



Standing Orders of Academic Council

[For consideration by Academic Council at its meeting on 6 November 2020]

1. Definitions

A simple majority shall mean the majority of the members present and voting at a valid meeting of the council.

A special majority shall mean two-thirds of the members present at a valid meeting of the council.

2. Adoption, amendment and suspension

These standing orders, having been approved by a special majority, shall remain in force except as provided below.

Standing orders may be altered or amended by special majority provided due notice to do so has been delivered to each member of the council at least one week before the meeting at which it is proposed to alter or amend the Standing Orders.

Standing orders may be suspended or modified in effect, for any part of any meeting of the council, provided the members present so determine by simple majority.

3. Quorum

The quorum required to constitute a valid meeting of the council shall be at least half of the membership of the council plus one.

4. Meetings

4.1 Meetings shall normally be held at least three times per semester. Further meetings may be held as deemed necessary by the council. In fixing times and dates of its meetings, the council shall endeavour to minimise the disruptions to the teaching timetables of its members. Staff with responsibility for timetabling will endeavour to ensure that Academic Council members are available for Council and Committee meetings.

4.2 Unless otherwise decided by a simple majority of the council, meetings will be scheduled to last not more than one and a half hours, but may be extended with the agreement of the meeting. The Chairman should endeavour to complete the

business within the stipulated time, while giving due regard to each item on the agenda. Membership of Academic Council and of Committees confers responsibility on members with regard to workload and attendance.

- 4.3 A special meeting on a limited agenda may be held by decision of the council or of the President. A special meeting shall also be convened either by the secretary or chairperson on the written requisition of not less than one-third of the members of the council which states the purpose of the meeting. The business of the special meeting shall be confined to the stated purpose.

5. Procedure at meetings

- 5.1 The chairperson shall open the meeting at the appointed time or as soon thereafter as a quorum is present.
- 5.2 The President shall be chairperson of the council and shall chair all meetings when present.
- 5.3 The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar of the Institute shall be secretary to the council.
- 5.4 In the absence of the President, the secretary shall open or continue the meeting. In that event, the next business of the meeting shall be the election of a chairperson for the meeting or part of the meeting from among the assembled members of the council. The secretary shall call for the nomination of a member to chair the meeting. Should more than one valid nomination be made, the matter shall be put to a vote and the member receiving the greatest number of votes shall chair the meeting during the absence of the President.
- 5.5 In the absence of The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar, the chairperson shall open the meeting. In that event, the first or next business of the meeting shall be the election of a secretary from among the assembled members of the council. The chairperson shall call for the nomination of a member to act as secretary for the meeting. Should more than one valid nomination be made, the matter shall be put to a vote and the member receiving the greatest number of votes shall act as secretary during the absence of The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar.
- 5.6 In the event of the simultaneous absence of the President and Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar, the assembled members may decide by simple majority to convene the meeting. In that event, the first business of the meeting shall be the election of a chairperson and secretary in accordance with standing orders.
- 5.7 The chairperson shall conduct the business of the meeting according to the agenda adopted at the commencement of the meeting. A meeting may be adjourned to a specified date by a simple majority vote.

6. Agenda

- 6.1 An agenda for each meeting shall be prepared by The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar, or in the absence of The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar, by another officer of the college designated by the President. The agenda and notice for ordinary meetings shall be delivered to each member of the council at least one week before the date of the meeting accompanied by relevant documentation. The agenda for a special meeting shall be notified to members between two and five working days before the date of the meeting.
- 6.2 An item shall be included on the proposed agenda at the direction of the council or at the request of the governing body, the President, any committee of the council or any member of the council. Draft Academic Council dates with deadlines of submission of agenda items will be made available to all staff.
- 6.3 The agenda for ordinary meetings of the council shall include the following sequence
1. Approval of proposed agenda
 2. Apologies received
 3. Minutes of previous meeting
 4. Matters arising
 5. Correspondence
 6. Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar's Report
 7. Reports from committees
 8. Individual agenda items at the behest of council, governing body, President, committee or council member
 9. Any other business.

