

# Academic Senate and Academic Senate Committees Procedure

## Section 1 - Purpose

- (1) The purpose of this Procedure is to set out the requirements and protocols for meetings of the Academic Senate and Committees of the Academic Senate and related processes.
- (2) This Procedure should be read in conjunction with the [Academic Senate Rules](#) and the Terms of Reference for each Committee.
- (3) This Procedure may be used by other academic governance bodies (such as Faculty and College Boards), noting that some clauses are only applicable to the Academic Senate or its Committees.

## Section 2 - Policy

- (4) Nil.

## Section 3 - Procedures

### Part A - General

- (5) The Academic Senate may determine procedures to govern the conduct of its meetings as set out in clause 37 (a) of the Macquarie University [Academic Senate Rules](#).
- (6) The Academic Senate will conduct its meetings in accordance with this Procedure, subject to the Macquarie University Act, By-laws, University Rules and resolutions of the University Council (Council).
- (7) This Procedure may be amended by a majority vote of the Academic Senate.

### Part B - The Chair and the Deputy Chair

#### Academic Senate

- (8) The Chair and Deputy Chair of Academic Senate will be elected using the process outlined in clauses 26 to 28 of the [Academic Senate Rules](#).
- (9) The Chair will preside at any meeting of the Academic Senate except in the circumstances described in clauses 10 or 11.
- (10) The Deputy Chair will preside at a meeting of the Academic Senate, should the Chair:
- a. be on leave;
  - b. elect not to preside; or

- c. be unable to preside.

(11) Where the Chair and both Deputy Chair are both absent, as described in clause 10, the members must elect a presiding member of the Academic Senate from among their number.

(12) The role of the Chair is to:

- a. lead the Academic Senate;
- b. be a member of the Council and its Committees, as appropriate;
- c. oversee the Academic Senate in the effective discharge of its role;
- d. manage the efficient organisation and conduct of the Academic Senate's functions and meetings;
- e. facilitate the effective contribution of all members;
- f. develop and maintaining a relationship with appropriate members of staff and Governance Services to ensure appropriate reporting;
- g. ensure adequate reporting from Academic Senate committees to the Academic Senate;
- h. ensure adequate reporting from Academic Senate to the Council;
- i. promote constructive and respectful relations between members; and
- j. commit the time necessary to discharge effectively their role as Chair.

(13) The role of the Deputy Chair is to:

- a. provide support to the Chair in each of their activities;
- b. act in the role of the Chair in circumstances where the Chair is on leave or declares a conflict of interest;
- c. act in the role of the Chair in the event that the office is vacant; and
- d. perform such other duties as are agreed between the Chair and Deputy Chair and reported to the Academic Senate.

### **Committees of Academic Senate**

(14) The Chair of a Committee of the Academic Senate (Committee) will be appointed by the Chair of the Academic Senate.

(15) The Deputy Chair of the Committee will be appointed from the membership of the Committee.

(16) The Chair of the Committee will act in an independent capacity and shall not be a member of the University Executive unless otherwise approved by the Academic Senate (or the Academic Senate Standing Committee on behalf of Academic Senate).

(17) The Chair of Academic Senate, in consultation with the Academic Senate Standing Committee, will determine any specific criteria to be applied when selecting a Committee Chair.

(18) A Chair and Deputy Chair of a Committee will normally be appointed for a term of two years and will be eligible to be reappointed to a further two consecutive terms of office.

(19) The Chair will preside at all meetings of the Committee except in the circumstances described in clause 20.

(20) Should the Chair of a Committee be absent, elect not to preside, be unable to preside or, in the event that the office of the Chair is vacant, then the Deputy Chair will preside. If the Deputy Chair is similarly unable to preside, the members of the Committee must elect a presiding member from among their number.

