Executive Group
September 2026

Workplace Change Proposal and Implementation Plan
Macquarie University Special Education Centre (MUSEC)

*This Workplace Change Proposal and Implementation Plan have been prepared in accordance with Clause 46 of the Macquarie University Professional Staff Enterprise Agreement 2023 (**Enterprise Agreement**). The proposal is being issued to all directly impacted professional staff (and their unions) in the Macquarie University Special Education Centre (MUSEC) within the School of Education in the Faculty of Arts.*

Staff are encouraged to provide feedback, including any alternative proposals. All responses will be considered prior to the University deciding whether to proceed with the proposed changes (or a modified version).

While it is recognised that staff should be able to discuss the proposal with their unions, advisors and colleagues, this proposal does contain confidential information about the University, as well as sensitive and confidential information about staff of the University. Accordingly, it should not be disclosed outside of the University and should be treated with sensitivity internally within the University.

1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Macquarie University Special Education Centre (MUSEC) forms part of and is overseen by the Macquarie School of Education in the Faculty of Arts, with its finances managed through a project account within the Macquarie School of Education.

MUSEC opened in 1976 and its program, research focus, student population, size and operational requirements have evolved significantly since that time. While MUSEC was historically closely connected to the University's teaching and research activities, it now operates primarily as a specialist school providing education services to students from Kindergarten to Year 6.

Sector Context

The degree and complexity of regulatory and legal requirements governing the independent primary school sector have increased significantly over time. These requirements include obligations relating to school registration, student funding, child safety, disability funding administration and other regulatory reporting requirements.

In addition to educational outcomes, schools are required to manage a broad range of governance, compliance, workforce and operational requirements. These obligations have increased the level of organisational support required to operate a specialist school environment.

University Context

MUSEC is an independent school based at Macquarie University providing high-quality education to primary students with mild to moderate intellectual disability, autism and language difficulties across Kindergarten to Year 6.

MUSEC is one of 64 independent Special Assistance / Special Schools in NSW and is the only Special School owned and operated by a university.

MUSEC has a strong reputation for delivering high-quality, evidence-based programs for students with disabilities, and transitioning students to their next educational setting. The School offers small class sizes, personalised education programs and highly qualified staff.

MQSL is an entity 100% owned and controlled by Macquarie University and shares the same CEO and Directors as U@MQ. There is significant operational and governance experience across both MQSL and U@MQ in early childhood education and community-facing programs that will support MUSEC to continue fulfilling its purpose of providing high quality education for children with complex needs, while ensuring its operational and governance arrangements remain fit for purpose

2. RATIONALE FOR CHANGE

This section sets out the rationale for the change, including objectives and aims of the change, as per clause 46.8(a) of the Enterprise Agreement.

It is intended that the proposed transfer of MUSEC from the Faculty of Arts to MQSL will enhance operational support and organisational sustainability, while maintaining MUSEC's established educational programs and services. The proposed transfer recognises the evolution of MUSEC from its historical association with the University's teaching and research activities to a specialist school operating within an increasingly complex regulatory environment. This aligns with the 'Sustainability and Performance' pillar under the University Operating plan 2025-2030. Further details on the objectives and anticipated benefits of the proposed transfer are outlined below.

(a) Alignment of organisational purpose

MUSEC has evolved significantly since its establishment and now operates primarily as a specialist school providing education services to children and families. While historically associated with the University's teaching and research activities, it no longer undertakes material teaching or research activity within the Faculty of Arts. The proposed transfer better aligns MUSEC's current purpose, operating model and support requirements with MQSL's education and community-facing service functions.

(b) Education-sector operational and compliance expertise

The operation of early childhood education centres, Children's Programs and specialist schools is governed by a range of complex regulatory, governance and compliance obligations. These include requirements relating to school registration and accreditation, child safety, disability funding, educational reporting and workforce compliance. Through its relationship with U@MQ and other University-owned services, MQSL has access to governance, operational and compliance capabilities relevant to the ongoing operation of MUSEC.

(c) Shared governance

Alignment with other Macquarie University-owned education services will support coordinated governance and management of centres and schools, and effective management of operational, regulatory and infrastructure-related requirements. In progressing this change, it is proposed that the existing MQSL Board is expanded to include Professor Deborah Youdell, Dean of Macquarie School of Education, to enhance educational expertise within the governance structure and provide continuity in leadership and oversight.

