

## Academic Board Terms of Reference

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### 1. Purpose

- 1.1. The Academic Board is a sub-committee of the AFTRS Council (“Council”).
- 1.2. Council approves the terms of reference of the Academic Board, which may be amended when appropriate.
- 1.3. Membership of the Academic Board is determined and approved by Council.
- 1.4. Sub-committees (requiring Council approval) and ad-hoc working groups (not requiring Council approval) may be established by the Academic Board where appropriate to consider particular issues (e.g. academic integrity, assessment strategies).

### 2. SCOPE

- 2.1. This terms of reference applies to the Academic Board as a sub-committee of Council.

### 3. Membership

#### Composition

- 3.1. The Academic Board consists of up to nine (9) members, but not less than four (4) members, who may be present in person or electronically, one of whom is required to be an independent member.
- 3.2. Members (ex-officio, unless otherwise stated as ‘nominated’):
  - One independent member, being the Chair of Academic Board;
  - A Council member(s), although this is not a requirement;
  - Two or more additional external members;
  - AFTRS CEO;
  - Head of Governance;
  - A member of the Teaching Staff; and
  - Student Member of Council.

### 3.3. Standing Attendees

- Director of Teaching & Learning; and
- Director of People & Culture

### 3.4. By Invitation

- Head of Curriculum;
- Compliance Manager; and
- AFTRS Executive Directors, as required.

## Length of Service/Term

### 3.5. Chair, Independent and External Members:

- Will be appointed by the Council for an initial period of up to three (3) years;
- May be re-appointed for further periods of three (3) years, or a lesser period, as determined by the Council, following the Council's assessment of the member's performance; and
- Either party may terminate the appointment with at least three months' notice.

### 3.6. Staff Members:

- Unlimited service, whilst they are a current AFTRS staff member.

### 3.7. A Member of the Teaching Staff:

- Shall be elected by staff for a period of a one-year term;
- May be elected as a member of the Academic Board on two successive terms; and
- Either party may terminate the appointment with at least three months' notice.

### 3.8. Student Member of Council:

- One year, to be the same term as their Student Member of Council term, and whilst they are a currently enrolled AFTRS student; and
- Where a vacancy exists in this position, the Chair may request a member of the Student Representative Committee be invited to the Academic Board, without membership rights, to ensure continuity of student representation.

## Appointment

### 3.9. Chair:

- Will be a higher education specialist with professorial qualifications and experience or equivalent;
- Preferably, the Chair will be a member of Council if there is a Council member with the required higher education qualifications and experience. If the Chair is not a member of Council, then a member of Council may be asked to become a member of Academic Board;
- May not be the Chair of Council;
- Will be Independent of AFTRS management, staff and students; and
- Will be recommended by the CEO to Council for approval.

### 3.10. Deputy Chair:

- Academic Board will elect a Deputy Chair;
- Must be an independent member of Academic Board.

### 3.11. Independent and External Members:

- Will have higher education experience;
- Will be recommended by AFTRS CEO, Council Chair or the Chair of Academic Board; and
- Will be presented to the Council for membership approval.

## Duties and responsibilities of the Chair

3.12. The Chair will ensure the Academic Board fulfills its functions as specified in these Terms of Reference, including:

- Preside over Academic Board meetings and direct discussions to effectively use the time available to address issues;
- Authorise the minutes of the Academic Board and ensure they properly reflect Board decisions;
- Be the point of contact between the Board and the Council;
- Provide the CEO with advice on educational quality assurance;
- Present reports to the Council about matters considered at meetings of the Academic Board held since the previous meeting of the Council; and
- If requested, participate in selection committees for Executive positions.

## 4. Functions

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- 4.1. Oversee the quality assurance of teaching, learning and research activities of the School.
- 4.2. Approve new curricula.
- 4.3. Approve major changes to courses of study.
- 4.4. Ensure curricula is designed to meet the standards of the higher education sector.
- 4.5. Review policies, procedures and guidelines related to the admission, enrolment, assessment, and progress of students in approved courses of study including the Student Handbook and Production Code of Practice.
- 4.6. Make recommendations directly to the CEO and/or to the Council as appropriate relating to academic and student support matters.
- 4.7. Report on any issues referred by the Council or the CEO.
- 4.8. Endorse, and make additional recommendations where required, to Council regarding the conferring of degrees, alternate exit awards or any other award.
- 4.9. Oversee the work of any Academic Board sub-committees and ad-hoc working groups, where created.

## 5. Meetings

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### Frequency

5.1 The Academic Board will meet five times a year, aligned to the Council meeting schedule. The Chair may schedule additional meetings as required and must do so if requested by the CEO or Council.

### Presiding

- 5.2 The Chair will preside over meetings.
- 5.3 In the absence of the Chair, the Deputy Chair will preside over a meeting(s).
- 5.4 In the absence of the Chair and Deputy Chair, the members present will appoint one of their number to preside over a meeting(s).

### Quorum

5.5 A quorum of the Academic Board is a majority of the current members and must include one independent member.

## Standing Attendees and By Invitation

5.6 The Academic Board may request members of staff to participate in meetings as standing attendees; and

5.7 May also request members of staff or external parties to attend meetings by invitation on an as-needed basis to provide their expertise.

