

## Standing Orders of Committees of Academic Senate

### General

1. Committees of Academic Senate (the Committee) are established under the authority of Rule 9(4)(c) of the Academic Senate Rules.
2. The “Chair” means the Chair of the Committee.
3. “Members” means the ex-officio and appointed members of the Committee as set out in its Terms of Reference
4. The Committee must publish clear Terms of Reference on the Academic Senate website outlining the Committee’s purpose, roles and responsibilities, membership, and tenure.
5. The Committee should be strategically focussed, providing policy and evaluative oversight of the academic activity for which it is responsible.
6. Members of the Committee act under the authority of, and are accountable to Academic Senate.
7. The Committee shall conduct its meetings in accordance with these Standing Orders, subject to the Macquarie University Act, By-laws, University Rules, Council and Academic Senate resolutions.
8. The Committee carries the responsibility to contribute to the implementation of the Academic Senate communication strategy. In particular, it must ensure that its website is up to date and structured to clearly articulate key priorities and strategic initiatives.

9. The Committee must ensure that an appropriate system of academic risk oversight and internal controls is in place, in its area of responsibility, to enable effective identification and management of academic risk.
10. These standing orders are established by resolution of Academic Senate.

### **The Chair**

11. The Chair of the Committee shall be appointed by the Chair of Academic Senate, in consultation with the Academic Senate Standing Committee.
12. The Chair shall act in an independent capacity and shall not be a member of the University Executive unless otherwise approved by Academic Senate.
13. The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Committee except in the circumstances described in Standing Order 14
14. Should the Chair
  - a) be absent;
  - b) elect not to preside; or
  - c) be unable to preside,or, in the event that the office of the Chair is vacant, then the members of the Committee shall elect a presiding member from among their number.
15. The role of the Chair is to:
  - a) lead the Committee;
  - b) oversee the Committee in the effective discharge of its role;

- c) manage the efficient organisation and conduct of the Committee's functions and meetings;
- d) facilitate the effective contribution of all Committee members;
- e) develop and maintain a relationship with appropriate members of staff and Governance Services to ensure appropriate reporting;
- f) ensure adequate reporting to Academic Senate;
- g) promote constructive and respectful relations between members; and
- h) commit the time necessary to discharge effectively his or her role as Chair.

### **Executive Action**

- 16. The Chair may take executive action by way of a flying minute on behalf of the Committee.
- 17. The Chair of Academic Senate, in consultation with the Academic Senate Standing Committee, may take executive action by way of out of session business in regard to the Committee's business.
- 18. At the earliest opportunity, all executive actions shall be reported to the Committee on the exercise of this authority.

### **Membership**

- 19. The membership of the Committee must be broadly representative of the University community, in all its diversity. However, the Committee does not need to be constituted to represent every possible interest group.
- 20. Stakeholders with expert skills, experience and knowledge will be appointed to the Committee and are required to act in the best interest of the University and work collectively to fulfill the

Committee's role.

21. In order to achieve broad representation and collegial decision making, the Committee must comprise an appropriate balance of ex-officio, appointed, Senate elected, and student members.
22. Unless otherwise approved by Academic Senate, the Committee shall have a membership which comprises:
  - a) The Chair or Deputy Chair of Academic Senate,
  - b) Up to five (5) ex-officio members,
  - c) One (1) nominee of the Executive Dean of each Faculty,
  - d) One (1) nominee of the Faculty Board of each Faculty,
  - e) Members of Academic Senate as appointed by the Chair of Academic Senate,
  - f) Up to four (4) members in a specialist capacity as nominated by the Chair,
  - g) At least (1) student member, of an appropriate category, nominated by the Chair in consultation with relevant student bodies, and
  - h) Up to three (3) co-opted members as required.
23. The Chair of Academic Senate shall approve the membership of the Committee, in consultation with the Academic Senate Standing Committee.
24. All members of the Committee are responsible for consulting early and widely with the broader University community to promote engagement and commitment amongst all stakeholders.
25. Members of the Committee are expected to:
  - a) act in good faith in the best interests of the University;
  - b) contribute the time needed to study and understand the papers

- provided;
- c) apply good analytical skills, objectively and with sound judgement;
- d) bring their talents, insights and views of other members of the University community to discussions;
- e) be the point of contact between the University and the faculty/community;
- f) ensure that confidential information is not disclosed; and
- g) express opinions frankly and ask questions that go to the fundamental core of the issue; and
- h) work collaboratively with other members of Senate.

