

# PATHWAYS AND ACADEMIC LEARNING SUPPORT CENTRE BOARD TERMS OF REFERENCE



## Standing Committee of Academic Senate

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### 1. Establishment

- 1.1 The Pathways and Academic Learning Support Centre Board established 1 January 2020, under the Governance Rule of the Academic Senate and therefore definitions in the Governance Rule apply to these Terms of Reference.

### 2. Purpose

- 2.1 The Pathways and Academic Learning Support Centre (PALS) Board aims to ensure the highest standards in all academic matters pertaining to the Centre. It is responsible for the governance and oversight of academic activities of the Centre, including teaching and learning, and research. It provides a forum for high level academic discussion of teaching and learning and research activities, to generate ideas and innovations that enhance the quality of these activities. The PALS Board functions apply to all matters associated with the quality of activities conducted within the Centre. As a Standing Committee of Academic Senate, mobilising the diverse expertise and experience of its academics, students and professional staff, the PALS Board carries out its responsibilities on behalf of, and advises, Academic Senate.

### 3. General Functions and Meetings

#### 3.1 General Functions

##### Quality Assurance

- 3.1.1 oversee quality assurance for teaching, learning and research activities within PALS (the Centre);
- 3.1.2 contribute to good governance of the Centre;
- 3.1.3 monitor the continuous improvement of the Centre's activities within the

relevant legislation and University Rules and policies and approve matters in accordance with these;

- 3.1.4 review and monitor academic standards and student outcomes in teaching, learning and research within the Centre and provide advice to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education Innovation), the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and to Academic Senate and its committees;

#### Approve

- 3.1.5 approve Centre procedures and guidelines relevant to teaching, learning, research, student experience and engagement consistent with the policies of Academic Senate as requested;
- 3.1.6 approve revisions of existing programs and courses, including the discontinuation of courses within the delegations and functions assigned to the Centre Board and Academic Senate policies.

#### Advise and Recommend

- 3.1.7 advise the Academic Senate, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education Innovation), and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) on any relevant issues;
- 3.1.8 monitor, advise and make recommendations to the Academic Senate and its committees on academic matters including teaching, learning and research. These include but are not limited to:
- endorsing new programs for Program and Course Approval Committee approval;
  - recommending the discontinuation of a program for Program and Course Approval Committee approval;
- 3.1.9 advise on other matters referred by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education Innovation), the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Academic Senate, the President of Academic Senate, or the Vice-Chancellor.

#### Other Duties

- 3.1.10 contribute to the strategic and operational planning of the Centre.
- 3.1.11 monitor Centre research impact and conduct regular benchmarking for continuous improvement and to track trends.

### **3.2 Meetings**

- 3.2.1 The Board will usually meet five (5) times each calendar year;
- 3.2.2 The Standing Orders of the Academic Senate will apply.

## **4. Reporting**

- 4.1 The Board shall report to report to Academic Senate in accordance with Section 3.1 General Functions as listed in these Terms of Reference, delegations of the PALS Board, and any annual cycle of business requirements.

## **5. Membership**

The Board shall consist of the following members:

### **5.1 Ex Officio**

- 5.1.1 Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education Innovation) (Chair);
- 5.1.2 President of Academic Senate;
- 5.1.3 Director Pathways and Academic Learning Support Centre (PALS);
- 5.1.4 Deputy Dean (Education) (PALS);
- 5.1.5 Head of Domestic Programs (PALS);
- 5.1.6 Assistant Director English Language and Academic Learning Support (PALS);
- 5.1.7 PALS Program Convenors;
- 5.1.8 Senior Manager Strategy and Operations (PALS);
- 5.1.9 Senior Learning Advisor (PALS);
- 5.1.10 Manager of Widening Participating programs (PALS);

### **5.2 Nominated Members**

- 5.2.1 up to three (3) academic or teaching staff appointed by the Chair on the advice of the Director of PALS, who shall take account of the needs of each unit in the Centre to have adequate representation;
- 5.2.2 up to three (3) students appointed by the Chair, on the advice of the Director of PALS, who are either currently enrolled in a program offered by the Centre or who are a former student of the Centre and are currently enrolled

in a Bachelor program;

5.2.3 a nominee member of each of the Colleges on the advice of the College Pro Vice- Chancellor;

5.2.4 such other members as the Chair may wish to appoint.

