

## Standing Orders

### 1 INTRODUCTION

The Academic Council as a statutory body responsible for academic matters within the Institute has the major task of formulating and implementing the Institute's academic policies. Academic council is appointed by the Governing Body to assist it in the planning, co-ordination, development and overseeing of the educational work of the college and to protect, maintain and develop the academic standards of the courses and the activities of the college. The Academic Council is responsible for the quality of all academic activities within the Institute. The terms of reference set out in the Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992 (section 10) and amendments of Institutes of Technology Act 2006 (section 11) gives a broad preview to the work of the Academic Council. The activities of the Academic Council will directly impinge on the Institute's future as an effective academic community. The Academic Council must, therefore:-

- have a strong, high profile within the Institute so that the staff see it as a major instrument of academic direction and policy and a desirable body of which to be a member
- have a clear leadership role and an influence on all academic policy of the institute
- debate, make comment on and respond to appropriate academic policies and reports in the sector, regionally and nationally
- be accessible to all staff through course boards, committees, elected representatives and senior staff.

The Academic Council is the body through which the Institute's academic reputation will be established. The ultimate authority for the Academic Council is the Governing Body, as conferred by the Act. The Governing Body's role with respect to the Academic Council is supportive rather than regulatory in nature. The Academic Council has devolved to it by the Governing Body responsibility for all academic matters.

The majority of members shall be holders of academic appointments within the Institute (section 10(2)(b)).

### 2 MEETINGS OF THE ACADEMIC COUNCIL

- 2.1 It will be the normal practice that the Council will meet at least seven times during the academic year. The dates of meetings will normally be based on a schedule agreed by the Council.

- 2.2 A Special Meeting of the Council may be convened by the President, upon her/his own motion, or upon a request addressed to the President and signed by at least ten members of the Council.
- 2.3 Normally meetings shall convene at 11 am and terminate at 1.00 pm. By resolution of a simple majority of those present a meeting may be extended 30 minutes and by further resolution of a simple majority of those present at meeting may be extended by a further 30 minutes to a maximum extension of 1 hour.
- 2.4 No substitution of members by non-members on either the Council or committees is possible.
- 2.5 The Council and its committees may be addressed by experts only for the relevant agenda items.
- 2.6 The Council may invite a non-member to be in attendance at a meeting or meetings for the duration of the discussion on any particular agenda item. This will be by resolution passed by a simple majority of members attending the meeting. Such invitees may not vote on any motion before such meeting.
- 2.7 All correspondence on Academic Council matters must be communicated through the Secretary of Academic Council.
- 2.8 An elected member of the Council who is absent from three consecutive meetings of the Council, unless such absence was due to illness or was approved by the Council, will be deemed to have resigned from the Council and will be replaced for the remainder of that person's period in office

### **3 MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEES OF THE ACADEMIC COUNCIL**

- 3.1 Committees of the Council shall meet at the same frequency per year as Academic Council during the Academic year. The meetings will be held at the midpoint between academic council meetings.
- 3.2 Meetings of the committees may be called by the Chairperson of each committee and/or the Secretary, on their own motion, or upon a requisition addressed to the Chairperson and signed by at least four members of the committee.
- 3.3 The normal duration of meetings will not be more than two hours. A motion to extend, for a specified period beyond this duration may be passed by a simple majority of the members present.
- 3.4 At the end of each meeting, the Committee will confirm the set of decisions that will be brought to the next meeting of the Council for consideration.
- 3.5 Once a year each Committee will report on their work to the Council

### **4 OFFICERS OF THE COUNCIL**

- 4.1 The President is the Chairperson of the Council and entitled to be a member of every Committee of the Council as per the Third Schedule to the 1992 Act.
- 4.2 A Deputy Chairperson will be elected from among the members of the Council at its first meeting. The Deputy Chairperson will take the Chair in the absence of the President.
- 4.3 In the absence of the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson the Council shall elect one of its members to act as Chairperson for that meeting.
- 4.4 The Secretary to the Council is the Registrar, who is responsible to the Council for the discharge of the duties of Secretary to the Council. The Secretary may be assisted by a Recording Secretary, who is not a member of the Council.

