

# Terms of Reference (Council approved) - Teaching and Learning Committee

## Section 1 - Overview

### Teaching and Learning Committee

(1) The Teaching and Learning Committee is established as a University Committee to support the Academic Board.

(2) These Terms of Reference for the Teaching and Learning Committee prescribe the following:

- a. the members of the Teaching and Learning Committee, and their method and term of appointment;
- b. the functions of the Teaching and Learning Committee; and
- c. other matters in connection with the Teaching and Learning Committee and its operation.

(3) The establishment of this committee and of the Terms of Reference of the Committee to carry out the business of the Academic Board are actions authorised under [Section 23 of the UNE By-law 2005](#). The provisions of these Terms of Reference take effect as a Council Rule made under Section [29 of the UNE Act](#).

### Objectives

(4) The role of the Teaching and Learning Committee is to oversee and report to the Academic Board on the academic governance of teaching and learning at the University.

## Section 2 - Teaching and Learning Committee Membership

### Membership

(5) The members of the Teaching and Learning Committee are as follows:

- a. Chair
  - i. The Chair of Teaching and Learning Committee is appointed by the Chair of Academic Board after a call for expressions of interest from Level D/E academic staff. The Chair of Academic Board may ask the Teaching and Learning Committee to recommend a candidate for appointment.
- b. Ex officio members
  - i. Executive Principal Education Futures;
  - ii. Director, Education Quality (or nominee);
  - iii. Executive Principal Student Experience;
  - iv. Director Library Services and University Librarian (or nominee);
  - v. Associate Deans Teaching and Learning;
  - vi. Chairs of the Faculty/Directorate Education Committees (normally the Associate Deans Teaching and

Learning);

- vii. Chair of Academic Board (or nominee who is a senior academic at Level C or above and an elected member of the Board); and
- viii. A Deputy Chair of Academic Board (if a Deputy Chair of Academic Board is already a member through having been appointed as Chair of the Committee, then a Chair of Academic Board nominee who is a senior academic at Level D or E and an elected member of the Board).

c. Appointed members

- i. Two senior members of academic staff at Level C or above who are well-informed about teaching and learning and coursework student matters from each Faculty, appointed by the Executive Dean (or nominee) (in consultation with the Chair) after an expression of interest process and with due consideration of School representation;
- ii. Two junior academic members of staff (Level A or B) from each Faculty, appointed by the Committee after an expression of interest process and with due consideration of School representation;
- iii. One member of academic staff who identifies as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent, appointed by the Chair after an expression of interest process for academic staff members;
- iv. One undergraduate Current Student, appointed by the Chair (in consultation with the Academic Board Executive) after an expression of interest process; and
- v. One postgraduate coursework Current Student, appointed by the Chair (in consultation with the Academic Board Executive) after an expression of interest process.

d. Current Student members

- i. The Current Student members may be student representatives elected to Academic Board, but it is not a requirement.

(6) The Teaching and Learning Committee can co-opt members in order to achieve or maintain gender diversity.

## **In attendance**

(7) At the discretion of the Chair, the Committee can also invite non-voting individuals as observers to attend regular or individual meetings, provide appropriate expertise as necessary and contribute to discussion upon invitation by the Chair.

## **Appointment procedure for appointed members**

(8) Appointed members of the Teaching and Learning Committee are appointed when a vacancy occurs.

## **Appointments**

(9) Appointment of members will be conducted as per these Terms of Reference and the [Standing Order of Academic Board and Committees](#).

## **Automatic vacancy by an appointed representative**

(10) An appointed position becomes vacant automatically if:

- a. the appointed member is absent without prior leave from the Chair from three consecutive Teaching and Learning Committee meetings, or
- b. the appointed member loses their original qualification for appointment. In the case of promotion the elected position may be retained for a maximum of six (6) months.

## Acting ex officio members

(11) An ex officio member of the Teaching and Learning Committee includes a person who has been appointed on an 'acting' basis to the role.

## Term of office

### Ex officio members

(12) The ex officio members will be Teaching and Learning Committee members while they hold their primary office.

