review functions, purpose and responsibilities

Purpose	Responsibilities
The performance monitoring and review functions provides assurance on the effectiveness of both corporate and academic activities.	Planning and undertaking scheduled monitoring and reporting of both corporate and academic quality. Planning and undertaking scheduled monitoring and reporting of both the student and staff experience. Monitoring and reporting the: • progress of UNE key plans and project activities; • commercial activity and contract performance (Commercial Activities Rule). Conducting annual self-reviews and periodic external reviews of governance bodies and University committees to ensure consistency with the body's/committee's Terms of Reference. Completing internal audit review and control monitoring (see Audit and Risk Terms of Reference/Charter; Gifts and Benefits Policy; Fraud and Corruption Control Policy; Public Interest Disclosure and Whistleblower Policy).

People and culture

(19) The people and culture function supports the University to meet its internal and external responsibilities for students and staff, aligned with the University's values and culture by:

a. monitoring resourcing and human resource management service delivery;

b. informing future workforce planning and design activities; and

c. fostering a healthy culture, to maintain the University's object and mission, meeting and exceeding legal requirements and community expectations.

Table 8 – People and culture functions purpose and responsibilities

Purpose	Responsibilities
The people and culture functions provide guidance and assurance that our people practices are fair and responsible.	Monitoring people resources and delivery of human resource management services in a manner consistent with regulations to support the functioning of the organisation. Monitoring of organisational workplace agreements relating to employment conditions and practices. Developing, implementing and monitoring workforce strategy and plans, including: • inductions, training, professional development, and self-improvement opportunities; • capability frameworks and succession planning. Establishing, monitoring and maintaining policies and practices supporting staff and students as appropriate including: • UNE Identity Values and Goals policies for both staff and students; • Codes of Conduct • Complaints and grievances • Organisational development policies for staff;

Safety and environs

(20) The safety and environs function supports the University to meet its internal and external responsibilities for a

safe physical environment for student and staff.

Table 9 – Safety and environs functions, purpose and responsibilities

Purpose	Responsibilities
The safety and environs functions provide guidance and assurance that our physical environment can meet the needs of current operations and future strategy.	Developing, implementing and monitoring policies, practices and frameworks for workplace safety, the effective control and sustainable resource management of physical facilities and environments (see UNE SAFE and UNE Environment, Facilities and Spaces). Identifying and managing risks to ensure safety and wellbeing across UNE campus facilities and activities conducted offsite including: • implementing specific practices for dealing with hazardous materials in the workplace or within teaching or research activities; • operating the network of WHS Safety Representatives (WHS) committees. Creating a safety culture by communicating and supporting safe practices to prevent incidents (including via the UNE SAFE Application). Maintaining effective systems for capturing and managing WHS incidents and responding to hazards. Reporting on WHS incidents and hazards to meet internal and external obligations. Identifying and implementing WHS and relevant building codes/standards for the design and operation of digital and physical environments.

Academic quality assurance functions

(21) The academic quality assurance function supports the University to meet its internal and external obligations for the quality of teaching and learning, research, scholarship and student support activities of the University.

Table 10 – Academic quality assurance functions, purpose and responsibilities

Purpose	Responsibilities
The academic quality definition and standard setting, monitoring and review functions provide guidance and assurance that our academic activities meet internal and external standards and serve the public good.	Supporting UNE Representatives to meet the academic quality expectations of their roles through the implementation of policies for the student journey and scholarship (see Academic Quality Assurance Policy). Conducting internal review and monitoring consistent with UNE's self-accreditation status, including: • units, courses, research training and academic areas (e.g., Faculties and Schools and academic governance bodies); • institutional academic quality benchmarking measures; • external providers supporting UNE's academic program delivery, providers of work integrated learning for UNE students and reviews of articulation arrangements; • internal student feedback mechanisms and grievances, and student surveys (both internal and broader sector surveys). Planning and managing accreditation and registration, including: • the external accreditation of academic programs/courses, including professional accreditation and/or benchmarking or peer review processes. • institutional re-registration processes (eg: via TEQSA, CRICOS); Participation in Research Excellence and Impact Reviews by the Australian Research Council. Monitoring of research quality and integrity practices including human and animal ethics committee reviews, research examination processes, peer and publication review and/or assessment of research against grant requirements and millstones. Providing opportunities for student input in decision making both directly (representation and participation in governance bodies) and indirectly (via feedback, surveys and other advisory roles).

Financial governance functions

(22) The financial governance function supports the University to meet its internal and external obligations for integrity in financial management and reporting.

Table 11 – Financial governance functions, purpose and responsibilities

Purpose	Responsibilities
The financial governance function provides oversight and stewardship of the financial resources to meet the needs of current operations and future strategy.	Supporting UNE Representatives to meet the financial governance expectations of their roles through the implementation of systems, policies and processes for the planning and budgeting process (See Organisational Capability, UNE Delegations Framework Rule and Controlled Entity Rule and Guidelines). Conducting annual planning of financial commitments of the University via the UNE Business Plan and Budget. Monitoring key performance indicators and reporting on UNE financial performance against business plans, budgets and target financial measures. Ensuring compliance with financial management and reporting standards. Preparing public financial statements for UNE and the Consolidated Group of Entities (Controlled Entities). Ensuring independent external assurance of the accuracy of financial management and reporting.

