

Southern Cross University

RULES FOR THE ACADEMIC BOARD AND ITS COMMITTEES

As at 1 June 2012

1. Function and Authorisations

- 1.1 The Academic Board is the principal academic body responsible for establishing and maintaining the highest standards in teaching and learning and research in the University.

The Academic Board is the primary advisory committee of the University Council on academic matters. It provides a forum for the discussion and debate of the academic directions of the University, as well as the quality of its academic programs. It may consider any matter relating to the University's teaching, learning, research or other academic activity, and approve such matters or advise the Council and the Vice Chancellor as delegated to it by Council. When conducting its business the Academic Board shall have particular regard to issues of academic accountability and quality assurance, and to University plans.

- 1.2 Subject to the Southern Cross University Act, the By-Law of the University and any Rules of the University Council, the Academic Board is authorised to:
- (a) consider and advise on all matters referred to it by the Council or the Vice Chancellor;
 - (b) exercise any delegations provided to it by the Council and in doing so develop and approve academic policies, Awards and Rules for the University relating to academic and research matters. These include:
 - i. rules governing the awards and academic processes of the University;
 - ii. issues related to teaching and learning at the University;
 - iii. issues related to research in or associated with the University;
 - iv. the introduction, structure, progression, and review of undergraduate and postgraduate programs offered by the University that are not in new discipline areas;
 - v. requirements for the completion of degrees and awards;
 - vi. the admission, assessment and progression of students;
 - vii. the Rules and procedures for the award of student scholarships, medals and prizes;
 - viii. the award of student scholarships, medals and prizes unless the Rules of those student scholarships, medals and prizes state otherwise;
 - ix. mechanisms for the hearing of appeals made by students against grades, exclusion and progression;
 - x. any other academic matter;
 - (c) advise the Council on:
 - i. the strategic directions of the University with regard to academic and research matters;

- ii. the undergraduate and postgraduate programs offered by the University that are in new discipline areas;
 - iii. criteria and procedures for the appointment, promotion and professional development of the academic staff of the University;
 - iv. the discontinuation of academic awards and courses;
 - v. the Rules of Academic Board and its Committees;
 - vi. any other academic matter;
- (d) consider reports of Academic Board committees and working parties and any other body required to report to the Academic Board; and:
- i. determine such matters as authorized;
 - ii. transmit to the Council with or without amendment or comment any report or recommendation requiring the attention of the Council;
- (e) make orders with respect to:
- i. the manner and time of convening, holding and adjourning a meeting of the Academic Board;
 - ii. the quorum and voting at such a meeting;
 - iii. the powers and duties of the person presiding at a meeting of the Academic Board;
 - iv. the conduct of the business at a meeting of the Academic Board;
 - v. the election of Academic Board members and office bearers;
 - vi. the appointment, powers and duties of committees and working parties of the Academic Board;
 - vii. the membership and quorum at meetings of committees and working parties so appointed;
 - viii. the establishment and maintenance of a public register of the Academic Board's policies, procedures and delegations.

1.3 The Academic Board and its committees shall conduct business in accordance with the Standing Orders of the Academic Board and its Committees.

1.4 These Rules shall be reviewed annually by the Academic Board.

2. Structure and Membership of Academic Board:

2.1 The structure and membership of the Academic Board shall be as follows:

The following shall be ex-officio members of Academic Board:

- (a) The Vice Chancellor
- (b) Deputy Vice Chancellor
- (c) Pro Vice Chancellor (Research)
- (d) Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic)
- (e) Pro Vice Chancellor (International & Enterprise)
- (f) Director, Teaching and Learning
- (g) Executive Director (Corporate Services)

- (h) Chief Information Officer

The following shall be ex officio members of Academic Board unless already a member under another category:

- (i) Chairs of sub-committees of Academic Board
- (j) Heads of each School and College
- (k) The Deputy Heads or Acting Heads of School and College will act as alternates on Academic Board for Heads of School
- (l) Director, SCU College

The following shall be elected members of Academic Board:

- (m) Chair of Academic Board elected from the University professoriate by membership
- (n) Two Deputy Chairs of Academic Board elected from full time academic staff of the University by the membership of Academic Board:
 - (i) Deputy Chair of Academic Board (Teaching and Learning)
 - (ii) Deputy Chair of Academic Board (Research)
- (o) School and College representatives:

