

# **PROGRAM AND COURSE APPROVAL COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**



## **Standing Committee of Academic Senate**

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### **1. Establishment**

- 1.1 The Committee was established as a Sub-Committee of the Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Committee (under the name of Program and Course Appraisal Sub-Committee) at the November 2005 meeting of Academic Senate. The Committee was re-constituted as a Committee of Academic Senate (under the name of Program and Course Approval Committee) at the November 2007 meeting.

### **2. Purpose and Functions**

#### **2.1 Purpose**

The Program and Course Approval Committee:

- 2.1.1 is the principal advisory committee to Academic Senate on all programs and courses;
- 2.1.2 provides advice and guidance for the creation and maintenance of functions associated with Program Schedules;
- 2.1.3 provides strategic advice to Academic Senate on program and course related matters supporting the:
  - a. global competitiveness of graduates of the University;
  - b. strategic directions of the University; and
  - c. innovative program developments in the University.
- 2.1.4 approves, on behalf of Academic Senate:
  - a. the academic content and structure of new and revised programs and courses;
  - b. the discontinuation of programs; and
  - c. any transition arrangements;
- 2.1.5 recommends to Academic Senate the establishment and the

disestablishment of awards, as appropriate, for approval. Such approvals will be reported to Council;

2.1.6 has oversight of the number and uniqueness of courses across the University; and

2.1.7 exercises the responsibilities located in the relevant Rules, Schedules and policies of the University for programs and courses.

## **2.2 Functions**

The Program and Course Approval Committee will:

2.2.1 review and approve all new and revised program proposals ensuring they:

- a. provide clear advice on admission criteria, exit pathways, and articulation opportunities;
- b. comply with all existing requirements and structures for programs;
- c. have appropriate arrangements for quality assurance of all contributions to the learning outcomes, including contributions from third party entities;
- d. include teach-out and transition plans for currently enrolled students in revised or discontinued programs; and
- e. have appropriate arrangements and support services available for programs being offered to international onshore students;

2.2.2 endorse for approval by Academic Senate new, or revisions to existing, Program Schedules;

2.2.3 assist in the development and implementation of innovative program and course content and delivery models;

2.2.4 monitor responses to external program reviews by:

- a. approving the Response and Action Plans recommended by the relevant Board(s), and forward to the Teaching and Learning Committee; and
- b. assessing reports on the implementation and progress of the approved plan.

2.2.5 advise the Teaching and Learning Committee and Research Committee on the framework and structure of the programs and courses offered by the University ensuring they:

- a. enable student participation and success;

- b. ensure the global competitiveness of our graduates; and
  - c. facilitate student engagement in work and research integrated learning experiences.
- 2.2.6 notify Academic Senate of new program approvals, any major changes to existing programs and any transition arrangements;
- 2.2.7 advise the Teaching and Learning Committee and the Research Committee of any relevant program and course related issues arising from current policy, practice or procedures;
- 2.2.8 approve articulation arrangements which exceed the maximum credit listed in the relevant Program Schedule;
- 2.2.9 be responsible for the approval, quality control and monitoring of all courses offered by the University, excepting that the academic content of a course is the responsibility of College Board or the PALS Board, in accordance with the respective Terms of Reference. This responsibility for courses includes:
  - a. undertaking periodic reviews of the number of courses offered by the University;
  - b. approving the addition of new courses to the University's Course Availability List;
  - c. monitoring course content, to address and minimise any duplication of content or changed learning outcomes, particularly following revisions to courses and programs; and
  - d. new and revised requisites.
- 2.2.10 undertake any other program and course related matters as requested by the President of Academic Senate or the Chairs of the other Academic Senate Standing Committees; and
- 2.2.11 refer to Academic Senate for resolution, any matters the Committee is unable to satisfactorily resolve. The Academic Senate will consider and recommend a resolution to the Program and Course Approval Committee.

## **2.3 Meetings**

- 2.3.1 The Committee will meet a minimum of five times each calendar year.
- 2.3.2 Standing Orders of the Academic Senate will apply.

### 3. Reporting

- 3.1** The Program and Course Approval 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.

### 4. Membership

The Program and Course Approval Committee shall consist of the following members:

- 4.1** In accordance with the Governance Rule, the Vice-Chancellor is, by virtue of office, a member of all Academic Senate committees.

