



Terms of Reference

Research Committee

Trim Location	
Responsible Officer	University Secretary
Approval Date	21 September 2021
Approval Authority	Academic Board

1. Role

The Research Committee is a Standing Committee of Academic Board and is responsible to Academic Board for providing leadership in relation to the academic governance and quality assurance of research and research training, research integrity and risk.

2. Functions

The Research Committee shall:

1. make recommendations to Academic Board regarding the development, implementation and effectiveness of policies, procedures and practices relevant to research and research training;
2. make recommendations to Academic Board on the structure of research and how the University engages with researchers in relation to research and research training;
3. monitor reports from the Human and Ethics Committees and the Institutional Biosafety Committee to initiate action, mitigate risks and provide assurance on matters including health and safety, biosafety and research ethics and integrity and to provide advice regarding external compliance requirements to the Vice-Chancellor's Executive and/or Council through Academic Board;
4. monitor and review research and research training performance, impact and quality assurance, including external arrangements, and initiate action to improve performance against internal and external research and research training standards or benchmarks and the University's strategic research objectives;
5. monitor and review delegations made under policies and procedures relevant to the role and functions of the committee, ensuring delegations are appropriately exercised, and make recommendations to Academic Board regarding any required actions;

6. provide recommendations to Academic Program Committee on research higher degree programs and the research components of coursework higher degree programs including on program accreditation, matters relating to research supervision, the appointment of examiners and the content and assessment of the research component;
7. make recommendations to promote capacity building of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers, to engage in best practices when conducting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research;
8. make recommendations to promote the capacity of USQ researchers to pursue the continual enhancement of outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through the research activities of the University;
9. provide advice to Academic Board regarding the performance of Research Institutes and/or Centres, Faculties and other parts of the University that are engaged in research to support research development and capacity building, and monitor and review professional research development initiatives and their effectiveness;
10. assure the quality and transparency of processes concerning research scholarships, stipends, student prizes and awards;
11. assure the quality and transparency of processes for encouraging, recognising and rewarding excellence in research and research training;
12. advise Academic Board and the University Executive on any matters related to research, including the Higher Education Standards Environment;
13. Consider any other research and research training related matters referred to it by Academic Board, other committees, or the University Executive.

3. Meetings, Reporting and Minutes

Frequency of and Conduct of Meetings: Six times per year. Special meetings may be called by the Chair (Research Committee) as the need arises.

The meetings of Research Committee shall be chaired by the Chair (Research Committee). In the absence of the Chair (Research Committee), the Deputy Chair (Research Committee) shall act as Chair. In all other matters, the conduct of meetings shall be as for Academic Board.

Reporting: The Research Committee must report to the next meeting of Academic Board after each meeting of the Committee. The Research Committee must provide an annual report on its activities and achievements, against its terms of reference, to the first meeting of Academic Board each calendar year.

Minutes: Minutes shall be kept for all meetings.

The Research Committee is expected to work in conjunction with other Standing Committees of Academic Board.

4. Membership

4.1. Membership Structure

The membership** of the Research Committee is:

1. Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) (ex officio) (Chair);
2. One elected staff member of Academic Board, appointed by the Chair, Academic Board, following an Expression of Interest process (Deputy Chair);
3. Associate Deans (Research) (ex officio);
4. Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) (ex officio);
5. Pro Vice-Chancellor (First Nations Education and Research) (ex officio);
6. Dean (Graduate Research School) (ex officio);
7. Three elected staff members of Academic Board representing different organisational units within the University, elected by the members of Academic Board;
8. Director (Office of Research) (ex officio);
9. One elected Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander academic staff member, elected by and from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic staff of the University;
10. Two elected Higher Degree by Research students, elected by and from the Higher Degree by Research students of the University;
11. One early-career researcher of the University, who does not qualify under categories 4.1.1 to 4.1.7, elected by the academic staff of the University;
12. One mid-career researcher of the University, who does not qualify under categories 4.1.1 to 4.1.7, elected by the academic staff of the University;
13. One Professor or Associate Professor of the University, who does not qualify under categories 4.1.1 to 4.1.7, elected by the academic staff of the University;
14. One nominee from University Research Centre Directors or Institute Executive Directors, appointed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation).

**Additional members, as required, to meet Academic Board Gender Representation requirements.

4.2. 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 term that aligns with the term of Academic Board 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.

4.3. Standing and Sub-Committees

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.

Academic Board may also establish sub-committees (independently resourced) under Academic Board or any of its Standing Committees, usually with a focus on specialised functions, to assist them to effectively carry out their functions. Sub-committees may coopt members of the University to their membership for such terms as they may decide.

4.4. Working Parties, Co-option and Observers

1. The Research Committee may establish such ad hoc working parties as it deems necessary or desirable for it to carry out its functions.
2. The Research Committee may co-opt members of the University to their membership for such terms as they may decide. Co-opted members will have full voting rights.
3. By endorsement of the Research Committee, observers may be invited to attend meetings, noting that an observer may not contribute to debate and will have no voting rights.

4.5. Responsibilities of Research Committee Members

Members are identified as coming from named organisational entities to facilitate the consultation process. However, members are not appointed to represent their particular organisational constituencies, and are expected to contribute to the Research Committee in the overall interests and objectives of the University.

4.6. Absences

Ex-officio members may nominate a person to represent them in their absence. The member should ensure the nominee is fully briefed and prepared to contribute to the meeting. An elected member who is absent from two or more consecutive meetings without having been granted prior leave of absence by the Chair (Research Committee) shall be deemed to have vacated the position, resulting in a casual vacancy.

4.7. Casual Vacancies

Casual vacancies will be managed under the provisions of the Academic Board Terms of Reference.

5. Performance Evaluation

Research Committee will undertake an annual self-evaluation of its performance over the preceding twelve months. A summary report of the evaluation shall be submitted to Academic Board by the first meeting of the following calendar year.

6. Review of Terms of Reference

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

Modification History

Date	Source	Details
16.04.2019	AB	Establishment of new Research Committee
21.04.2020	AB	Update to Terms of Reference – Functions and Membership
21.09.2021	AB	Update to Terms of Reference – Memberships, and Standing Committees and Sub-Committees