



Terms of Reference

Academic Board

Trim Location	12/G/3
Responsible Officer	University Secretary
Approval Date	25 February 2019
Approval Authority	USQ Council

1. Role

Academic Board plays a leading role in the academic governance of the University, working separately but collaboratively with Council and the University Executive. Academic Board is responsible for making recommendations to Council on the academic programs, quality and risk of the University and for approving and monitoring the implementation of academic quality policies. Academic Board may advise Council and University Executive on any academic matter relevant to the University and works with them in achieving the strategic objectives of the University. In this role, Academic Board addresses the requirements that arise from the University Act.

The *University of Southern Queensland Act 1998*, Part 4, Division 3, section 39, clause (3) states that the Academic Board must:

- A. advise the Council about teaching, scholarship and research matters concerning the University; and
- B. formulate proposals for the academic policies of the University; and
- C. monitor the academic activities of the University's faculties; and
- D. promote and encourage scholarship and research at the University.

Academic Board also plays a leading role in ensuring that the University is compliant with relevant Australian Higher Education regulations.

2. Functions

The functions of the Academic Board shall be to:

1. develop, review and approve policy and endorse procedures and schedules relating to all aspects of development and accreditation or re-accreditation of programs, admission of students, teaching, assessment, requirements for graduation, scholarship, and research planning and management;
2. establish an academic quality framework for the University and provide advice and recommendations to Council and the University Executive on academic quality assurance and academic risk management processes;

3. advise Council and University Executive on, and contribute to education and research aspects of the University's Strategic Plan;
4. refer Academic Board matters, including formulation of advice to Council, to designated standing committees as the Board may from time to time establish;
5. monitor reports from Academic Board's standing committees to ensure that their referred responsibilities are discharged;
6. monitor and review the implementation of academic policy and recommend to Council and University Executive such changes as may be deemed necessary;
7. discuss and facilitate communication on issues within the higher education sector, including learning, teaching and research;
8. monitor the academic activities of the University and recommend to Council and University Executive such changes as may be deemed necessary; and
9. consider and recommend on any matter referred to the Academic Board, by Council, Faculty Assembly, Faculty Board and the University Executive.

3. Membership

3.1. Membership Structure

The membership of the Academic Board shall be:

1. Chair, (Academic Board) (appointed by Council);
2. Vice-Chancellor (ex officio);
3. Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) (ex officio);
4. Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) (ex officio);
5. Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services) (ex officio);
6. Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education) (ex officio);
7. Executive Deans of Faculties (ex officio);
8. Four Professors, two male and two female, who do not qualify under categories 3.1.1 to 3.1.6 elected by and from the academic staff;
9. One female and one male academic staff member from pathway organisational units, who do not qualify under categories 3.1.1 to 3.1.6 elected by and from the academic staff of the pathway organisational units;
10. One female and one male academic staff member from non-faculty organisational units, who do not qualify under categories 3.1.1 to 3.1.6 and 3.1.8 elected by and from the academic staff of the non-faculty organisational units;

11. Three male and three female academic staff members from each faculty, who do not qualify under categories 3.1.1 to 3.1.6 elected by and from the academic staff of the faculty;
12. One academic staff member from Education Portfolio, who does not qualify under categories 3.1.1 to 3.1.6, elected by and from the academic staff of the Education Portfolio;
13. One academic staff member from the Research and Innovation Division, who does not qualify under categories 3.1.1 to 3.1.6 elected by and from the academic staff of the Research and Innovation Division;
14. One Indigenous academic staff member elected by the Indigenous academic staff of the University;
15. President of the Student Guild (ex officio);
16. One undergraduate student elected by and from the undergraduate students of the University;
17. One postgraduate coursework student elected by and from the postgraduate coursework students of the University; and
18. One higher degree research student elected by and from the higher degree research students of the University.

The number of elected members shall comprise at least two thirds of the total Board membership.

3.2. Gender Representation

The University is inclusive of all genders and ideally the Board would comprise a balance of genders. The membership of the Board should not comprise more than 60% of any gender at any time.

Should the situation arise where any gender represents more than 60% of the membership, the person or persons of an under-represented gender next in line on the most recent Academic Board ballot shall be invited onto the Academic Board.

3.3. Campus Representation

There shall be a representative of the elected staff members from each campus. Where this representation does not occur as a result of the election of members in the categories 3.1.7 to 3.1.13 an additional member will be elected by and from the academic staff of the unrepresented campus for the term of the Academic Board.

Where there are no nominations from an unrepresented campus, expressions of interest shall be sought from the academic staff of the unrepresented campus and the Academic Board Executive Committee shall act to invite an academic staff member from that campus onto the Academic Board.

3.4. Elections

Elections for the Board shall be conducted in accordance with the [Council Election Policy](#) and [Council Election Procedure](#). In the event of failure to nominate the required number of persons to a category of membership, a by-election shall be held to fill the vacancy.

3.5. Appointment of Chair and Deputy Chair

Nominations for Chair shall be sought from the academic staff. Criteria will be provided stating requisite skills, capacity and experience. A Panel comprising Vice-Chancellor, current Chair (Academic Board), or Deputy Chair (Academic Board) if the Chair is a nominee, and University Secretary shall consider the nominations and compile a list of up to three nominations. The nominations will be presented to Academic Board for individual ratification by secret vote prior to forwarding to Council, in confidence. The Academic Board will not be advised of the outcome of the vote. Council will appoint the Chair (Academic Board). It is expected that nominees for Chair will have prior Academic Board experience. The duty statement for Chair (Academic Board) is provided in Appendix 1.

The Deputy Chair shall be elected by and from the members of the Academic Board. Only elected members of the Academic Board are eligible candidates for the position of Deputy Chair.

