University Governance

ACADEMIC BOARD HANDBOOK

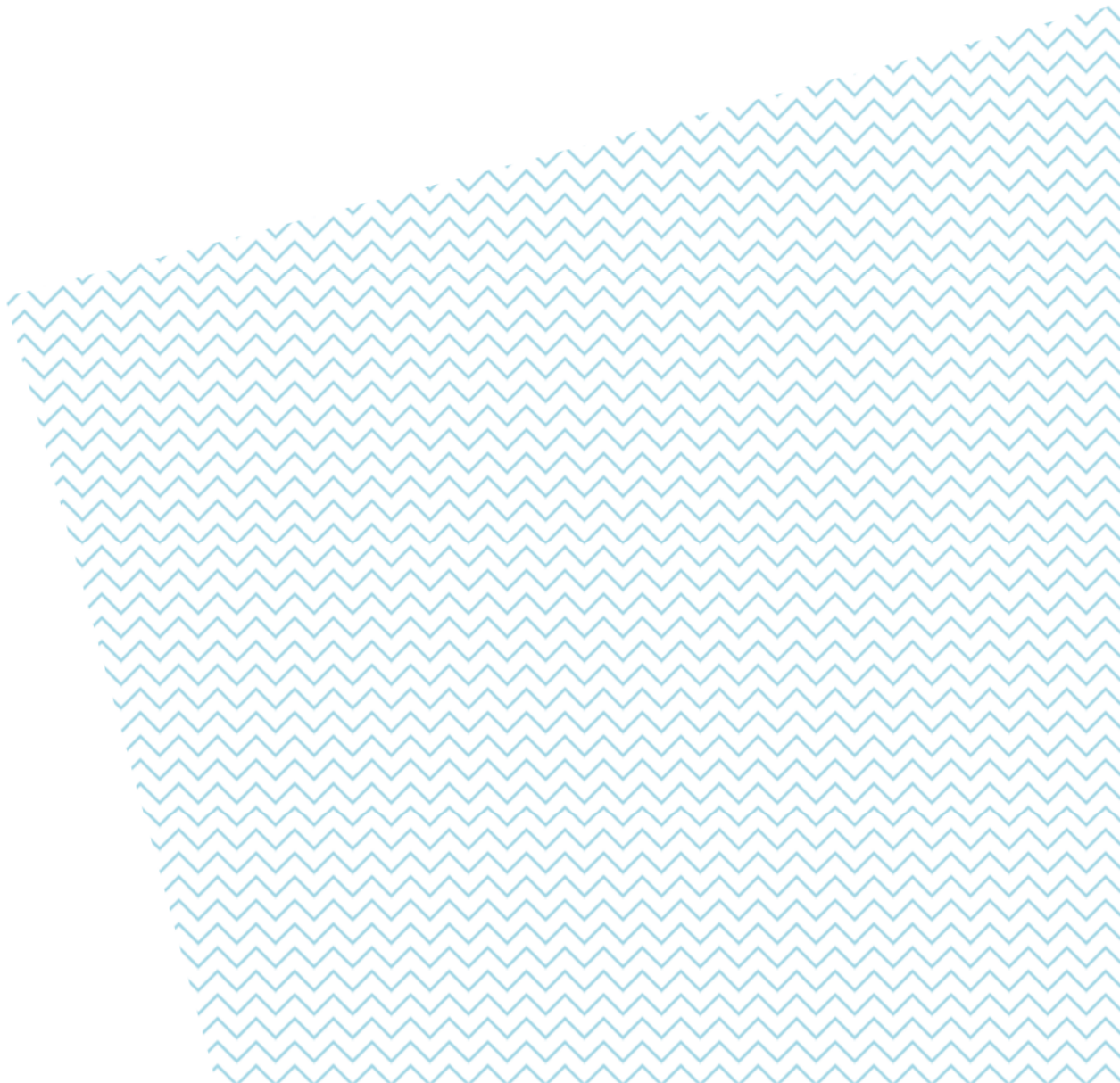2024

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Acknowledgement of Country

The University of Melbourne acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the unceded land on which we work, learn and live: the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong peoples (Burnley, Fishermans Bend, Parkville, Southbank and Werribee campuses), the Yorta Yorta Nation (Dookie and Shepparton campuses), and the Dja Dja Wurrung people (Creswick campus).

The University also acknowledges and is grateful to the Traditional Owners, Elders and Knowledge Holders of all Indigenous nations and clans who have been instrumental in our reconciliation journey.

We recognise the unique place held by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the original owners and custodians of the lands and waterways across the Australian continent, with histories of continuous connection dating back more than 60,000 years. We also acknowledge their enduring cultural practices of caring for Country.

We pay respect to Elders past, present and future, and acknowledge the importance of Indigenous knowledge in the Academy. As a community of researchers, teachers, professional staff and students we are privileged to work and learn every day with Indigenous colleagues and partners.

The Academic Board recognises the contribution of Indigenous knowledges in the Academy.

Welcome from the President of the Academic Board

Dear Colleagues,

The Academic Board is established by the governing body of the University, the Council, in accordance with the University of Melbourne Act 2009. It reports to Council and is the body responsible for oversight of quality in teaching, learning and research. Consisting of the professoriate, senior leadership, student association representatives and elected professional staff representatives, and members of its committees, the Board ensures that the University maintains high standards in teaching, learning and research. It does this through its committees and its meetings. This handbook aims to provide members with information about the Board, its purpose and operations, and where it fits into University governance.

The quality of the oversight provided by the Board is, of course, dependent on the contribution of its members. Members are expected to critically scrutinise reports received by asking questions and providing feedback. All members are invited to attend meetings and participate. If you have not yet attended, I would like to encourage you to come along.

Professor Karen Farquharson

President, Academic Board 2023-2024 term

1. Foreword

The Academic Board is an integral part of the governance structure at the University of Melbourne. This handbook has been prepared so that existing and new members of the Board are clear about what the Board does, why it is important, and how to become involved in its activities.

Suggestions about any aspects of the Board's work may be made to the Academic Board officers or to the Chairs of the committees of the Board; the email addresses of these individuals are available in Section 7 *Contact Information*. We welcome any opportunity to share information or address concerns with Board members and the wider University community.

2. University Regulatory Framework

The University of Melbourne governs its operations through a hierarchy of instruments, referred to as the Regulatory Framework.

