

Supplementary Questions - INQUIRY INTO NEW SOUTH WALES UNIVERSITY SECTOR

1. As students of the University how were you made aware about the OSI? What engagement have you as the body representing students had on the OSI?

Awareness of the Operational Sustainability Initiative among students was developed in a fragmented and indirect manner. Much of the initial understanding arose through the NTEU, which communicated concerns about the scope and implications of the OSI at a time when clear guidance from the University had not yet been provided. Information was conveyed to some of us in our capacity as student leaders, rather than as members of the general student population, creating a disparity in access to relevant updates. For most students, knowledge of the OSI depended almost exclusively on email communications issued by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and material published on the University's website. This produced a situation in which students were required to locate and interpret information themselves, rather than being actively engaged through a coherent, structured communication process.

- a. In responses to supplementary questions asked at Budget Estimates UTS stated that UTS has actively communicated with students throughout the OSI and the associated course suspension process, has this been your experience?

The assertion made by UTS during Budget Estimates that the University has actively communicated with students throughout the OSI and the associated course suspension process does not accord with our experience. While periodic email updates and web postings were issued, these do not constitute active, consistent, or transparent communication in the context of large-scale institutional change. From our perspective, the University's approach has been episodic and top-down, leaving many students without adequate information or opportunities to engage with decisions that materially impact their academic pathways.

- b. The responses also indicate that Professor Kylie Readman, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students), has met regularly with student representatives to listen to their views and address concerns. What has been your experience of these meetings, who is typically involved from the student body?

Engagement between the University and the student representative body has similarly been limited. The UTSSA President has, on occasion, been able to speak directly with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor or receive high-level updates at Academic Board; however, these interactions have functioned primarily as information briefings rather than substantive consultation. As the incoming President, I have not had any engagement on the OSI to date, the outgoing President has. This experience reflects a broader pattern whereby student representatives have not been invited to meaningfully participate in discussions or decision-making processes regarding initiatives that directly affect the student body.

c. **Has the VC interacted with students about the OSI?**

The Vice-Chancellor has had minimal direct interaction with students regarding the OSI. Under ordinary practice, the UTSSA President meets with the Vice-Chancellor once during their annual term; however, the OSI was not discussed at the 2025 meeting. The Vice-Chancellor also presents a report at Academic Board, which the President attends, and may occasionally take questions. Despite this, it has been our consistent experience that responsibility for communicating with students about the OSI has been delegated to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor. As a result, there has been no substantive, student-facing engagement from the Vice-Chancellor specifically on the OSI.

2. **Are students concerned about the OSI? Why? How has the university communicated to students who have expressed these concerns?**

Students are indeed concerned about the OSI, and these concerns have been driven by the scale of proposed changes, the uncertainty surrounding potential course discontinuations, and the broader implications for students' academic progression and long-term planning. Much of the anxiety students have articulated stems from the absence of early, clear and consistent communication from the University. While UTS has now begun holding consultations with students, this shift appears to have occurred only after considerable pressure from student representatives and the wider student community. Prior to this, information was largely delivered through periodic emails from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, which outlined proposals and high-level updates but offered limited opportunities for genuine dialogue or individualised support.

The emails issued to students communicated the University's description of the OSI process, summarising proposed structural changes, preliminary outcomes, and assurances that 2026 would proceed as "learning as usual." They described the volume of feedback received, provided general guidance for students in courses likely to be continued, redesigned, or discontinued, and referred students to FAQs and feedback forms. However, these communications were unidirectional in nature. They did not substantively engage with the concerns that students had already raised, particularly around the stability of their degrees, the rationale for discontinuations, or the potential impact on study pathways. Students who sought further clarity were directed to generic communication channels such as studentfeedback@uts.edu.au, with most responses incorporated into broader FAQs rather than delivered through personalised engagement.

Students have also expressed ongoing concern due to the fact that the OSI remains a consistently evolving process. As proposals, timelines and stated outcomes have shifted, many students feel a persistent lack of certainty as to whether the information being provided is accurate, up-to-date or complete. This fluid environment has contributed to a reduced level of confidence among students, who report feeling unable to rely on the communications they receive to make informed decisions about enrolment, progression or long-term academic planning.