Information governance function

(23) The information governance function supports the University to meet its internal and external obligations for consistency in the management of information, including data, to support the University objectives and strategy.

Table 12 – Information governance function

Purpose	Responsibilities
The information governance function provides oversight and stewardship of the information assets to meet the needs of current operations and future strategy.	Effective Technology Digital Services (TDS) monitoring and management/maintenance of key University information assets and corporate systems considering risk. Supporting UNE Representatives by implementing processes, roles, controls and metrics that support the protection, reliability, security and use of the University's information assets. (See Information Security Rule and Information Security Policy, Privacy Management Rule, Records Management Rule, Policy Framework Policy Compliance Rule, Copyright Policy). Implementing and supporting systems for identifying, eliminating, minimising, managing and monitoring of information risks. Planning and reviewing of the University's information assets to meet strategic goals.

Section 2 - Authority and Compliance

(24) The Council makes this Rule pursuant to section 29 of the UNE Act.

(25) This Rule is to be read subject to the Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Cth), and Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021.

(26) The Policy Administrator for this Rule is the Director Governance and University Secretary, who is authorised to make minor administrative updates, and to publish as associated documents any tool that will assist with compliance.

(27) UNE Representatives must observe this Rule in relation to University matters.

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(28) This Rule operates as and from the Effective Date.

(29) Previous Rules and Policies relating to UNE Governance Framework/s are replaced and have no further operation from the Effective Date of this Rule.

Section 3 - Quality Assurance

(30) Quality Assurance regarding the effective implementation of the UNE Governance Framework Rule will be supported by:

a. Assurance by the Director Governance and University Secretary to the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer, and to the Council, at least annually that:
   i. the authorities and delegations of the University are being adhered to;
   ii. that the membership of the University's governing bodies and committees, meets the skill and diversity expectations and members are supported in their roles;
   iii. that governance relationships are being supported and managed consistent with the values and protocols expressed; and
   iv. that each of the functions of governance are working effectively and that issues or areas for continuous improvement are being followed up/actioned.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	18th April 2023
Review Date	18th April 2026
Approval Authority	Council
Approval Date	18th April 2023
Expiry Date	To Be Advised
Unit Head	Kate McNarn Director Governance and University Secretary
Enquiries Contact	Kate McNarn Director Governance and University Secretary Office of the Director Governance and University Secretary 0267732925

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"UNE Representative" - Means a University employee (casual, fixed term and permanent), contractor, agent, appointee, UNE Council member, adjunct, visiting academic and any other person engaged by the University to undertake some activity for or on behalf of the University. It includes corporations and other bodies falling into one or more of these categories.

"Graduate" - Is a person who has completed the requirements for a course and has had their award conferred on them by the University Council.

"Student" - Is an admitted student or an enrolled student, at the relevant time: 1. an admitted student is a student who has been admitted to a UNE course of study and who is entitled to enrol in a unit of study or who has completed all of the units in the UNE course of study; 2. an enrolled student is a student who is enrolled in a unit of study at UNE.

"Senior Executive" - Means the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, Chief Financial Officer, and Chief Operating Officer.

"Research" - Is thecreation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way so as to generate new concepts, methodologies, inventions and understandings. This could include synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative. (Defined by the Australian Research Council)

"Risk Management" - Means coordinated activities to direct and control an organisation with regard to its management of corporate risk.

"Quality Assurance" - Is the ongoing, internal process of assessing a university's outcomes against its aims.

"Standard" - Is an agreed specification or other criterion used as a rule, guidelines or definition of a level of performance or achievement.

"School" - Is an organisational unit comprising academic staff in related fields of study who are responsible for teaching and research in those academic fields together with support staff. Each School also has lead management for the design and delivery of the courses within its responsibility.

"Academic Governance" - Means the framework of policies, structures, relationships, systems and processes that collectively provide leadership to and oversight of the University's academic activities (teaching, learning and

scholarship, and research and research training) at an institutional level.

"Commercial Activity" - A commercial activity is any activity engaged in, by, or on behalf of the University in the exercise of commercial functions of the University; and any other activity comprising the promotion of, establishment of, or participation in any partnership, trust, company, or other incorporated bodies, or joint venture, by or on behalf of the University, that is for the time being declared to be a commercial activity.   Examples of a commercial activity include: being a member or holding securities of another legal entity; holding academic partnerships and collaborations with other organisations; articulation and pathway arrangements with other organisations; research commercialisation (with the exception of research conducted for the University by a member of the University's academic staff); leases and other occupancy agreements (with the exception of study centre premises); and, legal agreements with another party, excluding Students, under which the University agrees to provide goods or services. The following activities are not considered to be commercial activities: the delivery by University staff of the University's academic programs to its Students; and, the Joint Medical Program delivered by the School of Rural Medicine and the University of Newcastle.

"Effective Date" - means the Rule/Policy takes effect on the day on which it is published, or such later day as may be specified in the policy document.

"Faculty" - An organisational unit consisting of a group of related Schools, which is responsible for coordinating the management and quality of the teaching and research conducted by those Schools.

"UNE By-law" - Means the University of New England By-law 2005 (NSW).