Welcome to the Academic Board

Dear colleagues,

I am delighted to welcome you to membership of the Academic Board for 2020-2021, and I thank you for undertaking such an important role within the University.

The pursuit of academic excellence is a foundational principle of university life, and the Academic Board has a critical role in ensuring academic standards at the University of Sydney.

Specifically, the Board is responsible for assuring the highest standards in teaching, scholarship and research and, in so doing, safeguarding the academic freedom of the University; for overseeing and monitoring the development of academic activities of the University; for communicating with the academic community; and for providing a forum for debate and information flow within the University in relation to academic matters.

Members of the Academic Board ensure that the breadth of the University community is represented by bringing their unique talents, insights and discipline-informed experience to all discussions and decision-making processes undertaken by the Board. As Chair of the Academic Board, I hope that your membership term provides a valuable opportunity for you to share knowledge, support, and inspiration.

Again, welcome to the Board.

Associate Professor Tony Masters,
Chair, Academic Board, The University of Sydney
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1. History of the Academic Board

Established in 1850, the University of Sydney was the first university in Australasia. In 1887, a Professorial Board was established under the By-Laws of the University and with Anderson Stuart, the eminent Professor of Medicine, as its first Chairman.

The Professors of the Four Faculties, with the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor, shall form a Board, to be called “The Professorial Board” – the duties of which shall be to consider and report to the Senate upon all matters respecting the studies and examinations of the students, and the conferring of degrees in the several Faculties – the studies, examinations, and degrees, in the Faculty of Medicine excepted – with power to establish Rules, subject to the approval of the Senate, for maintaining order and discipline among the students, and securing their due attendance at Lectures. For the breach of any such Rule, or misconduct of any kind by a student, the Board may inflict such punishment as is sanctioned by Academic usage, including a fine not exceeding Five Pounds, or such other punishment as those Rules shall have prescribed. Provided that no student shall be expelled, or suspended for more than a month, unless the order in that behalf be confirmed by the Senate.

University of Sydney Calendar, 1886, By-Laws of the University.

In 1975 and at a time of major changes in academic governance, the old Professorial Board was dissolved and replaced by an Academic Board chaired by Professor J M Ward. The new body included “substantial representation from the non-professorial staff and students”.1

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A review of the Academic Board in 1995 recommended the then Academic Board of nearly 400 members be replaced by a two-tiered structure made up of an Academic Forum of approximately the same number of members and an Academic Board of 61 members. This structure was further reviewed in 2001, and the revised Academic Board came into effect in 2004 with a membership of approximately 112. Further changes took place with the restructure of the university faculties and schools, and the Academic Board as constituted in 2020 has a membership of approximately 133.

2. Role of the Academic Board in relation to Senate

The Senate is the governing authority of the University of Sydney and is constituted under the University of Sydney Act 1989 (as amended). The Senate of the University acts for and on behalf of the University in the exercise of the University's functions, has the control and management of the affairs and concerns of the University, and may act in all matters concerning the University in such manner as appears to the Senate to be best calculated to promote the object and interests of the University.

Under the University of Sydney By-law 1999, the Academic Board reports directly to Senate and has the membership and functions prescribed by rules made by Senate. The membership and functions of the Academic Board are set out in the University of Sydney (Academic Board) Rule 2017.

3. Purpose of the Academic Board

The Academic Board is responsible for overseeing and maintaining the highest standards in teaching, scholarship and research, and for safeguarding the academic freedom of the University. It does this by providing the academic community, including representatives from faculties, boards of studies and similar organisations, with the opportunity to communicate with one another on both a formal and informal level. The Academic Board also fulfils a function required by the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015, namely that “Course approval and self-accreditation processes are overseen by peak institutional academic governance processes … before the courses are first offered and during re-approval or re-accreditation of the courses.”

The Academic Board has principal responsibility for:

- assuring the highest standards in teaching, scholarship and research and, in so doing, safeguarding the academic freedom of the University
- overseeing and monitoring the development of academic activities of the University
- communicating with the academic community, particularly through academic organisational units such as faculties, University schools, boards of studies and centres, and
- providing a forum for debate and information flow within the University in relation to academic matters.

