

GENERAL BOARD: STANDING ORDERS

1. Responsibilities of the General Board

The General Board have adopted these Standing Orders to regulate their business and to promote its efficient and proper consideration. In doing so, members of the General Board accept a general responsibility to comply with the specific provisions of the Standing Orders and to secure the conduct of the business as expeditiously as is consistent with its proper consideration.

The responsibilities and powers of the Board are set out in Statute A, V, and in those Ordinances that refer to the Board. In any apparent conflict between these Standing Orders and the provisions of the Statutes and Ordinances, the latter shall prevail.

2. Membership

The categories of membership of the Board and the tenure of membership are set out in Statute V, Special Ordinance A, vi, and in Ordinance Chapter I, as are the arrangements in the event that the Vice-Chancellor, as Chair of the General Board, is unable to attend a particular meeting.

Any member unable to attend a particular meeting should inform the Secretary in advance of the meeting. Members unable to attend for these items may, if they wish, inform the Secretary of their views of particular items of business in advance: the Secretary shall report those views at the meeting. Appointment, attendance and retirement of members of the Board are governed by the General Regulations for Boards, Syndicates, etc. in Statutes and Ordinances. In particular regulation 7, as follows:

If a member of such a Board, Syndicate, or other body is absent from three successive meetings of which due notice has been given, that member's seat shall become vacant at the end of the third of such meetings, unless at that or an earlier meeting the cause of the absence has been declared sufficient by the body of which the person concerned is a member.

3. Secretary

In accordance with Statute A, V the Academic Secretary has been designated by the Council as Secretary of the General Board. The Secretary shall advise the Chair on the business to be included on the agenda for each meeting, shall circulate proper notice of meetings and relevant papers usually not later than 6 days before the date of the meeting, and shall advise the Chair and the Board on the proper exercise of their responsibilities within the framework of Statutes and Ordinances, agreed University policy and of relevant decisions previously taken by the Board. The Secretary shall keep the Minutes of each meeting unless the General Board shall direct otherwise for business in which the Secretary has declared a personal interest or for which the Secretary and others in attendance have been asked to leave.

4. Declarations of interest

The Chair, the other members and the Secretary of the Board are required to declare at the time of the General Board's consideration of any item any personal or other material interest which they have in the item. Any member who is in any doubt as to whether to declare any such interest should seek the advice of the Secretary on the question in advance of the meeting at which the item will be discussed. Any member who has declared such an interest is required to consider whether by withdrawing for the item he or she will facilitate the proper conduct of the business and to seek the advice of the Chair on the question. If the Chair advises that the member should withdraw, the member shall withdraw for the duration of the discussion of that item or for so long as otherwise directed by the Chair. Nothing in this Standing Order shall prevent the Chair from enquiring whether any members consider that they have a personal or other material interest in any item under consideration and in that regard the Chair may assert that in his view a member has such an interest and should withdraw. The Chair's decision in this regard shall be final.

5. Circulation of papers

A provisional Agenda, together with papers available at the time, shall usually be circulated 6 days prior to the meeting. When necessary, a final Agenda, together with any supplementary papers, shall be circulated two days prior to the meeting at the latest. Members or others who wish items to be placed on the Agenda shall inform the Secretary, normally no later than 2 weeks prior to the meeting of the Board. The Chair, in consultation with the Secretary, shall determine the wider circulation of papers. No papers shall be tabled at a meeting unless the Chair directs otherwise.

6. The Board's Agenda

It shall be the responsibility of the Chair to determine the agenda for each meeting of the Board, acting on the advice of the Secretary, and to ensure that the business is transacted efficiently, expeditiously and properly in accordance with the requirements of the Statutes and Ordinances and as appropriate to the nature of the business.

The Agenda shall be divided into the following sections:

Unreserved Business	A – Preliminary and Legislative
	B – Principal Business
	C – Other substantive business

Reserved Business includes the categories set out in Special Ordinance A,viii as below:

'(i) the employment or promotion, or any matter relating to the employment or promotion, of individuals by the University;
(ii) the admission and academic assessment of individuals;
(iii) such other matters as may be specified by Statute or Ordinance in respect of any particular body or class of bodies; and
(iv) any other matter at the discretion of the Chair.'

In the latter instance, a reason will be given to the General Board for the Chair's decision.

Save as determined under the provisions of Standing Order 4, all categories of members shall participate in the consideration of unreserved business. Members in Class (d) (student members) shall withdraw for reserved business.

The Chair shall invite an appropriate member of the Board or one of those in attendance to introduce items of business as appropriate.

Business which the Chair deems straightforward or which does not require a decision by the Board may be dealt with by means of circulars issued between meetings. Unless any member requests, via the Secretary and within 7 days of the date of issue of the circular, that a matter be referred to a meeting of the Board or to a Committee, the decisions recommended in the circular are approved.

7. Observers and advisers

The following may also be in attendance: the Pro-Vice-Chancellors, the Registry, the Draftsman and others as agreed by the Chair on the advice of the Secretary.