The council shall decide at the end of each meeting the action to be taken in relation to agenda items not reached during the course of the meeting.

7. Minutes

- 7.1 Minutes shall be kept in respect of each meeting of the council and of all of its committees.

The draft minutes of council meetings shall be sent to each member of the council at least one week before the date of the next meeting.

- 7.2 The minutes shall record all resolutions of the council and, if the resolution was reached by way of vote, the result of the vote. A member's dissent shall be recorded on request. The minutes shall also, as far as is practicable, in respect of each agenda item, include a synopsis of the debate. Contributions to the debate shall not normally be attributed but any member's contribution shall be attributed if requested at the time of the discussion. Where applicable, resolutions of the council shall indicate what further action the council envisages,

by whom it considers that this action should be taken and what form of report back the council desires. This shall be reflected in the minutes.

Correspondence of referrals to committees, Executive Board and others will be made by The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar's office within 1 week of an Academic Council meeting.

Where a resolution of the council calls for a decision or action by a person or body, the resolution shall be specifically communicated to that person or body by the secretary other than by circulation of minutes. Recommendations to the governing body shall be communicated by the secretary to the Vice President for Finance and Corporate Services as secretary to the Governing Body for inclusion in the agenda of the Governing Body.

- 7.3 The adoption of the minutes of the previous meeting shall be an agenda item following on the adoption of the agenda. The draft minutes as circulated shall be taken as read and may be discussed by the meeting only in the event of a challenge to their accuracy.
- 7.4 When the minutes, with or without amendment, have been adopted, members may raise questions on matters arising therefrom.
- 7.5 Minutes as adopted by the council shall be signed by the chairperson and secretary and copies of the signed minutes shall be circulated to members of the council and to all members of the Institute staff within one week of the meeting.

8. Attendance

The secretary shall keep a register of attendance at council meetings.

The secretary shall read any apologies for non-attendance following the discussion, if any, on matters arising from the minutes.

9. Correspondence

- 9.1 The secretary shall advise the meeting of all correspondence which has been received giving a brief summary of each item and the identity of the correspondent. The secretary shall not be obliged to read such correspondence to the meeting but shall make it available to members on request.
- 9.2 The secretary shall make available to members before meetings documentation relating to the business of the council. Members of the Institute not themselves members of the council may have information circulated to the council in this way if the circulation is requested by a member of the council. Where circulation is not considered practicable, the secretary shall so inform the member who may have the matter raised at the next meeting of the council.

10. *Motions*

- 10.1 Motions should as far as possible be put in writing and circulated with the agenda. All motions shall require a proposer and seconder. The proposer may speak first and conclude with the motion. The seconder may formally second the motion and reserve the right to speak later. Each member other than the proposer shall have the right to speak once; further interventions shall be at the discretion of the chairperson. The proposer shall have the right of reply at the end of the debate.
- 10.2 Proposals to amend any motion shall require a proposer and a seconder. An amendment may not negate the main motion. All amendments shall be determined in the order in which they were proposed prior to the conclusion of the debate. The original motion, together with any amendments which have been carried, shall become the substantive motion. The substantive motion shall be put to the meeting and, if carried, shall be the resolution of the meeting.
- 10.3 The debate may be closed by any of the following procedural motions, viz.
- (a) that the question be now put
 - (b) that the motion be adjourned to the next meeting
 - (c) that the meeting proceed to the next business

Such a procedural motion, once proposed and seconded, shall be put to the meeting without discussion and shall be determined by a simple majority.

- 10.4 Decisions of the council will normally be reached by consensus after the exact proposal has been read back to the meeting by the secretary and formally put by the chairman. Voting shall be on a straight vote system by a show of hands at the request of a member. Questions will be determined by simple majority except where a special majority is required by these standing orders. The chairperson shall have an additional casting vote in the event of a tie. Voting for elections shall be according to procedures determined by the council for the purpose.

