



**TERMS OF REFERENCE, MEMBERSHIP AND STANDING ORDERS
OF
ACADEMIC COUNCIL
OF DUBLIN CITY UNIVERSITY**

Office of the Vice-President Academic Affairs (Registrar)

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ACADEMIC COUNCIL OF DUBLIN CITY UNIVERSITY

Terms of reference, membership and standing orders of Academic Council and its sub-committees

Office of the Vice-President Academic Affairs (Registrar)

3 February 2021

1. Object and functions of Academic Council

Academic Council shall, subject to the financial constraints determined by the Governing Authority and to review by that authority, control the academic affairs of the University, including the curriculum of, and instruction and education provided by, the University. The functions of Academic Council shall include:

- 1.1 to design and develop programmes of study
- 1.2 to establish structures to implement those programmes
- 1.3 to make recommendations on programmes for the development of research
- 1.4 to make recommendations relating to the election, admission, retention and exclusion of students
- 1.5 to propose the form and contents of statutes to be made relating to the academic affairs of the University, including the conduct of examinations, the determination of examination results, the procedures for appeals by students relating to the results of such examinations and the evaluation of academic progress
- 1.6 to make recommendations for the awarding of fellowships, scholarships, bursaries, prizes or other awards
- 1.7 to make general arrangements for tutorial or other academic counselling
- 1.8 to perform any other functions, not in conflict with the Universities Act, 1997, which may be delegated to it by the Governing Authority, and
- 1.9 to implement any statutes and regulations made by the Governing Authority relating to any of the matters referred in this subsection

Academic Council normally meets six times in the academic year.

2. Membership of Academic Council

By decision of the Governing Authority of Dublin City University on 9 June 2005, and subsequent decisions of Academic Council, including decision made at the meeting of Academic Council of 5 December 2012 and approved at the Governing Authority meeting of 14 February 2013, and including changes which came about as consequence of Incorporation the membership of Academic Council is determined as follows:

2.1 *Ex officio* members:

- President – *Chair*
- Deputy President
- Vice-President Academic Affairs (Registrar) – *Deputy Chair*
- Deputy Registrar/Dean of Teaching and Learning
- Member of Academic Affairs’ Secretariat – *Secretary*
- Academic Secretary
- Executive Deans of Faculty
- Five Directors of Unit
- Vice-President for Research and Innovation Support
- Dean of Graduate Studies
- Dean of Strategic Learning Innovation
- Chair of Examination Appeals Board
- Director of the National Institute for Digital Learning
- Representative of Faculty Administration
- Student’s Union Vice-President – Academic Affairs

2.2 Members selected by Faculties/Open Education:

- Fifteen members of academic staff from each Executive Faculty
- Three members of academic staff from Open Education.

2.3 Elected student members:

Seven members, one each from the following:

- Dublin City University Business School
- Faculty of Engineering and Computing
- Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
- Faculty of Science and Health
- Postgraduate taught programme students
- Postgraduate research students
- DCU Institute of Education

2.4 Co-option

There is provision for the co-option of a further three members to Academic Council, should the Chair deem this to be necessary.

2.5 Changes to post titles

In the event that University structures change, and changes ensue to the titles of the posts above, consequent changes shall be made to the membership of Council, under the direction of the Chair and subject to approval by the Governing Authority.

2.6 Codicils with respect to membership

2.6.1 Members selected from Directors of Unit:

This group must include:

- Director of Quality Promotion
- Director of Registry
- Director of Student Support and Development

The selection of the remaining two members is a matter for all Directors in consultation with the Chief Operations Officer.

2.6.2 Members selected by Faculties/Open Education:

The method of selection of these members is a matter for Faculties/Open Education although subject to the following conditions:

The Open Education group must include the Head.

The group of fifteen from each Faculty should be drawn from an appropriate range of levels of academic staff from an appropriate range of academic disciplines, but must include:

- Each Head of School (or Group in the case of DCUBS)
- The Associate Dean for Research
- The Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning/Education
- A minimum of four who have significant responsibility for taught programmes.
- Academic staff members selected from Faculties/Open Education normally hold office for three years.