The Academic Board has a number of functions, including (but not limited to):

- the development, in consultation the with University Executive, of standards and policies covering a range of academic areas, such as admission requirements, programs of study,
progression requirements, examinations and assessments, and student recognition awards, including scholarships and prizes

- considering and approving new award courses and amendments to existing courses, subject to subsequent approval by the Senate
- providing advice to the Senate, the Vice-Chancellor and the University Executive on academic matters relating to teaching, research and educational programs, academic priorities, academic aspects of University strategic plans, academic aspects of policies and procedures including those relating to the appointment, promotion and conditions of employment of academic staff, establishing and maintaining academic standards, and any academic matter of strategic importance
- the oversight, jointly with the University Executive, of a formal program of reviews of the academic activities of the University and its academic organisational units
- receiving and directing reports from faculties and other organisational units in relation to academic matters.

4. Role of the Chair and Deputy Chair

The role of the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Academic Board is multifarious. The main functions of both positions can be found under Part 4 – Office Bearers in the University of Sydney (Academic Board) Rule 2017.

The most important role of the Chair and Deputy Chair is to provide the University community with outstanding leadership in research, learning and teaching through benchmarking and quality assurances.

5. Secretary to the Academic Board

The Secretary to Senate, or the Secretary’s nominee, is Secretary to the Academic Board. The role of the Secretary is to provide the Academic Board with high level governance advice and administrative support. By doing this, the Board is in a better position to provide the University with quality academic leadership. At the time of writing, the Secretary to Senate’s responsibilities towards the Academic Board are carried out by the Secretary’s nominee, the Manager Governance (Senate and Academic Board).

6. Role of Members

Members of the Academic Board have a responsibility to act in the best interests of the Board and the University. Members are expected to engage with agenda papers, attend Academic Board meetings, and participate in discussion and decision-making processes at Academic Board meetings. Board members are required to bring their discipline-informed experience to the Board. They can also be a point of contact between the Board and their own school or Faculty by disseminating information about discussion and outcomes to colleagues, and by raising the interests of colleagues with the Board. However, elected members of the Board sit as individuals with their perspectives informed by their discipline base, but not as representatives of that discipline. The role of representing the views of a University school or Faculty is taken by the Deans, who are ex officio members.
Board members also have a responsibility to volunteer their time and expertise for Academic Board committees, reviews and working groups. Academic staff members are also required to act as an Academic Board Nominee (ABN) on recruitment selection panels (see “Academic Board Nominees” below).

6.1 Meeting etiquette

The motto of the Academic Board is: “Respect is a core value of the Academic Board”. This appears on all Board papers in English and in the following translation to Indigenous dialect: Maridarangun Academic Boardmirung.

All members of the Academic Board have an equal right to participate and to be heard and there is an expectation that members will display good manners and respect at all times, in accordance with the University’s principles of disagreeing well.

Due to the size of the membership of the Academic Board, members are requested to direct questions and remarks through the Chair. The Chair will be responsible for setting the order in which members may be heard. The purpose of this arrangement is to ensure the meeting is kept within a reasonable timeframe and that members have a chance to participate.

It is important to remember to be brief and concise if you have a question, wish to propose a motion or want to seek clarification of the discussion. If required, the Chair will call upon you for further information.

Please speak only to the matter at hand, as raising other discussion topics will slow the meeting and there may be insufficient time left to deal with the agenda.

If you have a topic you wish the Academic Board to discuss you should ensure the item is placed on the agenda or that “General Business” is starred.
7. Academic Board membership and method of appointment

The Board currently consists of:

(a) Chair
(b) Vice-Chancellor
(c) Ex officio members
(d) Elected staff members
(e) Student members
(f) Appointed or co-opted members.