### Appointed members

(13) The term of office of an appointed member is two years. Appointed members may stand for re-appointment.

## Gender representation objectives

(14) Gender representation shall accord with the [Gender Representation on Decision-Making and Advisory Committees Policy](#).

# Section 3 - Teaching and Learning Committee Functions

## Functions

(15) The functions of the Teaching and Learning Committee are as follows:

- a. To oversee the academic governance of teaching and learning at the University and report to the Academic Board on these matters, so as to enable the Academic Board to provide assurance (or otherwise) to the Council.
- b. To the extent they relate to teaching and learning, the Teaching and Learning Committee will provide assurance (or otherwise) to the Academic Board that processes and structures are established and responsibilities are assigned that collectively:
  - i. achieve effective academic oversight of the quality of teaching and learning;
  - ii. set and monitor institutional benchmarks for academic quality and outcomes;
  - iii. establish and maintain academic leadership at an institutional level, consistent with the types and levels of higher education offered; and
  - iv. provide competent advice to the Academic Board and management on academic (teaching and learning) matters, including advice on academic outcomes, policies and practices.
- c. To the extent they relate to teaching and learning, the Teaching and Learning Committee will provide assurance (or otherwise) to the Academic Board that academic oversight assures the quality of teaching and learning effectively, including by:
  - i. developing, monitoring and reviewing academic policies and their effectiveness;
  - ii. confirming that delegations of academic authority are implemented;
  - iii. maintaining oversight of academic integrity;
  - iv. monitoring potential risks;
  - v. monitoring and initiating action to improve performance against institutional benchmarks for academic quality and outcomes;
  - vi. critically evaluating the quality and effectiveness of educational innovations or proposals for innovations;
  - vii. evaluating the effectiveness of institutional monitoring, review and improvement of academic activities;

and

- viii. monitoring and reporting to the corporate governing body on the quality of teaching and learning.
- d. The Teaching and Learning Committee will exercise its academic governance functions in all areas of benchmarking and quality assurance related to teaching and learning, including providing oversight and assurance of:
  - i. student participation and attainment encompassing admission, credit and recognition of prior learning, orientation and progression, learning outcomes and assessment, qualifications and certification;
  - ii. learning environment encompassing facilities and infrastructure, diversity and equity, wellbeing and safety, student grievances and complaints;
  - iii. teaching encompassing course design, staffing, learning resources and educational support;
  - iv. institutional quality assurance encompassing course approval and accreditation, academic and research integrity, course monitoring, review and delivery with other parties; and
  - v. representation, information and information management encompassing representation of course offerings, information for prospective and current students and information management.
- e. To the extent it relates to teaching and learning, the Teaching and Learning Committee will provide assurance (or otherwise) to the Academic Board that students have opportunities to participate in academic governance.
- f. The Teaching and Learning Committee will consider new University Rules and Policies that are developed in relation to teaching and learning, and any replacement or major changes to them. If the Rule or Policy is considered to be in order then the Teaching and Learning Committee will recommend it to the Academic Board for endorsement.
- g. The Teaching and Learning Committee may exercise such other authority as may be delegated to the Teaching and Learning Committee in a University Rule.
- h. In exercising its functions, the Committee will take into account the University objects, [Strategic Plan](#) and Values as well as academic and emerging risks.

## General

(16) The Teaching and Learning Committee may form working groups from time to time to undertake specific projects and tasks related to their functions.

(17) At least once per year, the Teaching and Learning Committee and Curriculum Committee will have a joint meeting to discuss items of joint interest and responsibility.

(18) The Teaching and Learning Committee will exercise and promote academic leadership in governance commensurate with its duties and functions, and take an active role in supporting the achievement of best practice in governance in teaching and learning, including by:

- a. supporting understanding of personal responsibility and duties via regular induction;
- b. calling for reports around compliance and continuous improvement;
- c. engaging in discussions on strategic directions and the achievement of strategic goals; and
- d. seeking and providing advice and assurance to management and to the Academic Board regarding the pursuit and achievement of excellence in teaching and learning.