School of Arts and Social Sciences

- one representative#

School of Education

- one representative#

School of Law and Justice

- one representative#

School of Tourism and Hospitality Management

- one representative#

Southern Cross Business School

- one representative#

School of Environment, Science and Engineering

- one representative#

Gnibi College of Indigenous Australian Peoples

- one representative#

School of Health and Human Sciences

- one representative#

or alternate

(p) Four (4) undergraduate students elected by the entire relevant student body:

- One undergraduate student enrolled at Lismore Campus
- One undergraduate student enrolled at Coffs Harbour campus
- One undergraduate student enrolled at Tweed/Gold Coast campus
- One external student

(q) One Post Graduate student elected by the entire relevant student body.

The following may be nominated by the Vice Chancellor, following consultation with the Chair of Academic Board:

(r) One full Professor per Lismore Campus, per Coffs Harbour Campus and per Tweed/Gold Coast Campus (total three (3))

The following shall be observers at Academic Board:

- (s) Director, Library Services*
- (t) Director, Planning Quality and Review*
- (u) Director, Student Services*
- (v) Head, Office of Community Engagement*
- (w) Director, International Office*

* or nominee

(x) To maintain an appropriate gender balance the Board may co-opt as necessary.

2.2 The Academic Board may, in addition, co-opt such other persons to membership as it determines from time to time.

2.3 The office bearers of the Academic Board shall be the Chair, and up to two (2) Deputy-Chairs, as per para 2.1(n)(i) and (ii).

2.4 In the event that the Vice Chancellor does not wish to be the presiding member of the Academic Board, the Board shall elect a Chair from the full-time Professors and Associate Professors of the University. The Deputy-Chairs shall be elected by the Academic Board from the full-time academic staff of the University. The Chair shall be a member of Council in accordance with Section 10(1)(a)(iii) of the SCU Act.

2.5 In the event that the Vice Chancellor does at any time wish to be the presiding member of the Academic Board, there shall be fresh elections for Deputy-Chairs of the Academic Board, who shall hold office until the normal time for elections of office bearers of the Academic Board. One Deputy-Chair shall be elected by the Academic Board from the full-time academic staff. The other Deputy Chair shall be elected by the Academic Board from the full-time Professors and Associate Professors of the University and shall be a member of Council in accordance with Section 10(1)(a)(iii) of the SCU Act.

- 2.6 In the event that a Chair elected as prescribed in para. 2.4, or a Deputy-Chair elected as prescribed in para. 2.5, is also an elected member in another category, the constituency concerned shall be entitled to nominate an additional member to the Academic Board.
- 2.7 The Academic Board and its committees shall conduct any elections for the appointment of members and office-bearers in accordance with the Standing Orders of the Academic Board and its Committees.

3. Committees of the Academic Board

- 3.1 In order to fulfil its responsibilities, the Academic Board may establish committees to perform functions delegated to them by the Academic Board. All elected academic staff members of these committees shall serve for a period of two (2) years following election, or as otherwise determined by the Standing Orders. All student members shall serve for a period of one (1) year following election.

Academic Board Executive Committee

- 3.2 The Academic Board Executive Committee shall:

- (a) provide advice and recommendations to the Academic Board on any academic matter requested by the Board;
- (b) provide advice and recommendations to the Vice Chancellor or the Chair of Academic Board on any urgent academic matter as requested by the Vice Chancellor or the Chair of Academic Board;
- (c) act on behalf of the Academic Board in the event of urgent and/or exceptional circumstances which require a decision normally in the purview of the Academic Board and which cannot be delayed until the next meeting of the Board;
- (d) make decisions on behalf of the Academic Board as delegated by the Board;
- (e) report any decisions and actions to the subsequent meeting of the Academic Board.

- 3.3 Membership:

- (a) Chair - Chair of Academic Board
- (b) Deputy Chairs of Academic Board
- (c) Deputy Vice Chancellor
- (d) Pro-Vice Chancellor (Academic)
- (e) Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research)
- (f) Director, Student Services or nominee
- (g) The Committee may co-opt such other persons to membership as it determines from time to time.

- 3.4 Meetings:

The Committee will meet at such times when requested to consider matters referred to it by the Vice Chancellor, by the Academic Board or by the Chair of Academic Board.