(21) The role of the Chair of a Committee is to:

- a. lead the Committee;
- b. oversee the Committee in the effective discharge of its role and responsibilities;
- 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 reporting to the Academic Senate following each meeting of the Committee;
- g. promote constructive and respectful relations between members; and
- h. commit the time necessary to effectively discharge their role as Chair.

## Part C - Executive Action

(22) The Chair of the Academic Senate or the Chair of a Committee may take executive action by way of out of session business on behalf of the Academic Senate or the relevant Committee.

(23) The Chair of the Academic Senate or the Chair of a Committee may request that the relevant Deputy Chair deal with a matter by executive action if the Chair declares a conflict of interest with respect to the matter.

(24) At the following meeting of the Academic Senate or the relevant Committee, the Chair (or Deputy Chair, as the case may be) will report to the Academic Senate or the relevant Committee on the exercise of this authority and seek ratification of the related decision/s.

## Part D - Membership

### Expectations on Members of the Academic Senate

(25) Members of the Academic Senate are expected to:

- a. act in good faith in the best interests of the Academic Senate and the University;
- b. contribute the time needed to read and understand the papers provided;
- c. attend meetings and participate in discussions of matters before Academic Senate;
- d. contribute to the implementation of the Academic Senate communication strategy;
- e. apply good analytical skills, objectively and with sound judgement;
- f. bring their expertise, insights and the perspectives of other members of the University community to discussions;
- g. be the point of contact between the University and the faculty / community;
- h. ensure that confidential information is not disclosed;
- i. express opinions frankly and courteously, and ask questions that go to the fundamental core of the issue; and
- j. work collaboratively with other members of the Academic Senate.

### Process for Filling Casual Vacancies for Elected Members of the Academic Senate

(26) Where a casual vacancy exists in the office of an elected academic member of the Academic Senate as referred to in clause 25 of the [Academic Senate Rules](#), the following process will be followed to fill the vacancy:

- a. academic staff member – following an expression of interest process, a panel consisting of the Chair of the relevant Faculty Board and the elected members of the Academic Senate from that Faculty will assess the candidates and, in consultation with the Chair of the Academic Senate, recommend a candidate to the Academic Senate (or the Academic Senate Standing Committee on behalf of Academic Senate) for appointment to fill the casual vacancy for the remainder of the term;

- b. Indigenous staff member – following an expression of interest process, the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous) will assess the candidates and, in consultation with the Chair of the Academic Senate, recommend a candidate to the Academic Senate (or the Academic Senate Standing Committee on behalf of the Academic Senate) for appointment to fill the casual vacancy for the remainder of the term; and
- c. student member – following an expression of interest process, the Chair of the Academic Senate will assess the candidates and recommend a candidate to the Academic Senate (or the Academic Senate Standing Committee on behalf of the Academic Senate) for appointment to fill the casual vacancy for the remainder of the term.

### **Co-opted Members of the Academic Senate**

(27) As set out in clause 12(p) of the [Academic Senate Rules](#), up to four additional members may be co-opted by resolution of Academic Senate to address gaps in expertise or diversity and social inclusion.

(28) A formal process will be conducted at least biennially, to identify if there is a need to co-opt additional members to the Academic Senate. This process will be considered, following the elections held as set out in clauses 17 to 33 of the [Academic Senate Rules](#) and will include an optional, confidential survey of all Academic Senate members. De-identified results from the confidential survey will be considered by a working group of the Academic Senate and a recommendation made to the Academic Senate on the need to co-opt additional members to address any identified gaps.

(29) Additional members may be appointed or co-opted to the Academic Senate as set out in clauses 12 (o) and (p) of the [Academic Senate Rules](#).

### **Members of Committees of the Academic Senate**

(30) The membership of a Committee of the Academic Senate will generally 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.

(31) Stakeholders with expert skills, experience and knowledge will be appointed to a Committee of the Academic Senate and are required to act in the best interests of the University and work collectively to fulfill the Committee's role. In order to achieve broad representation and collegial decision making, the Committee will comprise an appropriate balance of ex-officio, appointed, Academic Senate elected, and student members.