## Authority

(19) The Teaching and Learning Committee is authorised to seek data and information from the University through the Executive Principal Education Futures and Executive Principal Student Experience to meet the Teaching and Learning Committee's duties and functions.

## Section 4 - Related Committees

(20) Each Faculty will have a committee that oversees teaching and learning matters at a Faculty level.

## Section 5 - Authorities

### Committee of Academic Board

(21) The Teaching and Learning Committee is established as a committee of Academic Board to perform the functions set out in the terms of reference above and all matters ancillary to those functions.

## Section 6 - Conduct of Teaching and Learning Committee Business

### Reporting

(22) The Teaching and Learning Committee reports to the Academic Board, including in an annual report of the Committee's performance of its functions.

### Meetings

(23) The Teaching and Learning Committee will meet at least six times per year or otherwise as required, in order to perform its functions.

### Business papers

(24) Unless the Chair directs otherwise, Teaching and Learning Committee business papers will be distributed to Teaching and Learning Committee members and official attendees, at least seven days prior to the meeting, or such shorter period as is practicable.

(25) Public disclosure of business papers, minutes and other information received by the Committee should be made via the Chair or Secretary of the Teaching and Learning Committee.

### Quorum

(26) At any meeting of the Teaching and Learning Committee, one half of the voting membership plus one constitutes a quorum.

### Use of technology

(27) For its business papers, meetings and otherwise to conduct its business, the Teaching and Learning Committee and its members may use technology including telephone, video-conferencing, telepresence, email and internet as arranged by the Chair and/or Secretary to the Committee.

### Resolutions

(28) The Teaching and Learning Committee may pass a resolution by 'flying minute' provided that the resolution has been approved by a simple majority of committee members at the time the resolution is made.

## Confirmation of minutes

(29) Draft minutes will normally be circulated to members for comment promptly after each meeting. Next the minutes (with any necessary changes) will be circulated for adoption by the Teaching and Learning Committee. The minutes will be finalised and adopted when they have been approved by a majority of the members that were present at the relevant meeting. Alternatively, the minutes may be included in the business papers for the next Committee meeting and considered and adopted by the Committee at that meeting.

## Self-review

(30) Once in every twelve-month period, the Teaching and Learning Committee shall devote a part of one meeting to the review of its policies, practices and procedures over the preceding twelve months.

## Secretary to Teaching and Learning Committee

(31) The University Secretariat will provide secretarial and administrative support to the Teaching and Learning Committee.

## Standing Orders

(32) The Standing Orders of Academic Board and Committees relate to the conduct of meetings and business of the Teaching and Learning Committee. To the extent of any inconsistencies between these Terms of Reference and the Standing Orders, the Standing Orders prevail.

# Section 7 - Definitions and Interpretation

## Definitions

(33) Words and phrases used in this document have the following meanings, unless the context requires otherwise:

- a. Academic Governance means the framework of policies, structures, relationships, systems and processes that collectively provide leadership to and oversight of the University's academic activities (teaching, learning and scholarship, and research and research training) at an institutional level.
- b. Current Student means a person who is at the time a Student and who is enrolled in one or more units.
- c. Senior Executive means the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer and his/her direct reports above Director level.
- d. Student means a person who has been accepted into a course at the University and is entitled to enrol in units for the purposes of that course.
- e. UNE Act means the [University of New England Act 1993 \(NSW\)](#).
- f. UNE By-law means the [University of New England By-law 2005 \(NSW\)](#).

## Interpretation

(34) This document should be interpreted using the following principles:

- a. Where Teaching and Learning Committee membership is defined by reference to an office held (e.g. 'Chair of Academic Board'), that office-bearer is an ex officio member and has all of the same rights and responsibilities (including voting) as other committee members whilst holding the office specified.
- b. This document does not override or otherwise affect:
  - i. the [Authorities Retained by Council Rule](#); or
  - ii. the [Vice-Chancellor Functions Rule](#).

- c. However, it operates as a delegation of certain authorities that have been retained by Council.