3. PROPOSED CHANGES AND STAFF IMPACT

This section sets out the recommended changes, as per clause 46.8 (a) of the Enterprise Agreement; and likely effects of the change on staff, including changes to positions, structures, proposed redundancies and/or redeployments, and/or closure of a University work unit or part of a University work unit, as per clause 46.8(b) of the Enterprise Agreement.

The key proposed change is the transfer of MUSEC, including all continuing, casual and fixed term employees employed at the proposed implementation date, from the Faculty of Arts to MQSL with an effective date of 26 November 2026. No positions are proposed to be disestablished, no new positions are proposed to be created and no redundancies or redeployment processes are proposed as part of this change.

IMPACT ON STAFF

This proposed transfer has been developed on the basis that the transfer of business provisions under the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth) are expected to apply. On this basis, employees who transfer to MQSL are expected to continue to be covered by the applicable Macquarie University enterprise agreement and associated employment arrangements following transfer. The proposed transfer is not anticipated to result in any adverse changes to the terms and conditions of employment of continuing, casual and fixed term employees who remain employed at the implementation date.

A Positions proposed to transfer to MQSL

Aside from the proposed change in employing entity, no substantive impact on staff who occupy positions proposed to be directly transferred to MQSL is anticipated. Employees who transfer to MQSL will continue to be covered by the applicable Macquarie University enterprise agreement and service with the University will be recognised by MQSL for all purposes (including leave entitlements and redundancy).

B Proposed disestablished positions

There are no positions proposed to be disestablished.

C Proposed new positions

There are no new proposed positions.

Impact on Fixed Term and Casual Staff

Fixed Term Staff

Staff with fixed term contracts with an end date after the change implementation date will transfer to MQSL on their current terms and conditions (including their current contract end date and conditions of employment under the Enterprise Agreement).

MQSL may choose to offer further fixed-term contracts following the transfer date having regard to operational requirements. Any further fixed-term employment will be subject to the industrial instrument applicable to the employee at the relevant time.

Casual Staff

MUSEC currently operates with a casual pool of approximately 40 Classroom Assistants and Special Education Teachers. It is proposed that current casual employees in this pool be offered casual employment with MQSL commencing from the transfer date, so they can continue to undertake casual work for MUSEC.

Their employment with MUSEC will remain casual and will not guarantee any particular amount or pattern of work. The Enterprise Agreement will continue to apply to these casual employees in relation to the transferring work.

The Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) attachment to this change proposal and implementation plan provides further detail on the staff impacts arising from the proposed transfer.

OPERATIONAL IMPACTS

It is not anticipated that the proposed transfer will result in changes to the day-to-day educational operations of MUSEC. MUSEC will continue to deliver high-quality education to primary students with mild to moderate intellectual disability, autism and language difficulties across Kindergarten to Year 6.

The proposed transition is expected to provide greater alignment of governance, compliance, operational support and risk management functions through MQSL. This includes access to systems, processes and specialist expertise relevant to the operation of education and community-facing services, while maintaining MUSEC's existing educational model and service delivery.

IMPLEMENTATION

This section outlines the proposed implementation plan and timelines as per clause 46.8(d) of the Enterprise Agreement.

If this proposed change proceeds, it is anticipated that the following implementation timelines would apply:

- Consultation commences: 23 September 2026
- Feedback on change proposal closes: 22 October 2026
- Decision made and communicated: 28 October 2026
- MQSL employment offers issued: 29 October 2026
- Response date for MQSL employment offers: 5 November 2026
- Implementation effective date: 26 November 2026

These timeframes are indicative only and staff will be advised of any changes in anticipated implementation timeframes.

Proposed Process for Transferring Staff

Staff whose positions are proposed to transfer to MQSL would receive offers of employment from MQSL. These offers of employment would have effect from 26 November 2026 and provide that:

- Employees will continue to be covered by the applicable Macquarie University enterprise agreement and associated employment arrangements following transfer.
- Existing leave balances will transfer to MQSL, where applicable.
- Service with the University will be continue to be recognised for relevant service-based employment entitlements including, where applicable, leave and redundancy.

4. POTENTIAL DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IMPACTS

No disproportionate diversity and inclusion impacts have been identified arising from the proposed transfer. This assessment is based on the fact that all continuing positions are proposed to transfer to MQSL, no positions are proposed to be disestablished, no new positions are proposed to be created, and no adverse changes to employment conditions, recognised service or accrued entitlements are anticipated as a result of the proposed transfer.

