

UNIVERSITY OF SALFORD

STANDING ORDERS: REGULATIONS FOR COMMITTEES

1. Committees

- 1.1 These Standing Orders shall apply to the following committees of the University of Salford:
- Council and its standing committees
 - Senate and its standing committees
- 1.2 Standing committees shall be defined as those permanent and regular committees with fixed membership specialising in the consideration of particular areas of business within the remit of their parent body. Other committees shall be considered non-standing committees where they are constituted with looser membership provisions (e.g., where substitute members are permitted or where members are drawn from a wider pool) and/or are convened as and when the need arises to deal with specific matters. The term 'Committee' as used in these standing orders applies to any of the bodies referred to in 1.1 above.
- 1.3 Alternate members are not permitted at Council, Senate or any of their standing committees.
- 1.4 Where Council or Senate approves exceptions in the application of these Standing Orders to their respective standing committees, these exceptions shall be made explicit in the Standing Orders.
- 1.5 These Standing Orders shall be recognised as the University model for management of committee business and shall apply, as appropriate, to committees established by and within the University of Salford other than those referred to in 1.1 above.

2. Chair and Deputy Chair

- 2.1 Meetings of a committee shall be chaired by the Chair designated in the committee's membership.
- 2.2 For all standing committees of Council, Senate and joint committees, in the absence from a quorate meeting of the Chair, those members present shall elect one of their independent members to chair the meeting unless the position of Deputy Chair is designated in the committee's constitution, in which case the Deputy Chair will chair the meeting.
- 2.3 Between ordinary meetings of a committee the Chair shall have the authority to act on behalf of the committee on any matter requiring a decision prior to the next scheduled meeting where the business does not merit, in the view of the Chair, the convening of a special meeting. Any action taken by the Chair on behalf of the committee shall be reported to the next meeting of the committee.

3. Quorum and Adjournment

- 3.1 The quorum for meetings of Council shall be that specified in Statute 4.5, i.e. one-third rounded up to the next whole number of the total actual membership of Council, with the number of independent members present exceeding the number of internal members present by at least two, except where a conflict of interest prevents an independent member from voting on an item.
- 3.2 The quorum for all other committees, including Senate, shall be one-third of the total actual membership rounded up to the nearest whole number, or three, whichever is the greater. Council standing committees also require that at least two of those present must be independent Council members of the committee in order to be quorate.
- 3.3 In the absence of a quorum at the published start time of a meeting, no business shall be transacted other than the adjournment of the meeting to another time.
- 3.4 When a meeting becomes inquorate through the departure of members, the Chair shall decide whether the consideration of unfinished business requires the adjourned meeting to be reconvened or carried forward to the next scheduled meeting. If there are no matters of urgency to be resolved, the unfinished business may be referred to the next ordinary meeting of the committee. When a meeting temporarily becomes inquorate due to one or more member's being asked to leave for the consideration of a restricted or closed item, the normal quorum rules shall be waived, and the meeting shall remain quorate so long as (in the case of Council standing committees) two independent Council members remain in attendance.
- 3.5 Where an adjourned meeting is to be reconvened, the Chair shall normally give members at least one week's notice of the date and time of the reconvened meeting and of the business to be transacted, which shall normally be restricted to the unfinished business from the original meeting.
- 3.6 The Chair may decide or be directed by the Committee to adjourn a quorate meeting to later on the same date or to another date. Where the time and date of the adjourned meeting, whether on the same date or another date, is decided at the original quorate meeting, the provisions of 3.5 shall not apply. Where the time and date of the adjourned meeting is not decided at the original quorate meeting, the provisions of 3.5 shall apply.
- 3.7 Where a quorate meeting has been adjourned to later on the same date, no business shall be decided at the adjourned meeting without a quorum other than the adjournment of the meeting to another date.

4. Schedule and Notice of Meetings

- 4.1 For each committee an annual schedule of ordinary meetings shall be agreed with the Chair and published for members prior to the start of each academic year. At least two meetings shall be scheduled each academic year.
- 4.2 Special meetings of a committee may be convened by the Chair at any time, subject to the provisions in 4.4 below, to consider matters to which specific or immediate attention must be given.
- 4.3 An extraordinary meeting of a committee shall be convened within two weeks of the receipt by the Secretary to the committee of a written request signed at least one-third of the actual membership. In such circumstances clause 4.4 shall not apply but members shall be given at least two working days' notice of the extraordinary meeting and of the business to be conducted.

4.4 Unless otherwise agreed by the committee, at least one week's notice shall be given to members of the business to be transacted at meetings (this includes any meeting to be reconvened because the original scheduled meeting was inquorate), such notice shall be deemed given on the day of dispatch in the case of email communications or the day after dispatch in the case of internal or external postal communications.

4.5 The accidental omission of a member from a communication giving notice of a meeting or the lack of receipt of a notice of a meeting by any member shall not invalidate the proceedings of the meeting.

5. Conduct of Business at Meetings

5.1 Unless varied by agreement of the committee, the order of business to be transacted at a committee meeting shall be as set out in the agenda which shall be compiled by the Secretary to the committee and approved by the Chair prior to issue and provided to members in accordance with 4.4 above.

5.2 The consideration of any business not notified on the agenda shall be permitted only at the discretion of the Chair or by resolution of the committee, taking into account the urgency of the business.

5.3 Members wishing to propose an item of business shall normally give written notice of such business to the committee Chair or Secretary at least two weeks in advance of the next scheduled meeting so that the item may be included on the agenda. Where such notice is not practicable because of the nature of the business, members shall notify the Chair at the earliest opportunity of the proposed item and the Chair shall decide on its inclusion in the business to be transacted at the next meeting or at a subsequent meeting.