### **Meeting Arrangements**

- 26. The committee will meet as frequently as required. The meeting dates of the Committee will normally be confirmed by November of the previous year, but may be varied.
- 27. The Chair may adjourn a meeting in appropriate circumstances (for example, lack of a quorum).
- 28. The Chair shall not adjourn a meeting to prevent a motion or amendment being put without the approval of two thirds of the members present. This discretion shall not limit any other powers of the Chair to adjourn a meeting.
- 29. When a meeting is adjourned:
  - a) no further business will be dealt with. Business left unfinished will be carried over to the next regular meeting; and

- b) for 10 days or more, notice of the adjourned meeting shall be given as for an ordinary meeting. It shall not be necessary to give any notice of the business to be transacted at an adjourned meeting.
30. The Chair may cancel an ordinary or adjourned meeting of the Committee any time in between meetings, if the Chair is of the opinion that there is not sufficient business to warrant the holding of a meeting of the Committee. The Chair will also determine how business that would have been transacted at the cancelled meeting will be dealt with, in the manner set out in Standing Order 46.
31. Meetings of the Committee shall be open to members of the University, that is, staff, students and graduates. Members of the University may attend meetings of the Senate as observers and shall be admitted subject to the availability of space.
32. The dates of meetings of the Committee, and of any working parties thereof, shall be published in the Academic Governance Calendar.
33. Members of the University who intend to attend the Committee should inform Governance Services of their intention to attend the meeting at least two days prior to the meeting.
34. Ordinarily, observers shall not be accorded speaking or voting rights. The Chair may however grant observers leave to speak at a meeting on a matter or item of discussion.
35. The Chair may invite non-members to attend meetings of the Committee including the issuing (and withdrawal) of standing invitations.

36. Observers at the Committee will be excluded from the meeting when confidential agenda items are discussed. If a confidential item emerges in the course of discussion, observers shall be requested to leave for the duration of that discussion.

### **Quorum and Attendance**

37. It is incumbent on members to attend meetings of the Committee unless absent from the University or otherwise prevented from attending.

38. The number of members who constitute a quorum must be at least half the membership of the Committee plus one.

39. Vacant positions on the Committee do not count toward the calculation of the number required for a quorum.

40. Members unable to attend the Committee will not be entitled to a proxy.

41. Formal attendance and voting via video link or other remote connection approved by the Chair will be permitted and will be included in the determination of a quorum.

42. If a quorum is not reached within 15 minutes of the scheduled start of a meeting, the Chair may adjourn the meeting.

43. If no quorum is present, the session can proceed at the Chair's request and with endorsement of members of Committee who are present. Items of business can be discussed (but no formal decisions can be made) and the inquorate session is recorded as notes.

44. Items of business discussed at an inquorate session may be sent to Committee members out of session for approval by flying minute.
45. In the instance where sufficient members arrive (part way through an inquorate session) such that a quorum is achieved, the now quorate members may choose to resolve to approve and accept all the items discussed during the inquorate session. Such items would then be considered resolutions of the now formal meeting.
46. Where an inquorate session does not proceed as outlined above, the Chair will determine how business will be dealt with, which may include:
- a) through out of session business;
  - b) at the next meeting of the Senate; or
  - c) for no further consideration.
47. Once a meeting of the Committee has commenced with a quorum, a quorum shall be deemed to exist thereafter, unless a member of the Committee draws the lack of a quorum to the Chair's attention. On the Chair's attention being drawn to the lack of a quorum she or he shall adjourn the meeting for five minutes. If at the expiration of five minutes there still is no quorum, the Chair may adjourn the meeting and/or deal with remaining business as noted in Standing Order 46 above.

### **Absence from Meetings**

48. Governance Services will monitor absences and apologies submitted by members who are unable to attend a meeting. The receipt of an apology does not imply the consent of the Senate to grant leave of absence.

49. The Committee, at its discretion, may grant leave of absence for one or more meetings. Members must seek leave in writing and in advance giving reasons for the proposed leave of absence.
  
50. Appointed members of the Committee who absent themselves from three consecutive meetings, without leave being granted, will be deemed to have vacated office.
  
51. Ex-officio members of the Committee who absent themselves from three consecutive meetings, without leave being granted, will have their membership suspended for a period, of no less than one year, as determined by the Chair of Academic Senate. The Chair of Academic Senate, in consultation with the Academic Senate Standing Committee, shall determine a replacement for the suspended member.

## **Agendas**

52. The Chair shall set the agenda for Committee meetings.
  
53. The Registrar of University, or nominee, is Secretary to the Committee. The Secretary will ensure the agenda for each meeting and supporting papers are circulated electronically, after approval from the Chair, to members, normally six days prior to the meeting.
  
54. All papers for inclusion on the agenda shall normally be provided to Governance Services at least 10 working days before the meeting.
  
55. Any member who intends to bring before the Committee a matter, which might be ruled as confidential, shall inform the Chair of this

intention before the meeting. Confidential matters or documents must be clearly marked on the agenda and on all associated documents.

56. In exceptional circumstances, late items may be considered, via electronic circulation, at the discretion of the Chair.
57. The Chair will call for starring agenda items. Agenda items may be starred by any member of Committee, prior to, or at the start of the meeting when called on by the Chair.
58. Acceptance of all unstarred items will be voted upon as a block.
59. At a meeting, the agenda order may be varied by the Chair or on the vote of the members present.
60. The agenda will be published on the Academic Senate website prior to the meeting.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

61. At each meeting of the Committee the Chair must request members to declare any potential conflict of interest, either actual or perceived, in respect of any item on the agenda.
62. The Committee shall determine how declared conflicts will be managed.
63. The Chair shall stand aside as chair for a particular item on a meeting agenda that presents him or her with a potential conflict of interest. In such cases, the Committee will nominate a temporary chair for the discussion of that particular item.

