

## **Frequently Asked Questions regarding VU Academic Board and/or the Learning and Teaching Quality Committee Elections**

### **1. What are the Academic Board's functions?**

As the peak academic governance body within the University and accountable to the University in its own right and as a delegate, the Academic Board's functions are to (but not limited to):

- a) Set institutional standards for academic quality and outcomes; monitor the effectiveness of initiatives to improve the quality of teaching and learning, programs and courses and the student experience, domestically, internationally and through third-party arrangements.
- b) Receive reports from delegates and management that assess the University's capacity to demonstrate it meets the academic-related standard of the Higher Education Standards Framework and the Standards for VET Accredited Courses and report to Council.
- c) Make determinations on proposals for the accreditation and reaccreditation of all academic programs of study offered by the University.
- d) Maintain oversight of academic and research integrity, including monitoring breaches, and mechanisms to mitigate potential and emerging academic risks including reporting to the Compliance, Audit and Risk Committee.
- e) Review and provide advice on the development and effectiveness of policies and procedures that guide all academic and educational activities, including approval of policies relating to academic quality.
- f) Monitor and provide advice on policies and procedures that are intended to support participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and ensure sensitivity to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and cultures.
- g) Monitor the quality of scholarship, research, research training and research-related matters and associated policies and foster the development and maintenance of high standards and support for research and scholarship.
- h) Monitor and review the effectiveness of delegations made under policies and procedures relevant to the role and functions of the Academic Board and its standing committees, ensuring delegations are appropriately implemented.
- i) Advise Council and/or the Vice-Chancellor on the academic aspects of the University's strategic plans, priorities and risk management, including evaluating the quality and effectiveness of educational innovations or proposals for innovations.
- j) Monitor and report on the annual and strategic reviews of third-party arrangements, course delivery and agreements involving education programs delivery.
- k) Evaluate annual self-reviews of Academic Board's standing committees to ensure that their referred responsibilities are effectively discharged.

- l) Provide a forum to facilitate communication on issues within the education sector and encourage discussion and dissemination of information within the University regarding good practices in scholarship and research.
- m) Monitor and report on the occurrence of formal complaints about academic matters and allegations of academic misconduct, and actions taken to address underlying causes.
- n) Advise on matters referred to the Academic Board, within the remit of its delegated authorities, by Council, the Vice-Chancellor or other University officers.
- o) Provide a report to Council following each meeting of Academic Board.
- p) Review and report annually to Council on its own performance.

## 2. What are the required competencies and behaviours for Academic Board Members?

All members on the Academic Board and its Committees, will:

- a) participate constructively in governance activities in a lawful, ethical and justifiable manner;
- b) demonstrate respect, concern and courtesy at meetings;
- c) inform oneself about the Committee's role and purpose within the University and associated matters affecting the Committees' business;
- d) participate actively and work cooperatively with other Committee members and University staff for the betterment of the University;
- e) not improperly influence or attempt to influence other Committee members;
- f) where required, respect confidentiality of Committee business;
- g) openly declare any conflicts of interest and, where appropriate, disqualify themselves from discussions and decisions at such time;
- h) share the responsibility for ongoing improvements in the Committees' operations, culture and good standing; and
- i) ensure decisions are consistent with any regulatory and policy requirements.

All members on the Academic Board and its Committees will also:

- a) Attend all meetings, or where attendance is not possible provide apologies and proxies, verbally or in writing, to the Executive Officer prior to the meeting.
- b) Actively contribute to the agenda and papers.
- c) Read the agenda and papers prior to meetings.
- d) Actively contribute to meeting discussions by addressing the item/issue under discussion.
- e) Listen to and value others when they have the floor.
- f) Respect the role of the Chair as leader of the meeting and abide by their rulings in relation to meeting procedure.
- g) Ensure that records related to confidential items are stored and maintained in a way that protects the confidentiality.
- h) Avoid using their position to gain an advantage for themselves or another person.
- i) Always act in the best interests of the University as a whole.

### 3. What are the Research and Research Training Committee functions?

1. Will advise and make recommendations to the Academic Board on:
  - a) issues relating to research and research training activities of the University;
  - b) the design, approval and review of amendments to courses of study that involves research training (research degrees) in collaboration with the Courses Committee;
  - c) the reporting of research training and supervision, in relation to (but not limited to):
    - i. the admissions to candidature, confirmation of candidature, variations in conditions of candidature, the appointment of independent examiners, assessment, examination, student progress and classification of results and annual reports;
    - ii. research integrity, research misconduct including allegations of misconduct and monitoring of potential risks and make recommendations to the Academic Board where appropriate on actions to improve performance; and
    - iii. supervisor registration and standards of supervision.
  - d) The performance of Research Institutes and Centres
  
2. Will monitor and make recommendations to the Academic Board on the following aspects related to:
  - a) the implementation and effectiveness of the University's regulations, policies, procedures and regulations to ensure quality assurance and the quality of research and research training, specifically to ensure appropriate academic governance oversight, academic standards, research and research training standards, promotion of best practice and quality assurance;
  - b) the implementation of strategies and major developments to improve the University's research and research training performance, partnerships, quality and integrity;
  - c) the University's performance research and research training performance against national and international standards, quality indicators and benchmarks; and
  - d) the ethical conduct of research and responsible research practice, specifically on matters relating to biosafety, animal experimentation and human research ethics; and
  - e) the matters arising from the Higher Degrees by Research Annual Course Monitoring.
  
