

Standing orders¹

THE COMMITTEE OF CHAIRS OF ACADEMIC BOARD/SENATES IN NSW/ACT STANDING ORDERS and RULES OF PROCEDURE (COC02/1)

Introduction

The following standing orders and rules of procedure have been developed at the request of the Committee of Chairs to facilitate the conduct of the Committee's business. They should be read in conjunction with the Committee's Terms of Reference (Appendix A).

The Standing Orders may be varied by the Committee of Chairs from time to time as appropriate.

1. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Committee comprises all the Chairs/Presidents of the Academic Boards or Senates in NSW and the ACT.

1.1 Annual Contribution

At the meeting of 31 May 2001, the Committee of Chairs resolved that the annual contribution for membership of the Committee would be a standard amount to be determined to cover Secretariat costs, payable at the commencement of the financial year. The Committee may from time to time vary the amount of the annual contribution. The Financial Procedures are attached as Appendix B.

2. TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON SCALING

The Technical Committee on Scaling (TCS) provides regular reports to the Committee. The TCS's Terms of Reference are attached as Appendix C. The TCS also submits matters for approval to the Committee in keeping with the delegated responsibility from the New South Wales Vice-Chancellors' Conference (NSWVCC) to the Committee of Chairs for categorisation of HSC subjects and scaling of the HSC.

3. SCHEDULE, NUMBER AND LOCATION OF MEETINGS

The Committee will meet usually three times per year, in March, May and August, and in November if required. The Committee will usually meet on the last Thursday in those months, from 9/10 am to 3/4 pm, at the Chair's discretion.²

The schedule of meeting dates coincides with the meeting dates for the New South Wales Vice-Chancellors' Conference, which usually meets in February, June, September and November.

Meetings should normally alternate between big city and small city/town locations.

¹ As some details are now out of date, the Standing Orders are due to be reviewed and updated.

² At a subsequent meeting it was agreed to vary the meeting schedule.

3.1 Scheduling of Business

The Committee will consider nominations for the New South Wales Board of Studies Examination Committees in May each year.

The Committee will receive regular reports from the Chair on Board of Studies matters, from the Chair of the TCS and from the Office of the New South Wales Board of Studies.

The Committee agrees to share policy documents and other information useful to members.

Acknowledgment should be made of sources.

4. SPECIAL MEETINGS

Special meetings may be called from time-to-time at the discretion of the Chair.

5. MEMBERS

5.1 Role of Chair

The Chair is charged with the responsibility of conveying Committee of Chairs' business to the New South Wales Vice-Chancellors' Conference. S/he must ensure the efficient functioning of the Committee to effect not just the decision-making process but also to encourage and support collegiality and the flow of information. The Chair also speaks on behalf of the Committee of Chairs.

The Chair attends meetings of the New South Wales Board of Studies³ and responds to requests from the Board of Studies regarding Committee of Chairs nominations for Board of Studies Curriculum Committees. The University nominated members of the Curriculum Committees must be nominated through the Chair of the Committee of Chairs. S/he also assists the Board of Studies in promulgating the call for nominations for Board of Studies Examination Committees. These nominations do not come only through the Chair and may be made directly to the Board of Studies.

In the conduct of meetings of the Committee, all reasonable discretion is allowed to the Chair.

³ The current Chair is a member of the Board of Studies.

5.2 Election of Chair

When a new Chair is required, the Committee shall elect one of its members by a “first past the post” method.

5.3 Term of Chair

The term of the Chair will be two years, subject to the Chair remaining a member of the Committee. A Chair will be limited to two consecutive two-year terms.

5.4 Chair of Technical Committee on Scaling

A member of the TCS with relevant expertise or background in accordance with the Terms of Reference of the TCS will be appointed by the Committee of Chairs to chair the TCS. The Chair of the TCS will make regular reports to the Committee of Chairs (see Item 2 above and TCS Terms of Reference, Appendix B).

