

Terms of Reference (Council approved) - University Research Committee

Section 1 - Overview

University Research Committee

(1) The University Research Committee is established as a University Committee and is authorised to discharge some of the functions of Council.

(2) These Terms of Reference for the University Research Committee prescribe the following:

- a. the members of the University Research Committee, and the members' method and term of appointment;
- b. the functions of the University Research Committee;
- c. the terms of reference of the Graduate Research Subcommittee and Graduate Research Examination Board established under the University Research Committee, and
- d. other matters in connection with the University Research Committee and its operation.

(3) The establishment of this committee and the delegation of powers to it are actions authorised under [Section 17 of the UNE Act](#). The provisions of these Terms of Reference take effect as a Council Rule made under [Section 29 of the UNE Act](#).

Objectives

(4) The University Research Committee functions as an academic governance and management advisory body to:

- a. monitor the performance of the University in relation to research, higher degrees by research and higher degree research (HDR) students;
- b. develop rules, policies, procedures and guidelines to manage the University's research and, through the Graduate Research Subcommittee, matters relating to the supervision and candidature of the University's higher degree research students, and
- c. oversee and report on the academic governance, quality and integrity of the University's research and higher degree research student activities.

Section 2 - University Research Committee Membership

Membership

(5) The members of the University Research Committee are as follows:

- a. Chair
 - i. Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research (PVCR).

b. Members

- i. Research Director (Deputy Chair);
- ii. Chair of Academic Board or nominee who is a senior academic (level D or E) and an elected member of the board;
- iii. Chairs of the University's ethics committees;
- iv. Chairs of the research committees of each School;
- v. Chair of the Graduate Research Subcommittee;
- vi. University Librarian;
- vii. One director of a research centre appointed by the Chair;
- viii. One early career researcher appointed by the Chair;
- ix. One higher degree research Current Student appointed by the Chair.

c. Student member

- i. The student may be a student representative elected to Academic Board, but it is not a requirement.

In attendance

(6) The University Research Committee can co-opt members in order to achieve or maintain gender balance, where the membership does not include at least two women and two men. At the discretion of the Chair, the committee can also invite individuals as observers to attend regular or individual meetings, provide appropriate expertise as necessary and contribute to discussion but not to vote.

Appointment procedure for appointed members

(7) Appointed members of the University Research Committee are appointed when a vacancy occurs. The term of an appointed member's tenure on the committee is two years.

(8) Appointed members who are employed on fixed-term contracts are required to have sufficient service remaining to fulfil their period of office.

Appointments

(9) Appointment of members will be conducted as per these Terms of Reference and the University Research Committee's Standing Orders.

Automatic vacancy by an appointed member

(10) An appointed position becomes vacant automatically if:

- a. the appointed member is absent without prior leave from three consecutive University Research Committee meetings, or
- b. the appointed member loses his/her original qualification for appointment.

Acting ex officio members

(11) An ex officio member of the University Research 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 University Research 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.

Chair

(14) The University Research Committee will be chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research or their nominee.

Gender representation objectives

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

Section 3 - Terms of Reference

Functions

(16) The functions of the University Research Committee are to advise the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer and Academic Board in relation to the University's research and, through the Graduate Research Subcommittee, higher degrees by research training.

Approval function

(17) To approve academic procedures and guidelines relating to research, subject to final approval by the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer or Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer's delegate.

(18) Through the Graduate Research Subcommittee, to approve academic procedures and guidelines relating to higher research degrees, and the admission, candidature and supervision of higher degree research students, subject to final approval by the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer or Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer's delegate.

(19) Through the Graduate Research Subcommittee, to approve new, amended and disestablished HDR courses and course rules, subject to final approval by the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer or the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer's delegate.

Monitoring functions – to monitor

(20) the quality, integrity and standards (threshold, admissions, discipline, assessment, qualifications) associated with the University's research and higher degrees by research training, and

(21) student feedback, including University and national surveys of HDR student satisfaction, completions and graduate destination and employment outcomes.