Figure 1 - University Regulatory Framework
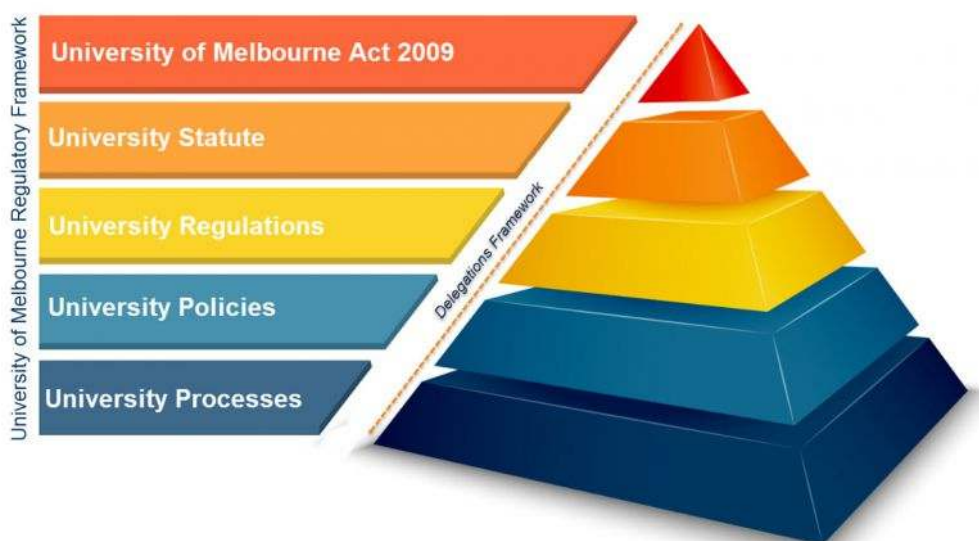
Information on the Council Regulation, Academic Board Regulation and Vice-Chancellor Regulation can be found at: https://about.unimelb.edu.au/strategy/governance/regulatory-framework/legislative-framework

2.1. University of Melbourne Act 2009 (Vic)

The University of Melbourne Act 2009 (Vic) establishes the University, its governing body (University Council) and its core functions. The Act empowers the University to enact subordinate legislation (statutes and regulations) and act by way of resolution of its governing body or by the decision of its authorised officers.

The Act sets out the objects of the University, which frame the University's purpose and mission and inform the work of the Academic Board, as follows:

a) *to provide and maintain a teaching and learning environment of excellent quality offering higher education at an international standard;*

b) *to provide vocational education and training, further education and other forms of education determined by the University to support and complement the provision of higher education by the University;*

c) *to undertake scholarship, pure and applied research, invention, innovation, education and consultancy of international standing and to apply those matters to the advancement of knowledge and to the benefit of the wellbeing of the Victorian, Australian and international communities;*

d) to equip graduates of the University to excel in their chosen careers and to contribute to the life of the community;

e) to serve the Victorian, Australian and international communities and the public interest by—

    i) enriching cultural and community life;

    ii) elevating public awareness of educational, scientific and artistic developments;

    iii) promoting critical and free enquiry, informed intellectual discourse and public debate within the University and in the wider society;

f) to use its expertise and resources to involve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Australia in its teaching, learning, research and advancement of knowledge activities and thereby contribute to—

    i) realising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander aspirations; and

    ii) the safeguarding of the ancient and rich Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage;

g) to provide programs and services in a way that reflects principles of equity and social justice;

h) to confer degrees and grant other awards;

i) to utilise or exploit its expertise and resources, whether commercially or otherwise.

2.2. University Statute

Statutes are the primary legislative instrument of the University. University Statutes are enacted when:

- The Act expressly requires it;

- The University seeks to regulate conduct other than the conduct of an employee, client or other person who has contracted with it;

- The Act has given a power to act by legislation, and the power is not one generally available to a body corporate (that is, the University has been granted a power to act as a body politic in areas not necessarily available to it as a body corporate, so activities in these areas must be governed by University legislation);

- Balancing the rights of different classes of members of the University.

Statutes require ministerial consideration and, as such, are reserved for high-level principles. Currently, the University of Melbourne Statute is the only statute in effect. Matters of detail, subject to more frequent change, are enshrined in University regulations, policies, and procedures.

2.3. Regulations

University Regulations are subordinate legislative instruments under the Act, made under a parent statute to regulate interpretation and implementation of the statute. The regulations allow Council to direct and enable the tripartite relationship required for University operations.

The **Council Regulation** provides rules for areas of Council operations including Council elections; meetings; establishment of faculties and other bodies; and awards including honorary doctorates.

The **Academic Board** Regulation provides rules for the University for membership, meetings and procedures of the Academic Board; the accreditation of courses and awarding degrees and other awards; selection, admission and assessment requirements; academic progress and fitness to practice; matters relating to academic integrity; and student appeals arising from grievances, academic misconduct, general misconduct, academic progress, fitness to practice and selection.

The **Vice-Chancellor Regulation** provides for the general powers, functions and duties of the Vice-Chancellor as the key leader, manager and administrator of University operations. The Regulations also provide for specific powers, functions and duties of the Vice-Chancellor and, in some circumstances, the Deans. The specific areas include the establishment of University departments; conduct rules for researchers and students; and setting fees and penalties.

University Regulations are available via the following link:
https://about.unimelb.edu.au/strategy/governance/regulatory-framework/legislative-framework

2.4. Policy Framework

The Act, statutes and regulations are complemented by policies and processes that either provide more detailed requirements for practice than specified in the relevant legislation or cover new areas of operation not covered in the formal legislation. The Policy Framework is approved by Council and sets requirements for the establishment of University policy. Policy provides the principles for the implementation of governance and management requirements into University operations. These principles are informed by University legislation, strategy and Australian law.

Each policy has a Policy Steward, who advises the University community on the policy, and a Policy Approver. Policies are reviewed cyclically in accordance with the Policy Framework or more frequently if required by a precipitating event (e.g. new legislative requirements).

Faculty, School or Departmental operating practices/guidelines must not be inconsistent with any document contained within the regulatory framework including policies.

2.5. Delegations Framework

Although a considerable amount of work is undertaken by the committees of the Academic Board, the authority to approve many course, program and subject changes has been delegated by Council to Deans on the recommendation of the Academic Board. The Academic Delegations Schedule outlines who is authorised to make course and subject changes. By default, the authority relating to any matter not listed in the schedule rests with the Board.

3. External Regulatory Framework

The Academic Board and its standing committees are obligated to align with the following regulatory frameworks:

3.1. Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA)

TEQSA is Australia's independent national quality assurance and regulatory agency for higher education. TEQSA's purpose is to protect student interests and the reputation of Australia's higher education sector through a proportionate, risk-reflective approach to quality assurance that supports diversity, innovation and excellence.

TEQSA is responsible for regulating and assuring the quality of all providers of higher education in Australia. This includes the application of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and Educational Services for Overseas Students National Code (ESOS).

TEQSA has substantial powers including setting conditions on registration, 'cease and desist' powers, and the ability to deregister a provider. TEQSA's regulatory decisions are recorded on the National Register.

3.2. Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards)

The Higher Education Standards Framework is a set of standards, regulated by TEQSA, that all providers must meet to enter and remain within Australia's higher education system. The Framework is organised around the following seven 'domains' aligned to the student lifecycle from prospective students through to the conferral of an award.