**4.2 Ex Officio**

- 4.2.1 Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Vice-President (Chair);
- 4.2.2 President of the Academic Senate;
- 4.2.3 Assistant Deans Education of the University's Colleges and equivalent from Pathways and Academic Learning Support Centre approved by the Pathways and Academic Learning Support Board;
- 4.2.4 Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Strategy and Leadership) (or nominee);
- 4.2.5 Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience) and Academic Registrar.

**4.3 Other Members**

- 4.3.1 up to five additional members appointed by the Chair and the President of Academic Senate to ensure appropriate academic expertise and diversity in the committee.

**4.4 Attendance with Rights of Audience and Debate**

In accordance with the Academic Senate Standing Orders, the Committee 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. The following persons shall have rights of audience and debate at all meetings of the Committee:

- 4.4.1 Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Innovation);
- 4.4.2 Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Global) (or nominee);
- 4.4.3 Dean, Graduate Research;
- 4.4.4 one senior academic staff member from the Wollotuka Institute with governance and management responsibility, nominated by the Directors;

4.4.5 one senior academic staff member nominated by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Singapore);

4.4.6 Education and Innovation Officers (or equivalent) from each College and the Pathways and Academic Learning Support Centre.

#### **4.5 Terms of Office for Other Members**

4.5.1 The terms of office for members in category 4.3.1 will usually be two years

#### **4.6 Quorum**

The quorum for meetings is one half of the total membership (to the nearest whole number, not including any vacant positions). The Vice-Chancellor is not counted as part of the quorum.

#### **4.7 Deputy Chair**

The role of Deputy Chair will be undertaken by a member appointed by the Chair and the President of Academic Senate.

### **5. Subsidiary Bodies**

5.1 The Committee may establish sub-committees or working parties in respect of specific issues to assist it to meet its obligations.

5.1.1 The Committee must establish and approve Terms of Reference for any other sub-committees or working groups as required to facilitate the work of Program and Course Approval Committee, ensuring that the Terms of Reference are consistent with the policies of Academic Senate.

5.2 Such subsidiary bodies will report to the Program and Course Approval Committee. The report will provide advice, make recommendations and notify the Committee of action taken under appropriate delegated authority.

### **6. Authorities (Delegations)**

6.1 As per the authority vested in the Committee and its Chair, Academic Senate, and relevant University policies.

6.2 In accordance with Council Resolution of 3 March 2006, the Program and Course Approval Committee has the delegated authority of Council to approve the following:

6.2.1 the academic content of new and revised programs;

- 6.2.2 the establishment of courses; and
- 6.2.3 the College Response and Action Plan following an external program review.
- 6.3** On behalf of the Program and Course Approval Committee, the Chair is authorised to approve urgent business which must be scheduled between meetings of the Committee.
  - 6.3.1 Where the Chair is also a College Pro Vice-Chancellor, the Deputy Chair can approve urgent business relating to programs and courses for that College.
- 6.4** The Chair will notify the Committee of any action taken under delegated authority between meetings, at the next meeting of the Committee and where appropriate, Academic Senate.

## **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**

Program and Course Approval Committee Secretary

## **9. Essential Supporting Documents**

Governance Rule

Academic Senate Handbook

Standing Orders of the Academic Senate

Rules, Policies and Procedures of the University of Newcastle relating to Program and Course Management

## 10. Related Documents

University of Newcastle Act 1989 (NSW)

University of Newcastle By-law 2017 (NSW)

Research Committee – Terms of Reference

Teaching and Learning Committee – Terms of Reference

College Boards – Terms of Reference

| Document History and Authority |                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
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| <b>Date Approved</b>           | 16 June 2010    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Approval Authority</b>      | Academic Senate |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Date                           | Approved By     | Amendment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 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.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 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.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 10 November 2021               | Academic Senate | Amendments to Clauses 4.2, 4.3, 4.5, 4.4 and 4.7 and position title updates.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 16 February 2021               | Academic Senate | Amendments to position titles and references from 'Faculty' to College'.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| TBA                            | Academic Senate | Amendments to position titles.<br><br>Addition of Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Strategy and Leadership) or nominee to clause 4.2.<br><br>Addition of 'one senior academic staff member nominated by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Singapore); under clause 4.4.<br><br>Amendments to the Other Members criteria and Term of Officer Other Members.<br><br>Amendments to clause 4.7 Deputy Chair                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 16 June 2010                   | Academic Senate | The Terms of Reference for the Committee were amended                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 2009                           | Academic Senate | Following the outcomes of the 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:<br><br>The membership of each committee should, in general, be based on expertise rather than a representative model;<br><br>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<br><br>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. |