2.7 Elected student members

Elections for officers of the Students' Union take place in Semester 2 of each academic year in accordance with approved procedures. The officers' term runs for one year, from 15 June to 14 June.

2.8 Membership Status

All members of Academic Council are members in their own right and are not on the Council as representatives.

2.9 Substitution of Representation

Substitution of representation is not permitted as a matter of course. If, however, a member wishes to speak to an agenda item and cannot be present, a substitute may attend for that item subject to permission from the Chair.

3. Terms of Office

- 3.1** Academic Council shall be re-constituted every three years, i.e. 2013, 2016, etc., normally at the end of the academic years 2012/13, 2015/16, etc. Within each three-year period, where an *ex officio* member steps down from University office, he/she will cease to be a member of Council and will be replaced by the new office-holder.
- 3.2** The names of academic staff members selected by Executive Faculties/Open Education should be notified to the Office of the Vice-President Academic Affairs (Registrar) by the end of August of the relevant academic year.
- 3.3** Any vacancy should be filled within one month of the Office of the Vice-President Academic Affairs (Registrar) being notified of the occurrence of the vacancy.

4. Conduct of Meetings

Meetings of Academic Council shall be conducted in accordance with its Standing Orders in force at the time and as agreed by Academic Council.

5. Committees

- 5.1** Academic Council may establish such and so many committees as it thinks necessary to assist it in the performance of its functions.
- 5.2** A committee may consist either wholly of members of the Academic Council or of such combination of members and non-members as Academic Council thinks fit.

6. Standing orders of Academic Council

6.1 Chair, secretariat

- 6.1.1** The President is Chair of the Council. In the absence of the Chair from a meeting, the Vice-President Academic Affairs (Registrar), as Deputy Chair, or such other person as may be determined by the President, will chair that meeting.

6.1.2 A member of the Academic Affairs' Secretariat is Secretary to the Council.

6.2 Meetings

6.2.1 A schedule of meetings for each academic year is noted by Executive in advance of that year.

6.2.2 Additional meetings can be convened either (i) by the Council at one of its scheduled meetings; (ii) by the Chair; (iii) by a request to the Chair signed by at least one quarter of the members of the Council and submitted at least ten working days in advance of the proposed date of the meeting.

6.2.3 The normal duration of meetings will be not more than two hours. A motion to extend a meeting beyond this duration must be agreed by at least two-thirds of the members present and voting.

6.3 Agenda

6.3.1 The agenda is divided into three sections:

- A Adoption of the agenda, minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising from these minutes; minutes of subcommittees
- B Policy and strategy issues
- C Items for formal approval or noting.

The members of the Council will, in advance of each meeting and by a specified deadline, be requested to notify the Secretary of any items in section C which they wish to have discussed at the meeting. All items not so notified will be deemed, at the meeting, to be approved or noted, as appropriate, without discussion.

6.3.2 The first item of business at each meeting will be the adoption of the agenda.

6.3.3 Any member may request to have an item placed on the agenda for a meeting of the Council. The item must be submitted to the Secretary in accordance with the schedule of notification/submission/circulation of items made available to relevant staff members before the beginning of each academic year.

6.4 Minutes

6.4.1 The Secretary will keep minutes of every meeting of the Council and will circulate these in draft form to all members in accordance with the schedule of notification/submission/circulation of items made available to relevant staff members before the beginning of each academic year.

6.5 Documents

- 6.5.1** All documents for circulation to the members of the Council will be submitted to the Secretary in accordance with the schedule of notification/submission/circulation of items made available to relevant staff members before the beginning of each academic year. Documents (or draft agenda items or questions) given to the Chair will be considered to have been given to the Secretary. The Secretary will cause documents for a meeting to be circulated in accordance with the schedule of notification/ submission/ circulation of items made available to relevant staff members before the beginning of each academic year.
- 6.5.2** A document may be tabled at a meeting provided it relates to one of the agenda items for the meeting and provided two-thirds of the members present agree to its being tabled.