5.4 Where an item of business is categorised as CLOSED, members shall not divulge the associated papers or discussion to anyone who is not a member of the committee without the explicit consent of the Chair.

5.5 For Council and Senate meetings only, agenda items may be classed as starred items. Starred items are straightforward and non-controversial and are for approval or noting without discussion. When the agenda is compiled, the final decision on whether an item is starred rests with the Chair. Once the agenda is dispatched, any member of Council may request before the meeting, by notifying the Secretary, that an item be unstarred. At the start of each meeting, the Chair will confirm which items are starred.

5.6 Any member who has a pecuniary, family or other personal interest in any item of business shall, as soon as practicable, disclose that fact to the committee and shall withdraw from that part of the meeting unless requested to remain either by the Chair or by resolution of the committee.

5.7 Any member shall be permitted to speak to any item under consideration, but the Chair may, having regard to equity of opportunity, limit the duration and frequency of a member's spoken contributions to any one item. Any recommendation or amendment to a recommendation proposed by a member shall be seconded before discussion by the committee.

5.8 Resolutions of a committee shall be passed by a majority of members present. Where a vote is deemed necessary by the Chair to determine the majority, this shall be conducted by a show of hands. In the case of a tie in the number of votes, the Chair shall have a second and casting vote. Decisions may arise from proposals presented in a written report published before a meeting and/or orally by one or more members during discussion of the item (subject to compliance with clauses 5.2 and 5.3 above),

- 5.9 Officers, observers and others in attendance at a meeting, including the Secretary to the committee, shall be allowed to speak at meetings by invitation of the Chair.
- 5.10 Exceptionally, the Chair may direct that an item of business be considered in camera and require any officers, observers or other persons in attendance to withdraw during consideration of the item. Where the Secretary of the Committee has withdrawn from the meeting in such circumstances, they must be apprised on their return of any resolutions made in camera so that the official record of the meeting may be completed.
- 5.11 No resolution of a committee shall be rescinded unless notice of a proposal to rescind the decision is given in the agenda for the meeting at which it is to be considered.

6. Committee Papers and Minutes

- 6.1 Papers submitted to and considered by a committee, including agendas, shall be deemed public documents, i.e., appropriate for wide circulation or unrestricted publication, unless otherwise determined by the committee, its parent committee or the application of current legislation.
- 6.2 Where it is determined that committee papers are not public documents, the degree of confidentiality of the documents should be made clear to committee members.
- 6.3 The Secretary of the committee shall, where applicable, advise the authors of committee papers regarding the format and content of such papers in order to ensure consistency with accepted practice and conformity with the committee's terms of reference.
- 6.4 Papers for consideration at a committee meeting shall normally be issued to members at the same time as the agenda in accordance with clause 4.4. above. Where this is not practicable for valid reasons, then papers shall be issued to members no later than two days prior to the meeting. Papers tabled at meetings shall not be considered except at the sole discretion of the Chair.
- 6.5 The committee Secretary shall be responsible for preparing draft minutes of each meeting and shall submit the draft to the Chair for consideration prior to their circulation to other committee members.
- 6.6 Minutes of a committee meeting shall be considered unconfirmed until they have been confirmed by the committee as a correct record at its next ordinary meeting, incorporating any agreed amendments.

7. Attendance at Committee Meetings

- 7.1 A record of attendance of members shall be kept and attendance at each meeting of a committee reported in the minutes. Apologies for absence from a meeting shall be submitted to the committee Secretary
- 7.2 If any member fails to attend for two consecutive meetings of a committee, a report of their non-attendance shall be made to the relevant Chair who shall be responsible to consider the matter in the first instance. If any member fails to attend a further two consecutive meetings (i.e., four consecutive absences), a report of their non-attendance and the outcome of the earlier discussion between the member and the Chair of the relevant committee shall be made to the standing committee – or Senate - with responsibility for oversight of governance and membership matters.

- 7.3 Following consideration of the report of non-attendance, the relevant standing committee may recommend to Council or Senate (as appropriate) that the member be removed from membership of the committee.

8. Decision making outside of meetings

Chair's Actions

- 8.1 Between ordinary meetings of a committee the Chair shall have the authority to act on behalf of the committee on any matter requiring a decision prior to the next scheduled meeting where the business does not merit, in the view of the Chair, the convening of a special meeting. Any action taken by the Chair on behalf of a committee shall be reported to the next scheduled meeting of the committee.

Resolutions in Writing

- 8.2 A resolution in writing signed by not less than 75% of the current members of the relevant committee shall be as valid as if it had been passed as a resolution at a meeting of that committee. In addition, a resolution may be passed by an exchange of e-mails or other electronic means provided that a copy of the final resolution has been: -

8.2.1 circulated to all members (other than those who would be regarded as having a conflict of interest pursuant to paragraph 14.2 of the Ordinances) and not less than 75% of them have confirmed their agreement by e-mail to the committee Secretary; and

8.2.2 signed by the Chair and is accompanied by copies of the affirming e-mails.

- 8.3 Such a resolution shall be treated as having been passed at a duly convened meeting of the committee concerned held at the location of the Chair. The committee Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining appropriate records of such resolutions and for reporting them to the next scheduled meeting of the relevant committee.

9. Suspension of Standing Orders

- 9.1 A committee may suspend these Standing Orders provided that two-thirds of members present at a quorate meeting agree to such a suspension.

- 9.2 Any suspension of Standing Orders shall last no longer than the meeting at which it was agreed.