5. POTENTIAL WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPACTS

The University recognises that workplace change, including changes to governance and employment arrangements, can give rise to work, health and safety considerations. The following table considers common work health and safety hazards that may arise throughout change and sets out relevant control measures that are either in place or proposed to be implemented.

Potential risk area	Activities to mitigate and manage
Change and uncertainty	• The University will undertake a structured consultation process on the proposed changes, as set out in this Workplace Change Proposal. • Staff will receive information regarding the proposed transfer, implementation process and employment arrangements during the consultation period. • Staff are encouraged to actively participate in the consultation process, ask questions and provide feedback.
Workload management	• As no positions are proposed to be disestablished, no new positions are proposed to be created, and no changes to day-to-day educational operations are anticipated, no material change to workload is expected as a result of the proposed transfer.
Communication	• Staff will be kept informed throughout the process via timely and accessible communications. • Staff will be given an opportunity to engage with the change in various forums and formats, including written feedback and meetings.
Support	• The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a confidential counselling, coaching and wellbeing which is available for staff affected by this change. The Macquarie University EAP service is provided by TELUS Health and is available 24/7 on 1300 360 364 or log in for online support. • UniSuper offer a range of free and confidential health support services to members including in relation to mental health. Further information is available here: https://www.unisuper.com.au/insurance/360health

6. FEEDBACK AND CONSULTATION

The formal consultation period is as follows:

- Release of change proposal

and implementation plan: 23 September 2026

- Feedback on change proposal implementation plan closes: 22 October 2026

Feedback on the change proposal and implementation plan should be emailed to the Dean of School of Education, Professor Deborah Youdell at dean.education@mq.edu.au by close of business on 22 October 2026**.**

The University will consider all feedback received during the consultation period before making a final decision regarding the proposal. Affected staff and their representatives will be advised of the outcome of the consultation process and any decision made in relation to the proposal.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

MUSEC generates a modest annual surplus and can meet its financial obligations through a combination of State and Commonwealth Funding, and students' tuition fees.

The proposed transfer is primarily intended to strengthen operational support arrangements and long-term sustainability rather than address financial viability concerns or reduce expenditure. The University currently provides in-kind support to cover the provision of the school's building and grounds, property maintenance (cleaning & repairs) and utilities as well as operational support services, including finance, IT, HR and procurement. This in-kind support will continue with the proposed operating structure.

8. INFORMATION AND SUPPORT FOR AFFECTED STAFF

Staff may seek information and support on the proposed change and/or on issues arising from the proposal from a number of sources:

Key contacts *For feedback on the proposed changes and/or further information about the rationale for change or proposed transfer.*	Professor Deborah Youdell Dean of Macquarie School of Education – Faculty of Arts Email: dean.education@mq.edu.au
Human Resources *For general HR information, clarification around the change proposal, further information about new positions or recruitment processes, etc.*	Frances Olsen, Lead HR Business Partner – MQSL Email: frances.olsen@mq.edu.au Michael Hanckel, Lead HR Business Partner – Faculty of Arts Email: michael.hanckel@mq.edu.au
Employee Relations *For information about the change process in the Enterprise Agreement.*	Alyssa FitzGerald Senior ER Consultant Email: alyssa.fitzgerald@mq.edu.au

Superannuation *For information about superannuation and financial advice*	• For UniSuper members, www.unisuper.com.au or, phone 1800 331 685 • For SSS members, www.statesuper.nsw.gov.au or, phone 1300 130 096 • For SASS members, www.statesuper.nsw.gov.au or, phone 1300 130 095 For other funds, please contact your fund's advice line or customer service centre
Employee Assistance Program *For free counselling or support about any work or personal matter*	The Employee Assistance Program (**EAP**) is a confidential counselling, coaching and wellbeing which is available for staff affected by this change. The Macquarie University EAP service is provided by TELUS Health and is available 24/7 on **1300 360 364** or online support through the TELUS Health One app or TELUS Health website.
Employee Representative *For personal advice about your rights and entitlements*	Staff are entitled to be represented by the Union or other Representative at any stage of discussion of the workplace change. Although this change proposal is confidential to Macquarie University staff, an affected staff member can provide a copy of this change proposal to their employee representative for the purposes of advice on the basis that its contents remain confidential.