6.6 Quorum and attendance

- 6.6.1** A meeting will not commence until at least one third of the members are present. If a quorum is not forthcoming, the Chair will set an alternative date for the meeting.
- 6.6.2** The President may invite non-members of the Council to attend for specific items on the agenda.

6.7 Mode of address

- 6.7.1** Speakers will always address the Chair. While a member is speaking, other members will be silent.

6.8 Motions

- 6.8.1** A motion is a proposal which is put forward. A resolution is the acceptance of a motion by a meeting.
- 6.8.2** For a motion to be put to a meeting, it requires a proposer and a seconder. A motion from the Chair does not require a seconder.
- 6.8.3** For an amendment to a motion to be put, it requires a proposer and a seconder. An amendment will be put to a vote before the original motion.
- 6.8.4** If an amendment is not carried, the Chair will put the motion in its original form to a vote. If an amendment is carried, the Chair will put the amended motion to the meeting. Before a motion or an amendment is put to a vote, the Secretary will read out the text to be voted on.

6.9 Voting

- 6.9.1** Where a motion has been put to the meeting, the Chair will ask the Council whether or not it assents, and the decision will normally be by acclamation. Where there appears to be a division, the Chair will call for a vote; such a vote may also be

requested by any member. The results of voting will be counted and recorded by the Secretary.

- 6.9.2** It is open to any member to propose a motion demanding a secret ballot and this motion, if seconded, can be dealt with in the usual way.
- 6.9.3** The number of votes for and against a motion, and the number of abstentions, will be recorded in the minutes.
- 6.9.4** If the votes for and against a proposal are equal, the Chair has an additional, casting, vote as Chair.

6.10 Points of order and closure

- 6.10.1** A member may, at any time and without notice, interrupt debate by raising a 'point of order'. The Chair will decide whether the point of order is admissible, and his/her ruling will be final.
- 6.10.2** A motion for closure, if seconded in the usual way, must be put to the vote at once, without being discussed.

6.11 Emergency items

- 6.11.1** Any member may seek to add an item to the agenda as an emergency item. An emergency item can only be one which could not have been foreseen in accordance with the schedule of notification/submission/circulation of items made available to relevant staff members before the beginning of each academic year and which must be resolved before the next scheduled meeting. A vote must be held on every proposal for an emergency item to be inscribed, and for it to be inscribed it must get the assenting votes of at least two-thirds of the members present and voting. Members may vote only for or against the inscription of an emergency item; members abstaining will not be considered, for the purposes of the vote, to be 'present and voting'.
- 6.11.2** Occasionally, it may be appropriate to deal electronically with an urgent item which needs to be resolved before the next scheduled meeting. The permission of the Chair to do this must be sought in all cases. If permission is granted, the Secretary will cause the documentation relating to the item to be circulated and will request responses by a specified date and time. After the deadline has passed, the Secretary will inform the Council of the outcome of the discussion. The outcome will be noted in the minutes of the next scheduled meeting.

6.12 Questions

- 6.12.1** Any member of staff may submit a question relevant to the work of the Council for reply at the Council. Questions must be e-mailed to the Secretary in accordance with the schedule of notification/submission/circulation of items made available to relevant staff members before the beginning of each academic year. The Chair will judge if a question is relevant to the work of the Council, and if it is he/she will circulate it to all members at least five working days in advance of the meeting. If he/she decides that a question is not relevant he/she must inform the next meeting

of the text of the question and why it was judged not to be relevant. Questions may be answered either orally or in writing. The minutes of each meeting will record the text of all questions and replies.

6.12.2 A question may be submitted as an emergency question under the same conditions and following the same procedure as set out in the foregoing paragraph on emergency items.

6.13 Other business

The rubric 'other business' on each agenda will be used only (a) to inform the meeting of agenda items which are proposed for the next following meeting or (b) to convey briefly other items of information of a factual nature.

6.14 Interpretation

Where a dispute arises as to the interpretation of these orders, the decision of the Chair is final.