> HESF Domain 1: Student participation and attainment
> HESF Domain 2: Learning environment
> HESF Domain 3: Teaching
> HESF Domain 4: Research and research training
> HESF Domain 5: Institutional quality assurance
> HESF Domain 6: Governance and accountability
> HESF Domain 7: Representation, information and information management

Under the TEQSA Act, it is an obligation of registration that all providers meet and continue to meet the Threshold Standards. Relevant to the Board's policy making powers, where the standards specify the existence of a policy and/or

procedure, it is implied that such a policy or procedure should be fit for its intended purpose and effective in its implementation.

Further information on the Higher Education Standards Framework and TEQSA is available at Contextual overview of the HES Framework 2021 | Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (teqsa.gov.au)

3.3. Australian Qualifications Framework

The Australian Qualifications Framework 2013 is the national policy for regulated qualifications In Australian education and training. The framework sets out the qualification levels and nomenclature and defines their characteristics including broad learning outcomes, volume, approaches. The AQF is supported by policies and explanatory guides governing qualification types and issuance, pathways, and credit.

3.4. Education Services for Overseas Act 2000 (ESOS) and Code of Practice

The ESOS Act governs delivery of education to onshore international students, including English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS). The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (National Code 2018) contains eleven detailed standards on provision of educational services to protect the interests of overseas students:

Standard 1: Marketing information and practices
Standard 2: Recruitment of an overseas student
Standard 3: Formalisation of enrolment and written agreements
Standard 4: Education Agents
Standard 5: Younger overseas students
Standard 6: Overseas student support services
Standard 7: Overseas student transfers
Standard 8: Overseas student visa requirements
Standard 9: Deferring, suspending or cancelling the overseas student's enrolment
Standard 10: Complaints and appeals
Standard 11: Additional requirements

3.5. Higher Education Support Act 2003 (HESA)

The Higher Education Support Act (HESA) 2023 governs the majority of federal higher education funding via a series of funding, loan and grant schemes. The HESA Act informs University strategy and policy, in particular those related to tuition fees, student support arrangements, and measures to support access and participation from underrepresented cohorts.

4. University Governance Framework and Bodies

The University of Melbourne governance structure is established through by the Council in accordance with the governance requirements set out in the University of Melbourne Act 2009 (Vic). The University's governance framework is comprised of three elements:

- The corporate governance framework
- The academic governance framework
- The University's management structure

The University's governance framework reflects a tripartite governance model comprised of the Council, the Academic Board and the Executive Management led by the Vice Chancellor. Council is the governing body of the University, responsible for the general direction and superintendence of the University

Figure 2 University Governance Framework
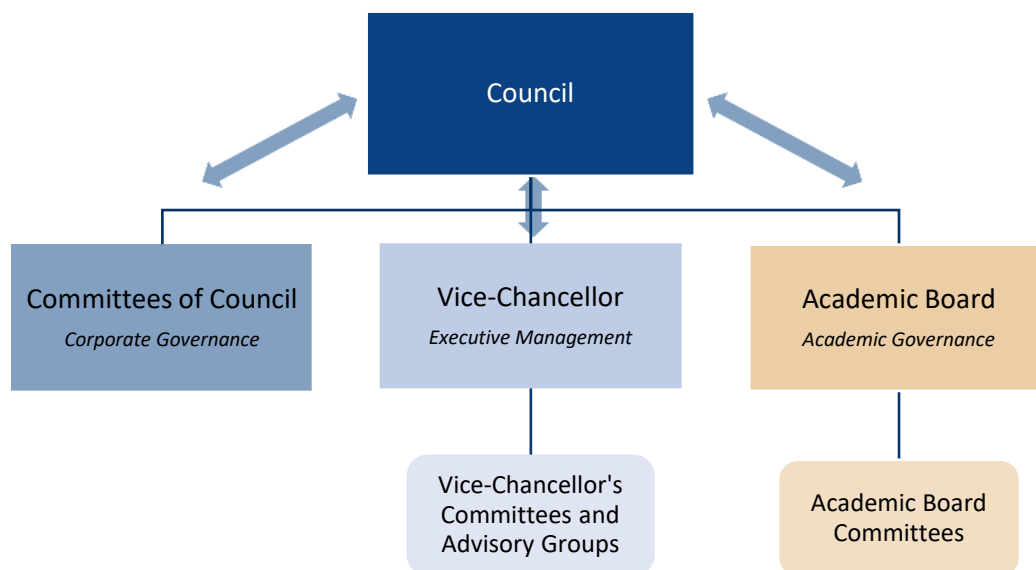
4.1. University Council

The University of Melbourne Act sets out the constitution and governance of the University, including the responsibilities, role and function and membership of the University Council. Council is the University's governing body, empowered with the authority to make statutes and regulations while the Academic Board is the chief academic body.

The Act sets out the primary responsibilities of Council, which include:

- appointing and monitoring the performance of the Vice-Chancellor as chief executive officer of the University;
- approving the mission and strategic direction of the University and its annual budget and business plan;
- overseeing and reviewing the management of the University and its performance;
- establishing policy and procedural principles for the operation of the University consistent with legal requirements and community expectations; approving and monitoring systems of control and accountability of the University, including those required to maintain a general overview of any entity over which the University has control within the meaning of section 3 of the Audit Act 1994;
- overseeing and monitoring the assessment and management of risk across the University, including university commercial activities;
- overseeing and monitoring the academic activities of the University;
- approving any significant university commercial activities.

Council has established six committees to support the effective governance of the University:

- Audit and Risk Committee (ARC);
  - o   Critical Incident Response Committee (ad-hoc);
- Finance Committee;
- Investment Management Committee, a sub-committee of Finance Committee;
- Gift Committee;
- Governance and Nominations Committee; and
- Human Resources and Remuneration Committee.

Each of the above committees or sub-committees is directed by its respective terms of reference and reports regularly to Council on matters within each committee's respective remit.

4.2. Academic Board

Section 20(a) of the *University of Melbourne Act 2009* states that Council 'must establish an academic board or its equivalent'. Academic Board is thus established by Council via the <u>University of Melbourne Statute</u> *(section 10),* as enabled by the University of Melbourne Act 2009 and the Acts that have preceded it since 1853.

