



ADELAIDE
INSTITUTE

of HIGHER EDUCATION

Academic Board

Terms of Reference

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1. Preamble

Pursuant to the constitution of the Adelaide Institute of Higher Education (AIHE) the Board of Directors has chosen to delegate its powers to the Council in relation to the operation, management, and governance of the Higher Education business operated by the Institute on the terms and conditions of the deed of delegation of powers.

An Executive Management Committee and an Academic Board have been established by the Council. The Executive Management Committee oversees the management of the Higher Education business of the Institute. The Academic Board oversees the academic governance of the Higher Education business of the Institute.

The Council has delegated all academic governance responsibilities to the Academic Board. The Academic Board is responsible and accountable to the Council for the discharge of these academic responsibilities.

2. Responsibilities

- 2.1 The Academic Board is the principal academic governing body for all matters affecting the Adelaide Institute of Higher Education's (AIHE) teaching, learning and scholarship. It monitors and maintains the quality of all academic programs and identifies and analyses matters related to AIHE's academic direction and values.
- 2.2 The Academic Board is guaranteed a high degree of independence in decision making, which affirms academic freedom and freedom of inquiry within the Institute. As the voice of the Institute's academic community and highest authority on academic matters in the Institute, the Academic Board will provide a forum for consideration of high-level academic issues within the Institute.
- 2.3 Academic oversight to assure the quality of teaching, learning, scholarship and assessment including¹:
 - 2.3.1 Maintaining oversight of academic integrity and quality assurance, including monitoring of potential risks

¹ This Terms of Reference has been developed in line with the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015 (6.3) on Academic Governance.

- 2.3.2 Setting and initiating action to improve performance against institutional benchmarks for academic quality and outcomes
 - 2.3.3 Monitoring and initiating action to improve performance against institutional benchmarks for academic quality and outcomes
 - 2.3.4 Evaluating the effectiveness of institutional monitoring including the work of the AIHE Academic Board sub committees and Academic Schools including admissions, results and student feedback
 - 2.3.5 Confirming that delegations of academic authority are implemented
 - 2.3.6 Monitoring students' rights and appeals.
 - 2.3.7 Ensuring that students have opportunities to participate in academic governance, including board membership.
- 2.4 Approvals including:
- 2.4.1 Approving and reviewing academic policies and their effectiveness
 - 2.4.2 Approving new course and subject proposals and major changes to existing courses and subjects. This includes approving assessments, learning outcomes and moderation arrangements for each course as specified in the Australian Qualifications Framework
 - 2.4.3 Noting minor changes to courses and subjects
 - 2.4.4 Approving students who are eligible to graduate.
- 2.5 Academic leadership and advice including:
- 2.5.1 Evaluating the quality and effectiveness of educational innovations
 - 2.5.2 Advising the AIHE Council on academic matters pertaining to the Higher Education sector including academic policy and practices, strategic academic directions, areas for improvement in course and subject design and delivery and perceived risks
 - 2.5.3 Fostering excellence in teaching, learning and scholarship.
- 2.6 Reporting including:
- 2.6.1 Reporting to the AIHE Council on the quality of teaching, learning and scholarship.

3. Academic Board Membership

- 3.1 Chair (Independent of the institution and appointed by AIHE Council).
- 3.2 Ex officio (full voting rights)
 - 3.2.1 Head of School.

- 3.3 Appointed (full voting rights)
 - 3.3.1 At least four independent members with higher education qualifications, knowledge and academic governance experience, who are not employees of AIHE, nominated, considered and appointed by the AIHE Council.
 - 3.3.2 One student member of the Institute or recent alumni within one year of graduation, appointed by the AIHE Council, recommended by the Chair.
- 3.4 Invited to attend as appropriate (having participatory, but not voting rights)
 - 3.4.1 Any visitors with the approval of the Chair.
- 3.5 Observers (no rights)
 - 3.5.1 Any person with the approval of the Chair.

4. Tenure

- 4.1 Members appointed by the Council, other than student members, will serve for a period of two years, up to and no more than a maximum of five two-year terms.
- 4.2 Student members will serve for a period of one year, with a maximum of two consecutive terms of office.

