

Research Committee

Terms of Reference



A committee of the Academic Board established in accordance with section 10(5)(a) of the University of Melbourne Statute and Section 20 of the University of Melbourne Act (Vic) 2009.

1. PREAMBLE

The Research Committee is a standing committee of the Academic Board responsible for providing academic governance oversight of research activities across the University. It advises the Academic Board on matters relating to research strategy, policy, integrity, ethics, performance, quality, and impact.

The Research Committee contributes to the University of Melbourne's compliance with the requirements of the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (HESF 2021).

2. MEMBERSHIP

2.1 Committee composition

The University Research Committee comprises the following members:

Members	
Chair appointed by the President of the Academic Board	
Ex-officio members	
President of the Academic Board	
Vice-President of the Academic Board	
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) or nominee	
Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research Performance) or nominee	
Associate Director, Office of Research Ethics and Integrity	
Elected members	
Eight members of the academic staff of the University who are active in research, elected by the Academic Board. Limit of two members elected from any one Faculty.	
Two early-career research academic ¹ staff, one each from a HASS and STEM discipline, elected by the Academic Board.	
Appointed members	
Two members drawn from Associate Deans (Research), one from STEM and one from HASS disciplines.	

¹ Early-career research academic means a person who was awarded a PhD no more than five years prior to the date of their election to the Committee and who holds a continuing academic appointment at the University, subject to extension of the qualifying period to account for recognised career interruptions.

A graduate research candidate, appointed by the President of the Academic Board on the advice of the President of the Graduate Student Association.	
A graduate research candidate, appointed by the President of the Academic Board on the advice of the President of the University of Melbourne Student Union.	
Co-opted members	
The President of the Academic Board may co-opt up to four additional members, either academic or professional, to enhance its expertise, skills, or diversity. This may include, but is not limited to, addressing imbalances in gender representation or other aspects of diversity.	
In attendance	
Chair, Higher Degree by Research Committee Other staff of the University may be invited to any meeting as the Committee determines.	

2.2 Chair and Deputy Chairs

- (a) The Chair of the Committee is appointed by the President of the Academic Board.
- (b) The President of the Academic Board may appoint up to two Deputy Chairs from among the members of the Committee, in consultation with the Chair.

2.3 Quorum and voting

- (a) The quorum for the Committee is a simple majority (50 per cent of members plus one).
- (b) A quorum must be present for any vote to be valid.
- (c) Matters shall be decided by a simple majority of the members present and voting.
- (d) Each member has a vote.
- (e) The Chair has an ordinary vote and a casting vote if required.
- (f) Invitees or standing invitees do not have a vote.

2.4 Attendance

- (a) Elected and appointed members must attend at least 50 per cent of scheduled meetings per year to retain their membership, unless the Chair approves a leave of absence.
- (b) Where a member is unable to attend a meeting of the Committee, the member must notify the secretary prior to the commencement of the meeting.
- (c) An ex-officio member may nominate, in writing to the secretary to the Committee not later than the advertised time of commencement of the meeting, another person to act as that member's proxy at the meeting, with the permission of the Chair.

2.5 Terms of office, eligibility and appointments

- (a) The term of office of the Chair and Deputy Chairs of the Research Committee is two years. The Chair may serve a maximum of three consecutive terms of two years, six years in total.
- (b) The term of office of elected members of the Committee is two years. Elected members may serve a maximum of three consecutive terms of two years, six years in total.

- (c) A person may not stand for election to the Committee while they hold a senior management role encompassing research such as Associate Dean Research, Associate Dean Graduate Research, Head of School, Dean, Pro Vice-Chancellor or Deputy Vice-Chancellor.
- (d) Ex-officio members remain members of the Committee by virtue of their office.
- (e) Appointed members are appointed by the Academic Board President for a two-year term and may be eligible for re-appointment at the discretion of the Academic Board President. Appointed members may serve a maximum of three consecutive terms of two years, six years in total.
- (f) Co-opted members are appointed on an annual basis and may be eligible for re-co-option at the discretion of the President of the Academic Board.
- (g) Membership in elected, appointed or co-opted positions shall not exceed six consecutive years in aggregate.²

2.6 Vacancies

- (a) Should the position of an elected or appointed member become vacant for any reason, the President of the Academic Board, in consultation with the Chair, will appoint a person to fill the position for the remainder of the term of office in the position vacated.

