



Standing Orders of the Academic Senate

Introduction

Academic Senate Standing Orders will apply in all meetings of the Academic Senate and its Standing Committees.

The Standing Committees of the Academic Senate are:

- Teaching and Learning Committee
- Research Committee
- College Boards
- Program and Course Approval Committee
- Pathways and Academic Learning Support Centre Board
- Academic Senate Executive Committee

In meetings of the Standing Committees of the Academic Senate, the Chair will take the role described for the President of Academic Senate (PAS), and references to 'the Academic Senate' should be read as to the relevant Standing Committee of the Academic Senate, except for Clause 17.0 describing amendments to Standing Orders.

For the purposes of this document, the term "Standing Orders" refers to the *Standing Orders of the Academic Senate*.

For the purposes of this document, an "Alternate" means a person who is appointed to act as a replacement for an existing member, with the same rights, powers, duties and responsibilities as the other members, for a specified time period. This appointment must be approved by the Academic Senate.

For the purposes of this document, a "Proxy" means a temporary replacement at one meeting for an existing member who has been instructed to speak and vote at the member's direction. This role does not need to be approved by the Academic Senate.

Contacts:

Secretary of the Academic Senate	academicsenate@newcastle.edu.au
President of the Academic Senate	PAS@newcastle.edu.au

Table of Contents

1.0	Convening of Meetings.....	1
2.0	Placing Items of Business on the Agenda	1
3.0	Quorum	1
4.0	Attendance of Members.....	2
5.0	Business at Meetings.....	3
6.0	Confidential Items	3
7.0	The Chair.....	3
8.0	Conduct of Members.....	4
9.0	Regular Rules of Debate	4
10.0	Formal Rules of Debate	4
11.0	Items In Camera.....	5
12.0	Motions and Amendments.....	6
13.0	Voting	7
14.0	Questions.....	7
15.0	Flying Minute	8
16.0	Minutes.....	8
17.0	Amendment of Standing Orders.....	9
18.0	General	9

1.0 Convening of Meetings

- 1.1. Academic Senate will meet:
 - (i) at least five times a year; and
 - (ii) when specially called by the Secretariat to the Academic Senate (herein referred to as the Secretary) at the direction of the President of Academic Senate (PAS) or the Vice-Chancellor; or
 - (iii) when specially called by the Secretary upon receipt of a written requisition, from at least 25% of all members of the Academic Senate, containing a description of the business to be discussed.
- 1.2. Notice of a meeting including a copy of the Agenda, will be circulated by the Secretary to the normal university email address of each member seven days before the meeting.
- 1.3. If the Academic Senate Executive Committee is of the opinion that there is not sufficient business to warrant holding a scheduled meeting of the Academic Senate, the PAS may direct that members are informed that the meeting has been cancelled. Consecutive scheduled meetings of the Academic Senate may not be cancelled.
- 1.4. Meetings of the Academic Senate will not exceed three hours in duration unless there is a specific motion for an extension beyond two and half hours.

2.0 Placing Items of Business on the Agenda

- 2.1. Items of business for the Agenda should reach the Secretary no later than 14 days prior to the meeting unless previously arranged with the PAS.
- 2.2. Any notice of motion must be submitted in writing to the Secretary 14 days prior to the meeting. If submitted after this time it may be accepted only at the discretion of the PAS.
- 2.3. Tabled items will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances and by prior arrangement with the PAS (see Clause 5.3).

3.0 Quorum

- 3.1. The quorum for the Academic Senate will be half of the membership (to the nearest whole number, not including any vacant positions) with the majority being elected members of the Academic Senate. The quorum for individual Committees of the Academic Senate will be as determined in their respective Terms of Reference.
- 3.2. Proxies and Alternates will have full voting rights at the meeting for which they have been nominated and will count as part of the quorum for that meeting.
- 3.3. If a quorum is not present 15 minutes from the stated commencement time of the meeting, or such greater period as the PAS may determine, the meeting will lapse. All business on the Agenda will be included in the Agenda for the next scheduled ordinary meeting.

- 3.4. When a meeting is not quorate or ceases to be quorate, but there are items of urgent business to transact, the PAS may authorise that the inquorate meeting proceeds to consider the matters listed for the original meeting or, specific item(s).
- 3.5. Decisions made by an inquorate meeting will be ratified by the next quorate meeting of the Academic Senate.