It is expected that a member of Academic Board will have served on at least one Board Standing committee prior to election as Deputy Chair. Duty statements for Chair, Deputy Chair and Board Standing Committee Chairs are available on the Academic Board website.

3.6. Terms of Office

Ex officio members remain members for their term of office. Elected members, with the exception of student members, shall serve for a three year term and shall be eligible for re-election, with no restriction on the number of renewable terms. Student members shall have one year terms running from 1 April to 31 March the following year, with an annual opportunity to continue their membership to a maximum term of three years without the need for an election. Student members shall be eligible for re-election after this period. The Chair shall serve for a three year term and shall be eligible for re-appointment for one further term through the standard nomination process. The Deputy Chair shall serve for a three year term and shall be eligible for re-election. The Chair and Deputy Chair may not serve for more than two consecutive terms in the same role.

3.7. Absences

1. Ex officio members of the Academic Board may nominate an acting person to represent them in their absence. The member should ensure the nominee is fully briefed and prepared to contribute to the meeting.
2. An elected member who is absent from two or more consecutive meetings without having been granted leave of absence by the Chair shall be deemed to have vacated the elected position, resulting in a casual vacancy.
3. An elected member who anticipates being absent with the approval of the University, from two or more consecutive meetings of the Academic Board, shall give prior written notice to the Chair for a leave of absence. During such absence, this place shall be filled by invitation to the candidate from the relevant membership category scoring the next highest number of votes at the most recent election. If no such candidate exists, then the Chair of the Board may invite a person from the relevant membership category to serve in this place.

3.8. Casual Vacancies

1. Where a casual vacancy for an elected staff member occurs in the first twelve months of the term of the Board the vacancy will be filled by the candidate from the relevant membership category with the next highest number of votes in the previous election. If no such candidate exists, the Secretary shall conduct an election to fill the vacancy.
2. Where a casual vacancy occurs more than twelve months into a term and with more than six months before completion, the Secretary shall conduct an election to fill the vacancy. If a casual vacancy is unable to be filled by election, the Chair may, after taking such advice as they see fit, appoint an appropriate person in the same category of membership to fill the vacancy.
3. Where a casual vacancy occurs in a term with less than six months before completion the Chair may, after taking such advice as they see fit, appoint an appropriate person in the same category of membership to fill the vacancy.
4. Where a casual vacancy occurs for the role of Chair or Deputy Chair, the process described in 3.5 will be reactivated.

3.9. Rights of Audience and Observers

1. The University Secretary, Heads of School, Director (Library Services), Director (Office for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching), Research Institute Directors, and Associate Deans shall have rights of audience and debate, but not voting rights, at meetings of the Academic Board.
2. The Chair may permit observers to attend meetings of Academic Board. Observers have rights of audience only, that is, they may not contribute to debate and cannot vote.
3. The Chair may request those with rights of audience and/or observers to leave the meeting when confidential items are discussed.

3.10. Standing Committees of the Academic Board

The Academic Board shall be assisted in its operation by the Executive Committee. Academic Board may establish standing committees as it sees fit. Each standing committee may co-opt members of the University to their membership for such terms as they may decide.

A standing committee may establish such working parties as it deems necessary or desirable for it to carry out its functions.

4. Performance Evaluation

Academic Board shall undertake an annual self-evaluation of its performance. The summary report of the evaluation shall be submitted to Council.

5. Review of Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference shall be reviewed annually by Academic Board to ensure they remain consistent with the Board's objectives and responsibilities. Any proposed amendments to the Terms of Reference shall be referred to Council for approval.

Modification History

Date	Source	Details
		Previously USQ Calendar Management 3.2
26.03.2013	12/G/3	Conversion to new template
26.08.2013	Council	Revised Terms of Reference and Membership of Academic Board
21.10.2013	Council	Revised Terms of Reference of Academic Board
13.08.2014	Council	Update to Section 4.1, Number 6, to reflect new PVC title
17.02.2015	Academic Board Executive Committee	Administrative updates following annual review
16.03.2015	Council	Revised Terms of Reference of Academic Board
15.05.2015	Council	Revised Terms of Reference of Academic Board
22.07.2015		Administrative update to 4.1.9 following appointment and change of title from Executive Director to Director
22.09.2015		Update to gender balance requirements within section 3.2, as approved by Academic Board on 22.09.2015.
07.12.2015	Council	Revised Terms of Reference of Academic Board (to include new section 4.8 Meetings, Reporting and Minutes)
09.02.2016		Removal of Fraser Coast representative from Membership list
15.03.2016		Removal of statement on Gender Representation in Section 3.2
11.09.2017	Council	Reinstated sentence regarding <i>ex officio</i> members in Section 4 (endorsed by Chancellor's Committee – 17.08.17)
11.12.2017	Council	Revised Terms of Reference of Academic Board. Functions to take immediate effect. Membership to take effect at the end of the current term i.e. up to but not including the meeting in July 2018.
12.03.2018	Council	Remove Section 3 – Meeting Procedures, now located in Academic Board Charter; add Appendix 1 – Chair (Academic Board) Duty Statement; remove Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor from membership; amended change of title for Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education)
10.04.2018	Council	Revised Terms of Reference of Academic Board (replaced 'Scholarly Information and Learning Services' with 'Education Portfolio'; amended term of office arrangements for Student Members)
25.02.2019	Council	Revised membership of Academic Board - Add Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic); Change title from Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students and Communities) to Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Services); 3.4 Elections - Remove reference to USQ Statute 2010.
25.03.2019	Council	Administrative update to reflect Council delegation of approval authority for Academic Quality Policy and endorsement authority for University Procedure related to Academic Quality Policy.