Ex officio members

The ex officio members of the Board are:

(g) the Vice-Chancellor
(h) the Deputy Vice-Chancellors
(i) the Pro Vice-Chancellors
(j) the Deans
(k) the Heads of School and Deans of University schools
(l) the Director, University Libraries
(m) the Director Student Administrative Services
(n) two representatives nominated by the Heads of School Committee
(o) two representatives nominated by the Faculty Academic Services Committee
(p) the President of the Students' Representative Council
(q) two other undergraduate students nominated by the executive of the Students' Representative Council
(r) the President of the Sydney University Postgraduate Representative
(s) two other postgraduate students nominated by the executive of the Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association

Elected Members

The elected staff members of the Board consist of:

a) Four academic staff members from each faculty or University School which employs 5% or less of the University’s full-time equivalent academic staff: the University of Sydney School of Architecture, Design and Planning; the University of Sydney Law School and the Sydney Conservatorium of Music

b) Eight academic staff members from each faculty or University School which employs more than 5% and up to (and including) 15% of the University’s full-time equivalent academic staff: the University of Sydney Business School, the Faculty of Engineering and the Faculty of Health Sciences2

c) 12 academic staff members from each faculty or University School which employs more than 15% and up to (and including) 25% of the University’s full-time equivalent academic staff: the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and the Faculty of Science

Professor Ros Pesman was the first female Chair of the Academic Board from 1997-1999.

2 Transitional arrangements are currently in place for the Faculty of Health Sciences in 2020
d) 16 academic staff members from each faculty or University School which employs more than 25% of the University’s full-time equivalent academic staff: the Faculty of Medicine and Health.

In addition, the following quotas will apply to the elected members for each faculty or University school:

i. at least 25% must be from Levels A-C; and
ii. at least 25% must be from Levels D and E, with at least one from Level E.

Student Members

The elected student members of the Board consist of:

a) Two student members from each faculty or University School which employs 5% or less of the University’s full-time equivalent academic staff: the University of Sydney School of Architecture, Design and Planning; the University of Sydney Law School and the Sydney Conservatorium of Music

b) Two student members from each faculty or University School which employs more than 5% and up to (and including) 15% of the University’s full-time equivalent academic staff: the University of Sydney Business School, the Faculty of Engineering and the Faculty of Health Sciences

c) Four student members from each faculty or University School which employs more than 15% and up to (and including) 25% of the University’s full-time equivalent academic staff: the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and the Faculty of Science

d) Four student members from each faculty or University School which employs more than 25% of the University’s full-time equivalent academic staff: the Faculty of Medicine and Health

In addition, for each faculty or University school:

i. at least one elected student member of the Academic Board must be an undergraduate student and one a postgraduate student, and
ii. the elected student members must be enrolled students who do not already hold office on the Academic Board in another capacity.

Appointed members

a) The Academic Board may appoint up to four members who do not already hold office in another capacity, on the recommendation of the Chair and by resolution at an ordinary meeting.

Co-opted members

a) Co-opted members are intended to be short term appointees appointed to assist the Academic Board with a particular issue or project. Co-opted members must be appointed by resolution at an ordinary meeting, and for a specified term of office which reflects the time span of the relevant issue or project.

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3 Transitional arrangements are currently in place for the Faculty of Health Sciences in 2020
8. Academic Board Committees

8.1 Academic Quality Committee

Terms of Reference

1. To play an active role in assuring the quality of teaching, scholarship and research in the University and co-ordinate and maintain an overview of the academic activities of all academic units.

2. To monitor issues relating to quality in relation to undergraduate and postgraduate award courses, and to make recommendations to the Academic Board.

3. To monitor issues relating to quality in relation to research, and to make recommendations to the Academic Board.

4. To monitor issues relating to quality in relation to research training, including the assessment and examination of Higher Degree by Research candidates, and to make recommendations to the Academic Board.

5. To provide academic oversight in relation to domains 2.2, 5.2.2, 5.2.4, 5.3.1, 5.3.2, 5.3.3, 5.3.4, 5.3.5, 5.3.7, 5.4.2, 6.1.4, 6.3.1 (b) – (d), 6.3.2 (a), (c) – (h) inclusive of the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015

6. In pursuit of the above objectives, to:
   
   6.1. request reports from, or refer matters to Faculties, University Schools, schools, departments, University Executive portfolios, etc., for consideration and action as required
   6.2. consider and take action as required on reports or academic submissions from academic units
   6.3. initiate and oversee, in collaboration with the University Executive, a formal and regular program of review of academic activities of all academic units.

7. To ensure undergraduate and postgraduate coursework education are compliant with appropriate rules, policies and procedures.

8. To ensure that research training is compliant with appropriate rules, policies and procedures.

9. To receive reports and recommendations from the Higher Degree by Research Examinations Sub-Committee for comment and transmission to the Academic Board.

