ACADEMIC BOARD CHARTER
Approved by Academic Board: 13 Apr 2018
Revised by Academic Board: 6 Nov 2020
Revised by Academic Board: 16 June 2026

1. Introduction

1.1 The Academic Board leads the University in discussion and decisions to fulfil its academic purposes. Working separately from and collaboratively with the Council and the Executive, the Academic Board protects the values and commitments of the University and guides strategic conversation to ensure the University maintains world-class standards in learning and teaching, scholarship and service, research and research training. The Academic Board brings together members from across the University to ensure that all parts of the University are accountable for and have a voice in the University's academic programs. The *University of Divinity Act 1910* identifies the purposes of the Academic Board as:

a) Oversight of the academic programs and courses of study in the University and other academic affairs of the University;

b) Providing advice to the Council on the academic programs and course of study and other academic affairs of the University.

1.2 The work of the Academic Board is therefore concerned with academic governance and advancing the University as an academic community of scholars and researchers, learners and teachers. This entails responsibility for the formulation, approval, implementation and monitoring of academic policies and procedures, making recommendations to Council on academic programs, quality and risks, and ensuring the University is compliant with the relevant regulations governing Higher Education in Australia. In keeping with these responsibilities, the Academic Board also provides a forum for robust and considered discussion of all aspects of learning, teaching and research, and facilitates the flow of information and conversation within the University.

2. Purpose of the Academic Board Charter

2.1 This Charter is adopted by the Academic Board and is governed by Regulation 2: Academic Board, in light of the University of Divinity Act. The Regulation assigns to the Academic Board certain **duties** [2.5.2 a) to p)] and delegates to the Board certain **responsibilities** [2.6.1 and 2.6.1 to 2.6.8].

2.2 Membership of the Academic Board and the role of the Chair of the Academic Board are also defined in Regulation 2.

2.3 This Charter supports the work of the Board by further defining the Board's operations and procedures, with regard to meetings and responsibilities of members to the Board. The Charter will be reviewed annually.

3. Responsibilities of Members of Academic Board

3.1 Members of the Academic Board have a responsibility to act in the best interests of the University as a whole, in the understanding that the whole is more than the sum of its parts. Members therefore recognize that there is an interdependent relationship between the collective well-being and strategy of the University as a whole and the health and mission of individual Colleges. The Academic Board cannot deliver its responsibilities if it is not informed by the perspectives of Colleges and students.

3.2 Members have a responsibility to contribute the time required to read and understand the papers provided before each meeting, so that clear and disciplined discussion supports good decision-making.

3.3 Members have a responsibility to support and participate in frank discussion with good judgement and courtesy according to good practice and the University's Code of Conduct. Academic Board has a significant capacity to examine issues from the perspective of learning and teaching, research, access and equity, including student perspectives. The Chair will welcome questions from members and encourage members to hear from the range of perspectives.

3.4 Members are expected to attend all meetings. If a member is unable to attend, a formal apology should be offered in through the Secretary. A person who holds an acting appointment in a role (such as when an officer is on leave or an office is vacant) is entitled to attend and participate as a member of the Academic Board.

3.5 Members are expected to be familiar with the values and principles set out in the University's Strategic Plan and to act in accordance with the Board's duties in fostering collaboration, promoting excellence and innovation, upholding integrity, managing risk, and maintaining inclusiveness in policies and practices.

3.6 Members are expected to be familiar with the following documents related to the Board's accountabilities and operations:

a) Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021

b) The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018)

c) TEQSA Guidance Note: Academic Governance

d) Australian Qualifications Framework

e) University of Divinity, Regulation 2: Academic Board, and Regulation 11, Awards, Courses and Units

f) University of Divinity Strategic Plan

g) Key University Policies, including: Academic Staff Policy, Academic Quality Policy, Academic Integrity Policy, Admissions Policy, Governance Policy, Support for Students Policy, Unit Policy, and the Code of Conduct

4. Meeting Procedures

4.1 The Academic Board has six scheduled meetings each year advertised on the University Calendar.

4.2 Special meetings may be called by the Chair of the Academic Board with at least 7 days' notice to members, or earlier by agreement of the Board. Historically, additional meetings have been for such purposes as extended strategic planning, collaboration with other bodies of the University, professional development of members.

