



University of Galway Terms of Reference Academic Council Standing Committee

1. Purpose

1. Academic Council Standing Committee is a sub-Committee of Academic Council with responsibility for assisting the Council to discharge its academic governance responsibilities by making recommendations on matters relating to the maintenance of academic standards and regulations in the operational aspects of academic affairs and academic policy.

2. Membership

1. The membership of Academic Council Standing Committee is approved by Academic Council and is co-terminous with the term of Council.
2. Academic Council Standing Committee is comprised of the following members:
 - An tUachtarán Ionaid agus Meabhránaí (Chair)
 - Executive Deans (or nominee)
 - Vice-President for Research
 - The Dean of Students
 - The Dean of Graduate Studies
 - The Director of Quality
 - 2 others* from the College of Arts, Social Sciences, and Celtic Studies
 - 2 others* from the College of Science and Engineering
 - 2 others* from the College of Business, Public Policy and Law
 - 2 others* from the College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences Up to
 - 4 others* to be nominated by the President
 - Vice-President/Education Officer of Comhaltas na Mac Léinn
 - The Director of Adult Learning and Professional Development

(*Being members of the Council)
3. The membership of Academic Council Standing Committee shall reflect the University's requirement for at least 40% gender balance on all University Committees.

3. Secretariat

1. The Office of the Secretary for Governance & Academic Affairs provides the Secretariat to Academic Council Standing Committee and shall be responsible for keeping the record of attendance and the minutes of meetings of the Academic Council Standing Committee.

4. Conflicts of Interest

1. Committee members shall take personal responsibility for the declaration of any real or perceived conflicts of interest arising in relation to any items on the agenda for Committee meetings. To facilitate this, the declaration of any conflicts of interest will be the first agenda item for each meeting of the Committee.



2. Where a conflict of interest arises, a Committee member shall bring this to the attention of the Chair and where necessary absent themselves from the meeting for the duration of the discussion and shall not take part in any decisions in relation to the matter in question. Similar arrangements apply in relation to relevant meeting documentation where such documentation shall not be made available to the Committee member, once a potential conflict of interest has been declared. Declarations of conflicts of interest shall be noted in the minutes of the Committee meeting.

5. Functions and Responsibilities

1. Academic Council Standing Committee will, on behalf of Academic Council, undertake the following functions and responsibilities:
 - Approval of PhD reports;
 - Approval of Exam Board recommendations;
 - Approval of Graduate Studies Board recommendations;
 - Approval of new programmes and major changes to programmes;
 - Approval of External Examiners; and
 - Approval of academic prizes and awards.
2. Academic Council Standing Committee may establish sub-Committees and Working Groups to assist in the management of its agenda including but not limited to:
 - Academic Regulations Committee which makes recommendations on changes to or derogations from Marks and Standards,
 - University Curriculum & Programme Board which reviews and makes recommendations to AC Standing Committee on College proposals for new undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes, as well as major changes to programmes
3. Advise and make recommendations to the Academic Council on academic institutional and sectoral initiatives.

6. Conduct of Business

1. Ordinary Meetings of the Academic Council Standing Committee will be convened by the Secretary, on the instruction of the Chair, five times in the academic year. Provisional dates for such meetings will be published by the Secretary at the beginning of each academic session.
2. A Special meeting of the Academic Council Standing Committee may be called at any time by the Chair.
3. The quorum for a meeting of the Academic Council Standing Committee shall be as follows:
 - (i) if there is an even number of members on the Committee, the attendance of half the number of members, plus one, or
 - (ii) if there is an odd number of members on the Committee, the attendance of half the numbers of members of the Committee rounded down to the nearest whole number, plus one.
4. The Deputy President and Registrar shall be chairperson of the Academic Council Standing Committee. Where the Deputy President and Registrar is unable to chair a meeting of the Academic Council s/he shall nominate a member of the Academic Council Standing Committee to chair the meeting.



5. Every issue at a meeting of the Academic Council Standing Committee shall, as far as possible, be determined by consensus, but where in the opinion of the Deputy President and Registrar, or the member nominated by the Deputy President and Registrar to chair the meeting, consensus is not possible, the issue shall be decided by a majority of the votes of members present and voting on the issue
6. At meetings of the Academic Council Standing Committee, the Deputy President and Registrar shall have a casting as well as a deliberative vote. A member of the Academic Council standing Committee nominated by the Deputy President and Registrar to chair a meeting of Academic Council Standing Committee shall have a deliberative, but shall not have a casting, vote.
7. The Secretary for Governance & Academic Affairs shall notify each member of the Academic Council Standing Committee of the date, time and venue of each meeting of Academic Council Standing Committee at least two weeks in advance of the meeting.
8. The agenda for each meeting of the Academic Council Standing Committee shall be prepared by the Secretary for Governance & Academic Affairs in consultation with the Deputy President and Registrar and shall be communicated to each member of the Academic Council Standing Committee at least one week in advance of the meeting.
9. Members wishing to make an input to the agenda should notify the Secretary at least two weeks before the meeting in question.
10. The Secretary for Governance & Academic Affairs shall include on the agenda for each meeting any item referred to the Academic Council Standing Committee by the Academic Council or any College.
11. The Academic Council Standing Committee may, from time to time, establish other committees. When establishing such a committee, the Academic Council Standing Committee shall specify the membership, terms of reference and reporting arrangements of the committee.

7. Reporting

The Academic Council Standing Committee will submit reports to the Academic Council and where appropriate make recommendations after every meeting.

8. Review

The Terms of Reference of the Academic Council Standing Committee shall be reviewed once every four years, at the beginning of a new Committee term.