## 5 AGENDA AND NOTICE OF MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

- 5.1 The schedule of Council meetings will be circulated to all staff at the commencement of each semester.
- 5.2 Notice of the meeting and the agenda, reports and papers will be circulated a minimum of 5 working days prior to the meeting. Special meetings of the committees will be called with lesser notice at the discretion of the Chairperson or the Secretary.
- 5.3 Members of staff who are not members of the Council may propose an agenda item to the Secretary.
- 5.4 Where members wish to have items placed on the agenda of the Council meeting, they must submit same to the Secretary at least 10 working days in advance of a scheduled meeting.
- 5.5 Documentation proper to the agenda items for a meeting will be submitted to the Secretary not less than 10 working days in advance of a scheduled meeting.
- 5.6 The meeting agenda will be circulated to the Academic Council members not less than 5 days before the meeting.
- 5.7 The President or any member of the Council, at the commencement of the meeting and before the minutes are approved, may seek to add an item to the agenda as an Emergency item. An Emergency Item is one which could not have been foreseen 5 working days in advance of the meeting and which must be addressed before the next scheduled meeting of the Council. A vote will be held for an Emergency Item to be included in this agenda, and for it to be accepted it must receive the assenting votes of a simple majority of the members present.
- 5.8 Subject to paragraph 5.7, the ruling of the Chairperson on the appropriateness of items listed on the agenda and all points of order will be final unless the ruling is challenged. The challenger shall have the right to give reasons for challenging the ruling of the Chairperson who will then have the opportunity to briefly respond. The challenge will be deemed to be successful only if supported by a simple majority of the members present.
- 5.9 Any Other Business (AOB) must be notified at the commencement of the meeting and will only be permitted if the item is of non-urgent nature or which is for information only. AOB items will be taken only if there is sufficient time after all other agenda items have been dealt with.

## 6 MINUTES

- 6.1 The minutes of meetings shall record attendance and decisions made by the Council except where a member of the Council specifically requests that his/her disagreement with a decision shall be recorded. The adoption of the minutes shall be formally proposed and seconded.
- 6.2 Draft minutes of Council meetings shall be available 10 working days after the meeting
- 6.3 Abbreviated minutes of Council meetings, approved by the Council, shall be circulated to the Governing Body.
- 6.4 Copies of the full minutes of the Council shall be available to any member of the Institute.
- 6.5 Such minutes shall be taken as read when the question that they be confirmed is put from the Chair, unless any member requests that any part be read in order to determine whether it is an accurate record.
- 6.6 The minutes of Academic Council and of its committees shall be posted on the Document Store not later than seven working days following their confirmation.

- 6.7 The Academic Council may consider minutes of a committee prepared without the minutes having been approved by that committee. Should a change of substance to these minutes occur subsequently the Academic Council must be informed of this change
- 6.8 The recommendations and actions of all committees must be approved at the next meeting of the Academic Council, save where specific authority to act without prior approval has been delegated by the Council to the committee. All recommendations and actions by the committees must be reported to the Council. Minutes of committee meetings shall be circulated and adopted by the Council.

## **7 MEETINGS**

- 7.1 No substitution of members by non-members on either the Council or committees is possible.

## **8 QUORUM**

- 8.1 The quorum for the Academic Council shall be ten members. If, ten minutes after the time fixed for a meeting, a quorum is not present, no business shall be proceeded with that day.
- 8.2 The quorum for committees shall be four persons outside of holiday times. Non-quorate meetings of the committees may be held during holiday periods on an emergency basis.
- 8.3 Meetings which commence quorate shall remain quorate until closed regardless of the numbers remaining.

## **9 PROCEDURE AT MEETINGS**

- 9.1 The chair is to be taken at a meeting of the Council within ten minutes after the time appointed for such a meeting, by the President, or, in his/her absence, by the Deputy Chairperson or by any member called thereto by motion.
- 9.2 A proposal to terminate a discussion shall be proposed and seconded without discussion. If such a proposal is carried by simple majority of those present and voting, the item originally under discussion shall be put and decided without further discussion other than a reply by the mover thereof. If the procedural proposal is lost, the discussion on the original item shall be resumed.
- 9.3 If a proposal to proceed to the next business is proposed and seconded, the proposer of the item under discussion shall have the right briefly to speak in opposition and the procedural proposal shall then be put without further discussion. If the procedural proposal is passed by a simple majority of those present and voting, the discussion on the item shall be abandoned.
- 9.4 A motion to terminate discussion or to proceed to next business may not be proposed or seconded by a member who has spoken to or proposed a vote on the item under discussion.
- 9.5 Interruptions shall be allowed only on a point of order or information as decided by the Chairperson.