(32) Unless otherwise approved by the Academic Senate, a Committee of Academic Senate will have a membership which comprises in addition to the Chair:

- a. a Deputy Chair;
- b. the Chair or Deputy Chair of the Academic Senate;
- c. up to five ex-officio members;
- d. the relevant Deputy Dean of each Faculty or their nominee;
- e. one nominee of the Faculty Board of each Faculty and the Macquarie University College Board;
- f. members of the Academic Senate as appointed by the Chair of the Academic Senate;
- g. up to four members in a specialist capacity as nominated by the Chair of the Committee;
- h. at least one student member of an appropriate category, normally selected from the elected student members of Academic Senate and nominated by the Chair of the Committee in consultation with the Chair of Academic Senate and the relevant student bodies; and
- i. up to three (3) co-opted members as required.

(33) The Chair of the Academic Senate will approve the appointment of non-ex-officio members to a Committee of the Academic Senate.

(34) All members of a Committee are responsible for consulting early and widely with the broader University community to promote engagement and commitment amongst all stakeholders.

(35) Members of a Committee are expected to:

- a. act in good faith in the best interests of the University;
- b. contribute the time needed to read and understand the papers provided;
- c. attend meetings and participate in discussions of matters before the Committee;
- d. apply good analytical skills, objectively and with sound judgement;
- e. bring their expertise, insights and the perspectives of other members of the University community to discussions;
- f. be the point of contact between the University and the faculty / community;
- g. ensure that confidential information is not disclosed;
- h. express opinions frankly and courteously, and ask questions that go to the fundamental core of the issue; and
- i. work collaboratively with other members of the Committee.

## Part E - Meeting Arrangements

(36) The Academic Senate or a Committee will meet as frequently as required; however, there will be at least six meetings of the Academic Senate per annum.

(37) Meeting dates for the Academic Senate are endorsed by the Council as a component of the rolling three (3) year [Calendar of Governance](#).

(38) Meeting dates for the Committees of the Academic Senate will normally be confirmed by October of the previous year, but may be varied.

(39) Meetings of the Academic Senate or a Committee may be held using video/teleconferencing technology where determined by the Chair.

(40) The Chair of the Academic Senate / Chair of a Committee may adjourn a meeting of the Academic Senate/the Committee in appropriate circumstances (for example, lack of a quorum).

(41) The Chair will not adjourn a meeting of the Academic Senate /Committee to prevent a recommended resolution or amendment being put without the approval of two-thirds of the members present at the meeting. This discretion does not limit any other powers of the Chair to adjourn a meeting.

(42) When a meeting is adjourned no further business will be dealt with and any business left unfinished will be carried over to the next meeting.

(43) The Chair of the Academic Senate / Chair of a Committee may cancel an ordinary or adjourned meeting of the Academic Senate /the Committee any time in between meetings, if the Chair is of the opinion that there is insufficient business to warrant the holding of the meeting. 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 clause 57.

(44) Meetings of the Academic Senate and Committees of the Academic Senate will be open to members of the University, that is, staff, students and graduates. Members of the University may attend meetings as observers and will be admitted subject to the availability of space. The Chair may determine that where meetings are held using video / teleconferencing technology, observers may not be admitted for practical reasons.

(45) The dates of meetings of the Academic Senate, and Committees of Academic Senate, will be published in the [Calendar of Governance](#) and on the Academic Senate website.

(46) Members of the University who intend to attend a meeting of the Academic Senate or Committee of the Academic Senate must inform Governance Services of their intention at least two business days prior to the meeting.

(47) Observers do not have the right to vote on any matter at the meeting, but the Chair may grant observers the right to speak at a meeting on a matter or item of discussion.

(48) The Chair of the Academic Senate / the Committee may invite non-members of the Academic Senate /the Committee to attend meetings, including the issuing (and withdrawal) of standing invitations.

