



Rules for the Conduct of Meetings

Introduction

These rules apply all formal meetings which are held to discuss University business. Additional rules for the conduct of meetings of the University Court and its committees are set out in the Memorandum, Articles of Association and Standing Orders of the University and its Court.

All meetings, regardless of size or purpose, have the following things in common:

- a quorum must be present
- someone should chair the meeting
- someone should minute the meeting
- business is conducted according to specific rules governing attendance, participation in the discussion and voting
- all members should receive advance notification of the meeting's date, time and purpose

1. Quorum

- a. A quorum is the number of members needed at a meeting before business can be transacted. A quorum must be present for a meeting to take place, and also throughout the meeting.
- b. The quorum for any meeting will be 50% of the members unless the standing orders of the meeting specify otherwise.
- c. If the meeting is or becomes inquorate, it may go proceed provided that minutes are produced and any decisions taken are ratified by a later, quorate meeting.
- d. Those engaged in a meeting can participate in person or, where practical and with the prior approval of the chair, through electronic media for example video-conferencing. Any participation via use of electronic means will count towards a quorum.

2. Chair

- a. Each meeting should be chaired by one person. This person may be identified in the Articles of Association, specified in the Terms of Reference or designated by virtue of their role in the University.
- b. When the chair is unable to be present, a deputy chair will be appointed for that meeting. If the absence is unexpected, the chair may be elected by a majority of members of the meeting. If the chair arrives during the course of the meeting, s/he will assume the chair and the temporary chair will step down.
- c. With the prior agreement of the meeting, the chair may take action on its behalf on any matter which is judged to be either urgent or non-contentious. Such action shall be within the Terms of Reference, and shall be reported at the next meeting.

3. Members and observers

- a. Members will be entitled to attend meetings and to receive notice of a meeting.
- b. Observers and guests at meetings will normally be allowed, subject to the

- agreement of the chair of the meeting, to stay for all or part of the meeting.
- c. Observers and guests may observe the business of the meeting including speaking in a debate but may not vote.
 - d. The Terms of Reference of the meeting will set out whether members may delegate their duties/rights to other persons

4. Business of Meetings

- a. The chair and secretary of each meeting shall be responsible for ensuring that its business is within its Terms of Reference. The chair, with the assistance of the secretary, will hold veto over business which does not fall within the Terms of Reference of the meeting.
- b. At the end of each academic session the chair, with the assistance of the secretary, will be responsible for ensuring that the Terms of Reference are discussed, considered and reviewed and any amendments forwarded to the parent body.
- c. Where applicable the secretary will be responsible for ensuring that at the start of each academic session a schedule of business specific deadlines is established in order to meet the operating deadlines of the institution.
- d. Any member may propose an item for discussion by submitting notice of a matter in advance in writing to the secretary. Acceptance of the proposed agenda item will be at the discretion of the chair. All matters to be discussed or decided at meetings will appear or arise from the agenda, with the exception of items raised by the chair.

5. Conflicts of Interest

- a. Members attending a meeting should declare at the start of a meeting whether or not they have any material interest in an item of business to be considered at the meeting. A person who declares such a conflict of interest should withdraw from the discussion.

6. Decision Making Process

- a. Decisions are likely to be made by consensus without being put to a formal vote. When a formal vote is required, this can be either through a show of hands or a written poll.
- b. Where members of committees are not able to attend meetings, they may delegate their duties and rights as a member to another named alternate, with the advance agreement of the Chair.
- c. Decisions made will be clearly recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

7. Length of Debate

- a. The discussion and debate of agenda items is directed by the chair.

8. Record of the Meeting

- a. The minutes will be drafted by the secretary for the approval of the chair and a copy sent to all members.
- b. The minutes of each meeting will be presented for approval at its next meeting. Agreed amendments or corrections will be recorded by the secretary
- c. The secretary will be responsible for maintaining an archive of the agendas, minutes and papers of the meeting.