

RESEARCH COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE



Standing Committee of Academic Senate

1. Establishment

- 1.1 The Committee was established as the Research Portfolio Committee on 1 January 2002 by the Vice-Chancellor and renamed Research Committee and made a standing committee of Academic Senate on the 30 November 2005.

2. Purpose and Functions

2.1 Purpose

The Research Committee:

- 2.1.1 Is the principal advisory committee to Academic Senate for research and research training;
- 2.1.2 Provides strategic advice to Academic Senate on research, research training, and research-related matters:
 - a. To ensure sustained high academic standards; and
 - b. To support the strategic directions of the University.
- 2.1.3 Provides strategic advice to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, (Research and Innovation) on the implementation of the University's Strategic Plan and relevant supporting plans related to research and research training;
- 2.1.4 Maintains, develops, and reviews the implementation of policies on research training to ensure compliance with the Higher Education Standards; and
- 2.1.5 Exercises the responsibilities located in the relevant Rules, Schedules, and Policies of the University in relation to research and research training related matters.

2.2 Functions

The Research Committee (Committee) will:

- 2.2.1 Advise Academic Senate on strategic policy, planning, quality assurance, and performance in relation to research, research training, and research development. This will include advice on:

- a. Pathways that contribute to student access including credit and articulation, participation, retention, and success;
 - b. The admission and selection Policies and Procedures for higher degree by research programs;
 - c. Program quality and structure to ensure nationally and globally competitive graduates who meet the learning outcomes and priorities of the University;
 - d. Methods of assessing the quality of all research training activities, including those of third-party providers;
 - e. Innovative approaches to ensure the continuing research leadership and excellence of the University;
 - f. Work and research integrated learning opportunities;
 - g. Academic and research and ethics integrity; and
 - h. The sustainability of high-quality research training.
- 2.2.2 Implementation and effectiveness of research Policies, Procedures, and practices, using reviews and other methods of evaluation;
- 2.2.3 Develop, monitor, and review the University's:
- a. Research policy framework; and
 - b. Research performance reports.
- 2.2.4 Advise the Program and Course Approval Committee on proposals relating to the establishment, revision, discontinuation, and disestablishment of postgraduate research programs; and
- 2.2.5 Provide advice on any other academic policy and quality matters.

2.3 Meetings

- 2.3.1 The Committee will meet as frequently as required but not less than four times each calendar year.
- 2.3.2 Standing Orders of the Academic Senate will apply.

3. Reporting

- 3.1** The Committee is required to report to Academic Senate in accordance with section 2.2 of these Terms of Reference and any annual cycle of business requirements.
- 3.2** The membership of the Committee will be endorsed annually by Academic Senate.

4. Membership and Attendance

The Committee shall consist of the following members and attendees:

4.1 Ex Officio Members

- 4.1.1 Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) (Chair);
- 4.1.2 Deputy President of Academic Senate responsible for research (Deputy Chair);
- 4.1.3 President of Academic Senate;
- 4.1.4 Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research); and
- 4.1.5 Pro Vice-Chancellor (Industry and Engagement).

4.2 Appointed Members

- 4.2.1 Associate Dean, Research from each College with governance and management expertise in research, nominated by the College Pro Vice-Chancellor, and appointed by the Chair and the President of Academic Senate;
- 4.2.2 Chair, Research Training Sub-Committee;
- 4.2.3 Director of Indigenous Research
- 4.2.4 Two Higher Degree by Research students appointed by the Chair and the President of Academic Senate; and
- 4.2.5 Up to five additional members appointed by the Chair and the President of Academic Senate to ensure appropriate expertise on the Committee.

4.3 Term of Office for Members

- 4.3.1 The term of office for members in categories 4.2.4, and 4.2.5 will be up to 2 years from the date of appointment, as determined by the Chair and the President of Academic Senate.

