



The University of Western Australia  
**Academic Staff Association**

Annual General Meeting

Held on **Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2025 at 12:30pm in the Moot Court Room (G06),  
Law Building, The University of Western Australia**

## **UNCONFIRMED MINUTES**

### **1. Welcome and apologies**

In attendance: Nic Badcock, Ethan Blue, Natalie Brown, Michael Dentith, Lynette Fernandes, Marina Gerzic, Caleb Goods, Allison Imrie, Demelza Ireland, Kyoko Kawasaki, Jeff Keelan, Jessica Kerr, Matthew Linden, Shane Maloney, Brett Montgomery, Melanie O'Brien, Marco Rizzi, Linda Slack-Smith, Dino Spagnoli, Alice Vrielink

Apologies: Zach Aman, Peter Arthur, Dominique Blache, Chantal Bourgault Du Coudray, Romola Bucks, Philip Burcham, Donella Caspersz, Laura Dales, Raymond Da Silva Rosa, Stephen Dobbs, Shevaun Drislane, Angela Evangelinou-Yiannakis, Sonia Fernandez, Kelly Gerard, Michael Giudici, Debra Judge, Nin Kirkham, Matthew Linden, Chris Letheby, Paul Lloyd, Jane Lydon, Philippa Martyr, Sharon Mascher, Doina Olaru, Natasha Pauli, Matthew Piggott, Pejman Rowshan Farzad, Victor Sreeram, Becky Steven, Marc Tennant, Melville Thomas, Kati Tonkin, Jacqueline Van Gent, Jamie Walvisch, Suzanne Wijsman

Proxies: Chantal Bourgault Du Coudray TO Brett Montgomery; Emily Brink TO Brett Montgomery; Laura Dales TO Marco Rizzi; Raymond Da Silva Rosa TO Caleb Goods; Angela Evangelinou-Yiannakis TO Marco Rizzi; Debra Judge TO Caleb Goods; Nin Kirkham TO Shane Maloney; Doina Olaru TO Jessica Kerr; Natasha Pauli TO Shane Maloney

The President took the Chair and formally opened the meeting by acknowledging that the meeting takes place on the traditional lands of the Whadjuk Noongar people, recognising and respecting their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this region.

Members were welcomed to the 2025 AGM of the UWA Academic Staff Association and thanked for making the time to come along. Apologies and proxy votes were noted, and the meeting declared quorate with the use of the proxies.

### **2. Minutes**

Minutes from the 2024 AGM (Appendix A) are introduced for ratification.

***Motion: S Maloney PROPOSED that the minutes of the 2024 Annual General Meeting are accepted. Seconded by A. Vrielink.***

***Unanimously Accepted***

### **3. Business Arising from the Minutes**

Action (from 2024 minutes): The Treasurer will investigate our reinvestment of the Term Deposit at a higher rate, either with Uni Bank or another financial institution.

Outcome: The Treasurer and UWAASA Executive Officer investigated term deposit rates at various financial institutions, and Uni Bank provided the best deal for reinvestment at the time.

Marco noted that he would address all other action items in the President's Report.

#### 4. Appointment of Auditor

***Motion: M. Rizzi PROPOSED that Irvan Stanley from IS Assurance be appointed as auditor for 2025-2026. Seconded by J. Kerr.***

***Unanimously Accepted***

#### 5. Appointment of Returning Officer

***Motion: L. Slack-Smith PROPOSED that the WA Industrial Registrar be requested to arrange for the WA Electoral Commission to conduct the elections for 2026–27. Seconded by D. Ireland.***

***Unanimously Accepted***

#### 6. Treasurer's Report (Professor Shane Maloney) for year end 30 June 2025

Shane extended thanks to Marina for her contributions.

Shane took his report as read, noting the following:

- The auditor conducted a thorough and comprehensive review, with the audited financial report circulated to the membership for review.
- The organisation is currently facing a deficit of approximately \$15,000 for this financial year, attributed mostly to two rounds of WRF this financial year, and funding and the Maddern Award.
- Otherwise, overall expenses have remained static.
- Unibank has been identified as the most favourable banking option available for the term deposit, offering easier access and more competitive rates compared to alternatives.

Question raised: Is it important to continue engaging new members?

Response: Yes, ongoing engagement is essential. Organisational events are considered a valuable investment in community building and member retention. Suggestions for future initiatives and ideas on how to best utilise available funds are encouraged and welcomed.

***Motion: M. Rizzi PROPOSED that the Treasurer's Report is accepted. Seconded by: J. Keelan.***

***Unanimously Accepted***

***Motion: J. Kerr PROPOSED that UWAASA's audited financial statement for the 2024-2025 Financial Year be accepted. Seconded by: A. Imrie.***

***Unanimously Accepted***

#### 7. President's Report (A/Prof Marco Rizzi)

Dear friends, I begin by acknowledging that our meeting takes place on the unceded lands of the Whadjuk Noongar people. I recognise their irreplaceable role in caring for this country for tens of thousands of years, acknowledge their ongoing struggle towards Reconciliation, and pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging, as well as to any Indigenous person in attendance today.