4.0 Attendance of Members

- 4.1. Any member unable to attend a meeting should record their apology by advising the Secretary prior to the meeting.
- 4.2. A member who is unable to attend a meeting may nominate a Proxy to attend in their stead, acting at the member's direction, for a maximum of two consecutive meetings per member.
- 4.3. Members are responsible for notifying the Secretary of the Academic Senate of their Proxy at least 24 hours prior to the meeting and for ensuring the Proxy is briefed on the matters which will be considered at the meeting.
- 4.4. Where an elected or co-opted member of the Academic Senate anticipates being absent for more than two consecutive meetings, they should apply to PAS for leave of absence. Leave of absence may be granted for travel commitments, illness, bereavement (or similar compassionate grounds), or for any other reason the PAS considers appropriate.
- 4.5. On granting a leave of absence in accordance with Clause 4.4, the PAS will advise the Academic Senate at its next meeting and recommend that:
 - (i) the Academic Senate temporarily appoint an Alternate member from the same electorate for the period of absence; or
 - (ii) the Academic Senate permit the use of a Proxy for more than two consecutive meeting during the period of absence; or
 - (iii) the Academic Senate approve that the position remain vacant during the period of absence.
- 4.6. The position of any elected member of the Academic Senate who is absent without leave for three consecutive meetings may be declared vacant by the PAS.
- 4.7. On declaring a position vacant in accordance with 4.6, the PAS will advise the Academic Senate at its next meeting and recommend that:
 - (i) the Academic Senate appoint a replacement member for the remaining term of office following appropriate consultation and consideration; or
 - (ii) the Academic Senate approve that the position remain vacant for the remainder of the term of office.
- 4.8. Members cannot assign their voting rights except through the use of a Proxy and no member can exercise more than one vote.
- 4.9. If deemed appropriate by the PAS, members may participate in a meeting by electronic means such as Zoom, if available.

5.0 Business at Meetings

- 5.1. The normal order of business at regular meetings will be determined by the Chair, with the agreement of the majority of members.
- 5.2. Items requiring discussion will be starred by decision of the PAS. Any member of the Academic Senate may request that an unstarred item in the Agenda be starred for discussion. Members are encouraged to do this in a timely manner to promote debate and discussion.
- 5.3. All tabled material will be starred for discussion (see Clause 2.3).
- 5.4. All unstarred items will be submitted in a single motion to the Academic Senate for noting or formal approval, as required, without debate.
- 5.5. The PAS 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.

6.0 Confidential Items

- 6.1. Any confidential items will be clearly marked as 'Confidential' and circulated to members only.
- 6.2. A member of the Academic Senate ought not, without the approval of the PAS, discuss with, or directly or indirectly disclose to, a person not a member of the Academic Senate any matter listed as confidential on the business papers or in the minutes of the Academic Senate.

7.0 The Chair

The PAS (or their nominee) will act as Chair for the meeting.

- 7.1. The Chair will:
 - (i) conduct the proceedings in the manner indicated by the Standing Orders and give all members present an opportunity for speaking;
 - (ii) take care that the views of the meeting on any matter before it, are properly ascertained with regard to that matter;
 - (iii) put motions and amendments to the vote and report the result of the vote to the meeting;
 - (iv) require a speaker who is being unduly verbose, or is not keeping to the point under discussion, to stop speaking;
 - (v) require the withdrawal of offensive statements or the imputation of improper motives;
 - (vi) preserve order and prevent interference to speakers by private talk or heckling remarks; and
 - (vii) require a member who persists in being disorderly to leave the meeting.

- 7.2. The Chair may not adjourn a meeting to prevent it coming to a decision. The Chair may not refuse to accept an amendment that is in proper form and relates to a motion under discussion.
- 7.3. Any member disagreeing with a ruling from the Chair, may move as follows - “That the Chair’s ruling be dissented from”. No seconder is required.
- 7.4. A dissent motion must be moved immediately after the ruling is given.
- 7.5. Upon such a motion being moved, the assigned Deputy will take the Chair.
- 7.6. The member disagreeing with the ruling may speak to the matter for no more than two minutes. The Chair may reply for no more than two minutes. The motion will then be put and proceedings will be resumed.