4.4 Rights of Audience and Debate

- 4.4.1 Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience) or nominee;
- 4.4.2 Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Strategy and Leadership) or nominee;
- 4.4.3 Pro Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer, Newcastle Australia Institute of Higher Education (NAIHE), or nominee;
- 4.4.4 Director, Research Grants;
- 4.4.5 Director, Research Ethics and Integrity;
- 4.4.6 Director, Research Facilities and Infrastructure;
- 4.4.7 Director, Strategy, Planning and Performance
- 4.4.8 General Manager, Research and Innovation Division

4.4.9 Director, Strategy, Planning and Performance

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

4.5 Standing Invitees

- 4.5.1 Director, Hunter Medical Research Institute;
- 4.5.2 Director, Newcastle Institute for Energy and Resources;
- 4.5.3 Chair, Animal Care and Ethics Committee;
- 4.5.4 Chair, Human Research Ethics Committee;
- 4.5.5 Director, Health Research and Translation Centre, HNE Local Health;
- 4.5.6 Director, Institute for Regional Futures; and
- 4.5.7 Director, Central Coast Research Institute.

4.6 Quorum

The quorum for meetings of the Committee shall be at least five Ex- Officio and Appointed members and must include the Chair or Deputy Chair, two College representatives, and two other members as outlined in section 4.2 above.

5. Subsidiary Bodies

- 5.1 The Research Committee may establish sub-committees and/or working parties in respect of specific issues to assist it in meeting its obligations.
 - 5.1.1 The Research Committee must establish and approve Terms of Reference for any other sub-committees or working groups as required to facilitate the work of the Research Committee, ensuring that the Terms of Reference are consistent with the Policies of Academic Senate.
- 5.2 Such subsidiary bodies will report to the Research Committee. The report will provide advice, make recommendations, and notify the Research Committee of action taken under appropriate delegated authority.

6. Authorities (Delegations)

- 6.1 Delegated authority is as per the authority vested in this Committee and its Chair by Council, Academic Senate, and relevant University Policies.

- 6.2** On behalf of the Research Committee, the Chair is authorised to recommend urgent business which must be conducted between scheduled meetings of the Committee for approval by either Academic Senate or by the President of Academic Senate.
- 6.3** The Chair will notify the Committee of any action for recommended items between meetings under urgent business at the next meeting of the Committee.

7. Editorial Amendments to Terms of Reference

- 7.1** Editorial amendments as defined in Clause (7.2) may be made to this Terms of Reference following approval by the Chair or the President of Academic Senate.
- 7.2** An editorial amendment is an amendment to a title or naming convention, updating hyperlink(s), correcting an inaccurate reference, or rectification of a typographical error. An editorial amendment to a position title is limited to changes where there has been no change to responsibilities.
- 7.3** All editorial amendments must be communicated to the next meeting of the Committee or Academic Senate.

8. Contact

Research Committee Secretary, Governance and Assurance Services.

9. Essential Supporting Documents

Governance Rule
Academic Senate Handbook
Standing Orders of the Academic Senate

10. Related Documents

University of Newcastle Act 1989 (NSW)
University of Newcastle By-law 2017 (NSW) Governance Rule
Teaching and Learning Committee - Terms of Reference
Program and Course Approval Committee - Terms of Reference
College Boards - Terms of Reference

