

University Research Committee Charter

Introduction

1. The Academic Board of the Australian National University has established the University Research Committee (“the Committee”) in accordance with section 48 of the *Academic Board Charter*.
2. This Charter sets out the Committee’s objective, authority, composition and tenure, roles and responsibilities, reporting and administrative arrangements.

Objective

3. The objective of the Committee is to monitor, advise and provide assurance to the Academic Board on the quality and performance of the research programs and activities of the University.

Authority

4. The Academic Board authorises the Committee, within the scope of its role and responsibilities, to:
 - obtain any information it needs from any ANU staff and/or external party (subject to their legal obligation to protect information);
 - request the attendance of any ANU staff at Committee meetings;
 - discuss any matters with external parties (subject to confidentiality considerations); and
 - obtain professional external advice, as considered necessary to meet its responsibilities, at the University’s expense.

Composition and Tenure

5. The Committee consists of:
 - the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Innovation), as Chair of the Committee;
 - the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Graduate Research);
 - the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research Initiatives & Infrastructure);
 - the Chief, Research & Information Services;

- the Chief, Research, Partnerships and Translation;
 - the Vice-President (First Nations);
 - the Vice-President (Advancement);
 - the Registrar, Student Administration;
 - the Dean of each ANU College;
 - the Associate Dean (Research) of each ANU College;
 - one (1) academic staff member from each ANU College nominated by the Dean of the College and appointed by the Chair of the Committee. Approximately half of these nominees should be early career staff members;
 - up to three members of the professional staff of the University appointed by the Chair of the Committee;
 - one (1) postgraduate student appointed by the Chair of the Committee after consultation with the President of ANUSA;
 - one (1) undergraduate student appointed by the Chair of the Committee after consultation with the President of ANUSA;
 - One (1) elected member of the Academic Board appointed by the Chair of Academic Board; and
 - not more than three (3) additional members appointed by the Chair of the Committee to provide a diversity of views if the Chair considers that the current membership of the Committee does not reflect the academic and cultural diversity of the University.
6. Appointed members, other than student and Academic Board appointees, serve a term of two years and are eligible for re-appointment. The student members of the Committee are appointed for one year and are eligible for re-appointment. The Academic Board member is appointed for the duration of his/her current term on Academic Board and is eligible for re-appointment.
 7. An appointed member may resign from the Committee in writing to the Chair.
 8. If an appointed member of the Committee is absent from three (3) meetings of the Committee without the written approval of the Chair, or an appointed member ceases to be eligible for appointment, the Chair may declare the member's position vacant.
 9. When a vacancy occurs in the membership of the Committee, an eligible person may be appointed by the Chair to fill the vacancy, and serves the remainder of the former member's term of office.
 10. Whenever an opportunity arises for the Chair to appoint a new member to the Committee, the Chair will have regard to the current gender balance of the Committee before making decisions regarding an appointment.

Roles and Responsibilities

12. The Committee exercises such roles and responsibilities as may be assigned to it by the Academic Board from time to time, but only such powers as are explicitly delegated to it.
13. The Committee's responsibilities are to advise the Academic Board and the Vice Chancellor:
 - a. on matters relating to research, including research performance, integrity and training at the University; and
 - b. on major issues relevant to the University's strategic plans and overarching policy; and
 - c. on any matter referred to the Committee by the Academic Board, the Vice Chancellor, the Chair of the Committee, or a member of the University Executive with portfolio responsibility for research.
14. In carrying out its role, the Committee is to:
 - a. monitor the development of the University's policies and plans in relation to research; and
 - b. oversee research performance and advise on the coordination of the University's research effort;
 - c. monitor the quality and integrity of the University's research activities; and
 - d. make recommendations to the Academic Board on accrediting, reaccrediting or disestablishing postgraduate programs.

Responsibilities of Members

15. Members of the Committee are expected to understand and observe the legal requirements of the *Australian National University Act 1991*, the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* and University legislation.
16. Members are also expected to:
 - act in the interests of the University as a whole;
 - contribute the time needed to study and understand the papers provided; and
 - apply good analytical skills, objectivity and good judgment.

Reporting

17. The Committee regularly, but at least once a year, reports to the Academic Board on its operation and activities. The report includes:

- a summary of the work it performed to fully discharge its responsibilities during the preceding year;
- details of meetings, including the number of meetings held during the relevant period, and the number of meetings each member attended.