10. To receive reports from, and provide advice to, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), The Registrar and, where appropriate, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Global Engagement) on quality assurance and other matters relating to coursework study.

11. To receive reports from, and provide advice to, appropriate portfolios on quality assurance and other matters relating to higher degree by research training in domain 4.1 of the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015.

12. To obtain information or reports from any faculty, school or department, the Library or other academic unit on academic matters relating to coursework or research training studies.
13. To provide regular reports on its activities under its terms of reference to the Academic Board.

14. To consider and report on any matter referred to it by the Academic Board, or its committees, the University Executive or the Vice-Chancellor.

For further information, see the Academic Quality Committee website.

The HDR Examinations Subcommittee advises the Academic Quality Committee about resolutions, policy and procedures relating to the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and other higher degrees by research.

8.2 Academic Standards and Policy Committee

Terms of Reference

1. To play an active role in assuring the quality of teaching, scholarship and research in the University by ensuring the body of academic policies and degree resolutions are internally consistent, incorporate the best ideas and are aligned with the strategic goals of the University.

2. To formulate, review and, as appropriate, recommend policies, guidelines and procedures relating to academic matters, particularly with respect to academic issues that have scope across the University, including equity and access initiatives.

3. To recommend to the Academic Board policy concerning the programs of study or examinations in any Faculty, University School or Board of Studies.

4. To advise the Academic Board and Vice-Chancellor on policies concerning the academic aspects of the conditions of appointment and employment of academic staff.

5. To provide academic oversight of admissions, credit and recognition of prior learning in relation to domains 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.2.1, 5.2.2, 5.2.4, 6.3.1 (a), (b), (d), 6.3.2 (a), (d), (e), of the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015.

6. To provide academic oversight of research training in relation to domains 4.2.1 (a) – (e), and 6.3.1 (a), (b), (d), 6.3.2 (a), (d), (e), of the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015.

7. To actively seek and evaluate opportunities to improve the University’s pursuit of high standards in all academic activities.

8. To ensure proper communication channels are established with other committees of the Academic Board and the University Executive to promote cross-referencing and discussion of matters relating to academic standards and policy.

9. To receive reports from, and provide advice to, the Deputy Vice Chancellors relating to the operation and effectiveness of policy in the areas of teaching, scholarship and research.

10. To exercise all reasonable means to provide and receive advice from the University Executive and its relevant subcommittees.
11. To provide regular reports on its activities under its terms of reference to the Academic Board.

12. To consider and report on any matter referred to it by the Academic Board, the Vice-Chancellor or the Deputy Vice-Chancellors.

For further information, see the Academic Standards and Policy Committee website.

The Admissions Subcommittee advises the Academic Standards and Policy Committee and the Undergraduate and Graduate Studies Committees of the Academic Board about resolutions, policy and procedures relating to admissions to award courses at the University of Sydney.

8.3 Graduate Studies Committee

Terms of Reference

1. To advise the Academic Board on resolutions, policy and procedures relating to postgraduate studies in the University.

2. To make recommendations to the Academic Board regarding:
   2.1. proposals to introduce new postgraduate award courses and amendments to existing postgraduate award courses; and
   2.2. requirements to be satisfied by candidates for the award of a degree, diploma or certificate.

3. To provide academic oversight in relation to domains 1.4.1; 1.4.2; 1.4.5, 1.4.6, 1.4.7, 1.5.2; 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.1.3; 3.1.4; 3.1.5; 4.2.1(a) – (e) inclusive, 5.1.2; 5.1.3, 5.4.2 and 6.3.2(c) of the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015.

4. To ensure graduate education is compliant with appropriate rules, policies and procedures.

5. To act for the Academic Board in:
   5.1. admitting candidates, on the advice of the Faculty, University School or Board of Studies concerned, for higher doctorates, and
   5.2. determining, on the recommendation of the Faculty, University School or Board of Studies concerned, whether or not a higher doctorate be awarded.

6. To contribute to the development of the University’s strategic objectives in relation to postgraduate study and research training, and to develop, recommend to the Academic Board, and regularly review resolutions, policy and procedures supporting those strategic objectives.