### **5.3 Attendance with rights of audience and debate:**

5.3.1 all academic, teaching, professional and technical staff of the Centre;

5.3.2 the Senior Research Librarian;

5.3.3 the Director, Strategy, Planning and Performance, or nominee; and

5.3.4 in accordance with the Standing Orders of the Academic Senate, the Board may grant rights of audience and debate for a specific meeting or item(s) in a meeting to such a person, persons or categories of person as deemed appropriate.

## **6. Casual Vacancies**

6.1 Casual vacancies on the Board shall be filled by the Chair in consultation with the Director of PALS. A person filling the vacancy shall serve for the balance of the term of the original appointment.

## **7. Terms of Office**

7.1 for academic or teaching staff appointed by the Chair, the terms of office shall be two years from April in the year of appointment;

7.2 for students appointed by the Chair, the terms of office shall be a period of one year from the date of appointment, or such lesser period as the Chair may determine where the student will not be an enrolled student for that full year;

7.3 for nominees of the Colleges, the terms of office shall be a period of two years from April in the year of appointment;

7.4 for all other appointed members, the term of office shall be determined by the Chair.

## **8. Quorum**

- 8.1** The quorum for a meeting of the Board will be at least six (6) serving members from categories 5.1 and 5.2;
- 8.2** The President of Academic Senate is not counted as part of the quorum;
- 8.3** Proxies attending the meeting on behalf of a non-attending elected member are to be included as part of the quorum.

## **9. Subsidiary Bodies**

- 9.1** The Board will have a PALS Progress and Appeals Committee as a subsidiary body to advise and make recommendations to the PALS Board regarding student progress and appeals.
- 9.2** The Board may establish other sub-committees and/or working groups to advise it in meeting specific issues to assist it to meet its obligations. These sub-committees and/or working groups will provide reports as required to the Board.

## **10. Authorities (Delegations)**

- 10.1** The PALS Board may exercise delegated authority as set out in the online Schedule of Academic Matters, which has been approved by Council in accordance with the Governance Rule.

## **11. Urgent Business**

- 11.1** On behalf of the Board, the Chair, following consultation with the Director of PALS, is authorised to approve urgent business which must be conducted between scheduled meetings of the Board.
- 11.2** The Chair will report such actions to the next meeting of the Board for ratification, and must include these actions as part of their report to the next meeting of Academic Senate.

## **12. Contact**

PALS Board Secretary.

## **13. Essential Supporting Documents**

Governance Rule

Academic Senate Handbook

Standing Orders of the Academic Senate

Schedule 2 (G) – Governance Rule – Delegation of Academic Matters

## **14. Related Documents**

University of Newcastle Act 1989 (NSW)

University of Newcastle By-law 2017 (NSW)

Terms of Reference Program and Course Approval Committee

Terms of Reference Teaching and Learning Committee

Terms of Reference Research Committee

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**Document History and Authority**

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**Date Approved** 4 March 2020

**Approval Authority** Academic Senate

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<b>Date</b>	<b>Approved By</b>	<b>Amendment</b>
06 June 2023	Academic Senate	Revision of document for consistency with College Board Terms of Reference revised in August 2022 and subsequent changes to include a Student Progress and Appeals Committee in March 2023.
24 June 2022	Academic Senate	Amendment for removal of Interim Constitution of Academic Senate Rule and inclusion of Governance Rule. Document History and Authority updated for all amendments.
16 February 2021	Academic Senate	Amendment of reference from 'Faculty' to College.
13 January 2022	Academic Senate	Amendments required as a result of the structural and positional changes arising from the Enabling Change process during 2021.
4 March 2020	Academic Senate	The Terms of Reference were approved by Academic Senate, with effect from 4 March 2020.

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