Section 10 of the University of Melbourne Statute establishes and determines the powers and functions of the Board:

1) *The Academic Board is established.*
2) *Council must, in consultation with the Board, set in regulations the circumstances and manner for Board membership and appointment of the Board President.*
3) *The Academic Board is responsible to Council for quality assurance in academic activities including maintenance of high standards in teaching, learning and research.*
4) *The powers and functions of the Board are:*
   a) *setting policy and monitoring academic standards for course and subject entry, assessment and completion requirements;*
   b) *approving courses and subjects for delivery that meet the standards;*
   c) *setting policy and monitoring selection requirements for prizes, scholarships and other forms of academic recognition;*
   d) *requesting and receiving from academic units recommendations, advice and reports related to Academic Board functions;*
   e) *providing recommendations, advice and reports on its responsibilities and functions to Council;*
   f) *contributing to University reviews of academic units in relation to academic matters;*
   g) *acting as the University's final appeal body for student grievances and any other matters in accordance with the statutes or regulations; and*
   h) *developing, approving and reviewing policies and procedures related to Board functions in accordance with statutes and regulations.*
5) *In addition to (4), the Board has the power to:*
   a) *establish committees of the Board to advise it on matters related to its functions; and*
   b) *develop for Council approval a schedule of delegations of the Board's powers and functions to committees or individuals.*
6) *The Board must contribute to the achievement of:*
   a) *strategic plans approved by Council; and*
   b) *the objects of the University.*
7) *The Board must provide Council with both timely and systematic reports regarding its contribution in (4).*

4.3. Faculty Governance

Section 13(2) of the <u>Council Regulation</u> requires Council to monitor the structure and governance of Faculties and graduate schools established as Faculties. Faculties report to Council, via the Governance and Nominations Committee, every three years to assure the committee and Council that appropriate governance arrangements are in place.

4.4. University Executive

<u>University Executive</u> is the University's principal management committee and includes as members the Chancellery portfolio leaders, the President of Academic Board and Deans of faculties. The Committee is responsible for overseeing matters relating to University strategy, Advancing Melbourne 2030, preparation of the annual University budget and the University's major projects. In addition, University Executive receives regular reporting to maintain oversight of operations and respond to and monitor emerging risks. Three subcommittees report to University Executive:

- Diversity and Inclusion Sub-Committee (D&I Committee);
- Resources and Operations Sub-Committee (ROSC); and
- Risk Management and Compliance Sub-Committee (RMCSC).

5. The History of the Academic Board[1]

The Professorial Board 1854

The Professorial Board, as its name suggests, consisted of all the professors, sitting as a deliberative and executive body of the University. The Professorial Board made recommendations to Council on matters of academic policy, and concerned itself with the content, conduct of lectures, examinations and the day-to-day management of students. Its responsibility for both teaching and examining gave considerable scope to individual professors to shape the future development of the University and, while relations with Council could be fraught and a source of considerable debate and dissension, collectively the professors' views carried considerable weight with Council. The Board also concerned itself with the general organisation of the University and the general conduct of the various faculties as they were established. In the records of the Professorial Board and its committees can be found the general outline of the academic history and development of the University and of the relationship between the University and its students. The correspondence with this body and its reports provide valuable insight into the processes by which the University responded to new developments in scholarship, community demands and staff and student needs.

Academic Board 1978

In 1978 the name was changed to Academic Board to take account of changes in the statute to allow members of the academic staff other than professors to become Heads of Department.

A more detailed history and commentary entitled '*The Academic (or Professorial) Board in the past compared to the present*' written by Professor Ruth Fincher, President of Academic Board 2013 and 2014 is provided in Appendix 1.

6. The Role and Structure of the Academic Board

6.1. The Role of the Board

Within the overarching governance framework, the Academic Board is responsible to Council for quality assurance in academic activities including maintenance of high standards in teaching, learning and research. The Board provides Council with timely and systematic reports regarding its contribution under the duties and functions delegated to it by Council in the Statute.

Through its powers set out in the Statute and regulations, the Board's remit involves core areas of governance activity related to:

- Course accreditation, review and approval
- Academic policy and delegations
- Academic integrity, research integrity and ethics
- Academic and research quality & standards
- Institutional monitoring, review and improvement of academic activities
- Student outcomes and experience
- Compliance with associated external legislation (HESF, HESA, ESOS, TEQSA) and UoM legislation

In addition to the oversight and monitoring of academic quality and outcomes, the Board is responsible for formulating and reviewing policies, rules and guidelines in relation to academic matters. The Board further plays an active role in assuring the quality of teaching, scholarship and research in the University. To be confident that the policy structures properly sustain academic quality and assurance and are appropriate to the University's needs, the Board monitors their implementation and effectiveness. Much of this monitoring takes place through reviews, conducted through the Board's various committees. The review process is formative and collegial and aims to provide constructive feedback on the

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[1]Information on the history of the Board has been drawn from *Key 7: The Professorial Board 1854/Academic Board 1978 : Archives and Special Collections (unimelb.edu.au)*

quality of the University's educational provision. The Board may request investigations and reports from any of its sub-committees on any matter of academic policy.

The Board acts as the final appeal body for students on matters relating to decisions made by University bodies or individual officers.

6.2. The Membership of the Board

Under The Academic Board Regulation the members of the Academic Board are:

- the Chancellor;
- the Vice-Chancellor;
- the deputy vice-chancellors (including any deputy vice-chancellor appointed as Provost);
- the pro vice-chancellors;
- the University Librarian;
- the Academic Registrar;
- the University Secretary;
- the professors;
- the full-time salaried professorial fellows;
- deans of faculties;
- heads of academic departments;
- heads of schools (including graduate schools);
- other academic staff who are members of Academic Board committees;
- the President of University of Melbourne Student Union, and one nominee of the President of University of Melbourne Student Union who must be an education officer, of the University of Melbourne Student Union;
- the President of the Graduate Student Association and one nominee of the President of the Graduate Student Association;
- the President of the University of Melbourne Student Union (International) or their nominee
- two members elected by and from the professional staff who will hold office for a term of two years; and
- any other persons whom the Board determines by resolution.

As provided for under the Regulation, all salaried professors are members of the Academic Board. Involvement in the Academic Board is a way for professors to contribute actively the life of the University through policy formation and review, and engage in critical scrutiny, constructive challenge and robust debate in relation to academic matters.

6.3. Standing Committees of the Academic Board

The Board has the power to establish committees of the Board to advise it on matters related to its functions. The four committees of the Academic Board are illustrated in figure 3 below, with their terms of reference, and membership available on the Academic Board website.