(49) Observers at meetings of the Academic Senate or 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 will be requested to leave for the duration of that discussion.

## **Part F - Quorum and Attendance**

(50) It is incumbent on members to attend meetings of the Academic Senate or the Committee unless absent on approved leave from the University or otherwise prevented from attending.

(51) The number of members who constitute a quorum must be half the membership plus one as set out at clause 35 of the [Academic Senate Rules](#). The same rule for calculating the meeting quorum will apply to Committees.

(52) Vacant positions on the Academic Senate or the Committee do not count toward the calculation of the number required for a quorum.

(53) Members unable to attend meetings of the Academic Senate or the Committee will not be entitled to a proxy.

(54) Formal attendance and voting via video link or other technology approved by the Chair will be permitted and will be included in the determination of a quorum.

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

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

(57) Items of business discussed at an inquorate session may be sent to members out of session for approval by circular resolution.

(58) In the instance where sufficient members join the meeting (part way through an inquorate session) such that a quorum is achieved, the members present 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.

(59) 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 Academic Senate or the Committee; or
- c. for no further consideration.

(60) Should a meeting become inquorate after commencement due to a member(s) leaving, the Chair may adjourn the meeting for five minutes. If at the expiration of five minutes a quorum is still not present, the Chair may adjourn the meeting and / or deal with the remaining business as noted in clause 57.

## Part G - Absence from Meetings

(61) Governance Services will monitor absences and apologies submitted by members who are unable to attend a meeting of the Academic Senate or its Committees. The receipt of an apology does not imply the consent of the Chair to grant a leave of absence to the member.

(62) The Chair, at their discretion, may grant a member 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.

(63) Elected or appointed members of the Academic Senate who absent themselves from three consecutive meetings without leave of absence being granted, will be deemed to have vacated office, as set out in clause 26(e) of the [Academic Senate Rules](#).

(64) Appointed members of a Committee of the Academic Senate who absent themselves from three consecutive meetings, without leave being granted, will be deemed to have vacated office.

(65) Ex-officio members of the Academic Senate or a Committee of the Academic Senate who absent themselves from three consecutive meetings without leave of absence 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, in consultation with the Academic Senate Standing Committee, will determine a replacement for the suspended ex-officio member.

## Part H - Agendas

(66) The Chair will approve the inclusion of any item on the agenda for a meeting of the Academic Senate / the Committee.

(67) The Secretary to the Academic Senate or the Governance Officer supporting a Committee of the Academic Senate will be appointed by the Director, Governance Services as set out in clause 34 of the [Academic Senate Rules](#).

(68) The Secretary / relevant Governance Officer will ensure the agenda for each meeting and supporting papers are circulated electronically to members six calendar days prior to the meeting.

(69) All papers for inclusion on the agenda must be provided to the Secretary / relevant Governance Officer at least 10 business days before the meeting, unless otherwise approved by the Chair.

(70) Any member who intends to bring before the Academic Senate or a Committee a matter which might be ruled as confidential, will inform the Chair of this intention prior to circulation of the agenda and supporting papers. Confidential matters or documents must be clearly marked on the agenda and on all associated documents.

(71) In exceptional circumstances, late or urgent items may be considered by the Academic Senate or the Committee via circular resolution, at the discretion of the Chair.

(72) The Chair will call for the starring of any unstarred items on the Academic Senate or the Committee meeting agenda at the commencement of the meeting. Agenda items may be starred by any member.

(73) Acceptance of all unstarred items will be voted upon as a block.

(74) At a meeting of the Academic Senate or a Committee, the agenda order may be varied by the Chair or on the vote of the members present.

(75) Academic Senate meeting agendas may include an item of Question Time. This item provides a point in the meeting for members to ask questions of the Chair, the Vice-Chancellor and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) related to academic governance matters these persons have raised in their reports to the Academic

Senate.

