

TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NEWCASTLE
AUSTRALIA

Standing Committee of Academic Senate

1. Establishment

- 1.1 The Committee, originally named the Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Portfolio Committee, was established on 1 January 2002 by the Vice-Chancellor.

2. Purpose and Functions

2.1 Purpose

The Teaching and Learning Committee:

- 2.1.1 is the principal advisory committee to Academic Senate for teaching and learning;
- 2.1.2 provides strategic advice to Academic Senate on the quality of teaching and learning:
 - 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 Senior Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) on the implementation of the University Strategic Plan and supporting plans related to teaching and learning;
- 2.1.4 maintains, develops and reviews the implementation of policies on teaching and learning 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 for teaching and learning related matters.

2.2 Functions

The Teaching and Learning Committee will:

- 2.2.1 advise Academic Senate on the development and outcomes of its teaching and learning policies, procedures and practices for enabling, undergraduate and postgraduate coursework programs and courses. This will include:
 - a. pathways that contribute to student access including credit and articulation; participation; retention; and success;
 - b. the admission and selection policies and procedures for undergraduate and coursework degree programs;

- c. program structures and program and course quality 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 teaching activities, including those of third party providers;
- e. work and research integrated learning opportunities;
- f. innovative approaches to course and program delivery in the University;
- g. the expansion of leading edge and blended modes of teaching, eg. online delivery and intensive delivery;
- h. Academic integrity; and
- i. the sustainability of high quality teaching and learning.

2.2.2 ensure regular monitoring and reporting to Academic Senate on the implementation and effectiveness of teaching and learning policies, procedures and practices, using reviews and other methods of evaluation;

2.2.3 provide advice to the Programs and Course Approval Committee on the following:

- a. College Response and Action Plans to external program reviews;
- b. annual program reports;
- c. innovative options for program delivery;
- d. policy developments and review; and
- e. proposals relating to the establishment, revision, discontinuation and disestablishment of coursework programs.

2.2.4 provide advice on any other academic policy and quality matters.

2.3 Meetings

2.3.1 The Teaching and Learning Committee will meet as frequently as required, but not less than four (4) meetings per calendar year.

2.3.2 Standing Orders of the Academic Senate will apply.

3. Reporting

3.1 The Teaching and Learning Committee is required to report to Academic Senate in accordance with *Section 2.2 Functions* as listed in this Terms of Reference and any annual cycle of business requirements.

3.2 The membership of this committee will be endorsed annually by Academic Senate.

4. Membership

The Teaching and Learning Committee shall consist of the following members:

4.1 Ex Officio

- 4.1.1 Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) (Chair);
- 4.1.2 Deputy President Academic Senate (Teaching and Learning) (Deputy Chair); and
- 4.1.3 President of Academic Senate.

4.2 Members

- 4.2.1 College Associate Dean (Education), or one other senior academic from each College with governance and management expertise in teaching and learning, nominated by the College Pro Vice-Chancellor and appointed by the Chair and the President of Academic Senate;
- 4.2.2 Director of the Pathways and Academic Learning Support Centre, or senior academic of the Centre, nominated by the Director of the Pathways and Academic Learning Support Centre and appointed by the Chair and the President of Academic Senate;
- 4.2.3 Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education Innovation), or nominee;
- 4.2.4 Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience), or nominee;
- 4.2.5 Up to three (3) postgraduate coursework students appointed by the Chair and the President of Academic Senate;
- 4.2.6 Up to three (3) undergraduate coursework students appointed by the Chair and the President of Academic Senate; and
- 4.2.7 Up to five (5) additional members appointed by the Chair and the President of Academic Senate to ensure appropriate expertise in the committee.

4.3 Rights of Audience and Debate

- 4.3.1 Pro Vice-Chancellor (Global Partnerships), or nominee;
- 4.3.2 Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Strategy and Leadership), or nominee; and
- 4.3.3 Director, Strategy, Planning and Performance, or nominee.
- 4.3.4 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 person as deemed appropriate.

4.4 Terms of Office for Members

The terms of office for members in categories 4.2.4, 4.2.5 and 4.2.6 will be up to two (2) years from the date of appointment, as determined by the Chair and the President of Academic Senate.