I warmly welcome our members, both current and honorary, to the 2025 Annual General Meeting of the UWA Academic Staff Association. Thank you all for making the time to come along. I know this is a busy time of year—though, thanks to the rather absurd marking deadlines imposed by the graduation calendar, I suspect most of us are finally done! As is customary, I will keep my remarks concise. After this report, we will open the meeting to a broader discussion about the current situation at UWA and, more specifically, what members believe should be the key priorities for UWAASA in the coming year. Before I begin, I want to express my gratitude to those who have made this year possible. Emily Brink, our Vice President, is currently in the United States visiting family, yet her support remains invaluable. My thanks also go to our Secretary, Natasha Pauli, whose responsiveness to time-sensitive matters is unmatched, and to our Treasurer, Shane Maloney, whose steady hand continues to guide us. Last, but certainly not least, I extend heartfelt thanks to our Executive Officer, Marina Gerzic. Her dedication and attention to detail have been vital to our continued existence—most recently demonstrated in her handling of what we might call the “auditor debacle” (for details, ask Marina over lunch!). I will divide my remarks into two parts: first, a brief report on what we have achieved—and what we have not—over the past year; and second, some reflections on the period ahead and the role we can hope to play.

By way of premise, let me share a personal thought. This is my second AGM as President. Last year, I set out an agenda to re-centre UWAASA within the university community. It is not easy when everything we do relies on volunteer time and our workloads are anything but light. Yet, little by little, we keep going. Importantly, we remain an organisation that people turn to when they want to take the pulse of the academic community. I continue to experience this at all levels, being approached for counsel by colleagues ranging from junior staff all the way to management.

### **What We Have Done This Year**

We began the year with a half-day forum in February to discuss the future of the association and explore ideas to revitalise our role. The event was engaging and generated many valuable suggestions. While we could have done more to implement these ideas in the months that followed, we have started laying the groundwork and will continue to build on it. In the new year, I hope to gain traction on several initiatives that emerged from that forum, including:

- Developing cross-disciplinary grants for members and early-career researchers.
- Creating more communal opportunities—such as research and writing sessions or even “do your admin together” gatherings.
- Establishing an informal mentoring scheme, particularly relevant given current developments around promotions and sabbaticals.
- Hosting a forum on AI in tertiary education—a topic that continues to raise increasingly complex questions.

In June, we held a second forum on the future of the teaching-and-research balanced academic. This was particularly significant due to the participation of our Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Tim Colmer, whose comments have given us much to reflect on and strengthened our resolve to advocate for greater certainty in sabbatical and promotion decisions.

We also initiated conversations with several new figures who have recently joined UWA, particularly at that somewhat nebulous mid-level where Directors and Pro Vice-Chancellors proliferate. Jokes aside, we have established a promising rapport with the PVC Research Training and intend to cultivate that relationship with a view to contributing to ECR-focused initiatives.

Beyond these efforts, we continued to engage in governance bodies, particularly Academic Board and the Academic Consultative Committee. We are also pushing for a presence at staff inductions—something that used to be uncontroversial but has now become unexpectedly problematic. Finally, we engaged a graphic designer and are finalising a set of flyers. Early in the new year, we plan a small gathering to distribute these across campus and refresh our notice boards.

### **Looking Ahead**

At the February forum, we floated the idea of changing our legal status but ultimately decided to remain a registered state union. This would have been a significant change, and other priorities have taken precedence. Moreover, we can still achieve much within our current structure. Why does this matter? Because complex times lie ahead.

Mergers are back on the agenda, and the Vice-Chancellor's views—along with other indicators—suggest that whatever happens, UWA will be in the mix. Meanwhile, the Senate inquiry into governance has produced recommendations on transparency, which stand in stark contrast to current practices within our own Senate. Questions on notice raised to Academic Board on the issue of Senate transparency have been bounced back, but we have received assurances that steps will be taken next year to improve transparency—a window of opportunity we should seize. Similarly, a more fulsome report than what has been divulged so far on the India expansion is now promised for the first Academic Board meeting of the year. Other developments include the adoption of 70 ATAR entry requirement, which raises questions about the quantity, quality and strategic location of support for students, as well as implications for academic standards.

In this context we will need a strong Senate representative, and I extend my thanks to Nin Kirkham for stepping up. In parallel, enterprise bargaining is underway, and serious questions loom about the potential for industrial action. Here, we will need to coordinate closely with the NTEU, particularly in light of concerns about bad-faith bargaining. There is much to reflect on. As we move forward, I invite you to consider what we should prioritise, bearing in mind our twofold mission: advocacy and community.

Plans for 2026: UWAASA's plans for 2026 include:

- Strengthening recruitment strategies
- A graphic designer is developing promotional flyers, with plans for a campus-wide distribution in February.
- Continued support for the Philippa Maddern Award: Nominations are now open.
- A forum on Artificial Intelligence, with themes including supervision culture, peer review using AI, and work efficiencies.

***Motion: M. O'Brien PROPOSED that the President's Report is accepted. Seconded by M. Linden.***

***Unanimously Accepted***

### **8. Any Other Business**