3. Can you tell us about your experience accessing services as a student at the university?

My experience accessing student services at the University has been marked by confusion, extensive layers of governance and a lack of clarity about where to seek support. Services frequently do not meet students where they are, either in terms of accessibility or responsiveness. [Inference] A major factor contributing to this is the limited involvement of students in the design and oversight of the services intended to support them. Without meaningful student representation, systems tend to reflect administrative priorities rather than the practical needs and lived experiences of students.

a. What would you like to see change about the services that are available and how they are accessed?

There needs to be a structural shift toward embedding students in all aspects of student-facing services. This includes formal roles in consultation, governance, service review and decision-making processes. Services should be designed around student experience, with clear pathways for feedback and transparent mechanisms for responding to the issues and needs raised by the student body. Genuine collaboration with students would ensure services are accessible, relevant and effective.

b. Under the Operational Model Change Proposal it has been suggested that some services – like the assignment review support would move online, what impact will this have on students accessing the service?

Moving further toward online-only delivery would risk undermining the campus culture and the sense of academic support that comes from in-person engagement. The assignment review service already operates in a hybrid format, demonstrating that flexibility can be achieved without diminishing on-campus support. While online access is essential for students with busy schedules or accessibility needs, it should supplement, not replace, front-facing services. Reducing in-person provision would likely create additional barriers for students who rely on direct interaction, and could weaken the broader student experience by further fragmenting the campus community.

4. Ms Campbell, I note you submitted a complaint to the National Student Ombudsman regarding UTS's response to sexual harm and gender-based violence. Can you tell us more about what drove you to make this complaint?

This investigation follows years of student advocacy, resulting in four separate reviews since 2022, all of which identified serious flaws in UTS' systems. Despite these repeated warnings, UTS has failed to deliver meaningful reform. I reported UTS to the Ombudsman because I had tried absolutely everything else internally to get the leadership team to take this seriously. I have completely lost faith in UTS management to fix this without external pressure. Students deserve

better than being re-traumatised by a broken process, but they continue to face the same systemic issues despite years of promises and reviews, including:

- drawn-out timelines with no service standards;
- harmful and confusing communication, including victim-blaming responses;
- lack of transparency, with victim-survivors denied access to their own case documents;
- systemic failures to address coercive control, repeat offending, and patterns of behaviour; and
- fragmented, under-resourced systems that leave students unsupported.

a. You've publicly stated that you felt your efforts for internal reform were fruitless and that you 'completely lost faith in the university management [taking the issue] seriously without significant external pressure', can you tell us what led you to this point? Who did you engage with internally?

The UTSSA has consistently raised the same systemic issues, including through the UTS Student Partnership Agreements, the Student/Council Liaison Group, the Teaching and Learning Committee, the RNA Steering Committee, and continuous meetings with university management such as the Director of the Student Services Unit, Sarah Lok, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education & Students), Kylie Readman, and the Vice-Chancellor, and active participation in all four reviews into the system since 2022. UTS has had years of warnings, reviews, and student testimony, but instead of fixing the problems, management has delayed and downplayed them.

b. Have you met with VC about this issue?

I met once with the Vice-Chancellor on this issue in May 2025. It took two follow-ups before the VC finally provided a response to the things I'd raised during our meeting, 6.5 weeks later.

c. What would you like to see changed about how the University deals with sexual harm and gender-based violence complaints?

I think compliance with the National Code should majorly improve UTS' management of sexual harm and gender-based violence complaints, but there also needs to be a complete culture shift in how UTS treats urgent student concerns within this process - it is unacceptable and reveals major problems in UTS' governance that the same issues can be continuously raised by students without being addressed in any kind of meaningful way.

5. How is the Student Association funded? What is this funding used for?

The UTSSA is funded through the Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF). A breakdown of the UTSSA's expenses can be found on the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission, and on the UTSSA's website.