## Secretariat

5.8 The Secretariat service to the Academic Board will be provided by Committee Officer from the AFTRS Governance Unit; and

5.9 The Committee Officer is responsible for drafting the agenda in consultation with the Chair and is responsible for the provision of all paperwork for the Board's meetings.

## Papers and Minutes

5.10 The Secretariat will ensure that:

- Not less than seven days' notice of a meeting will be issued, with agenda and papers;
- The draft minutes of a meeting will be circulated to the Chair in a reasonable timeframe but not more than four weeks after the meeting and will be tabled at the next Academic Board meeting;
- The Chair will review the draft minutes and advise the Secretariat of approval or approval pending suggested amendments, after which they will be deemed Chair approved draft minutes;
- At each meeting, the Chair approved draft minutes of the preceding meeting must be approved or approved as amended, via motion by the Chair. The minutes approved by the Academic Board are to be classified as Board approved final minutes and provided to the next practicable Council meeting; and
- All Members shall as the second order of business identify and have minuted any conflict of interest on any item of business and recuse themselves from voting if so declared.

## Decisions

5.11 Decisions will be made the Academic Board by simple majority of attendees. In the instance of an evenly split vote on a decision, this decision shall be referred to AFTRS Council for resolution.

5.12 Out-of-session decisions may be required for matters outside of regular meetings. In such circumstances, the Secretariat or delegate may request members to vote on matters via circular resolution.

## 6. Responsibilities

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### Compliance, monitoring and review

6.1. The Head of Governance is responsible for ensuring the Terms of Reference:

- Continues to align with the intended purpose of the group, and AFTRS requirements, strategies, values, policies and procedures;
- Is implemented and monitored (i.e. the principles of the Terms of Reference are embedded in the operating of the group, monitored for changes in the policy environment, and emerging issues are identified); and
- Is reviewed to evaluate its continuing effectiveness.

### Reporting

6.2. The minutes of the meetings will be reported to the Council. Minutes will also be made available to the AFTRS Executive on request.

## Records Management

- 6.3. The Academic Board terms of reference, agendas, meeting papers and minutes (including out-of-session resolutions) will be stored in the appropriate folder within the Secretariat drive;
- 6.4. These terms of reference are considered a corporate document and are required to be registered in the AFTRS Policy Register; and
- 6.5. All records relevant to administering these terms of reference will be maintained by the AFTRS Policy and Governance Officer.

## 7. Definitions

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<b>AFTRS employees:</b>	Non-executive board members (i.e. members of the AFTRS Council) or persons engaged primarily to be audit committee members are not considered employees of the School <sup>1</sup> .
<b>Appropriateness:</b>	For the purposes of the PGPA Act, PGPA Rule and the Academic Board Terms of Reference, 'appropriateness' has its ordinary meaning of 'suitable or fitting for a particular purpose'.
<b>Independent:</b>	For the purposes of the PGPA Rule and the Academic Board Terms of Reference, 'Independent' means not employees of AFTRS. AFTRS Council members and external members of Council committees are regarded as independent of the School.
<b>External:</b>	A person who is not a member of the Council, sourced for their expertise from outside of AFTRS to be an independent member of the Committee.
<b>Staff Member:</b>	A person(s) who is employed on a full-time or part-time basis under s.34 of the AFTRS Act 1973.
<b>A Member of the Teaching Staff:</b>	A person who is employed on a full-time or part-time basis under s.34 of the AFTRS Act 1973, has been so employed (or whose employment term is) for a period of at least 12 months and will be a member of AFTRS faculty who is employed in the respective division primarily responsible for the provision of teaching and learning for the organisation.
<b>Student Member of Council:</b>	The Student Member of Academic Board will be the Student Member of Council.

## 8. Related Legislation and Documents

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- Council Terms of Reference;
- Australian Qualifications Framework;
- AFTRS Governance Framework;
- Higher Education Support Act (HESA) 2003;
- Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021;
- Tertiary Education and Quality Standards (TEQSA) Act 2011; and

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Finance, Guide for corporate Commonwealth entities on the role of audit committees, p. 22.; PGPA Rule 2014 sub-s (4AA).

- Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000.

## Approval and Review Details

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	Council
Responsible Officer	Head of Governance
Contact Officer	Committee Officer
Distribution	Intranet and AFTRS Website
Next Review Date	<b>01/12/2026</b>

Approval and Amendment History	Details
Original Approval Authority and Date	v5.3, 5 May 2023 —amendments include the removal of references to Registrar, and an update to quorum requirements.  <i>This is the date of approval of either: (1) the newly created ToR doc v1.0, or (2) a recently comprehensive or scheduled review of an existing document. Minor amendment approval dates are captured below]</i>
Amendment History and Date	<b>v5.3, 5 May 2023</b> —amendment includes adding the Student Handbook and Production Code of Practice (treated as policy documents at AFTRS) as documents for the board to review and comment on; and the addition of further terminology within award course, alternative exit and other award conferral function; v5.2, 11 March 2022 —no detail of amendment; v4.3, 03/12/2020 —no detail of amendment; v4.2, 13/03/2019 —no detail of amendment
Notes	<i>Regarding distribution – No Academic Board space has been created on the AFTRS website and as such the ABToR has not been published there (MM)</i>
Minor Amendment Approval and History	N/A