**10 MOTIONS**

- 10.1 A motion is a proposal which is put forward. A resolution is the acceptance of a motion by a meeting.
- 10.2 For a motion to be put to a meeting it requires a Proposer and Seconder. A motion from the Chair does not require a Seconder.
- 10.3 For an amendment to a motion to be put, it requires a Proposer and Seconder. An amendment shall be put to a vote before the original motion.
- 10.4 If an amendment is not carried the Chairperson shall put the motion in its original form to a vote. If an amendment is carried the Chairperson shall put the amended motion to the meeting.
- 10.5 Before a motion or amendment are put to a vote, the secretary shall read out the text to be voted on.

**11 VOTING AT MEETINGS**

- 11.1 All elections shall be held by secret ballot. All other motions shall be voted on by a show of hands, or by secret ballot if requested by at least three members.
- 11.2 The result of voting shall be counted and recorded by the secretary. The number of votes for and against a motion and the number of abstentions shall be recorded in the minutes.
- 11.3 In the event of an equal division of the vote the Chairperson shall have a second or casting vote.
- 11.4 Every question shall be put to the Council from the Chair, and the Chairperson shall call upon the members to answer their assent or dissent by a show of hands. The Chairperson and Secretary shall communicate the result to the Council and if it be shown that a majority of votes are cast in favour of adopting a motion, such motion shall be carried, save upon request, those members voting who have dissented may have their dissent recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

**12 ADJOURNMENT OF A COUNCIL MEETING**

- 12.1 A motion for adjournment of the Council may be made at any time by the Chairperson, or by a member, and when seconded, is determined by a majority of the members present and voting. When the motion for adjournment is adopted, the meeting will stand adjourned for the period of time mentioned in the motion, or to the named day.
- 12.2 A member moving that the Council adjourn may speak for not more than three minutes, and if the motion is seconded, it shall be seconded without a speech and be put by the Chairperson to the meeting without debate.

**13 CONDUCTING THE BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL**

- 13.1 A member may, at any time and without notice, interrupt debate by raising a "point of order". The Chairperson shall decide whether the point of order is admissible, and this ruling shall be final.
- 13.2 Any member of the Council, who, in the opinion of the Chairperson, transgresses any Standing Order may be called to order by the Chairperson. If the member persists in

disobeying the Chair, the Chairperson shall request a temporary adjournment of the meeting. If, when the meeting is reconvened, the member persists in disorder, the Chairperson may request the members to vote on the suspension of the member concerned. Suspension will only be effective if the members present and voting resolve by a simple majority to enforce the suspension.

- 13.3 Where a dispute arises as to the interpretation of these orders, the Chairperson shall rule on the matter. The Chairperson's ruling shall stand unless it is formally challenged and the challenge is seconded. Should this happen, the Chairperson and the challenger (and they alone) shall briefly address the meeting on the matter and a vote will then be taken.

## 14 BY-ELECTIONS AND MEMBERSHIP

- 14.1 Where the status of a member of the Council materially changes in respect of their membership of the Council, the Registrar shall notify the Governing Body of the College and request approval to organise a by-election or to make an appointment to fill the resulting vacancy on the Council as appropriate. The holding of such a by-election(s) making of such appointment(s) shall occur annually in the month of October.

- 14.2 Where the status of an ex-officio member of the Academic Council materially changes in respect of their membership of the Council and where that person is replaced by an acting official in the same or in similar capacity, that the replacement official should automatically become a member ex-officio of the Academic Council without the need for a formal personal appointment by the Governing Body. (Subject to approval of Governing Body).

## 15 CHANGES IN THE CONSTITUTION AND STANDING ORDERS

- 15.1 The Council, from time to time, may make representations to the Governing Body for changes in the Constitution and or standing orders.

### Tracking amendments

Date	Meeting	Item amended
13/06/2016	Academic Council	Insert 2.7 Secretary of Academic Council replace wording 'Registrar's Office' Delete sentence All Academic Council discussions must be through the formal Academic Council meetings.
01/04/2020	Academic Council	6.2 approved at Academic Council.