**Attachment A**

**Background**

On 30 August 2025, I submitted an RTI application in relation to VC Black's appointment. I refined the scope of my application following discussion with UTAS. I received UTAS' initial decision on 9 December 2025 and an internal review decision on 13 March 2026.

I am conscious that the following list of requests looks lengthy, but the requests are tightly contained and I would expect that most relevant information would be readily available on a small number of well-ordered files.

**Information Sought**

I request the following:

1. A table that lists each claim for payment from Deloitte and its related entities to UTAS since 30 August 2025 and its purpose, date of receipt and date of payment and total for each contract (that is, I seek a continuation of the table provided to me in response to my application of 30 August 2025).
2. A table listing former Deloitte partners and staff currently employed by, or seconded to, UTAS, their position titles and their remuneration or remuneration bands, or alternatively the records from which such a table can be derived (personal details to be redacted as appropriate).
3. All records relating to VC Black's dealings with Deloitte since 30 August 2025, in his official capacity as VC of UTAS.
4. All records relating to the appointment of VC Black to the Board of Deloitte since 30 August 2025.
5. All records relating to how UTAS' *STEM Precinct Detailed Business Case* (2025), which is a consultancy report by Deloitte, and the proposal contained therein will be handled in light of conflict-of-interest issues.
6. Any records relating to consideration of excluding Deloitte from future tenders as a means to address VC Black's conflict of interest.
7. All records of communications between UTAS and Deloitte relating to Deloitte's own arrangements for managing the conflict of interest arising from VC Black's Board appointment, including any indication of whether Deloitte will refrain from tendering for future UTAS work.
8. All records relating to artificial intelligence (AI) and any other benefits flowing to UTAS from VC Black's Deloitte appointment.
9. All records relating to the establishment, constituency, governance and functions of the Council Executive that is referred to in <u>Appendix 1</u> below (for the avoidance of doubt, this item is not limited to the period since 30 August 2025).
10. Any records relating to UTAS' consideration of the Commonwealth *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021*, and relevant guidance provided by

the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, in considering the appropriateness of VC Black applying for appointment to the Board of Deloitte and subsequent developments.

**Explanatory Notes**

For the avoidance of doubt:

- "records" include documents (paper or electronic), emails, text messages and messages on other messaging services (such as WhatsApp), in any form, including communications conducted on personal devices or accounts where they relate to official University business.
- Request 4 includes but is not limited to:
  a. Legal advice and/or consideration of the need for legal advice, particularly in relation to VC Black's conflict of interest;
  b. Records of steps taken to address VC Black's conflict of interest;
  c. Records pertaining to development of strategies for dealing with media and other inquiries relating to VC Black's Deloitte appointment;
  d. Records of media and other inquiries, and responses to media and other inquiries, relating to VC Black's Deloitte appointment;
  e. Communications with the Tasmanian Government (including the Premier and Ministers), government agencies and State MPs relating to VC Black's Deloitte appointment;
  f. Records pertaining to VC Black's time commitment to Deloitte, including particularly any records that VC Black provided the document reproduced in Appendix 2 below, or the information therein, to the Chancellor or other members of the UTAS Council;
  g. Records pertaining to VC Black's Deloitte remuneration, including any records that VC Black provided this information to the Chancellor or other members of the UTAS Council;
  h. Records regarding whether VC Black has begun making donations to UTAS to offset his Deloitte remuneration, and – if so – when he began doing so, the amounts donated and the amounts he has received from Deloitte;
  i. Records regarding why VC Black chose to make donations to UTAS rather than simply offsetting his Deloitte remuneration against his remuneration as VC;
  j. Records regarding the tax treatment and deductibility of the donations; and
  k. Records relating to any consideration of national reform initiatives and recommendations in the handling of VC Black's Deloitte appointment.
- Request 5 includes but is not limited to records relating to whether VC Black has been replaced as UTAS' STEM Precinct Detailed Business Case Project Sponsor and impacts on the project if he has been or will be.

**Public Interest**

In assessing this application, including any exemptions that may be considered, I ask that the decision-maker have regard to the substantial public interest in disclosure of the information sought. The information concerns the expenditure of public funds by Tasmania's only university, the management of a conflict of interest acknowledged by the University in briefing to the Chancellor and involving its most senior officer, and the adequacy of the University Council's oversight of that officer.

These matters have already been the subject of media reporting, criticism by the National Tertiary Education Union, and questions in the Tasmanian Parliament. They also arise in the context of national university governance reforms, including the University Governance Principles announced by the Commonwealth Minister for Education on 18 October 2025. Those Principles, which took effect as part of the *Higher Education Standards Framework* (Threshold Standards) on 13 July 2026, require that external roles undertaken by Vice-Chancellors be approved by the governing body and occur only by exception.

Disclosure would promote the objects of the *Right to Information Act 2009* by enhancing the accountability of University officers, informing public debate on a matter of established public concern, and enabling scrutiny of how the University is managing an ongoing conflict of interest. In relation to any internal deliberative or working documents, I note that the public interest in understanding how the University considers and manages these matters lies at the heart of this application.

**Appendix 1**

The Council Executive is referred to several times in documents provided to me in response to my RTI application of 30 August 2025. For example:

UNIVERSITY of TASMANIA

UNIVERSITY of TASMANIA

**BRIEFING NOTE FOR THE CHANCELLOR**

**SUBJECT:** **APPOINTMENT AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST MANAGEMENT**

**FROM:** **University Secretary**

**CRITICAL DATE:** **30 May 2025**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Chancellor:

- Agree the proposed appointment of the Vice-Chancellor to the role of external Board member of the Deloitte Board.
- Note the resulting potential conflict of interest.
- Approve the management plan and associated actions to monitor and limit the risk.

**RATIONALE:**
Situation (Context):

- In March 2025, the Vice-Chancellor approached the Council Executive (Chancellor and Deputy Chancellors) to seek their input and gage their level of support for applying for the position of Non-Executive Member of the Deloitte Board.

**Appendix 2**

The following document was provided in response to my RTI application of 30 August 2025, but none of the other documents I received, or have otherwise obtained, indicate that the Chancellor or other members of the UTAS Council were/are aware of this document or the information therein.

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[redacted]

[redacted]

## Board Calendar 2025

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| Month | Important Dates | Board Meeting Date & Location |
|---|---|---|
| January | | 22nd - Sydney |
| February | | 18th - Hybrid Meeting |
| March | | 20th - Canberra |
| April | 3rd & 4th Australia Partners Meeting (Cairns) | 22nd - Hybrid Meeting |
| May | End of Financial Year | 29th - TBC |
| June | | 26th - TBC |
| July | | 24th - TBC |
| August | | 28th - TBC |
| September | | 23rd - TBC |
| October | Annual General Meeting - via VC (TBC) | 28th - TBC |
| November | | 25th - TBC |
| December | | 18th - TBC |

The Board meets for a full-day meeting each month, with approximately half of the meetings held in-person in various Deloitte office locations around Australia.

The remaining meetings are held in a hybrid format, with Board members joining the meeting from their local office.



[redacted]