## **Questions on Notice**

64. Questions on notice may only be received from members and will only be accepted with the prior approval of the Chair. The following procedures apply to questions received on notice:

- a) at least 2 days notice must be provided for questions on notice
- b) the Chair will determine if the matter is within the Committee's authority and appropriate to be addressed at the meeting
- c) the Chair will allocate a period during the meeting to allow for any questions on notice to be addressed
- d) the Chair may allow an address by the member who submitted the question and this will be limited to five minutes
- e) any written paper to support the question on notice must be provided to the Chair at least 2 days in advance of the meeting
- f) no member should be permitted to address more than two successive meetings of the Committee or, more than half of the meetings in a year; and
- g) in respect of a question on notice, no decision will be made on the basis of an address to Committee without the University Executive having a reasonable opportunity, if necessary, to respond to any matters raised in that question and address.

## **Motions and Rules of Debate**

65. In the conduct of meetings, the Chair may exercise all reasonable discretion, and in particular may:

- a) require a speaker who, in his or her opinion, is being unduly verbose or repetitious or who is not keeping to the point under discussion, to desist
- b) refuse to accept motions and amendments which are not couched in clear terms

- c) require withdrawal of offensive statements or the imputation of improper motives
- d) preserve order and prevent interference to speakers by private talks or heckling remarks
- e) require a person who persists in being disorderly to withdraw from the meeting

66. At any time prior to, or during, a Committee meeting, the proposer or the Chair may withdraw a motion or agenda item.

67. The Chair can put routine items to the vote without requiring a seconder. This includes, but is not limited to:

- a) Apologies or requests for leave;
- b) Approval of minutes of previous meetings; and
- c) Starring of items and confirmation of confidential items.

68. The Chair has absolute discretion in permitting tabling of documents at the meeting and motions without notice.

69. Motions may be put forward by any member or working party of the Committee, and will require a proposer and seconder.

70. The proposer of a motion will have the right to speak first on a motion, followed by the seconder. The Chair will normally then call upon one or two members who may wish to speak against the motion or propose amendments, before referring the matter for general debate.

71. The Chair will generally not allow non-members of the Committee to speak to a motion.

72. A proposer may withdraw a motion at any time (prior to or during a meeting), at which point debate will cease.
73. If an amendment to a motion is proposed, seconded and accepted by the proposer of the original motion, then the amended motion will become the substantive motion. If not, then the Committee may vote upon the amendment.
74. Subject to Standing Order 73, when an amendment is before the Chair, discussion shall be confined to that amendment, and no further amendment shall be proposed until the amendment before the Chair has been disposed of.
75. All amendments to motions must be dealt with before the final substantive motion is put to members.
76. With the exception of the Chair, those present at a Committee meeting will not interrupt or interject when another member “has the floor”.
77. Any member of the Committee may raise a point of order, which shall take precedence over all other business and be open to discussion. The point must be raised at the time the alleged irregularity occurred.
- a) the Chair will make a ruling on a point of order; and
  - b) any member of the Committee disagreeing with the Chair’s ruling on a point of order may move dissent. Such motion shall be put to vote forthwith without debate. Upon such a motion, the Deputy Chair shall take the Chair until the motion is disposed of.

### **Method of Voting**

78. All questions must be decided by the majority of the members present and voting at the meeting and the Chair will have a deliberative vote and, in the case of an equality of votes, a casting vote.
79. At all meetings of the Committee, voting shall normally be on the voices.
80. At the discretion of the Chair or on the request of any two members of the Committee, voting shall be by a show of hands and will include a tally of those voting for, those voting against and those abstaining from the vote.
81. A ballot may be used only when it is required by an existing resolution of the Academic Senate, or at the discretion of the Chair or when demanded by at least 10 members of the committee. When a ballot is taken, it shall be conducted in such form as the Chair may direct provided its secrecy is preserved.

### **Minutes**

82. The Secretary will prepare minutes of Academic Senate meetings.
83. The draft minutes, once approved by the Chair, will be circulated to members normally seven days following the meeting.
84. The minutes will be included for approval at the next meeting and once approved will be published on the Academic Senate website.
85. The minutes will contain the results of any vote taken by the Academic Senate.

### **Delegations to Working Parties**

86. The Committee cannot establish, and will not delegate responsibilities to, permanent standing sub-committees unless otherwise approved by the Academic Senate Standing Committee.
87. The Committee may appoint working parties for a defined purpose and tenure, under terms of reference conforming to a common standard determined by Academic Senate.
88. The Committee remains responsible for all decisions and actions it delegates to working parties.
89. Working parties will consist of members appointed by the Committee, and can include persons who are not members of the Committee.

#### **Review and Evaluation**

90. At its first meeting of each calendar year, the Committee shall establish a schedule of work for that year and report this schedule to Academic Senate. The Committee will report to Academic Senate on progress against this schedule on a semi-annual basis.
91. The Committee will conduct an annual self-assessment of its activities as measured against the provisions of its Terms of Reference.
92. At any time, the Committee may ask Academic Senate to consider a revision to its Terms of Reference.