Figure 3 Academic Board Committee Structure
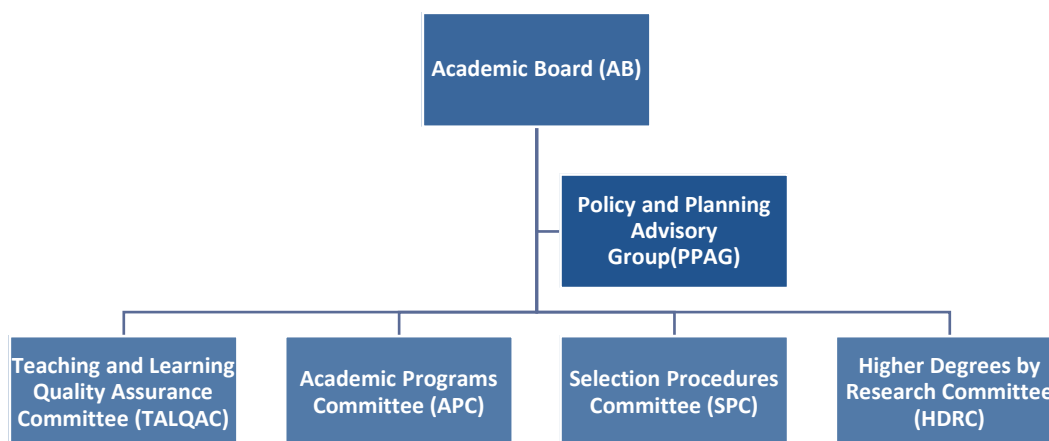
Academic Programs Committee
Co-Chairs: Professor Karena Waller and Professor Russell Cross (2024-2025 term)

The Academic Programs Committee makes recommendations to the Board on course and subject proposals, including new courses, course change proposals, suspensions and discontinuations. The Committee further advises the Board on assessment and course approval policies, coursework degree requirements, and ensuring proper delegation of approvals.

Higher Degrees by Research Committee
Chair: Professor Jane Dyson (2023-2024 term)

The Higher Degrees by Research Committee is responsible for advising the Board on various aspects of higher degrees by research, including policy matters, the review and recommendation of new and amended research programs, and compliance with internal and external legislation governing research training. The Committee plays a crucial role in monitoring the quality of the University's research courses and reviewing criteria for the development of new higher degree by research degrees. Additionally, the Committee oversees matters related to candidate selection, research scholarships, student awards and prizes.

Selection Procedures Committee
Chair: Professor Margreta Kuijper (2021-2024 term)

The Selection Procedures Committee is responsible for advising and making recommendations to the Board on selection and admission standards for undergraduate and graduate coursework studies, including policies, procedures, and guidelines for selection. The Committee makes recommendations to the Board regarding minimum entry requirements, admission criteria, and selection procedures. Additionally, the Committee conducts selection quality assurance activities, and makes recommendations to the Board regarding scholarships, awards, prizes and other forms of academic recognition and equity measures.

Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance Committee
Chair: Associate Professor Daniela Acquaro (2023-2024 term)

The Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance Committee is responsible for advising Academic Board on all matters of policy relating to teaching and learning quality, including matters of success, progression, attrition and student feedback. The Committee plays a crucial role in monitoring the quality of the University's coursework courses, through course reviews, and oversees and monitors academic integrity matters.

Policy and Planning Advisory Group
Chair: Professor Karen Farquharson (ex-officio)

The Policy and Planning Advisory Group is established to support the Academic Board President to plan and monitoring the timely and proper achievement of the Academic Board's functions, akin to an Academic Board Executive Committee. The membership of the group is the President, Academic Board (Chair), Vice-President, Academic Board, Deputy Vice-President, Academic Board, Chairs of Academic Board Standing Committees, and the Academic Secretary.

Membership of the Academic Board Committees

The Board's committees have positions for non-members of Academic Board, including academic staff who are not professors, professional staff, and student members. The academic members of Board committees who would not ordinarily be members of Academic Board then become members for the duration of their term on that Committee.

Co-opted members may be appointed to assist with a particular inquiry or for a certain duration. Co-opted members are members of the Committee for the duration of their appointment.

The members of these committees are required to conduct their discussions and decision-making in the interests of the University as a whole, not act as advocates for their own faculties. Each committee is chaired by a senior academic staff member appointed by the Academic Board on the recommendation of the President.

6.4. Roles and Responsibilities

6.4.1. Academic Board Officers

The Academic Board includes three office bearer roles: the President, Vice-President, and Deputy Vice-President. These positions are elected every two years by the members of the Board, serving a two-year term.

The primary responsibility of the Board Officers is to offer guidance to academic management and the University community on matters of academic and educational significance. They play a crucial role in planning the day-to-day activities of the Board, ensuring the timely and proper fulfillment of its functions. Typically, one of the Officers chairs the Student Appeals Panels, contributing valuable insights that shape the policies and assurance initiatives of the Board.

In addition, the Board Officers often undertake 'out of session' work to advise on urgent business, leading policy development and reviews, and membership of University committees or working groups that align with the remit of Board.

While the positions are subject to election, it is customary for the three officers to be selected from different faculties. This practice aims to incorporate a diversity of experiences from across the University, encompassing various disciplinary knowledge and practices.

For more information about the current Board Officers, please refer to the following link: https://about.unimelb.edu.au/strategy/governance/peak-bodies-structures/academic-board/about

Figure 4 Academic Board Officers 2023-2024 term

(Left to right, President Professor Karen Farquharson, Deputy Vice-President Professor Angela Paladino, Vice-President Professor David Shallcross)

The President of the Academic Board
Professor Karen Farquharson (2023-2024 term)

The President of the Academic Board is a member of Council, the University Executive and all Committees of the Academic Board. The President:

- Develops a close and effective working relationship with the Chancellor and all members of Council to assist Council in the monitoring and oversight of academic matters at the University of Melbourne.
- Consults with the Vice-Chancellor on a range of formal and informal matters affecting the academic activities of the University.
- Maintains an effective working relationship with the Provost as the Chief Academic Officer, responsible for strategic leadership across the University's academic activities, including oversight of the nine Faculties.
- Maintains effective working relationships with the Deputy Vice-Chancellors in light of their roles in the effective management of the University for areas in which the Board holds governance responsibility.

The President of the Academic Board is responsible for:

- Chairing all meetings of the Academic Board.
- Providing the leadership required to ensure that the Board carries out its responsibilities in an efficient and effective manner.
- Ensuring that the Board is sufficiently well informed in order to make sound decisions.
- Articulating and reinforcing the role of Board members, ensuring the demarcation between the Board's role as a governing body and that of executive management is well understood.
- Managing meetings in accordance with protocols, steering sensitive items of business through meetings when necessary.
- Encouraging open debate and discussion of issues before the Board.
- Engaging with individual Board members by being available to them for consultation from time to time, allocating mentors where appropriate and ensuring that appropriate induction is carried out.
- Fostering a sense of cohesiveness among Board members, in order that a high level of trust between members may be developed.
- Ensuring that Board members understand their responsibilities as trustees of the University, and not as delegates of their faculty, academic unit, professional staff or the student body.
- Assessing the performance of the Board and its committees on a regular basis and ensure continuous improvement.
- Reporting to Council on all matters pertaining to the Board at Council meetings.
- Playing a key role in long-term planning for the chairing of Board committees ensuring an appropriate mix of skills and a judicious search for suitable chairs.

The Vice-President and Deputy Vice-President of the Academic Board
Vice-President: Professor David Shallcross (2023-2024 term)

Deputy Vice-President: Professor Angela Paladino (2023-2024 term)

The Vice-President and Deputy Vice-President assist the President with all responsibilities, and act in place of the President during periods of leave or in addressing matters from which the President has recused themself.