Advisory functions – provide advice in relation to

(22) rules and policy for managing the University's research, research conduct, research higher degrees, and the candidature, conduct and supervision of higher degree research students;

(23) the conduct of the University's research and research training;

(24) major issues relevant to the University's strategic research plans;

(25) coordination of the University's research effort, and

(26) research infrastructure.

Communication functions

(27) Effective consultation and exchange of ideas between the Schools, Research Services, senior management and academic governance in relation to all research and research training matters.

Authority

(28) The University Research Committee is authorised to seek data and information from the University through the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research to meet the University Research Committee's duties and functions.

Section 4 - Related Committees and Subcommittees

Academic Board

(29) The terms of reference of the Academic Board are set out in a separate University rule.

Subcommittees reporting to the University Research Committee

The Graduate Research Subcommittee

(30) There is a Graduate Research Subcommittee of the University Research Committee.

(31) The terms of reference for the Graduate Research Subcommittee are set out in Annex A of this rule.

(32) The Graduate Research Subcommittee reports to the University Research Committee.

The Graduate Research Examinations Board

(33) There is a Graduate Research Examinations Board of the Graduate Research Subcommittee.

(34) The terms of reference for the Graduate Research Examinations Board are set out in Annex B of this rule.

(35) The Graduate Research Examinations Board reports to the Graduate Research Subcommittee, which reports to the University Research Committee.

General

(36) The University Research Committee and Graduate Research Subcommittee may form working groups from time to time to undertake specific projects and tasks related to their functions.

Section 5 - Delegations

Delegation from the Council

(37) The University Research Committee has delegated authority from the UNE Council to perform the approval, advisory, monitoring and communication functions set out in the terms of reference above and all matters ancillary to those functions.

Section 6 - Conduct of University Research

Committee Business

Reporting

(38) The University Research Committee reports to the Academic Board on matters that fall within the Academic Board's functions.

(39) The University Research Committee reports to the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer on operational and management matters.

Meetings

(40) The University Research Committee will meet at least six times per year or otherwise as required, in order to perform its functions.

Business papers

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

(42) Public disclosure of business papers, minutes and other information received by the University Research Committee should be made via the Chair or Secretary to the committee.

Quorum

(43) At any meeting of the committee, one half of the voting membership plus one constitutes a quorum.

Use of technology

(44) For its business papers, meetings and otherwise to conduct its business, the University Research 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

(45) The University Research 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

(46) 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 University Research 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

(47) Once in every twelve-month period, the University Research Committee shall devote at least a part of one meeting to the review of its policies, practices and procedures over the preceding twelve months.

Secretary to University Research Committee

(48) Research Services will provide secretarial and administrative support to the University Research Committee.

Standing Orders

(49) The University Research Committee may make standing orders relating to the way it conducts its meetings and business generally. To the extent of any inconsistencies between these Terms of Reference and the Standing Orders, these Terms of Reference prevail.

Section 7 - Definitions and Interpretation

Definitions

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

- a. Current Student means a person who is at the time a Student and who is enrolled in one or more units.
- b. Senior Executive means the Vice-Chancellor and her/his direct reports above Director level.
- c. 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.
- d. UNE Act means the University of New England Act 1993 (NSW).
- e. UNE By-law means the University of New England By-law 2005 (NSW).

Interpretation

This document should be interpreted using the following principles.

(51) Where University Research Committee membership is defined by reference to an office held (e.g. 'Chair of Academic Board'), that office-bearer is a member ex officio and has all of the same rights and responsibilities (including voting) as other committee members whilst holding the office specified.

(52) This document does not override or otherwise affect:

- a. the Authorities Retained by Council Rule; or
- b. the Functions of the Vice-Chancellor Rule.
- c. however, it operates as a delegation of certain authorities that have been retained by Council.

Research Committee governing documents

(53) The existing terms of reference, constitution and any other documents governing the Academic Board Research Committee at the time these new Terms of Reference are approved, are replaced and have no further operation.

Status and Details

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