11. *Interpretation of standing orders*

The ruling of the chairperson on any interpretation of standing orders, or on any points of order or explanation, shall be final unless a challenge by a member to any ruling is supported by a special majority.

12. *Any other business*

Before closing a meeting, the chairperson shall inquire if there is any other business to be considered by the meeting.

13. Committees of the council

- 13.1 The council may establish such committees or ad hoc groups to consider specific issues as it may from time to time consider appropriate. The council may also establish committees in accordance with section 10(4) of the RTC Act 1992.
- 13.2 The composition and terms of reference of each committee shall be determined by the council. It shall be open to the council, by resolution passed by simple majority, to terminate committees or to alter their composition, membership and terms of reference.
- 13.3 Acts of committees shall be subject to ratification by the council, except where the council determines otherwise. Committees shall report to the council as determined by council.
- 13.4 The council shall appoint one of the members of each committee to be chairperson. Each committee shall elect one of its members to be secretary to the committee.
- 13.5 Each committee may determine its own rules of procedure which should be based substantially on the standing orders of the council. The quorum required to constitute a valid meeting of a committee shall four members.
- 13.6 Each committee shall be responsible for keeping the minutes of every meeting it holds. Copies of the ratified minutes shall be submitted to The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar and be available for inspection. Only ratified minutes shall be submitted to the council.
- 13.7 *Standing committees*
- 13.7.1 The council shall establish five standing committees as follows:
- (a) Planning
 - (b) Programmes
 - (c) Academic standards
 - (d) Learning, teaching and student engagement
 - (e) Research
- 13.7.2 The total membership of each committee shall be a minimum of seven and a maximum of nine, made up as follows:
- (a) the President ex-officio
 - (b) The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar
 - (c) a minimum of five and a maximum of seven other members of the council of whom at least three shall be members of the academic staff of the Institute.

Committees should reflect a balance between academic staff, management and other Council members.

- 13.7.3 The terms of reference of each standing committee in respect of its particular remit shall be as follows:
- (a) to propose such items for the agenda of the council as it considers necessary to ensure that the council addresses all aspects of its remit
 - (b) to prepare or to co-ordinate the preparation of discussion, policy or research or briefing papers for the council, either on its own initiative or at the behest of the council
 - (c) to monitor the follow-through on resolutions of the council
 - (d) to assist in the drafting of resolutions, regulations etc. for approval by the council.

Each committee shall draw up its own terms of reference in the context of these guidelines.

- 13.7.4 The agenda of each ordinary meeting of the council shall include a report from each standing committee.
- 13.7.5 Any questions on the respective remits of the committees shall be referred to the council for decision.

13.8 *General Purposes Committee*

- 13.8.1 The Council shall establish a General Purposes Committee, which would meet between ordinary meetings of the Academic Council, at the request of The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar or a member of the Committee, to discuss items of such urgency that they require some action before the next scheduled meeting.

The Committee may:

- (a) make decisions on the business at hand
- (b) recommend that a special meeting of the Council be called
- (c) refer the item(s) to the next ordinary meeting of the Council

The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar will act on the decisions of the Committee.

- 13.8.2 The agenda for ordinary meetings of the Council shall include a report from this Committee.
- 13.8.3 The membership of the Committee shall be as follows:
- President
 - Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar

- Chairpersons (or in their absence secretaries) of the five standing committees of Council.

14. *Communication with Academic Community*

The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar and the Chairs of Committees will submit an annual summary of activity to the Academic Council which can then be communicated to Programme Boards.

15 *Secretariat*

The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar as secretary to the academic council shall be responsible for

- (a) processing and filing the records of the council proceedings including minutes and associated documentation of the council and of its committees and minutes of course boards lodged with the council.
- (b) correspondence addressed to the council.
- (c) communicating resolutions of the council to the appropriate persons or bodies.

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