Accreditation Committee

- 3.5 The Accreditation Committee advises the Academic Board on matters relating to unit and course approvals and course accreditation. The Committee shall:
- a) advise Academic Board on the accreditation, reaccreditation or removal of SCU coursework programs, in line with SCU Policy and national qualification standards;
 - b) advise Academic Board on award rules and admission standards in accordance with SCU Rules and Policy;
 - c) advise Academic Board on unit and course changes, advanced standing and articulation matters in accordance with SCU Policy. On behalf of the Academic Board, Accreditation Committee: approves new units and their unit statements; approves major changes to unit statements; makes recommendations on new courses to Academic Board; recommends major changes to existing courses; approves minor changes to existing courses; approves Schedules of Units; approves advanced standing above limits otherwise provided under Specific Award Rules and Rules Relating to Awards;
 - e) act as a source of advice and reference to Schools/Colleges on course development;
 - f) identify and make recommendations to Academic Board on current or emerging issues pertaining to courses and qualification standards;
 - g) consider and report to Academic Board on any matters referred by the Academic Board, by the Chair of Academic Board or by the Vice Chancellor.
- 3.6 In consultation with the Chair of Academic Board, the Chair of Accreditation Committee will determine if a change is major or minor.
- 3.7 Membership:
- (a) Chair - Deputy Chair of Academic Board (Teaching and Learning)
 - (b) Chairs of School Boards*
 - (c) Director, Teaching and Learning
 - (d) Chair of Academic Board
 - (e) Director, Student Services or nominee
 - (f) Director, Library Services
 - (g) The committee may co-opt such other persons to membership as it determines from time to time.

* The Deputy Chair of School Board will act as an alternate on Accreditation Committee.

Academic Standards and Quality Committee

- 3.8 The Academic Standards and Quality Committee is the principal advisory committee of the Academic Board on issues of standards and quality associated with teaching and learning at SCU. The Committee shall:
- a) advise the Academic Board on rules, policies and procedures governing teaching and learning at SCU in line with SCU's strategic directions;
 - b) advise Academic Board on the alignment of SCU standards with prescribed national standards associated with teaching and learning;
 - c) advise Academic Board on rules, policies, procedures and guidelines necessary for implementation of standards associated with teaching and learning;
 - d) regularly monitor, review and report to Academic Board on the realisation of standards associated with teaching and learning through defined indicators, and

- quality assurance and improvement processes;
- e) advise Academic Board on course review processes, panels and outcomes in line with SCU Policy;
- f) ensure that communication and consultation with other Academic Board Committees and stakeholders are a routine part of decision making;
- g) consider and report to Academic Board on any matters referred by Academic Board, the Chair of Academic Board, or the Vice Chancellor.

3.9 Membership:

- (a) Chair - Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic)
- (b) Chair of Accreditation Committee
- (c) PVC International and Enterprise
- (d) Chief Information Officer
- (e) Director, Teaching and Learning
- (f) School/College Directors of Teaching and Learning
- (g) Director, Office of Planning, Quality and Review
- (h) Director, Student Services
- (i) Undergraduate student representative
- (j) Postgraduate coursework student representative
- (k) The Committee may co-opt such other persons to membership as it determines from time to time.

Academic Board Appeals Committee

3.10 The Academic Board Appeals Committee is a Committee of Academic Board and a University body that assists in assuring quality and integrity in academic outcomes for students by considering potential irregularities in academic assessment and progression processes. The procedures to be followed for appeals and for the hearing of appeals by the Academic Board Appeals Committee shall be formulated by the Committee and approved by the Academic Board. The Academic Board Appeals Committee will:

- (a) hear, examine and determine student appeals in relation to student assessment, to research higher degree progression, and to exclusion on academic grounds;
- (b) hear, examine and determine an appeal on any other relevant matter referred to it by the Chair of Academic Board;
- (c) act as the final University decision-making body with regard to appeals under the University's Rules Relating to Awards;
- (d) ensure that students are advised that if internal processes fail to resolve a grievance there are provisions for review by an independent third party.

