

AAUP President Report 2026

*For our Universities to be successful and healthy workplaces in the long term, academics must speak with a united voice, to engage politicians and the wider community in shaping a sustainable future for Australian HE and society more broadly.
(<https://www.professoriate.org/>)*

Specific goals of the AAUP (Australian Association of University Professors):

- Establish chapters of AAUP at all 39 universities in Australia (in 2026 we have 19 local chapters)
- Provide our elected politicians with high quality information and advice, as a large independent national expert group in line with AAUP's nationally agreed [Pillars of a University](#), which form part of the [AAUP Constitution](#)
- By demonstrating our utility, build the clout we need to have a significant say over the direction and substance of future developments within our universities – in line with the Pillars. (<https://www.professoriate.org/>)

Over the past 12 months AAUP has primarily focused on submissions to government, press/media releases and meetings with politicians relating to the Senate and NSW Inquiries into the Governance crisis in Australian universities. It is now widely accepted that universities have governance issues, however work still needs to be done regarding changing governance structures and having academic principles of integrity, transparency, accountability, and collegiality guide decision-making and practices in our universities. Professors and experienced academics remain:

- structurally disadvantaged with formal exclusion from all relevant decision making bodies within universities and
- excluded as representatives on government advisory bodies related to University Governance, such as the Expert Council on University Governance, with no practising professors currently on such bodies.

In an ongoing attempt to address the above issues, in 2025-2026, the AAUP:

- Have 3 x published submissions to the Senate Inquiry into Quality Governance at Australian Higher Education providers: No. 115 and 115.1 (first round) and no. 40 in the second round of submissions. The latter was accepted, but not made public.
- Emailed, and posted by mail, a letter to Minister Jason Clare, the Australian Territory Education Commission (ATEC) and the Expert Council on University Governance in July, August, and September 2025, requesting academic representation on advisory bodies and expert councils to help inform university governance. No replies have been received so far.
- Wrote to Senator David Pocock, requesting to unite forces as Independents to address the above issues, and his office responded, and we have had meetings with his Chief of Staff, Fiona Scott. So far, this has resulted in helping to inform their recommendations arising from the Senate Inquiry, discussions on whistle blower protections, and a request to make our submission 40. public. We are following up on the outcome of the latter.
- Were cited in the Final report of the Senate Inquiry (findings from the AAUP survey and other individual AAUP members were cited).
- Have a published submission to the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into University Governance (No. 13).
- Endorsed the Public Universities Australia: Model University Act (No. 3.) published submission to the NSW Inquiry.

- Met with The Honourable Dr Sarah Kaine, who is leading the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry, with the goal of getting AAUP members invited to speak at the remaining public hearings.
- Endorsed the Public Universities Australia submission to the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into Enhancing University Governance, which has recently been announced.
- Have created a Newsletter, which will provide members with information on AAUP activities and is open to input from members on matters that are important to them.
- Have conducted free workshops on the the [Professional Ethical Framework for Australian Academics](#) (The Framework).
- Supported AAUP members on volunteer basis when they need representation in meetings with university management.
- Been active in the media with AAUP members having articles published in University World News and other outlets.

Moving forward, the AAUP is:

- Meeting in April with Shadow Minister for Education, Julian Leeser, organised by the USAP chapter;
- Continuing to meet and collaborate with David Pocock's office at the Senate level;
- Continuing to meet and collaborate with Dr Sarah Kaine at the NSW Parliament level;
- Offering free workshops on the the [Professional Ethical Framework for Australian Academics](#);
- Developing a statement on GenAI in universities and the need for regulation and education;
- Connecting with similar groups, with similar goals, in the UK, Canada and US;
- Developing a media campaign and seeking a credible journal to promote our academic principles.

Thank you to the AAUP Executive, Council and members for their support and collective wisdom over the past year. Together we can continue to enact our academic values for a better society.

Rylee Dionigi, AAUP President