7. To provide academic oversight of the University’s program of coursework for higher degree by research students, including:
   7.1. Approving the inclusion, removal or amendment of units of study in Table R
7.2. Approving restrictions on enrolment in units of study within Table R.

8. To receive reports from, and provide advice to, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), and, where appropriate the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), the Registrar and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Global Engagement) on matters relating to postgraduate study and research training at the University.

9. To recommend to the Academic Board effective policy and procedures for Higher Degree by Research students.

10. To obtain information or reports from any Faculty, University School, Board of Studies, school or department, the Library or other academic unit on academic matters relating to postgraduate studies.

11. To ensure proper communication channels are established with other committees of the Academic Board and University Executive to promote cross-referencing and discussion of matters concerning postgraduate students.

12. To determine the terms and conditions of awards, postgraduate scholarships and prizes established within the University.

13. To provide regular reports on its activities under its terms of reference to the Academic Board.

14. To consider and report on any matter referred to it by the Academic Board or its committees, the University Executive or the Vice-Chancellor.

For further information, see the [Graduate Studies Committee website](#).

The [Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Scholarships Subcommittee](#) advises the Graduate Studies Committee about policy and procedures relating to the award of Research Training Program Scholarships, University of Sydney Postgraduate Awards, travelling scholarships, grants-in-aid and other University-wide postgraduate awards.

### 8.4 Undergraduate Studies Committee

**Terms of Reference**

1. To advise the Academic Board on resolutions, policy and procedures relating to all undergraduate studies in the University, including the pattern of undergraduate award courses.

2. To make recommendations to the Academic Board about proposals to introduce new undergraduate award courses and amendments to existing undergraduate award courses.

3. To make recommendations to the Academic Board about requirements to be satisfied by candidates for the award of a degree, diploma or certificate.

4. To determine procedures for the consideration, and deadline for submission of proposals for new and amended undergraduate award programs and courses in consultation with the University Executive Curriculum and Course Planning Committee.
5. To provide academic oversight in relation to domains 1.4.1; 1.4.2, 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.1.3; 3.1.4; 3.1.5; 5.1.2; 5.1.3, 5.4.2 and 6.3.2(c) of the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015.

6. To ensure undergraduate education is compliant with appropriate rules, policies and procedures.

7. To contribute to the development of the University’s strategic objectives in relation to undergraduate study and to formulate, recommend to the Academic Board, and regularly review resolutions, policy and procedures supporting those strategic objectives.

8. To receive reports from, and provide advice to, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and, where appropriate the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Global Engagement) on quality assurance and other matters relating to undergraduate study.

9. To obtain information or reports from any Faculty, University School, Board of Studies, school or department, the Library or other academic unit on academic matters relating to undergraduate studies.

10. To ensure proper communication channels are established with other committees of the Academic Board and the University Executive to promote cross-referencing and discussion of matters concerning undergraduate students.

11. To determine the terms and conditions of undergraduate awards, scholarships and prizes established within the University.

12. To receive annual reports on the awarding of Honours and the University Medal from Faculties, University Schools and Boards of Studies.

13. To provide regular reports on its activities to the Academic Board.

14. To consider and report on any matter referred to it by the Academic Board, or its committees, the University Executive or the Vice-Chancellor.

For further information, see the Undergraduate Studies Committee website.

8.5 Working Parties

Purpose

Working Parties are ad hoc and set up by the Academic Board when required. Such groups will often undertake major reviews of policy and process, e.g. student appeals, communicating and implementing Academic Board policies, identifying students at risk, etc.

Working party members are drawn from across the University and include academic and administrative staff and students. Members of working parties are not necessarily members of the Academic Board.
9. Academic Board Agenda

9.1 Timeframes

The Academic Board meets on a Tuesday afternoon at least six times per year. The close-off for receipt of agenda items is three weeks prior to the meeting date. A full set of meeting dates and close-off periods can be accessed [here](#).

A copy of the Academic Board agenda is placed on the Board’s [SharePoint](#) site a week prior to the meeting date.

Members are advised via email when the agenda is available.

9.2 Agenda arrangement

The Academic Board agenda covers a multitude of areas. The agenda is arranged by the traditional method of starring items, minutes from the previous meeting and business arising from the minutes.