8.0 Conduct of Members

- 8.1. Within any meeting of the Academic Senate, members will:
 - (i) speak only on the matter then before the Academic Senate;
 - (ii) not make offensive statements or impute improper motives to other members;
 - (iii) when called to order by the Chair, cease speaking until the question of order is decided;
 - (iv) except with the permission of the Chair or by resolution of the Academic Senate, not remain in a meeting when any matter relating to that member personally (other than a motion that the member be censured) is under consideration.

9.0 Regular Rules of Debate

- 9.1. Academic Senate will conduct business in committee using regular rules of debate and, in particular:
 - (i) a member may speak more than once on any matter unless the Chair considers that other members are being denied the right to speak or that the member is unduly repetitious;
 - (ii) the mover of a motion from the floor will put the motion in writing to be read aloud, by the Chair, prior to the vote taking place; and
 - (iii) the Chair may “ask approval” and in the absence of dissent, assume that the matter has been approved without objection.

10.0 Formal Rules of Debate

- 10.1. If the PAS so rules or the Academic Senate by resolution determines, the Clauses 10.0 to 14.0 inclusive of the Standing Orders will be observed.

- 10.2. If the meeting or part of the meeting, is conducted in accordance with the formal rules of debate, then the following procedures will apply:
- (i) debate will only occur on a formal motion before the PAS or on an amendment to such a motion. Any such motion or amendment must be submitted in writing to the PAS, but may be seconded orally;
 - (ii) any member wishing to move a motion, an amendment, or to take part in the debate, will indicate this to the PAS by raising their hand;
 - (iii) the member first observed by the PAS to raise their hand, will be given priority in speaking;
 - (iv) no member (except the mover of a motion) may speak twice to a matter before the Academic Senate except by explanation in reply to a question, by raising a point of order, or with the consent of two-thirds of the members present. A member who, without comment, seconded the motion or amendment, will not be deemed to have spoken;
 - (v) a member may speak to an amendment even if that member has already spoken to the motion or a previous amendment;
 - (vi) the mover of a motion, but not an amendment, will have the right to reply. The mover's reply closes the debate;
 - (vii) a speaker will keep to the particular matter before the meeting and will not introduce irrelevant material;
 - (viii) the mover of a motion may speak for no more than five minutes and subsequent speakers for a period no more than two minutes, unless an extension not exceeding five minutes is granted by a vote of two-thirds of those present;
 - (ix) the PAS may participate in the debate from the Chair, or in order to speak from the floor call upon any member to take the Chair whilst the PAS speaks;
 - (x) no member may speak to a motion, except to raise a point of order, after it has been put by the PAS and the show of hands or ballot has been completed;
 - (xi) in the absence of a member who has given notice of motion, the motion will lapse unless another member present is prepared to move it;
 - (xii) a motion may be amended or withdrawn by the mover with the consent of the meeting; and
 - (xiii) any motion or amendment not seconded, will not be debated.

11.0 Items In Camera

- 11.1. A motion to close the meeting to all but members is called 'raising a question of privilege' and the meeting would then be 'in camera'. The motion to meet in camera is moved by the PAS and requires the support of a majority of members present (Clause 10.0).

- 11.2. The PAS may invite selected officers of the University to be present during items dealt with 'in camera'.
- 11.3. Amending an Agenda to declare an item be dealt with 'in camera' is dealt with as above. Where an item is listed as 'in camera', to have it dealt with in General Business requires an amendment to the Agenda.

12.0 Motions and Amendments

- 12.1. A motion or amendment will be presented in definite and precise language and should usually be affirmative in form.
- 12.2. An amendment:
 - (i) will relate to the matter involved in the motion and not to some other matter;
 - (ii) if a direct negative of the motion, will be disallowed;
 - (iii) if carried, but then determined by the PAS as substantially the same as the original motion, that motion to amend will be declared out of order; and
 - (iv) if an amendment has been defeated, the PAS may determine that another amendment which is substantially the same as that amendment, is also out of order.
- 12.3. The PAS may refuse to grant the mover of a motion the right to reply until it is clear to the Chair that no other member wishes to speak or to move an amendment.
- 12.4. The seconder of a motion may reserve the right to speak later, provided the seconder does not otherwise speak when seconding the motion.
- 12.5. The mover of an amendment has no right of reply.
- 12.6. As soon as the debate on a motion or amendment has concluded, the PAS will put the motion or amendment.
- 12.7. Debate on a motion or amendment will be immediately suspended, even if a member is speaking, if any of the following procedural motions are moved:
 - (i) "that the Academic Senate proceeds to the next business";
 - (ii) "that the Academic Senate does now adjourn";
 - (iii) "that the question is now put";
 - (iv) "that the speaker is no longer heard";
 - (v) "that the matter be referred back to the Committee which originally submitted the proposal"; and
 - (vi) "that the motion be referred to a Committee designated by the President of the Academic Senate".