18. The Committee may, at any time, report to the Academic Board any other matter it deems of sufficient importance to do so.

Administrative Arrangements

Meetings and Planning

19. The Committee shall meet up to six times per year on dates determined by the Committee.

20. A forward meeting plan, including scheduled meeting dates, location and agenda items, is agreed by the Committee each year. The forward meeting plan covers all its responsibilities, as detailed in this Charter.

21. The Chair is required to convene a meeting if asked to do so by at least 50% of the Committee members.

22. The Chair convenes and presides at all meetings of the Committee at which they are present. The Chair has a deliberative and a casting vote on all matters before a meeting of the Committee. When the Chair is unable to preside at a meeting, a senior member of the Research and Innovation Portfolio presides.

23. The procedure at meetings of the Committee is determined by the person presiding over the meeting, taking into account the advice of the Committee members.

24. All matters relating to individual persons, including appointments, enrolment, candidacy for degrees, personal details, performance and conduct are treated as confidential. Confidential items are so marked on the agenda and taken before any observers are admitted to the meeting. At the beginning of the meeting, members of the Committee may ask that other particular items on the agenda be treated as confidential and the Committee will determine this. During the course of the meeting, the Chair may declare a particular item to be confidential and observers are asked to leave until consideration of that item has finished.

Attendance at Meetings and Quorums

25. A quorum consists of at least 50 per cent of Committee members who hold office for the time being.

26. Meetings are held in person, and a Committee member may only participate in a meeting by telephone or videoconference with the prior consent of the Chair.

27. An appointed member of a Committee who is unable to attend a meeting of the Committee may nominate an alternate from the same category of membership to attend the meeting on their behalf. An alternate must be a person who would otherwise be eligible to be chosen as a member of the Committee.
28. An ex officio member of a Committee who is unable to attend a meeting of the Committee may nominate an alternate to attend the meeting on their behalf. The nominated alternate must be a senior member of staff from the same organisational unit as the member.
29. Alternates have the same rights and responsibilities as Committee members.
30. Meetings of the Committee are open to members of the ANU Council, academic and professional staff of University and to undergraduate and postgraduate students of the University, as observers. Observers register their intention to attend a meeting with the Committee Secretary in advance of the meeting, are registered by the Committee Secretary on a "first come first served" basis and then will be invited to participate via video teleconference link.
31. Observers may only speak if invited to do so by the Chair and in such cases may only speak on the particular issue about which they were invited to speak. Observers may not bring recording equipment or cameras into the meeting.
32. In their engagement with the University Research Committee, Observers are also bound by Clause 15 and are expected to act in the interests of the University as a whole.
33. The Chair may request any other ANU staff and/or external party to attend Committee meetings or participate in certain agenda items.

Sub-Committees and Working Parties

33. The Committee may establish one or more sub-committees or working parties to assist it in the carrying out of its functions.

Secretariat

34. The University Governance Office provides secretariat support to the Committee.
35. The Research and Innovation Portfolio and other relevant stakeholders will be responsible for the development and preparation of reports and other papers to be presented to the Committee. Such reports and papers will be submitted to the University Governance Office for inclusion in the agenda papers.
36. The University Governance Office will ensure the agenda and supporting papers for each meeting are circulated to members (via the Committee's agenda management site) after approval from the Chair and at least 7 days before the meeting.

37. The University Governance Office will ensure the minutes of the meetings are prepared and maintained. Minutes must be approved by the Chair and circulated to each member of the Committee.

Conflicts of Interest

38. Committee members must declare any material personal interests, whether they are actual, potential or perceived, at the start of each meeting or before discussion of the relevant agenda item or topic. Details of material personal interests declared by Committee members, and actions taken, are appropriately recorded in the minutes.

Induction

39. The University Governance Office maintains a program of induction for Committee members to assist them to meet their Committee responsibilities. The Research and Innovation Portfolio assists the University Governance Office in this task whenever requested.

Assessment and Review

40. The Chair, in consultation with the Academic Board Chair, initiates every second year a review of the performance of the Committee, and this Charter, with appropriate input sought from Committee members, the University Executive, College Deans and any other relevant stakeholders. The review of performance will be conducted on a self-assessment basis unless otherwise determined by the Academic Board.

Approved by resolution of the Academic Board meeting 3/2025 held on 24 June 2025 with major amendments made to the composition of the URC.