5.5 Term of Members

The term of members is dependent upon the term for which they are elected/appointed to Chair the Academic Board/Senate of their University. Their term on the Committee of Chairs will commence on their assuming this role and cease when their term is up on their Academic Board/Senate or they resign.

5.6 Board of Studies Representation

The President of the Office of the NSW Board of Studies or nominee will be invited to report regularly to the Committee, at least twice per year. S/he will from time-to-time be accompanied by another Officer of the Board of Studies as the Board of Studies sees fit.

6. THE AGENDA

The agenda will be prepared by the Secretary to the Committee under the oversight of the Chair. The Secretary to the Committee will usually be the Secretary of the Academic Board over which the Chair of the Committee of Chairs presides. Members may contact the Chair to put items on the agenda. The agenda should be structured to allow adequate discussion time for items.

6.2 Agenda Papers

All papers concerning items for consideration for inclusion on the agenda should be received by the Secretary at least twelve days before the next meeting of the Committee.

The finalised agenda and papers shall be dispatched by the Secretary one week before the meeting of the committee, by email and post, and also posted on the Committee of Chairs' website.

7. THE MEETING

To ensure the efficient consideration of business by the Committee:

- the meeting will consider the business on the agenda. Other business shall be considered only if the Chair and a majority of other members present agree;
- discussion of items should be contained and to the point. The Chair may suggest forming a working party to prepare documentation, setting out arguments and identifying recommendations for matters that are broad in focus or highly contentious;
- items under Business Without Notice should be signalled at the commencement of the meeting;
- items under Business Without Notice should be discouraged where there is no supporting documentation. For policy matters, tabled discussion papers under Business Without Notice should be considered at the next meeting of the committee;
- meetings may be cancelled only if there is insufficient business on the decision of the Chair.

8. QUORUM

A quorum will be half the members plus one. A quorum must be reached when the Committee is resolving on policy matters delegated by the NSWVCC.

9. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETINGS AND MAINTENANCE OF THE QUORUM

The Chair may adjourn a meeting of the Committee in appropriate circumstances; for example, if it is clear that it is unlikely that a quorum will be maintained or a long or contentious item of business is about to be discussed and it seems advisable that the Chair adjourn the meeting before commencing discussion on that item rather than cutting off discussion in mid-stream.

The Chair shall not adjourn a meeting to prevent a motion or amendment being put save with the approval of two-thirds of the meeting present. This discretion shall not limit any other powers of the Chair to adjourn a meeting.

10. METHOD OF VOTING AT MEETINGS

At all meetings of the Committee, voting in relation to any issue shall be on the voices except that:

- (a) the Chair shall have a discretion to take a vote on either a show of hands or by ballot. In exercising this discretion, the Chair shall consider whether there is a feeling in the meeting as to a preferable method of taking the vote or
- (b) any two members may request the Chair to take the vote by either of a show of hands or by ballot.

11. ABSENCE FROM MEETINGS

11.1 Chair

If the Chair is absent from a meeting of the Committee, the meeting shall elect a Chair for that meeting from the members present.

11.2 Other Members

Absences by other members are to be monitored, with the Chair counselling any member failing to attend two consecutive meetings. Members should send a nominee, such as a Deputy Chair of Academic Board/Senate, if they are unable to attend.

11.3 Apologies

Apologies are to be recorded in the minutes for any meeting of the Committee.

11.4 Alternates/Nominees

A nominee or alternate may attend, speak and vote at meetings in a member's stead. The nominee or alternate must be a member of the Academic Board of the University concerned, and should preferably be a Deputy Chair. The Committee may choose to invite non-members to attend and speak in cases where this will assist the Committee in its work.

12. RECORD OF MEETINGS

The Committee of Chairs will be serviced by the Secretariat of the University of the Chair in the preparation of the agenda and minutes and their dispatch. The draft minutes must be approved by the Chair. No alterations of substance may be made to the approved minutes without the consent of the Chair. The agenda and minutes of the Committee will be made available to every member of the Committee by mail and also posted on the Committee's website.

13 March 2002 (UNSW)

Revised 28 March 2002 (Committee of Chairs)