The Board, normally acting through the Chair, may invite any person to attend any meeting to observe the business or to advise the Board on a specific item. An observer shall have no right to speak, except at the request of the Chair, or to vote. An adviser shall have the right to speak subject to the Chair's normal direction but shall have no right to vote.

8. Quorum

In accordance with Statute A, V no business shall be transacted by the Board unless at least five members are present. In the absence of a quorum the business outstanding shall be carried forward to the next meeting of the Board.

9. Collectivity and responsibilities and the signing of Reports

The Chair is responsible for the conduct of meetings and for ensuring that the business is considered efficiently, expeditiously and properly. Members who speak should address the Chair and accept his/her direction, keeping silence when the Chair speaks. Members should at all times behave towards the Chair and each other with proper respect and consideration. Members are not limited in the number of times on which they may speak on any item but are expected to speak only as often as they judge necessary for the proper conduct of the business and for the proper fulfilment of the responsibilities of the Board. If the Chair considers that any member is unreasonably impeding the efficient, expeditious and proper running of a meeting of the Board, the Chair may require that member to withdraw from the meeting. Should the member continue to refuse to observe the authority of the Chair in this matter it shall be open to the Chair and the other members in their absolute discretion to determine how the consideration of that item and/or the meeting as a whole shall proceed.

In reaching decisions, members, under the direction of the Chair, shall endeavour so far as possible to achieve consensus. In any vote each member present shall have a single vote and voting shall be decided by a simple majority of the members

present and voting except when specific majorities are required by Statute or Ordinance.

10. Protocol on signing and non-signature of Reports

The Chair is responsible for seeking agreement for signing Reports. All Members are expected to sign a Report (and may do so electronically) unless they state their dissent. A note of dissent from Member(s) advising on reasons for not signing a Report is required and may be published together with the Report.

In their consideration of business, the Board shall take due heed of their statement of Intention (p.117 *Statutes and Ordinances*) which reads as follows:

In considering any proposal for enacting or amending an Ordinance in pursuance of their powers under Statute C, I, 2, the General Board will consult other University bodies as appropriate. If in the course of such consultation the Board become aware that the matter is likely to prove controversial, they will also consult the Regent House by initiating a Grace enabling the Regent House to express an opinion on the proposed change. The Board will give consideration to remarks made at any Discussion of such matters and to the outcome of any vote on them.

11. Meetings of the Board

The Board shall meet at least twice termly and at times agreed by them in the preceding year, in accordance with Statute A, and at such other times as may be determined necessary by the Chair. If, in the Chair's opinion, there is insufficient business to justify an ordinary meeting, that meeting may be cancelled by the Chair with 7 days' notice.

12. Adjournment

Should it prove impossible to complete the scheduled business of a meeting within the time allotted the meeting shall normally be adjourned and outstanding business carried forward to a future meeting.

13. Minutes of the Board

The Minutes of the Board shall be drafted by the Secretary for formal approval at the following meeting. In advance of that meeting, members of the Board will be asked to indicate whether they approve the version of the Minutes (which shall be the unconfirmed Minutes, less any confidential minutes and the Reserved Business Minutes) for the website.

14. Responsibility for actions arising from the Board

The Secretary shall be responsible for ensuring that the relevant bodies or individuals are informed of necessary actions arising from the decisions taken at meetings of the Board.

15. Confidentiality

Unless decided otherwise by the Board in relation to a specific item the business and papers shall be confidential to the members, the officers and authorised observers and advisers. Members may however make discreet use of their knowledge of Board business. Access to the Minutes and papers of the Board shall require the permission of the Secretary except for members or former members in relation to the period of their membership and, under the provisions of Statute A, VII, for members of the Board of Scrutiny.

16. The Board's Committees

Special Ordinance A viii provides that, unless otherwise expressly provided by the Statutes, a body such as the Board may appoint committees for any such general or special business as in the opinion of the body may be better regulated or managed by means of a committee, and may delegate to any committee so appointed, or to any University officer, with or without restrictions or conditions, the exercise of any functions proper to the body, provided (*inter alia*) that:

- i. such delegation shall not relieve the Board of responsibility for the matter delegated;
- ii. members of the Board shall have the right of access to all papers considered by such committees or persons;
- iii. such delegation may be withdrawn (either generally or in respect of a specific matter) at any time.

17. Members serving on other bodies

Members of the Board who are appointed by the Board as their representatives on other bodies shall, at meetings of those bodies, report the Board's view on any item discussed, whether or not the member(s) concerned agree with that view. Similarly, as and when business from those bodies is considered by the Board, members shall report the view of the body concerned, whether or not the member(s) agree with that view.

18. Interpretation

The interpretation of these Standing Orders shall be the responsibility of the Chair, whose decision shall be final. Review of these Standing Orders shall be undertaken annually.

19. Suspension

Subject to the provisions of the Statutes and Ordinances, these standing orders may be suspended by motion duly proposed and seconded and approved by a majority of two-thirds of the members present.

End.

October 2023