6.4.2. Academic Secretary
Academic Secretary: Rosy Peake

The General Manager Academic Governance & Academic Secretary (the "Academic Secretary") is responsible for oversight and management of the work of the Board and its committees. The Academic Secretary leads the team that provides executive support to the Academic Board and its committees, student appeals and academic policy. The Academic Secretary is the policy steward for the following policies:

- MPF1323, Student Appeals Policy
- MPF1293, Credit, Advanced Standing and Accelerated Entry Policy

- MPF1062, Establishment and Award of Student Awards Policy
- MPF1295, Selection and Admission Policy
- MPF1310, Student Academic Integrity Policy
- MPF1326, Assessment and Results Policy
- MPF1345, Student Fitness to Practice Policy
- MPF1327, Courses, Subjects, Awards and Programs Policy
- MPF1363, Academic Progress Review Policy (Graduate Research)
- MPF1291, Academic Progress Review Policy (Coursework)
- MPF1322, Supervisor Eligibility and Registration Policy
- MPF1321, Graduate Research Training Policy
- MPF1224, Academic Freedom of Expression Policy

As a Policy Steward under the Policy Framework, the Academic Secretary is responsible for:

- Providing advice on approved policies under their stewardship
- Drafting or overseeing the drafting of policy
- Reviewing policy in accordance with this Framework
- Consulting key stakeholders and obtaining advice from Legal Services as required, and
- Ensuring new policy and major amendments to policy are promulgated.

6.4.3.   The role of the Committee Chairs

The role of Committee Chair is to ensure the effective functioning of the Committee, determine the agenda and that matters considered are within the remit of the Committee, facilitate committee meetings, review and approve minutes for circulation to members for confirmation, and communicate and report on committee activities.

In addition, the Chair of an Academic Board Committee often undertakes 'out of session' work such as executive approvals for urgent business, chairing course reviews, and membership of chancellery working groups on strategic projects that align with the remit of their committee.

6.4.4.   The role and responsibilities of Members

The Academic Board officers are grateful to members who bring their good will, hard work and collegiality to the tasks of the Board, and always welcome new expressions of interest from those who wish to be more actively involved.

To enable Academic Board to discharge the responsibilities conferred on it, members are expected to engage actively with the business of the Board by:

- Critically reading all meeting documents before each meeting.
- Attending meetings, and actively contributing to constructive debate on matters before the Board.
- Participating as members of Working Parties when required.
- Participating as members of other University committees or panels when required.
- Where appropriate, by communicating and implementing decisions of the Board.

Members are expected to:

- Act in the interests of the University as a whole, rather than to promote the interests of a particular person, school or faculty. Whilst members of the Board are elected as representatives for particular bodies they do not serve on the Board as delegates of those bodies. Members are expected to act in what they believe to be in the University's best interests.
- Act in good faith, honestly and for a proper purpose.
- Exercise appropriate care and diligence in decision making.
- Not improperly use their position to gain an advantage for themselves or someone else.
- Disclose and avoid conflicts of interest.
- Conduct themselves in a collegial manner, refraining from making statements that could reasonably be deemed offensive or insinuate improper motives toward other members.

Members of the Board are encouraged to make information arising from the papers and discussion of the Board available to other members of the University and to stimulate discussion and understanding in their Departments except

where the matter is confidential. Members shall not disclose how other members spoke or voted on matters coming before the Board.

7. Meetings of Academic Board

The University of Melbourne: Standing Orders of the Academic Board
The University of Melbourne Standing Orders of the Academic Board are made by the Academic Board and set out the rules, processes and expected conduct of members and Board Officers at Academic Board meetings.

Meeting Dates
Academic Board meets six times a year. Meetings are held from 2:15pm – 4:15pm, generally on a Thursday (refer *Table 1 Academic Board and Committee Meeting and Paper Submission Dates*). Meeting dates and paper submission deadlines are published in the Academic Board and Committees page on the Staff Hub.

Due to the size of Board membership, Outlook calendar invitations are not able to be sent so meeting dates and times must be diarised by members.

Agenda & papers
The Agenda is published on Diligent (for those with Diligent access) and on the Meeting Information Manager (MIM) one week before each meeting. An email is sent out to notify members when the meeting papers are available.

Any notice of motion, report, or other business must be submitted in writing to the Academic Secretary eight clear University Business Days before the day of the meeting. Matters submitted after this time may be accepted at the discretion of the President of the Board.

Committee Approval and Reporting Pathways
The Committee Approval and Reporting Pathways document provides a general guide to the committee approval and reporting process. The pathways may not always be linear and will depend on the nature of proposals submitted and the terms of reference for the respective committee.

Usual order of business
The normal order of business at each regular meeting will include:

- Starring of additional items. Members will be asked if they would like to star any additional items, further those starred on the agenda as distributed, for discussion. Only those items which have been starred will be discussed. The motion for any matter that remains 'unstarred' will be adopted or received without discussion.

- Confirmation with or without amendment of the minutes of the previous meetings. The confirmation of minutes is a formal declaration by a committee that the minutes are a correct and accurate record of a meeting's proceedings. Members will be asked if they wish to raise any matters arising from the minutes that have not been included in the agenda.

- Reports, if any, from the President of the Board and the Vice-Chancellor.

- Reports from the Provost, the Deputy Vice-Chancellors and Chief Operating Officer.

- Questions with or without notice and oral statements by members. Question time is an opportunity for any member to ask any other member a question on any academic matter of likely interest to the Board or raise a matter of other business. Any question put in advance of the meeting must be put to the Academic Board President, via the Academic Secretary. Such questions will be vetted to ensure that they fall within the Board's remit before being referred to the relevant senior officer for a response at a future meeting. Questions put in session may be disallowed by the Presiding Officer (chair) if they fall outside the Board's remit.

- Matters for discussion. Each agenda will normally feature a discussion item dedicated to a hot topic or matter of significance for the Board (for example, a significant strategic matter or invited guest speaker).

- Reports of the Standing Committees and of bodies reporting through those committees. Each matter endorsed by the Committee for approval by the Board will be listed in this section.

Meeting procedure and formal rules of debate

The President of the Board, by virtue of that office, or, in the absence of the President, one of the other Board Officers or another member elected by the members present, is to preside.

If the Presiding Officer rules, or the Board by resolution determines, that a matter before a meeting shall be conducted in accordance with the formal rules of debate, then procedures set out in the Academic Board Standing Orders shall apply.

Voting is generally decided by a show of hands, although a ballot may be demanded by at least five members. Where a ballot is taken, it shall be conducted in such manner as the Presiding Officer shall decide.