5. Preparation of the Agenda

5.1 The University Secretary issues a call for agenda items at least 3 weeks prior to the scheduled meeting date.

5.2 Any member of the Board may propose an item of business at any time to the Chair or the University Secretary for consideration by the Board. All items should be supported by a briefing paper, following the template available from the Secretary.

5.3 Briefing papers are submitted to the Secretary at least 10 working days before the scheduled meeting date to facilitate the planning and preparation of the agenda.

5.4 In accordance with the University's policies on meetings, the agenda and meeting papers are circulated at least 1 week in advance of the meeting.

5.5 All items on the agenda must be presented either for discussion only or with a clearly-worded motion.

5.6 The Chair may exclude from the agenda an item submitted without a motion or clear objective for discussion and has discretion to refuse to put a late item before a meeting.

5.7 Questions of clarification, advice of typographical errors and similar insubstantial matters should be put to the Secretary or the proposer of an item ahead of the meeting.

6. Conduct of Meetings

6.1 The Chair of the Academic Board will chair the meeting. In the absence of the Chair, the Deputy Chair will preside. If both the Chair and Deputy Chair are absent, members will elect a chairperson from among the members present.

6.2 The Chair may exercise right of precedence over other members in speaking during a meeting.

6.3 Items for discussion will be 'starred' on the agenda and the Chair will invite members to star any additional items in the preliminary phase of the meeting.

6.4 Members are to declare any conflict of interest in an agenda item at a meeting prior to consideration of an item, or prior to expressing an opinion on an item dealt with by electronic circulation. Members are encouraged to discuss any potential conflicts of interest with the Chair or the Secretary prior to a meeting.

6.5 The Chair will invite the proposer of an item named on the agenda to introduce the item. The proposer should assume members have read the briefing paper and indicate the matters at hand briefly.

6.6 Where two or more members indicate the intention to speak, the Chair will call upon the members in turn.

6.7 Decisions are generally reached by consensus. The Chair may test the feeling of the meeting to determine if a matter should be put to the vote. If two consecutive speakers have argued either for or against a motion or amendment and no member wishes to raise a question, argue a different view, or to move or foreshadow an amendment, the Chair may put the matter to the vote without further debate.

6.8 From time to time, the Board will deal with confidential matters. These matters will be indicated clearly in the agenda and by the Chair at the meeting. The Secretary is responsible for distributing information appropriately. When an item or paper is marked Confidential, members are not to discuss it with or to disclose its contents to anyone other than a member of the Board.

7. Following the Meeting

7.1 The *Academic Board Bulletin*, a summary highlighting key matters from the agenda is circulated no later than 10 days after each meeting to support the flow of information and discussion in the wider community of the University.

7.2 Members will be asked to vote on the unconfirmed minutes of the previous meeting during the preliminary phase of the subsequent meeting.

7.3 Decisions by the Board on policy, regulations and appointments are published in the *University Gazette*.

8. Accountability

8.1 The Academic Board receives an annual report from each College in the form prescribed by the Board for the purposes of ensuring that Colleges are adhering to the academic policies of the University and to demonstrate that the University is operating within the requirements of the Higher Education Standards Framework.

8.2 The Academic Board receives an annual report from each Discipline Group in the form prescribed by the Board covering activities in learning, teaching and research for the purposes of ensuring that the Discipline Groups are adhering to their purpose as communities of scholars.

8.3 The Academic Board receives an annual report from each of the standing committees of the Board specified in Regulation 2 (Academic Promotions Committee (Reg.2.1), Learning and Teaching Committee (Reg.2.2), Library Committee (Reg.2.3), School of Graduate Research Academic Committee (Reg.2.4), Student Services Committee(Reg.2.7), Leadership Awards Academic Committee (Reg.2.9), Partnership for Professional Practice Academic Committee (Reg.2.10), Research Strategy Committee (Reg.2.11)) for the purpose of ensuring the committees are fulfilling their responsibilities according under their respective Terms of Reference.

8.4 The Academic Board reports to the University Council as required by the Board's Terms of Reference, including the outcomes of Course Reviews and the annual reports of the Colleges, Discipline Groups, and committees of the Board as required in 5.1, 5,2, 5.3 above.

9. Date of Next Review

9.1 This Charter will be reviewed by March 2027, and annually at the February meeting of the Board, together with the annual reports from committees for the previous year.