3.11 Membership:

- (a) Chair - Chair of Academic Board or a nominee of the Chair of Academic Board;
- (b) Three academic staff members selected by the Chair of Appeals Committee from a School/College or designated University research centre, none of whom shall be from the School/College or Research Centre relevant to the appeal;
- (c) One student from the student membership of the Academic Board selected by the Chair of Appeals Committee;

- (d) Director of Student Services or nominee;
- (e) Chair of Appeals Committee may co-opt members as necessary who will be full members for the duration of a designated hearing or hearings;
- (f) In accordance with rules of procedural fairness, persons who have participated in the prior assessment of an appellant's case are not permitted to be members of Appeals Committee.

Research Committee

3.12 The Research Committee of Academic Board is the principal advisory committee of the Academic Board on issues of research across the University. On behalf of the Academic Board, the Research Committee will:

- (a) advise the Academic Board on the University's performance with regards to national research standards frameworks and assessments;
- (b) monitor and report to Academic Board on trends in research relevant to the University;
- (c) recommend to Academic Board policies, strategies and actions to promote and enhance the research quality, performance and integrity of, or associated with, the University;
- (d) advise the Academic Board of the impact of research policies, strategies and actions on the quality and integrity of research at the University, and on the University's research performance;
- (e) advise the Academic Board on the University's ethical and quality assurance processes with regard to research, and on its compliance with national codes concerning research conduct;
- (f) ensure that communication and consultation with other Academic Board Committees and stakeholders are a routine part of decision making;
- (g) advise the Academic Board on any other research matters as requested by the Vice Chancellor, the Chair of Academic Board or the Pro Vice Chancellor (Research).

3.13 Membership:

- (a) Chair - Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research);
- (b) Deputy Chair of Academic Board (Research);
- (c) Chair, Higher Degrees Research Committee;
- (d) Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research);
- (e) One academic member of the Academic Board, elected by the Board on the basis of a strong research track record, for a period of two years;
- (f) The Director of a designated University Special Research Centre, appointed by Academic Board on the advice of the Chair of Academic Board after consultation with the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research), for a period of two years;
- (g) The Director of a designated University Research Centre, appointed by Academic Board on the advice of the Chair of Academic Board after consultation with the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research), for a period of two years;
- (h) Research Higher Degree student representative;
- (i) Three (3) academic staff members nominated by the Chair of Academic Board after consultation with the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research), for a period of two (2) years, to ensure diversity in disciplinary representation and research skills, experience and knowledge;
- (j) One Early Career Researcher appointed by Academic Board on the advice of the Chair of Academic Board;

- (k) The Committee may co-opt such other persons to membership as it determines from time to time.

Higher Degrees Research Committee (HDRC)

3.14 The Higher Degrees Research Committee is a committee of the Academic Board responsible for Higher Degree Research training across the University. On behalf of the Academic Board, the Committee will:

- a) advise the Academic Board and the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research) on research higher degree and research training outcomes, standards and quality;
- b) advise the Academic Board and the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research) on strategies to support higher degree research and research training;
- c) monitor, review and make recommendations to Academic Board on policies and rules related to research higher degree awards and scholarships;
- d) be responsible for research higher degree management, including, but not limited to, student admission, awarding of scholarships, appointment of supervisors, confirmation of candidature, monitoring of candidature and progress, approval of extensions and interruptions to candidature, appointment of examiners, overseeing the examination process, and recommending award of research higher degrees to Academic Board;
- e) monitor research higher degree pathways;
- f) advise the Academic Board on policies and strategies for the support and development of supervisors and supervisory practices;
- g) consult Research Committee on any matters related to the research training/research intersect;
- h) consult Academic Standards and Quality Committee on any matters related to the research training/teaching and learning intersect;
- i) report to Academic Board on any matter referred to the Committee by the Academic Board, the Chair of Academic Board or the Vice Chancellor

3.15 Membership:

- a) Chair – A member of the Professoriate, nominated by the Chair of Academic Board after consultation with the Vice Chancellor, Pro Vice Chancellor (Research) and Deputy Pro Vice Chancellor (Research);
- b) Deputy Chair of Academic Board (Research);
- c) Deputy Pro Vice Chancellor (Research);
- d) School Directors of Higher Degree Research Training;
- e) One staff member with expertise in professional doctorates, nominated by the Chair of HDRC after consultation with the Chair of Academic Board and relevant Head of School;
- f) Directors of Special Research Centres or nominee after consultation with the Chair of HDRC;
- g) The Committee may co-opt such other persons to membership as it determines from time to time.