Any matter of procedure which is not dealt with by the University of Melbourne Act 2009 or by any Statute made pursuant to that Act or by these Standing Orders shall be determined by the Presiding Officer

Quorum

The quorum for any Board meeting is 12 members. When attention is drawn to the lack of a quorum the Presiding Officer shall adjourn all unfinished business to the next meeting of the Board.

Meeting terminology

Endorse: When a motion is endorsed, it means that the members approve of it, and it may move forward in the decision-making process.

Note: To make an official record or acknowledgment of a particular item, statement, or issue during a meeting.

Receive: To formally accept and acknowledge a report, document, or communication presented during the meeting. Receiving an item does not necessarily imply approval or endorsement but indicates that it has been brought to the attention of the Board.

Approve: To grant official consent or authorisation to a motion or proposal. When a motion is approved by the Board, it becomes an official decision or action, and it is recorded in the meeting minutes.

In camera: A part of the meeting where sensitive, confidential, or privileged matters may be discussed. Attendees will typically be restricted to members of the Board only. The minutes for this section of the meeting will generally indicate that an 'in camera' session took place and the general nature of the matter under discussion.

Circular Resolution: Where it is not possible for the Board to meet to consider an urgent matter of business, the President may approve that a resolution is considered, and members invited to vote, by email. Circular resolutions are generally restricted to time sensitive but uncontroversial decisions.

Confidentiality

A member of the Board should not, without the approval of the President, discuss with or directly or indirectly disclose to a person not a member of the Board information received by virtue of membership of the Board concerning:

- any matter listed as confidential on the business papers or in the minutes of the Board;

- any personal matter affecting an individual;

- any business negotiation or other financial matter which might allow any person to profit;

- any matter concerning the promotion of any member of the staff of the University

A member shall not disclose how other members spoke or voted on matters coming before the Board.

Attendance at Meetings

While it is preferable for members to attend Academic Board meetings in person, it is understood that this is not always possible. All meetings are held in hybrid mode, with in-person members and members attending via Zoom.

Apologies & Proxies

If a member is unable to attend a meeting an apology should be sent prior to the meeting by email.

Generally, ex-officio members may not nominate a proxy to attend a meeting in their place unless the proxy is formally acting in the member's role.

Conflicts of Interest

If a member has a conflict of interest in relation to a particular item on a meeting agenda, the member must declare that conflict of interest to the President at the start of the meeting, or prior to consideration of the relevant item, and must not take part in a vote on any matter concerning it.

Elections

The President, the Vice-President and the Deputy Vice-President are elected at a single election, held biennially.

Elections for members of the Board and the committees of the Board are held annually, as positions fall vacant.

Table 1 Academic Board and Committee Meeting and Paper Submission Dates

Academic Board			
Meeting ref	**Meeting date**	**Papers due in to secretariat**	**Papers distributed to members**
AB 01 24	Wednesday, February 14, 2024	Wednesday, January 31, 2024	Wednesday, February 7, 2024
AB 02 24	Thursday, March 28, 2024	Thursday, March 14, 2024	Thursday, March 21, 2024
AB 03 24	Thursday, May 9, 2024	Thursday, April 25, 2024	Thursday, May 2, 2024
AB 04 24	Thursday, June 20, 2024	Thursday, June 6, 2024	Thursday, June 13, 2024
AB 05 24	Thursday, August 1, 2024	Thursday, July 18, 2024	Thursday, July 25, 2024
AB 06 24	Thursday, September 12, 2024	Thursday, August 29, 2024	Thursday, September 5, 2024
AB 07 24	Thursday, October 24, 2024	Thursday, October 10, 2024	Thursday, October 17, 2024
AB 08 24	Thursday, December 5, 2024	Thursday, November 21, 2024	Thursday, November 28, 2024

Academic Programs Committee			
Meeting ref	**Meeting date**	**Papers due in to secretariat**	**Papers distributed to members**
APC 01 24	Friday, February 2, 2024	Friday, January 19, 2024	Friday, January 25, 2024
APC 02 24	Friday, March 8, 2024	Friday, February 23, 2024	Friday, March 1, 2024
APC 03 24	Friday, April 19, 2024	Friday, April 5, 2024	Friday, April 12, 2024
APC 04 24	Friday, May 31, 2024	Friday, May 17, 2024	Friday, May 24, 2024
APC 05 24	Friday, July 19, 2024	Friday, July 5, 2024	Friday, July 12, 2024
APC 06 24	Friday, August 23, 2024	Friday, August 9, 2024	Friday, August 16, 2024
APC 07 24	Friday, October 11, 2024	Friday, September 27, 2024	Friday, October 4, 2024
APC 08 24	Friday, November 15, 2024	Friday, November 1, 2024	Friday, November 8, 2024

Higher Degree by Research Committee			
Meeting ref	**Meeting date**	**Papers due in to secretariat**	**Papers distributed to members**
HDRC 01 24	Wednesday, February 28, 2024	Wednesday, February 14, 2024	Wednesday, February 21, 2024
HDRC 02 24	Wednesday, April 17, 2024	Wednesday, April 3, 2024	Wednesday, April 10, 2024
HDRC 03 24	Wednesday, June 5, 2024	Wednesday, May 22, 2024	Wednesday, May 29, 2024
HDRC 04 24	Wednesday, July 24, 2024	Wednesday, July 10, 2024	Wednesday, July 17, 2024
HDRC 05 24	Wednesday, September 11, 2024	Wednesday, August 28, 2024	Wednesday, September 4, 2024
HDRC 06 24	Wednesday, October 30, 2024	Wednesday, October 16, 2024	Wednesday, October 23, 2024

Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance Committee			
Meeting ref	**Meeting date**	**Papers due in to secretariat**	**Papers distributed to members**
TALQAC 01 24	Thursday, March 14, 2024	Thursday, February 29, 2024	Thursday, March 7, 2024
TALQAC 02 24	Thursday, May 2, 2024	Thursday, April 18, 2024	Thursday, April 25, 2024
TALQAC 03 24	Thursday, June 27, 2024	Thursday, June 13, 2024	Thursday, June 20, 2024
TALQAC 04 24	Thursday, August 15, 2024	Thursday, August 1, 2024	Thursday, August 8, 2024
TALQAC 05 24	Thursday, October 10, 2024	Thursday, September 26, 2024	Thursday, October 3, 2024
TALQAC 06 24	Thursday, November 21, 2024	Thursday, November 7, 2024	Thursday, November 14, 2024

Selection Procedures Committee			
Meeting ref	**Meeting date**	**Papers due in to secretariat**	**Papers distributed to members**
SPC 01 24	Monday, February 26, 2024	Monday, February 12, 2024	Monday, February 19, 2024
SPC 02 24	Monday, April 15, 2024	Monday, April 1, 2024	Monday, April 8, 2024
SPC 03 24	Monday, June 3, 2024	Monday, May 20, 2024	Monday, May 27, 2024
SPC 04 24	Monday, July 22, 2024	Monday, July 8, 2024	Monday, July 15, 2024
SPC 05 24	Monday, September 16, 2024	Monday, September 2, 2024	Monday, September 9, 2024
SPC 06 24	Monday, November 11, 2024	Monday, October 28, 2024	Monday, November 4, 2024

8. Contact Information

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Academic Secretary
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Student Appeals
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9. Quick Links

Academic Board Public facing website: https://about.unimelb.edu.au/strategy/governance/peak-bodies-structures/academic-board

Academic Board Staff facing website: https://staff.unimelb.edu.au/students-teaching/academic-board

University Governance website: https://about.unimelb.edu.au/strategy/governance

University Governance staff hub: https://staff.unimelb.edu.au/governance

University Legislation page: https://about.unimelb.edu.au/strategy/governance/regulatory-framework/legislative-framework

Appendix 1: The Academic (or Professorial) Board in the past compared to the present

Written by Professor Ruth Fincher, President of Academic Board 2013 and 2014, and updated for the purposes of this document.