Any such motion may not be moved or seconded by a member who has already spoken to the motion or to an amendment.

Any of the above motions, except (v), will immediately be put without amendment or debate, unless the Chair expresses a view that the matter has not been adequately debated and that the procedural motion should not be carried. To carry any of the above motions requires at least two-thirds of the members present to vote in favour.

If (iii) above is carried in relation to an original motion, the mover of that motion may reply before the motion is put.

If (v) above is moved, debate may continue on matters to which the originating Committee's attention should be drawn.

12.8. A censure motion, formally reprimanding an office bearing member of the Academic Senate, for their actions in that capacity, may be moved. Any motion that a member of the Academic Senate be censured by the Academic Senate will be debated only if the member has been given:

- (i) written notice of that motion at least seven days previously;
- (ii) a brief statement of the matters alleged against the member;
- (iii) a notice that the charge may, if so desired, be answered at the meeting; and
- (iv) the PAS will ensure that the named member has a reasonable opportunity to answer the charge during the debate on the motion. Only one amendment may normally be accepted at a time. However, a member may speak against an amendment by drawing attention to a foreshadowed amendment to be moved if the amendment before the meeting is defeated.

13.0 Voting

13.1. Formal voting is only required when called for under Clause 10.0.

13.2. Voting will be decided by show of hands unless a secret ballot is directed by the PAS or is demanded by at least five members. When a vote has been taken by a show of hands, any five members may, by a subsequent show of hands, require that the vote be confirmed by a secret ballot which will take place without any further debate.

13.3. All questions which come before the Academic Senate will be decided by the majority of the members present and voting at the meeting.

13.4. As the member presiding at a meeting of the Academic Senate, the PAS will have the casting vote in the event that a vote results in a tie.

14.0 Questions

14.1. Questions may be asked through the PAS of any member present during 'Any Other Business'. The PAS may disallow any question or take 'a question on notice'. Answers to questions may not be debated or lead to a motion at the meeting.

15.0 Flying Minute

- 15.1. When, in the opinion of the PAS, a matter requires the urgent consideration of the Academic Senate, and no meeting of the Academic Senate is scheduled within 14 days, members may be consulted in writing by a flying minute.
- 15.2. A draft motion put before members by way of a flying minute, will become a resolution of the Academic Senate as at the date set for return of responses, provided at least two-thirds of all members vote in favour of the motion.
- 15.3. A resolution passed by way of a flying minute will be reported to the next ordinary meeting of the Academic Senate.

16.0 Minutes

- 16.1. The confirmed minutes of the meeting are the official record of the meeting.
- 16.2. The minutes will record:
 - (i) the nature of the meeting, whether ordinary, special or adjourned;
 - (ii) the date, time and place of the meeting;
 - (iii) the name of the member who held the Chair and a record of the members present and of any persons present by invitation;
 - (iv) a summary of the business conducted at the meeting including any motion carried:
 - (a) a brief statement of the reasons advanced in support of the motion, followed by the motion as carried;
 - (b) the figures where a vote is taken or, where there was a clear majority, the number voting against or a statement that the motion was carried without objection; and
 - (c) at the request of any member, a record that that member voted against the motion or abstained from voting.
- 16.3. Unless the Academic Senate directs otherwise, a record of the following matters need not be included:
 - (i) any motion which is lost or withdrawn;
 - (ii) any motion moved, but not seconded, while the Academic Senate is conducting its business pursuant to Clause 16.3;
 - (iii) except in the case where the Vice-Chancellor or the mover of a motion has made a formal statement for report to the Academic Senate or elsewhere, the views expressed by an individual member.
- 16.4. A member may, within two days after any meeting, submit to the PAS through the Secretary, a brief statement of their views expressed at the meeting on any matter. Such statements may or may not be included in the minutes, at the discretion of the PAS.