Boards of Assessors

3.16 The Boards of Assessors are a sub-committee of School/College Boards which meet to ensure that matters relating to moderation and award of grades are undertaken and thence approve and authorise the release of final grades.

- 3.17 Within each SCU School or College, the Board of Assessors will:
- a) ensure integrity of student assessment and progression;
 - b) ensure quality in assessment practices in accordance with national standards and University assessment and grade approval policies;
 - c) consider and approve final and interim grades for each student enrolled in undergraduate and postgraduate coursework units delivered by the School;
 - d) confirm that appropriate moderation processes have been undertaken prior to the submission of grades to the Boards of Assessors;
 - e) provide advice and recommendations to the Academic Board or the Academic Standards and Quality Committee on any academic matter related to standards, rules, policies and procedures arising from the discussion and award of grades;
 - f) provide annual reports to Academic Standards and Quality Committee.
- 3.18 Where grades are not presented at a Board of Assessors meeting and have been approved by the Chair of School Board, they are to be considered with reference to 3.17 (a), (b) and (d) at the next available School Board meeting.
- 3.19 Membership:
- a) Chair - Chair of School Board
 - b) Deputy Chair(s) of School Board
 - c) School Director of Teaching and Learning
 - d) Unit assessors, or with the approval of the Head of School their nominee, of units in a School, College or other teaching unit taught in that study period
 - e) Relevant Course coordinators or with the approval of the Head of School their nominee
 - f) Members of School/College Board
 - g) Director of Student Services or nominee
- 3.20 Meetings:
- The Boards of Assessors meet at the end of each standard session and trimester, and may meet more often at the discretion of the Chair.

School/College Boards and their Sub-Committees

- 3.21 The School/College Boards or their sub-committees shall:
- (a) consider and advise on all matters referred to it by the Academic Board;
 - (b) exercise any delegations provided to it by the Academic Board;
 - (c) formulate and recommend to the Academic Board academic policies and procedures;
 - (d) advise the Academic Board on:
 - (i) the academic directions of the School/College;
 - (ii) issues related to teaching and learning in the School/College;
 - (iii) issues related to research in or associated with the School/College;

- (iv) the undergraduate and postgraduate programs offered by the School/College;
- (v) policies and procedures for the accreditation and review of academic programs at the University;
- (vi) New Course Concept Proposals;
- (vii) any other academic matter;
- (e) recommend to the Academic Board and/or the relevant committee of Academic Board on:
 - (i) the accreditation of academic programs in the School/College
 - (ii) amendments to academic programs in the School/College
 - (iii) review of academic programs in the School/College
 - (iv) discontinuation of academic programs in the School/College;
- (f) determine the award of School/College student scholarships and prizes;
- (g) approve advanced standing up to the limit provided in the Specific Course Rules and Rules Relating to Awards and recommend all other advanced standing to Accreditation Committee;
- (h) consider reports of School/College Board committees and any other body required to report to the School/College Board, and
 - (i) determine such matters as authorised;
 - (ii) transmit to the Academic Board with or without amendment or comment any report or recommendation requiring the attention of the Academic Board.

3.22 Each School/College Board may establish sub-committees and delegate powers given under these rules to sub-committees or nominated officers.

3.23 Membership:

- (a) Each School/College will have a School/College Board. Membership will be determined from time to time by a meeting of all eligible full time and fractional (50% and above) academic staff of the School/College;
- (b) Two or more School/College Boards may choose to meet or merge as a collective School/College Board on a permanent or ad hoc basis.
- (c) There will be a Chair and Deputy Chair of a School/College Board.
- (d) The Chair of School/College Board will be elected by the full time and fractional (50% and above) academic staff of the School/College for a two (2) year term. The Chair shall be the School/College representative on Accreditation Committee;
- (e) The Deputy Chair of School/College Board will be elected by the full time and fractional, (50% and above) academic staff of the School/College for a two (2) year term. The Deputy Chair shall be the alternate member of Accreditation Committee;
- (f) A School/College Board may co-opt such other persons to membership as it determines from time to time.

3.24 Meetings:

The School/College Board will meet at least six (6) times in the Academic Year and these meetings shall be timed to co-ordinate with the meetings schedule of Accreditation Committee.

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