Consulting some of the published histories of the University, we see the following commentary on the establishment, activities and purposes of the Academic (previously Professorial) Board.

Soon after its first meeting on May 3, 1853, the Council of the University 'provided for the establishment of a professorial board, consisting of the professors, any lecturer who might be appointed to assist the professors, and the vice-chancellor ex officio. The board was to consider "all questions relating to the studies of the members of the University" – to consider, not to decide. That was the Council's prerogative' (Selleck 2003: 27-8).

Through the late nineteenth century and first three decades of the twentieth century (when the University was much smaller than it is now) spats between the two major governing bodies of the University, the Council and the Professorial Board, and ongoing re-distributions of roles and responsibilities between them, occurred regularly. ('The two oligarchies' (one internal and one external) is the term used to refer to the University Council and the Professorial Board in the mid-1930s by Priestley when becoming the first full-time Vice Chancellor of the University (Poynter and Rasmussen 1996: 11)). Examples are given by McIntyre and Selleck (2003): in 1889, Council proposed the appointment of a new position that would be termed Provost (a Chief Executive or Vice Chancellor for the University), but the Professorial Board opposed and defeated this proposal (pp. 24-5); in the early 1900s public examinations for university entrance in Victoria were introduced and the Professorial Board was given control over their content and operation (pp. 49-50); by the late 1930s, Vice Chancellors and Chancellors needed to work with the University's "key academic forum", that is, the Professorial Board, to obtain the trust of academic staff (p. 90).

Professorial Board meeting c1919 Source: University of Melbourne Archives Image Catalogue, UMA-I-1039

The Professorial Board was responsible for the high standards of the University in the 1930s, which Priestley commented upon, when the number of professors in the institution was 35. 'The Board, which could discuss and make recommendations to Council "on any matter pertaining to the University", with special responsibility for its studies, had

a reputation for being quarrelsome within itself and disputatious with Council, though individually the professors were reasonable men' (Poynter and Rasmussen 2003, 38).

In the late 1970s (after decades in which the Professorial Board had created academic policy but also used its budgets committee to make internal decisions about how Faculties and Departments would spend their money) the 'professorial panoply of power was severely dented when Deanships were made open to non-professorial appointments and shaken severely when Chairmen replaced Heads of Departments and the position was made open to any senior member of the academic staff recommended by the Vice Chancellor' (Poynter and Rasmussen 2003: 396-7) In 1978, the name of the Professorial Board was changed to that of Academic Board, which it has remained.

Now, a concluding comment made from the standpoint of the late 1990s reflected that 'Universities are now managed, not governed '(McIntyre and Selleck 2003: 178). The Academic Board is certainly not the internal oligarchy of the University that it was claimed to be in the 1930s when professors numbered 35 (In 1963, there were 62 professors (Poynter and Rasmussen 2003: 274)). And we now have a highly professional, large, University management, accountable as the Academic Board is to the University Council for maintaining high standards in the institution, and charged with making the University perform ever better. In this environment, what then is the singular role of the Academic Board in the University, when the professoriate numbers several hundred? Doesn't the University's management structure, centrally and in Faculties and Departments, now set and oversee the standards of the institution's academic work, as well as undertake (implement) that academic work? The answer is, of course, yes and no.

The quality of the University's academic work in teaching and research certainly depends upon the high standards of its teaching/research staff as they undertake their academic work, along with high standards in the selection of all students. There are requirements also of oversight of that work, however, in order for its quality to be assured and indeed for an assurance to be given to the University Council that standards are being set and followed appropriately. The Academic Board is tasked with this oversight role, in the statutes and regulations. Alongside and with the University's management workforce, the Academic Board brings the scrutiny of its members (the senior academic members of the University) to bear on the academic policies, procedures and practices of the institution, including in teaching, research, and student selection. This is achieved through reviews carried out by the committees of the Academic Board, which meet regularly throughout the year and are made up of Academic Board members from all Faculties. A level of evenness across the University's Faculties is assured in its academic practices, and a level of cross-Faculty equity, because of these reviews; in the Board's committee work a practical standard for the University is applied to all Faculties based on knowledge of best practice in all parts of the institution. Reports to the regular, 6-weekly meetings of the Academic Board are made by these committees, often with recommendations, and discussion of committee findings takes place there.

It is evident that a view has always existed at the University of Melbourne that the Academic Board, that large body of the institution's senior academic staff drawn from across all its Faculties, is essential in ensuring the quality of the University academically. It brings an ongoing cross-Faculty scrutiny, from people still deeply involved in the core research and teaching activities everywhere in the institution, to our academic activities. An additional benefit of Academic Board processes is that great collegiality and cross-University understanding is produced amongst its committee members because of the work they regularly do together. If this quality in our institution is impossible to quantify and perhaps not therefore valued in some quarters, in the thinking of others it is vital to our ongoing success.

In a speech marking his retirement, a Dean of one of our major Faculties portrayed the Academic Board as 'the soul' of the University, reflecting his commitment both to his Faculty and to the University as a functioning and collegial whole. There are many Academic Board committees, which undertake much work. Many people participate in them. Sometimes the comment will be made that this is inefficient – we could perform academic oversight adequately by using our management structures better, including on-line administrative systems. That is one view, and certainly it is true that effective management systems are vital for the University to function properly and with continued excellence. The view held by many, especially those who have been involved in Academic Board activities, is that the presence and work of the Board is also most valuable for both protecting our University's high academic standards with detachment and objectivity, and for making sure that academic staff from across the institution are involved in carrying forward that quality assurance and believing in it.

References:

McIntyre, S and Selleck, R 2003 A Short History of The University of Melbourne. Carlton, Melbourne University Press

Poynter, J and Rasmussen, C 1996 A Place Apart, The University of Melbourne: Decades of Challenge. Carlton, Melbourne University Press

Selleck, R 2003 The Shop: The University of Melbourne 1850-1939. Carlton, Melbourne University Press