3. To provide oversight of the University's course and assessment in relation to the following external regulations and standards:
  - HESF domain 4.1 Research of the [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#);
  - HESF domain 4.2 Research Training of the [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#);
  - HESF domains 5.1 Course Approval and Accreditation, 5.2 Academic and Research Integrity and 5.3 Monitoring, review and Assessment of the [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#);
  - HESF domain 6.3 Academic Governance of the [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#);
  - Category B1.3 Category of Australian University of the [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#)

4. Will respond to any matters referred to it by the Academic Board.

### 3. How often does the Academic Board meet?

The Academic Board traditionally meets on the first Wednesday in the Month (9.00am – 12.00pm) with the exception of January and July.

### 4. How often does the Research and Research Training Committee meet?

The Research and Research Training Committee traditionally meets on the third Wednesday in the Month (10.00am – 12.00 midday) with the exception of January, April, July, September and December.

### 5. What support and training will be provided to elected Academic Board and/or Research and Research Training Committee members?

Elected members have an induction program available via the Academic Board and Committees SharePoint site. In addition there is a mentor/buddy program where the elected members have the opportunity to learn alongside another member of the Academic Board or the Research and Research Training Committee.

### 6. Are the elected positions new positions?

Yes, these positions have changed since the previous elections to align with the new College structure at Victoria University.

### 7. Who is eligible to nominate for a position on the Academic Board and/or the Research and Research Training Committee?

As stated in the Election Regulations 2016, a person is entitled to be nominated for election as a staff member of the Academic Board if the person:

- is validly or entitled to be validly on the voters' roll on the date on which nominations close; and
- is a member of staff of the University who is currently employed at a time fraction of 0.5 full time equivalent and is based at a Victorian Campus.

### 8. How do staff or students nominate for a position on the Academic Board and/or the Research and Research Training Committee?

Candidates must have two VU staff members from the same category nominate them, as outlined in the nomination form.

Nomination forms will be made available on the VU Governance website at <https://www.vu.edu.au/about-vu/administration-governance/governance> upon the opening of the nominations period on Monday 28 August 2023.

Incomplete nominations will be deemed invalid. Candidates will receive an email advising that their nominations have been received, and, time permitting, candidates will be advised whether they

have completed the Nominations form as required.

Candidates are encouraged to lodge their nominations as soon as possible to enable sufficient time to resubmit in the event the nomination is invalid.

### 9. When do nominations open and close?

The nominations open at 9.00am AEST on Monday 28 August 2023 and close at 4.00pm AEST on Friday 8 September 2023.

**Nominations received after the deadline will not be accepted.**

### 10. When will an election be called?

An election to each category will be called if the number of nominations exceeds the number of vacancies for the relevant category. If an election is required it will commence at 9.00am AEST on Monday 2 October 2023 and close at 4.00pm AEST on Friday 13 October 2023.

### 11. Who is eligible to vote in the election?

Until nominations close, we will not be able to know whether some, if any, staff will be invited to vote. All eligible staff will receive an electronic voting ballot with instructions on how to vote if required.

### 12. What to do if I do not receive an invitation to vote, but believe I am eligible to vote?

If you believe that you should be on an electoral roll for one of the election categories, and you have not received an email from Big Pulse, please contact the People and Culture Employee Experience team by lodging a Service Request in VU People First who can clarify your eligibility on the electoral roll.

### 13. How do I insert a digital signature on the Nomination Form?

Please refer to the [‘Creating a New Digital Signature’](#) guide for step-by-step instructions.

### 14. Where do I go for further information or if I have questions?

You should refer to the Governance website at <https://www.vu.edu.au/about-vu/administration-governance/governance>, alternatively you can email [gov.sec@vu.edu.au](mailto:gov.sec@vu.edu.au).

## Relevant Legislation and Important Documents

[VU Act 2010](#)

[Governance, Academic and Student Affairs Statute 2013](#)

[Academic Board Regulations 2021](#)

[Academic Board Terms of Reference](#)

[Research and Research Training Committee Terms of Reference](#)

[Elections Regulations 2016](#)