

# Safety and Wellbeing Committee Charter

*The Safety and Wellbeing Committee ensures that Council has advice and assurance that the University is discharging its responsibilities in relation to the safety and wellbeing of its community. It has a membership made up of Council members, independent experts, staff and students.*

## Introduction

1. The Australian National University (ANU) Council (Council) has established the Safety and Wellbeing Committee (“the Committee”) in accordance with section 18 of the *Australian National University Act 1991*.
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 and advise Council on the University’s management of matters concerning the safety and wellbeing of staff and students at the University, consistent with the University’s pursuit of excellence in all aspects of its work.

## Authority

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

## Composition and Tenure

5. The Committee will consist of up to twelve members appointed by Council, as follows:
  - a Chair, who may be a member of the Council, but not the Chancellor or Vice-Chancellor, nor a student or employee of the University;
  - at least one and up to three other Council members, one of whom must be an internal member.
  - at least one and up to three external members, with any one or more specific skills and senior leadership experience relevant to the Roles and Responsibilities of the Committee.
  - at least one and up to three ANU students (not members of Council), one of whom must be a resident in ANU student accommodation at the time of appointment and one of whom may be a student member appointed for a second consecutive term on the Committee;
  - the President of the ANU Student Association, noting that where the President of the ANU Student Association is a member of Council, this appointment does not impact on or contribute to the number of Council appointees on the Committee;
  - at least one and up to two ANU staff (not members of Council) who hold specific skills and experience relevant to the Roles and Responsibilities of the Committee.
6. The Committee may appoint a Deputy Chair from among its members.
7. Student and staff members will be appointed for up to one year and are eligible for re-appointment.
8. External members appointed to the Committee, unless otherwise noted, will serve a term of up to three years and are eligible for re-appointment.
9. Council members shall be appointed until their term on Council expires or as otherwise determined by Council.
10. The Council will have regard to a balanced membership, including with respect to the diversity of the Australian community and the University, and the need for both continuity and regular renewal, in filling positions on the Committee.

## Roles and Responsibilities

11. The Committee exercises such functions, responsibilities and authorities as may be assigned or delegated to it by Council from time to time, but only such powers as are explicitly delegated to it.
12. The Committee's responsibilities relating to the safety and wellbeing of students and staff, contractors and visitors are, subject to revision by Council, to monitor, review and, where appropriate, make recommendations to Council in respect to:

- University wide safety and wellbeing strategies and plans;
- Data, risk and compliance reporting concerning safety and wellbeing at the University;
- Management’s reporting on and responses to any regulatory authority relating to performance and compliance with any relevant safety or wellbeing legislation or obligations;
- Policy relating to safety and wellbeing at the University; and
- Any other matter relevant to supporting the work of the Committee or the Council.

### **Student Safety and Wellbeing**

13. The Committee recognises the unique nature of the relationship between the University and its students. As such, meeting agendas will include a standing item dedicated to student matters and the student experience.
14. The Committee will have access to the student body beyond representatives forming the Membership in order to be able to review and advise Council with respect to student engagement with and experience of the University’s safety and wellbeing strategies, plans and services.

### **Responsibilities of Members**

15. Members of the Committee are expected to understand and observe the legal requirements of the *Australian National University Act 1991* and the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.
16. Members are also expected to:
  - act always in the best interests of the university as a whole, with this obligation to be observed in priority over any duty a member may owe to those appointing them;
  - act in good faith, honestly and for a proper purpose;
  - exercise appropriate care and diligence;
  - not improperly use their position to gain an advantage for themselves or someone else; and
  - disclose and avoid conflicts of interest.

### **Reporting**

17. The Committee will regularly, but at least once a year, report to the Council on its operation and activities. The report should include:
  - a summary of the work it performed to fully discharge its responsibilities during the preceding year;
  - a summary of safety and wellbeing performance at the University for the preceding

year; and

- details of membership, including any changes across the reporting period, meetings, including the number of meetings held during the relevant period, and the number of meetings each member attended.
18. Where the Committee identifies exposure (or potential exposure) to material risk to the University in relation to the Committee's role, the Council is to be notified of the matter, and it is to be referred (including by informal means during meeting agenda preparation phases) to the Audit, Finance and Risk Committee or other Council Committees for consideration and the development of advice to Council and/or the Vice-Chancellor.
  19. The Committee may, at any time, report to Council any other matter it deems of sufficient importance to do so.

## Administrative Arrangements

### Meetings and Planning

20. The Committee will meet at least four times per year on dates determined by the Committee.
21. The Chair is required to call a meeting if asked to do so by Council and decide if a meeting is required if requested by another Committee member.
22. A forward meeting plan, including meeting dates and key agenda items, will be agreed by the Committee each year. The forward meeting plan will cover all its responsibilities, as detailed in this Charter.
23. The Chair will be updated as necessary or as requested on significant issues relating to staff and student safety and wellbeing by the relevant member of the University Executive and/or the relevant Director/s most responsible.

### Attendance at Meetings and Quorums

24. Quorum will consist of 50 per cent of Committee members (rounded up to the nearest whole number) who hold office for the time being.
25. Meetings can be held in person or by digital means.
26. Members of the University Executive and other relevant persons, including the Chair of the University's WHS Committee may, subject to Committee direction, attend or be required to attend meetings and contribute to deliberations.
27. The Chair of the Committee may request any ANU employee and/or external party to attend Committee meetings or participate in certain agenda items.
28. On request, Council Members shall be provided with committee meeting papers and supporting material and may also attend Committee meetings.

### Secretariat

29. The University Governance Office (UGO) will provide secretariat support to the Committee.
30. The following portfolios and offices will be responsible for the development and preparation of reports and other papers concerning varying aspects of safety and wellbeing at the University for consideration by the Committee:
  - Residential Experience
  - University Experience
  - The Office of the Chief Operating Officer
  - People and Culture

Such reports and papers will be submitted to UGO for inclusion in the meeting papers.

31. In line with agreement by the Committee, in-camera sessions will be organised by UGO preceding each Committee meeting that will enable the Members to connect confidentially with various student and student focussed cohorts across the University to consider their levels of engagement with and receive feedback on the University's safety and wellbeing strategies, plans, policies and services.
32. In supporting the preparation of agenda papers, UGO will provide procedural and contextual advice and drafting support, especially in respect of recommendations being presented to the Committee or Council.
33. UGO will ensure the agenda and supporting papers for each meeting are circulated at least 7 days before the meeting.
34. UGO will ensure the minutes of the meetings are prepared and maintained. Minutes must be authorised by the Chair for circulation to members of the Committee for consideration prior to approval being sought from the Committee at the next meeting.

## Conflicts of Interest

35. Upon joining the Committee and then once a year thereafter, Committee members will provide written declarations to Council declaring any material personal interests that could preclude them from being members of the Committee. External members will be asked to consider past employment, consultancy arrangements and related party issues in making these declarations. Council will need to be satisfied that there are sufficient processes in place to manage any real, perceived, or potential conflict.
36. Committee members must declare any material personal interests 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, will be appropriately recorded in the minutes.

## Induction

37. UGO will maintain a program of induction, training and awareness-raising for Committee members, with the objective of enabling the Committee to keep abreast of contemporary developments and leading practice to assist Members to meet their Committee responsibilities. Other areas of the University will assist UGO in this task whenever requested.

## Assessment and Review

38. The Chair of the Committee will initiate a review of the performance of the Committee and this Charter at intervals of two years with the outcomes to be reported to Council. The review of performance may be conducted on a self-assessment basis unless otherwise determined by the Council.

*Approved by resolution of the ANU Council on 3 October 2025*