The Board agenda also incorporates reports from the Chair of the Board, the Vice-Chancellor, the student members of the Board and the Standing Committees of the Board. Thanks to the flexible nature of the agenda time is allocated for members to ask questions of the Chair, the Vice-Chancellor and Chairs of the Standing Committees. Thanks to the flexible nature of the agenda time is allocated for members to ask questions of the Chair, the Vice-Chancellor and Chairs of the Standing Committees.

The agenda also allows the University community to present information to members. For example, Deans can report on any significant faculty innovations or initiatives.

The Board also receives regular updates on topics of strategic importance and aspects of the University’s current strategic plan.

Presentations at the Board meetings provide an ideal way for faculties to share their academic knowledge with the wider University community. These presentations are scheduled on a regular basis.

9.3 Starring

All priority items and any standard items that require discussion and/or a vote are routinely starred. Otherwise, standard business is unstarred except for the reports of the Chair and the Vice-Chancellor. Members must notify the Manager Governance (Senate and Academic Board) of any items which they wish to star for discussion at the meeting by close of business on the Thursday prior to the meeting date.
10. Academic Board Protocols

10.1 Attendance

Records of attendance are kept for every meeting and attendance is also recorded in the minutes of the meeting. Members should advise the Manager Governance (Senate and Academic Board) in advance if they are unable to attend.

If a member cannot attend a meeting, they may send an observer in their place. In this event, the member or their observer is requested to notify the Manager Governance (Senate and Academic Board). For ex officio staff positions, a person acting in that position can attend Academic Board and exercise the voting rights of that position. For elected members, there is the option of nominating a standing alternate (see section 10.2 below).

Section 10.3 details the voting procedures for the Academic Board.

10.2 Standing Alternates

An elected staff or student member or ex officio student member may nominate a standing alternate to attend Academic Board meetings on their behalf.

Members must:
- advise the Manager Governance (Senate and Academic Board) of their nominated standing alternate
- ensure the standing alternate meets the relevant membership criteria for that member, and
- provide the name, position and contact details of the standing alternate to the Manager Governance (Senate and Academic Board).

A nominated standing alternate can attend any Academic Board meeting on behalf of the member in the same calendar year, but the Manager Governance (Senate and Academic Board) must be notified that they will be attending at least two days before the date of the meeting.

10.3 Voting

Voting at meetings must be conducted by:
- a show of hands
- a secret ballot, if demanded by any two members who are present and have the right to vote at that meeting, or if the Chair so directs.

Each member present at a meeting of the Academic Board has one deliberative vote. Where an ex officio member is absent or on leave and the position is being filled on an acting basis, the acting officer has the right to exercise the ex officio member’s one deliberative vote. In the case of an elected or co-opted member sending an observer in their place, the observer does not have voting rights.

In the event of a tied vote, then the person chairing that meeting of the Academic Board has one casting vote, in addition to a deliberative vote. However, this sub-rule does not apply to a motion of dissent.
10.4 Motions

Any motion in the agenda which is to be put to a vote by members of the Academic Board:

- must be duly proposed and seconded
- may be carried or lost by a majority of votes of those present at the meeting and eligible to vote, and
- together with the results of any vote on that motion, must be recorded in the minutes.

Only the Chair may put a motion without notice to a meeting of the Academic Board.

The Chair’s decision on all matters relating to meetings (including, without limitation, how meeting procedures are to be interpreted) is final.

Members of the Academic Board may move a motion of dissent from a ruling by the Chair without notice. A motion of dissent will be carried by at least 75% of those present and eligible to vote. A successful motion of dissent will allow members to:

- overrule the relevant ruling of the Chair, and
- substitute a new ruling for that ruling.

The Chair must not preside when a dissent motion is put and resolved. The Deputy Chair will preside in such circumstances, and if they are not present, the Academic Board must elect another member to preside.

10.5 Questions

At each meeting of the Academic Board, time has been set aside for Question Time. During this time, members have the right to ask questions of the Chair and the Vice-Chancellor (or the Vice-Chancellor’s representative) on matters relevant to the Board’s business.

10.6 Quorum

The quorum of the Academic Board is thirty members. If a quorum is not present at a meeting, the meeting may consider procedural matters only.