### **Teaching and Learning Committee governing documents**

(35) The existing Terms of Reference and other documents governing the Teaching and Learning Committee at the time these new Terms of Reference are approved, are replaced and have no further operation.

## Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	2nd February 2023
Review Date	2nd February 2024
Approval Authority	Director Governance and University Secretary
Approval Date	17th January 2023
Expiry Date	To Be Advised
Unit Head	Kate McNarn Director Governance and University Secretary
Enquiries Contact	Kate McNarn Director Governance and University Secretary

## Glossary Terms and Definitions

**"Assessment"** - Is the process whereby evaluative judgements are made in relation to a student's achievements against the learning outcomes of a unit of study.

**"Learning Outcomes"** - Is the expression of the set of knowledge, skills and the application of the knowledge and skills a person has acquired and is able to demonstrate as a result of learning.

**"Student"** - Is an admitted student or an enrolled student, at the relevant time: 1. an admitted student is a student who has been admitted to a UNE course of study and who is entitled to enrol in a unit of study or who has completed all of the units in the UNE course of study; 2. an enrolled student is a student who is enrolled in a unit of study at UNE.

**"UNE Act"** - Is the University of New England Act 1993 (NSW).

**"Academic Integrity"** - Is the practice of acting fairly, honestly and ethically in academic endeavour.

**"Senior Executive"** - Means the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, Chief Financial Officer, and Chief Operating Officer.

**"Research"** - Is the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way so as to generate new concepts, methodologies, inventions and understandings. This could include synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative. (Defined by the Australian Research Council)

**"Email"** - Means electronic mail.

**"Normally"** - Where the word 'normally' is used in a rule, policy, procedure or guideline, it means that it is the default position that must be followed unless exceptional circumstances exist that require a departure from the default position, as determined by the Rule Administrator acting reasonably.

**"Course"** - Course means a syllabus, a curriculum, a training package, units of study, or structured workplace learning, the successful completion of which leads to the conferral of an award on the student by the University (including but not limited to a regulated qualification under the Australian Qualifications Framework).

**"Quality Assurance"** - Is the ongoing, internal process of assessing a university's outcomes against its aims.

**"Unit"** - Is a part of a course with a code, title and credit point value for which a result is recorded on a student's academic record.



**"Benchmark"** - Means to evaluate processes, practices and outcomes by comparison with sector and discipline norms. (Assessment Rule)

**"School"** - Is an organisational unit comprising academic staff in related fields of study who are responsible for teaching and research in those academic fields together with support staff. Each School also has lead management for the design and delivery of the courses within its responsibility.

**"Admission"** - The process of assessment of an application leading to entitlement to enrol as a student in a course leading to an award of the University.

**"Recognition of Prior Learning"** - Recognition of Prior Learning is a process that involves assessment of an individual's relevant prior learning (including Formal, Informal and non-Formal learning) to determine the outcomes of an application for Advanced Standing and/or Exemption. Recognition can take the form of a reduced Volume of Learning or credit points that count towards a course or an Exemption of a requirement to undertake a core, prescribed or pre-requisite unit of study.

**"Academic Governance"** - Means the framework of policies, structures, relationships, systems and processes that collectively provide leadership to and oversight of the University's academic activities (teaching, learning and scholarship, and research and research training) at an institutional level.

**"Faculty"** - An organisational unit consisting of a group of related Schools, which is responsible for coordinating the management and quality of the teaching and research conducted by those Schools.

**"Approval"** - A statement to indicate the official acceptance of a proposal, recommendation, or other matter. It is a function of the role/committee with delegated authority to do so.

**"Complaint"** - A complaint is defined as a statement that something is unsatisfactory or unacceptable.

**"UNE By-law"** - Means the University of New England By-law 2005 (NSW).

**"Diversity"** - Diversity refers to the mix of people in an organisation – that is, all the differences between people in how they identify in relation to their: Social identity e.g., Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background, age, caring responsibilities, cultural background, disability status, gender, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex status, and socio-economic background. Professional identity e.g., profession, education, work experiences, organisational level, functional area, division/ department, and location. (Definition from Diversity Council of Australia)