## **Part I - Conflicts of Interest**

(76) At each meeting of the Academic Senate or a Committee, the Chair will request members to declare any potential conflict of interest, either actual or perceived, in respect of any item on the agenda prior to this being discussed.

(77) The Academic Senate or the Committee will determine how declared conflicts will be managed.

(78) The Chair will stand aside as chair for an item on an Academic Senate or Committee meeting agenda where they have declared an actual or perceived conflict of interest. In such cases, the Deputy Chair will act as a temporary chair for discussion of the particular item. If the Deputy Chair also declares a conflict of interest to the item, the Academic Senate or the Committee will nominate another member to act as a temporary chair.

## **Part J - Questions on Notice**

(79) Questions on notice will only be received from members of the Academic Senate and will only be accepted with the prior approval of the Chair. The following procedures apply to questions received on notice:

- a. at least two business days' notice must be provided for questions on notice;
- b. the Chair will determine if the matter is within the authority of the Academic Senate 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 two business days in advance of the meeting.

## **Part K - Recommended Resolutions and Rules of Debate**

(80) In the conduct of meetings, the Chair may exercise all reasonable discretion, and in particular may:

- a. require a speaker who, in their opinion, is being unduly verbose or repetitious or who is not keeping to the point under discussion, to desist;
- b. refuse to accept recommended resolutions 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.

(81) At any time prior to, or during, an Academic Senate or Committee meeting, the proposer or the Chair may withdraw a recommended resolution or agenda item. If this occurs during the meeting, the related debate will cease.

(82) The Chair can put any item to the vote. 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.

(83) The Chair has absolute discretion in permitting tabling of documents at the meeting and matters without notice.

(84) For Academic Senate meetings, matters may be put forward by any Academic Senate committee or any



University committee, individual members or ad hoc committees, and must include the name of the person submitting the matter and the name of the person who approved the submission of the matter. For meeting of Committees of the Academic Senate, matters may be put forward by any member or working party of the Committee, and must include the name of the person submitting the matter and the name of the person who approved the submission of the matter.

(85) The submitter of a matter will have the right to speak on the matter and any recommended resolution, prior to the Chair referring the matter for general debate.

(86) The Chair will generally not allow non-members or observers to speak to a matter.

(87) If an amendment to a recommended resolution is proposed and accepted by the submitter of the original recommended resolution, then the amended recommended resolution will become the substantive recommended resolution. If the submitter does not accept the amendment to the recommended resolution as proposed, the Academic Senate or Committee of the Academic Senate may still vote upon the amendment.

(88) Subject to clause 81, when an amendment is before the Chair, discussion will be confined to that amendment, and no further amendment shall be proposed until the amendment before the Chair has been dealt with.

(89) All amendments to recommended resolutions must be dealt with before the final substantive recommended resolution is put to members.

(90) With the exception of the Chair, those present at an Academic Senate or Committee of the Academic Senate meeting will not interrupt or interject when another member is speaking to a matter.

(91) Any member of the Academic Senate or a Committee of the Academic Senate may raise a point of order, which will take precedence over all other business and be open to discussion. The point must be raised at the time the alleged irregularity occurred and will be dealt with in the following manner:

- a. the Chair will make a ruling on a point of order; and
- b. any member of the Academic Senate or Committee of the Academic Senate disagreeing with the Chair's ruling on a point of order may move dissent. Such recommended resolution will be put to vote immediately without debate. Upon such a recommended resolution, the Deputy Chair will take the Chair until the recommended resolution is dealt with.

## **Part L - Method of Voting**

(92) All recommended resolutions must be decided by the majority of the members present and voting at the meeting either by a show of hands or by online technology (in the case of a meeting held by video/teleconference). The Chair will have a deliberative vote and, in the case of an equality of votes, a casting vote. A formal tally of votes may be taken at the discretion of the Chair or on the request of two or more members.