- 16.5. The unconfirmed minutes of each meeting will normally be available 14 days after the meeting. Any questions relating to the unconfirmed minutes should be directed to the Secretary.
- 16.6. The minutes of each meeting will be submitted to the following meeting for confirmation. Debate on a motion that the 'minutes be confirmed' will be limited to their accuracy and adequacy as presented. The only motion which may be submitted during such debate will be a motion that the minutes be amended to correct miss-statements or to record more adequately the proceedings of the previous meeting. Except with the permission of the PAS, or by resolution of the Academic Senate, a member may not request that a statement attributed to them be included. A matter decided at a previous meeting cannot be reopened during debate on a motion to confirm the minutes of that meeting. These matters may be raised from the members during Business Arising out of the Minutes under Clause 5.0.
- 16.7. The minutes, when confirmed, will be signed by the Chair as a true record of the proceedings of the previous meeting.
- 16.8. Lengthy amendments to the minutes of a previous meeting will be included in the minutes of the succeeding meeting. Other amendments will be initialled by the Chair.

17.0 Amendment of Standing Orders

- 17.1. Amendment to these Standing Orders may be approved by the Academic Senate.

18.0 General

- 18.1. Any matter of procedure which is not dealt with in these Standing Orders will be determined by decision by the PAS.
- 18.2. Where a matter before a Standing Committee is unable to be resolved by that Committee, the Chair of that Committee will refer the matter to the Academic Senate.
- 18.3. Any power conferred on the PAS as Chair by these Standing Orders may, in the absence of the PAS, be exercised by a Deputy PAS or, in the absence of both the PAS and both Deputy PAS, by the member chairing the meeting.
- 18.4. These Standing Orders will apply at every meeting of the Academic Senate, unless it is resolved by an absolute majority of its members present at the meeting, that any part (excluding Clauses 3.0, 4.0, 6.0 and 8.0) of these Orders be suspended for the whole or any part of a meeting.
- 18.5. Members of the Council have the right to attend all meetings of the Academic Senate and its committees, including in camera items, with rights of audience and debate and to receive meeting papers.
- 18.6. Any staff member of the University may attend a scheduled meeting of the Academic Senate provided:
 - (i) they notify the Secretary at least 24 hours in advance;
 - (ii) attendance is not contrary to Clauses 6.0 and 11.0; and

- (iii) there is no verbal or physical interruption, or attempt to interrupt or contribute to, any part of the proceedings of the meeting by an attendee, without an invitation from the PAS.

Document History and Authority	
Approval Authority	Academic Senate
Date Approved	24 June 2022
Standing Orders Sponsor	University Secretary
Standing Orders Owner	President of Academic Senate
Standing Orders Contact	Secretary, Academic Senate
Amendment History	9 October 2024 – Minor revision to Clause 1.4 approved by Academic Senate to increase the allowable duration of meetings to be up to 3 hours. 24 June 2022 – Full review of the Standing Orders of the Academic Senate undertaken and approved. 2 March 2021 - Administrative updates to terminology (from Faculty to College), as well as a minor amendment to the quorum for the Research Committee and Teaching and Learning Committee required as a result of the College re-structure. New Clause 3.4 added to include the quorum for the Program and Course Approval Committee, the Pathways and Academic Learning Support Board, and the Academic Senate Executive Committee. Administrative Amendment to Clause 18.5 to provide a point of clarity for Council members attending Academic Senate Academic Senate (22 May 2013) approved amendments to Clauses 3.1, 3.2 and 4.5 [AS13:033] Academic Senate (22 May 2013) approve new Clauses 3.3, 3.4 and 4.9 [AS13:033] Amendment to Clause 3.3 to align with changes to the Terms of Reference for Faculty Boards, approved by Senate on 24 July 2013 Academic Senate approved inclusion of new Clause 18.2 (dispute resolution) on 28 September 2011 (AS11:169) Amendments to section 4, approved by Academic Senate 8 June 2011 (AS11:066). Academic Senate approved the following amendments at its 16 June 2010 meeting (AS10:0070): Insertion of Clauses 3.1.1, 3.2.1. and 16.5; Amended wording in Clause 16.1; and Re-numbering of Clause 16.5, 16.6, 16.7 following the insertion of a new Clause 16.5. 2 December 2009 – Approved by the Academic Senate