5. Appointment and Induction

- 5.1 Academic Board members will be formally notified of their appointment by the AIHE Council through a letter.
- 5.2 New members will be asked to sign a Confidentiality Agreement prior to formally joining the Academic Board and/or its sub-committees.
- 5.3 The Chairperson or their nominee will meet with any new Academic Board members to induct them.
- 5.4 A copy of all relevant governance documents will be provided.

6. Quorum

- 6.1 The quorum will be 50% +1 of the membership provided the majority of members are external to AIHE.
- 6.2 If a quorum is not reached at any specific meeting, the meeting shall go ahead and members can make draft decisions which are to be formally approved through an out of session approval process or at the next meeting, whichever is appropriate at the time.

7. Roles of Academic Board Members

- 7.1 All Academic Board members are required to agree upon appointment:
 - 7.1.1 To act in accordance with this Academic Board Terms of Reference
 - 7.1.2 To act in accordance with the interests of the Institute as a whole
 - 7.1.3 To maintain confidentiality of all matters discussed at Academic Board meetings or in other situations where they are representing the Academic Board.
 - 7.1.4 To declare any conflicts of interest at each meeting and absent themselves from any discussion when appropriate.
- 7.2 The Chair will represent the Academic Board at meetings of the Council.

8. Rights of Audience and Debate

- 8.1 From time to time and as required, the Chair of Academic Board may invite additional AIHE staff members or external stakeholders to present to, or participate in, the Academic Board where their specialist contribution is necessary.

9. Meeting Schedule

- 9.1 The Academic Board will meet at least four times per annum unless there is insufficient business and then the Chair has the discretion to cancel a meeting on that basis.
- 9.2 Additional meetings may be scheduled on a needs basis to enable the Academic Board to discharge its duties, to be scheduled at a time and date suitable to the majority of members.

10. Sub-Committees and Working Parties

- 10.1 The Academic Board has the power to establish sub-committees to assist its work and functions or working parties to consider special issues.
- 10.2 The Council will be advised when the Academic Board establishes sub-committees or working parties.
- 10.3 The Academic Board may co-opt independent persons as deemed appropriate to serve on its sub-committees or working parties.

11. Proceedings of the Meetings

- 11.1 All items for the agenda must be provided to the Secretary of the Academic Board by the nominated deadline, with late or tabled papers requiring approval from the Chair.
- 11.2 Minutes, agendas and supporting documents will be distributed to members of the Academic Board at least five working days prior to the forthcoming meeting.
- 11.3 The Secretary of the Academic Board, will provide advice to members on appropriate scheduling for items to meet business requirements and regulatory compliance requirements.
- 11.4 If there be no Chair at a meeting, or he or she is unable or unwilling to act, or is not present at the commencement time of the meeting, the Academic Board members present may choose a Chair for that meeting.
- 11.5 Matters arising at any meeting of the Academic Board shall be decided by a majority of votes cast, and in the event of equality of votes, the Chair shall have a casting vote in addition to a deliberative vote.
- 11.6 The Academic Board may pass resolutions without a meeting being held if the majority of members who are entitled to vote on the resolution indicate as such by email.

12. Review and Reference

- 12.1 Terms of Reference and the functioning of the Academic Board will be subject to review at least every two years by the Council to ensure that it is operating effectively and fulfilling its functions and reviewed for continuing relevance.
- 12.2 The Academic Board will undertake a self-evaluation of performance on an annual basis. Areas requiring further attention in the following year will be highlighted and recommended to the Board of Directors.

Document control

Version	Date	Key changes
1.0	20/10/2017	Approved by Council
1.1	20/06/2019	Amended per Council Item 4.1 Meeting 2/2019: clause 4.1 to align Academic Board tenure with that of Council and the sector standard; clause 9.1 to empower Chair to cancel a meeting where there is insufficient business
1.1a	17/06/2021	Correction to spelling error in Sec 4.1
1.2	16/09/2021	Inclusion of alumni member in Sec 3.3.2 and regulatory compliance requirements in Sec 11.3
1.3	16/6/2022	Amended header for clause 11 from "Flow of Business General" to "Proceedings of the Meetings" Inserted new clauses 11.4, 11.5 and 11.6
1.4	14/12/2023	Inserted new clause 2.3.7 re student members in AIHE academic governance; updated AB membership under clause 3.3.1