10.7 Meetings of the Academic Board

The Academic Board meets at least six times per year. Meetings are held at 1.00pm in the Auditoriums 1 and 2 located on Level 1, F23 Administration Building, and last for approximately two and a half hours.

Meetings of the Academic Board may be adjourned by the Chair to a convenient later time to conclude any unfinished business.

10.8 Preparation for the meeting

The Academic Board is normally required to deal with a multitude of items at each meeting. Some of these items cannot be debated in detail, or at all, at the meeting.
Members are expected to prepare for meetings by reading the agenda, preparing relevant questions and by offering their full attention during all proceedings. To ensure that members gain the most out of each meeting, it is recommended that members attend for the duration of the Academic Board meeting. This way, members can participate fully in rigorous debate and the decision-making process and can ensure that a quorum is present to enable the Board’s business to be conducted.

Members are encouraged to contact the Chair or the Manager Governance (Senate and Academic Board) if they have any minor questions or wish to seek clarification regarding items on the agenda.

10.9 After the Academic Board Meeting

Members are encouraged to communicate issues and decisions from Academic Board meetings to their faculty and constituents. After each meeting of the Academic Board, the Manager Governance (Senate and Academic Board), in liaison with the Chair, produces an Action Summary for all members. This document is made available on the Academic Board's SharePoint site and can be used by members when reporting back to their constituents regarding the outcomes of the Board meeting.

11. Review of the Academic Board

As part of its commitment to good governance, the Academic Board conducts a self-review at regular intervals. There are many reasons for the review; one of the main reasons is to ensure the Board is providing high quality academic leadership to the University.

The Committee structure of the Board is also regularly reviewed, with the current structure the result of an external review in 2016.

12. Reviews of Faculties

The Academic Board is responsible for encouraging and maintaining high standards of teaching, scholarship and research and for safeguarding the academic freedom of the University. The Academic Board is also responsible for overseeing the development of all academic activities of the University, formulating and reviewing policies, guidelines and procedures in relation to academic matters and playing an active role in assuring the quality of teaching, scholarship and research in the University.

To be confident that the policy structures properly sustain academic quality assurance and are appropriate to the University’s needs, the Board monitors their implementation and effectiveness. Much of this monitoring is affected through Academic Board reviews. The review process is formative and collegial.
The reviews were originally undertaken in phases of comprehensive reviews of individual faculties. Since 2018, reviews have been conducted as an annual thematic review across faculties and University schools. This provides greater opportunity for faculties, University schools and portfolios to focus and collaborate on key issues, with a focus on particular higher education quality assurance standards.

The first thematic review in 2018 focused on Student Safety and Wellbeing, the 2019 review examined the Quality of Student Placements, Internships and Research Projects, and the review begun in 2020 will investigate the Quality of English Language Pathways and Support.

13. Academic Board Nominees (ABNs) on Academic Selection Committees

All selection committees for the appointment of academic staff are required to have one member who is a nominee of the Academic Board. These nominees are not necessarily members of the Academic Board but are members of the academic community at the University of Sydney. The names and contact details for current Academic Board nominees can be found here.

As part of the University’s successful Science Australia Gender Equity application for a bronze award, members of the Academic Board committed to ABNs completing unconscious bias training. This is available through CareerPath.

14. The University of Sydney (Academic Board) Rule 2017

The University of Sydney (Academic Board) Rule 2017 details the specific functions of the Academic Board. The Rule is in the University Policy Register and can be located on the University website.
15. Contacts

Chair, Academic Board
Associate Professor Tony Masters
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Telephone: 61 2 9351 3268
Email: chair.academicboard@sydney.edu.au

Manager Governance (Senate and Academic Board)
Alyssa White
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Contact details for the Academic Quality Committee, Academic Standards and Policy Committee, Graduate Studies Committee and Undergraduate Studies Committee are available on the websites for those committees:

- Academic Quality Committee
- Academic Standards and Policy Committee
- Graduate Studies Committee
- Undergraduate Studies Committee

16. Useful Websites and Information

1. Academic Board Websites:
   1. Academic Board
   2. Academic Board SharePoint
2. Senate Websites:
   1. Senate
   2. Senate
3. University Executive
4. Policy Register
5. About the University
For further information, please contact Alyssa White
(Manager Governance, Senate and Academic Board)

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