

Guide to Academic Board

What is the Academic Board?

The University's [Academic Board](#), established by section 15 of the UTS Act, is the principal advisory body to the UTS Council on academic matters. Academic Board provides a central forum for discussion and debate of academic directions of the University. It is concerned with policy development as it relates to UTS academic programs in education, scholarship and research, and community service. The board may refer policy recommendations to Council and discuss matters referred to it by Council.

What does the Academic Board do?

Academic Board sets and oversees the policies and processes necessary to achieve quality and integrity in academic outcomes; consistent with the University's overall strategic directions. This includes determining the accreditation or removal of accreditation of award courses, academic policies, academic administration standards, and the structures and functions of its committees and faculty boards.

Academic Board also provides academic leadership through its advice to Council or the Vice-Chancellor on the academic priorities and profile of the University, and it presents forums on issues and topics of interest to the academic community.

Each year, the board defines key focus areas and develops a work plan to deal with the matters requiring its consideration in a timely and effective way. The Chair and Academic Board committees carry out much of the work of Academic Board.

Academic Board's functions and powers are provided in [Rule G3, Division 3, UTS General Rules](#).

Who chairs the board and what do they do?

The Chair is elected by and from Academic Board members for a two-year term. The Chair serves as the key point of contact between the academic community, Council and the UTS senior executive.

The key responsibilities of the Chair include:

- presiding over meetings impartially, preserving order and ensuring that proceedings are conducted in a proper manner
- engaging with relevant parties to fill vacancies on Academic Board and its committees
- taking executive action on behalf of Academic Board by exercising powers of the board between meetings, as authorised by Council
- reporting to Council about matters considered by the board, and
- ensuring that Academic Board fulfils its primary role of assuring Council of the academic quality and standards of the University.

What is the board's relationship to Council?

Academic Board and the Vice-Chancellor are the principal sources of advice to Council on all academic matters. In essence, the effective governance of the University requires that Council and Academic Board develop ways to enable Council to fulfil its role as the governing authority, while Academic Board directs the academic affairs of the University. This is addressed by the unique relationship between the board and Council, which is detailed in [Rule G3, Division 4](#).

The Chair of Academic Board is an ex officio member of Council and regularly attends Council meetings and provides reports on Academic Board matters.

Further information in relation to the academic governance and management of the University is provided in the [Governance Overview Handbook for Council and its committees](#).

What happens at meetings and what's on the agenda?

The Academic Board has six [meetings](#) a year (usually), including a forum. Meetings are face to face and held at Aerial Function Centre, level 7, Building 10, Broadway.

An Academic Board agenda includes standing items such as reports from the Chair/Deputy Chair, the Vice-Chancellor and chairs of Academic Board committees and boards of studies. Faculty boards report to Academic Board as necessary, and key staff members make presentations on priority issues. At each meeting, members agree on what matters require more detailed debate and examination (these are starred for discussion) to ensure that business before the board is dealt with efficiently and effectively.

The procedures adopted for the conduct of meetings are included in the [standing orders](#).

How does the board communicate with UTS?

After each board meeting, all decisions are communicated via email to the areas of the University responsible for their implementation. In addition, the Chair sends a newsletter to the wider UTS community about the outcomes of the meeting. [Meeting papers](#), [presentations](#) and [minutes](#) are accessible to all UTS staff and to student members of the board.

Why become a member?

Being a member of the board provides a valuable opportunity to discuss topical academic issues, provide input into the reviewing of University policy and procedures, and contribute to the development of University courses. Past members have found the experience rewarding as it helps them develop an understanding of higher education governance and learn about the activities of the University.

How do I become a member?

If you are an academic staff member or student, you may be eligible to stand for election to Academic Board and its committees. [Elections](#) are held on a regular basis to fill a range of membership positions.

What is expected of a member?

All members, elected and ex officio, have a responsibility to act in the best interests of Academic Board and the University. Members are expected to attend all scheduled meetings and prepare for all meetings by reading meeting papers, participating in discussions, and by offering their full attention during proceedings. Members are expected to serve as liaisons between their faculty and the board, and vice versa, communicating important issues and decisions between the two.

Who are the members of Academic Board?

[Academic Board membership](#) includes ex officio members (in addition to the Vice-Chancellor), and elected members (academic staff and students). Student members are elected for a one-year term and staff members are elected for two-year terms.

The elected members of Academic Board comprise at least two members elected by and from the academic staff of each faculty, based on the size of the faculty; one student elected by and from students from each faculty (and an alternate); and one postgraduate research student elected by and from the postgraduate research students (and an alternate).

What are Academic Board committees?

[Academic Board committees](#) are standing committees, faculty boards and boards of studies that provide advice on the University's academic programs. The committees and boards make recommendations to Academic Board in accordance with their terms of reference.