Document History and Authority		
Date Approved	16 June 2010	
Approval Authority	Academic Senate	
Date	Approved By	Amendment
13 January 2026	PAS (under Clause 7)	Minor amendment to 4.2.3 to reflect committee title from Director, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research, Strategy and Leadership to Director of Indigenous Research.
25 November 2025	Academic Senate	Inclusion of new clauses 4.4.4 The Pro Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer of Newcastle Australia Institute of Higher Education Pro Vice-Chancellor and CEO, UON Singapore; and 4.4.8. Director, Strategy, Planning and Performance. Removal of position title at clause 4.4.4 Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Excellence).
31 October 2025	Academic Senate	Minor amendment to 5 to reflect full committee title. Amendment to 6 to reflect authority to recommend, not approve, to align with Schedule G – Academic Delegations.
8 October 2025	Academic Senate	Addition of Clause 7 for editorial amendments to be made to the Terms of Reference by Chair or President of Academic Senate.
13 May 2025	University Secretary	Minor administrative amendment to position title at clause 4.4.2 from 'Deputy Vice-Chancellor Global' to 'Pro-Vice-Chancellor Global' consistent with the current organisational structure.
9 October 2024	Academic Senate	Amended Section(s) 4 - clarity of members and non-members; 4.1 - removal of College Pro Vice-Chancellor roles replaced with Associate Dean, Research under 4.2; 4.2 – replacement of senior academic from Wollotuka Institute with Director, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research Strategy and Leadership; 4.3 position title changes; and 4.6-clarification of quorum.
1 November 2023	Academic Senate	Inclusion of new 4.3.7 (Director, Research Ethics and Integrity) and 4.3.8 (Director, Research Facilities and Infrastructure)
14 November 2022	PAS (under Urgent Business)	Inclusion of new 4.1.8 (Pro Vice-Chancellor, Industry & Engagement) and amendment to cl. 4.4 to increase terms of members to up to two years (in categories 4.2.3, 4.2.4 and 4.2.5).
20 September 2022	University Secretary	Administrative amendment to clause 4.4 to update internal references.
24 June 2022	Academic Senate	Amendment for removal of Interim Constitution of Academic Senate Rule and inclusion of Governance Rule. Quorum numbers defined. Document History and Authority updated for all amendments.
15 December 2021	PAS (under Urgent Business)	Amendment to Clauses 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, in addition to a number of minor administrative changes to reflect updated organisational language and structure including two title changes.
16 February 2021	Academic Senate	Amendments to position titles and references from 'Faculty' to College'. Minor update to Section 4.2 for consistency in relation to member appointment process for Academic Senate committees.
4 March 2020	Academic Senate	Amendment to Clause 4.2.3 to update the nominated by title to Director Wollotuka. Clause 4.3.3 amended to reflect updated title of Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice- President (Global Engagement and Partnerships), Clause 4.3.4 amended to Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Strategy and Leadership) and Clause 4.3.5 added to include Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Excellence). Contact and Related Documents amended. [AS20:373]
27 March 2017	Academic Senate	Administrative amendment to title of University of Newcastle By-law 2017 to reflect updated By-law.
20 March 2017	Academic Senate	Administrative amendment to Clause 4.3.3 to reflect updated positional title of Deputy Vice-Chancellor (International and Advancement).
9 December 2016	Academic Senate	Administrative amendment to Clause 4.2.3 to reflect updated positional title of Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Education and Research).

6 July 2016	Academic Senate	Minimum meeting requirement reduced from five meetings each calendar year to four (clause 2.3.1), membership amended to include one additional Higher Degree by Research Student (clause 4.2.4), 'Contact' information updated. [AS D16/136605[V2]].
28 October 2015	Academic Senate	Membership amended to include senior academic from Wollotuka (clause 4.2.3). Academic Senate. [AS15:108].
29 April 2015	Academic Senate	Amended Clauses 2.1.3, 4.1.1 and 4.3.1 – changed 'Research' to 'Research and Innovation'; and added Clause 4.3.4 - Pro Vice-Chancellor (Global Research) to staff granted Rights of Audience and Debate. [AS15:030].
22 May 2013	Academic Senate	Membership and quorum amended. [AS13:033].
28 September 2011	Academic Senate	Amended Clause 2.3.1 – requirement to meet a minimum of five times per year instead of six. [AS11:169].
1 July 2010	Academic Senate	The Terms of Reference for this Committee were amended and approved by Academic Senate 16 June 2010 with effect from 1 July 2010.
2009	Academic Senate	<p>Following the outcomes of 2009 External Review of Academic Senate, the functions and membership of this Committee were shaped using the following principles in accordance with the Review Report:</p> <p>The membership of each committee should, in general, be based on expertise rather than a representative model;</p> <p>The membership of each committee should be kept to a minimum, with the proviso that the membership should be large enough to ensure a creative diversity of views; and</p> <p>The Terms of Reference of a committee must be crafted so that the work of the committee falls within the boundaries of the responsibilities of the Academic Senate.</p>