4.5 Quorum

The quorum for meetings of the Teaching and Learning Committee shall be at least five (5) members and must include the Chair or Deputy Chair, two (2) College representatives and two (2) other members as outlined in 4.2 Members above.

5. Subcommittees / Working Groups

- 5.1** The Teaching and Learning Committee may establish sub-committees and/or working parties in respect of specific issues to assist it to meet its obligations.
 - 5.1.1** The Teaching and Learning Committee must establish and approve the Terms of Reference for any other sub-committees or working groups as required to facilitate the work of Teaching and Learning Committee ensuring that the Terms of Reference are consistent with the policies of Academic Senate.
- 5.2** Such subcommittees or working groups will make recommendations and report to the Teaching and Learning Committee.

6. Authorities (Delegations)

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

Teaching and Learning 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

Terms of Reference – Program and Course Approval Committee

Terms of Reference – Research Committee

Terms of Reference – College Board

Document History and Authority

Date Approved	16 June 2010	
Approval Authority	Academic Senate	
Date	Approved By	Amendment
25 November 2025	Academic Senate	Minor administrative amendment to position title 'Associate Dean (Education)' with including term 'College' to clarify position (4.2.1). Inclusion of Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience) as full member. Inclusion of number '4.3.4' within Rights of Audience, Chair Requested. Removal of number '4.4.1', content remains under 4.1.
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.
17 October 2025	President Academic Senate	Minor administrative amendment to position title 'Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)' with the inclusion of 'Senior' (clause 4.1.1). Position removal of 'Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Excellence)' (clause 4.3.3) consistent with the current organisational structure. Subsequent sequence of clause numbers also changed.
8 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. 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 from 'Assistant Dean' to 'Associate Dean' (clause 4.2.1) and position title from 'Deputy Vice-Chancellor Global' to 'Pro Vice-Chancellor Global' (clause 4.3.1) consistent with the current organisational structure.
18 October 2023	Academic Senate	Inclusion of Pro Vice-Chancellor Education Innovation as full member (new Clause 4.2.3) and removal from membership category 'Rights of Audience and debate'
14 November 2022	President Academic Senate (under Urgent Business)	Amendment to Clause 4.4.1 to enable terms up to two years for members in the following categories (4.2.3, 4.2.4 and 4.2.5).
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.
6 December 2021	President Academic Senate	Amendment to student membership composition to increase scope for student membership from one (1) to "up to three (3)" postgraduate students, and from one (1) to "up to three (3)" undergraduate students at Clauses 4.2.3 and 4.2.4. (Amendment made under Urgent Business Delegation AUB2).
5 October 2021	University Secretary	Amendment to position title from 'Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)' to the new position title 'Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education Innovation)' at Clause 4.3.2.
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	Clause 4.2.2 amended to the Pathways and Academic Learning Support Centre. Clause 4.3.1 amended to reflect updated title of Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Global Engagement and Partnerships). Clause 4.3.3 and 4.3.4 added to include Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Strategy and Leadership) and Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Excellence).
27 March 2017	Academic Senate	Administrative amendment to title of University of Newcastle By-law 2017 to reflect updated By-law.
30 November 2016	Academic Senate	Clause 2.3 amended to set minimum meetings per annum at four; addition to Clause 4.2.2 to include a senior academic representative of the English Language and Foundation Studies Centre; and minor amendments to Clauses 5, and 7.
29 April 2015	Academic Senate	Added Clause 4.3.3 to grant Rights of Audience and Debate to the Director, Strategy, Planning and Performance or nominee (AS15:035).
22 May 2013	Academic Senate	Membership and quorum amended. (AS13:033).
28 September 2011	Academic Senate	Added Clause 4.5 to clarify terms of office for members and amended Clause 2.3.1 – requirement to meet a minimum of five times per year instead of six. (AS11:169).
6 September 2010	Academic Senate	Minor amendment to section 4.4 Attendance to Rights of Audience and Debate.

16 June 2010	Academic Senate	Following the Review of Academic Senate in 2009, the Terms of Reference were amended and approved at Academic Senate 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>
May 2007	Academic Senate	At the May 2007 meeting of Academic Senate, the Committee was renamed the Teaching and Learning Committee.
November 2005	Academic Senate	At the November 2005 meeting of Academic Senate, the Committee was renamed the Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Committee and made a standing committee of Academic Senate.