2.7 Responsibilities of members

- (a) All members must:
 - (i) serve on the Committee having regard to the best interests of the University as a whole and should apply objectivity and good judgment,
 - (ii) maintain confidentiality in all matters and ensure that any information received as a member of the Committee is not disclosed within another context without the permission of the Chair,
 - (iii) contribute the time required to understand the Committee papers and participate actively in Committee meetings, and
 - (iv) exercise reasonable skill, appropriate care and diligence in decision making.
- (b) Members are expected to conduct themselves collegially and professionally during meetings and comply with any reasonable direction from the Chair.

2.8 Subcommittees

- (a) The Research Committee may establish formal subcommittees, subject to the approval of the Board.

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The functions of the University Research Committee are to:

3.1 Research strategy and performance

- (a) Receive reports, monitor and advise the Academic Board on:
 - (i) the development and implementation of the University's research strategy,
 - (ii) achievement against the University's research performance indicators, including research outputs, external funding, engagement, and impact,
 - (iii) collaboration with industry, government, and international partners, and

² For the purposes of this provision, "consecutive" means continuous service in any combination of elected, appointed or co-opted membership without a break of twelve months or more. Periods of co-option shall be counted pro rata (each year of co-option counts as one year towards the six-year limit). For the avoidance of doubt, the Chair, Deputy Chair, or ex-officio members are not subject to this limit.

- (iv) intellectual property, commercialisation, and knowledge transfer activities.

3.2 Research policy³

- (a) Receive reports, monitor and advise the Academic Board on policies relating to research.
- (b) Receive reports, monitor and advise the Academic Board on the effectiveness of the University's research and policy framework.

3.3 Research quality

- (a) Receive reports, monitor and advise the Academic Board on the maintenance of quality and pursuit of excellence in all aspects of the University's research endeavours.

3.4 Responsible conduct of research

- (a) Receive reports, monitor, and advise the Academic Board on the effectiveness of the University's policies, processes, and systems for ensuring compliance with the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* (2018) ("the Code") in relation to:
 - (i) maintaining research integrity and fostering a culture of responsible research conduct, and
 - (ii) preventing, detecting and managing breaches of the Code and research misconduct.

3.5 Risk and compliance

- (a) Receive reports, monitor and advise the Academic Board on:
 - (i) risks to the quality and integrity of the University's research, and
 - (ii) compliance with research legislation and regulatory requirements, including the Code, and the Australian Higher Education Standards Framework and consistency with the University Statute and regulations.
- (b) The President of the Academic Board will refer significant risks to the Audit and Risk Committee of Council.

3.6 Other matters referred

- (a) Consider and provide advice on any governance matter related to research referred to it by the Academic Board.

3.7 Review of terms of reference

- (a) Review annually the Committee's terms of reference and membership and make recommendations to the Academic Board regarding any amendments.

4. FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

- (a) The Committee must meet at least four times per year, with additional meetings as required.

5. REPORTING

- (a) The Research Committee reports to the Academic Board.
- (b) The Chair will provide a written report to the Academic Board on the outcomes of matters considered by the Committee. The report will be considered at the first available meeting of the Academic Board held after the Committee meeting.

³ These terms of reference do not limit or override the Vice-Chancellor's delegation to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) to approve policies related to the management of administrative functions, within the scope of Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)'s portfolio.

(c) The Committee must provide an annual report on its activities under its terms of reference to the Academic Board.

6. SECRETARIAT

(a) The Academic Secretary or nominee will provide secretariat support to the Committee.

Document Control

Version	Date	Description of version	Approval Reference
1-2026	26/03/2026	Approval of original version	AB Meeting 02/2026