(93) A formal ballot may be used only when it is required by an existing resolution of the Academic Senate or a Committee of the Academic Senate, or at the discretion of the Chair or when requested by at least 10 members of the Academic Senate or Committee of the Academic Senate. When a ballot is taken, it will be conducted in such form as the Chair may direct provided its secrecy is preserved.

## **Part M - Minutes**

(94) The Secretary is responsible for ensuring the preparation of minutes of Academic Senate and Committee of the Academic Senate meetings.

(95) The draft minutes, once approved by the Chair, will be circulated to members normally within fourteen calendar days following the meeting.

(96) The minutes will be included for approval at the next meeting.

(97) The minutes will contain the results of any vote taken by the Academic Senate or the Committee.

## **Part N - Committees**

(98) The Academic Senate may establish committees to assist it in connection with the exercise of any of its functions and may appoint such persons (not necessarily members of the Academic Senate) to those committees.

(99) Committees of the Academic Senate are established by Academic Senate under the authority of clause 37(c) of the [Academic Senate Rules](#).

(100) The Terms of Reference of a Committee of the Academic Senate will be published in [Policy Central](#) and include the purpose, any authorities, membership, functions and responsibilities.

(101) Operational and budgetary matters will normally be outside the scope of functions and responsibilities of a Committee of Academic Senate.

(102) Members of a Committee of the Academic Senate act under the authority of, and are accountable to, the Academic Senate.

(103) A Committee of the Academic Senate must conduct its meetings in accordance with this Procedure and its Terms of Reference, subject to the Macquarie University Act, By-laws, University Rules, and resolutions of the Council or the Academic Senate.

(104) A Committee of the Academic Senate carries the responsibility to contribute to the implementation of the Academic Senate communication strategy.

(105) A Committee of the Academic Senate 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.

(106) This Procedure may be adopted, as relevant, by other operational committees of the University.

### **Establishment of Sub-committees and Working Parties**

(107) A Committee of the Academic Senate cannot establish, and will not delegate responsibilities to, permanent standing sub-committees unless otherwise approved by the Academic Senate.

(108) A Committee of the Academic Senate may appoint working parties for a defined purpose and tenure, under terms of reference conforming to a common standard determined by the Academic Senate.

(109) The Committee of the Academic Senate remains responsible for all decisions and actions it refers to working parties.

(110) Working parties will consist of members appointed by the Committee and can include persons who are not members of the Committee.

## **Part O - Review and Evaluation**

(111) Prior to the end of each calendar year, the Academic Senate or Committee will review and update its Annual

Agenda Plan for the following year.

(112) Following each meeting of the Academic Senate a report will be submitted to the subsequent Council meeting.

(113) Following each meeting of a Committee of the Academic Senate a report will be submitted to the subsequent Academic Senate meeting. The Committee will report to the Academic Senate on the outcome of its Annual Agenda Plan at the end of each year.

(114) Academic Senate will conduct an annual self-assessment of its activities as measured against the provisions of the [Academic Senate Rules](#) and will report this to Council.

(115) Each Committee of the Academic Senate will conduct an annual self-assessment of its activities as measured against the provisions of its Terms of Reference and report this to the Academic Senate.

(116) At any time, the Committee may ask the Academic Senate to consider a revision to its Terms of Reference.

## **Section 4 - Guidelines**

(117) Nil.

## **Section 5 - Definitions**

(118) For the purposes of this Procedure:

- a. Chair refers to the Chair of the Academic Senate or the Chair of a Committee of the Academic Senate or the Chair of an academic governance body that is using this Procedure, unless specifically stated otherwise.

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Current
<b>Effective Date</b>	27th November 2024
<b>Review Date</b>	22nd September 2026
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Academic Senate
<b>Approval Date</b>	27th November 2024
<b>Expiry Date</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Executive</b>	Jacqueline Phillips Chair, Academic Senate +61 2 9850 2753
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Sophie Buck Director, Governance Services
<b>Enquiries Contact</b>	Sophie Buck Director, Governance Services