

# **ULSTER UNIVERSITY**

## **STANDING ORDERS OF THE COUNCIL**

### **1 Meetings**

There shall be at least six ordinary meetings of the Council in the academic year on dates to be determined by the Council.

A special meeting of the Council may be held at the instance of the Chairman or the Vice-Chairman if the Chairman is unavailable. A special meeting shall be convened when requested in writing to the University Secretary by one-quarter of the members of the Council. A special meeting shall be convened within 21 days of the University Secretary receiving such a written request.

In cases of urgency an emergency meeting may be called on such notice as the Chairman considers appropriate.

At a special or an emergency meeting only business included in the circulated agenda shall be transacted unless all the members present unanimously decide otherwise.

### **2 Notice and Agenda for Meetings**

Meetings shall be called by the University Secretary on direction of the Council. The notice of meeting, the agenda and all available supporting papers shall be dispatched not fewer than seven days before an ordinary or special meeting.

The non-receipt of notice of any meeting of the Council or the agenda thereof or any supporting papers shall not invalidate the proceedings of any such meeting. Members wishing to place items on the agenda must submit them to the University Secretary, with a supporting statement, not fewer than fourteen days before the meeting. The Chairman shall determine which items shall be placed on the agenda but shall report to the Council if any item submitted by a member has been excluded and the Council may decide to include that item on the agenda.

At an ordinary meeting of the Council the Chairman, with the agreement of the Council, may table business of which notice has not been given on the agenda but which he considers to be business of urgency which it was not practicable to include in the agenda.

“Any Other Business” shall not be included as a formal item on the agenda of the Council and its committees.

The unreserved agenda will be lodged in faculty offices and the University library concurrently with their issue to members of the Council.

### **3 Confidentiality**

Reserved business is confidential to members of the Council.

#### 4 Chairman

The Chairman shall preside over all meetings of the Council at which he is present, subject to Article 7 of the Charter.

In the absence of the Chairman, or during a vacancy in the office, the Vice-Chairman of the Council shall preside over the meetings of the Council. In the absence of both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman from any meeting of the Council, the members shall elect one of their number being a lay member of the Council to preside over that meeting.

#### 5 Quorum

The quorum shall be one third of the total membership provided that at any meeting the number of lay members present shall not be less than a majority of the quorum.

If a quorum has not been achieved within thirty minutes of the stated time of the meeting, the meeting shall be adjourned to a future date.

If, after the business has begun, there ceases to be a quorum present, the Chairman shall, if the matter is formally raised by a member, adjourn the meeting to a future date unless a quorum can be formed within ten minutes.

#### 6 Order of Business

The order of business shall be determined by the Chairman in consultation with the University Secretary. The order of the business appearing on the agenda may be altered by the Chairman with the consent of the Council.

#### 7 Minutes

The approval of the minutes shall normally be the first item of business at ordinary meetings. Proposed amendments to minutes of the Council and its committees should be submitted in writing to the relevant Chairperson or Secretary within seven days of the unconfirmed minutes being circulated to members. If objections are received the minutes will be brought forward to the next meeting of the Council or the appropriate committee for confirmation. Otherwise the minutes will be taken as confirmed.

The draft minutes marked "unconfirmed" shall be dispatched to members within 10 days of the meeting. The draft unreserved minutes shall be lodged in faculty offices and the University library for consultation by members of staff.

#### 8 Disclosure of Interest

Any member who may have an interest in any matter to be discussed shall state that interest and shall neither speak nor vote nor be counted in the quorum for that item of business.

A Register of Interests giving details of members' pecuniary, family or personal interests which may affect Council business, will be available for inspection at all

meetings of the Council and its committees. The Register will also include details of the Senior Management Team.

Members of the Council and the Senior Management team will be responsible for updating the information contained in the Register whenever necessary and will be required to confirm annually its accuracy and relevance.

9 Voting

Except where otherwise provided, decisions of the Council shall be taken by consensus unless a vote is requested. Votes shall be taken by show of hands.

10 Dissent

Any member present shall be entitled to be recorded as dissenting from any decision of the Council.

11 Interpretation

Reference to “days” in these standing orders are to calendar days.

Any question of interpretation or procedure shall be determined by the Chairman of the meeting.

12 Adjournment

The Chairman may, with the consent of the majority of those members present at any meeting of the Council, adjourn the meeting from time to time. The consideration of any business not transacted shall be adjourned to a time fixed by the Chairman at the time the meeting is adjourned or, if he does not fix a time, to the next ordinary meeting of the Council, unless a special meeting for the purpose is first held.

13 Sealing of Documents

Any document executed on behalf of the Council shall be valid if it is sealed with the Seal of the University and signed by one member of the Council and the University Secretary or any officer authorized by the University Secretary.

An entry of every sealing of a document shall be made and consecutively numbered in a register and shall be signed by the persons who have attested the use of the Seal.

The sealing register shall be available for inspection by any member of the Council upon request to the University Secretary.

14 Non-attendance at Meetings of the Council

A member of the Council who is unable to attend any ordinary meeting of the Council may provide an explanation giving a reason for non-attendance. Such explanation should where possible be sent in advance of the meeting to the University Secretary, who will bring it to the attention of the Council at that meeting.

Where a member has failed to attend two successive ordinary meetings without providing an explanation satisfactory to the Council, the Secretary shall write to that member to give warning of the operation of Statute I, 4, which states that appointed, elected and co-opted members of the Council will automatically cease to be members of the Council if they fail to attend three successive ordinary meetings of the Council without providing an explanation for their non-attendance satisfactory to the Council. That person having ceased to be a member of the Council cannot be reinstated by the Council on subsequent provision of an explanation.

15 Attendance at Meetings of Committees of the Council

Members of the Council wishing to attend a meeting of a committee other than one to which they have been allocated should seek permission a reasonable time in advance of the meeting from the committee Chairperson to whom authority to agree such requests may be delegated by the committee. Reasons for wishing to attend a meeting should be given. Such members would attend meetings as observers and would not normally speak, except at the invitation of the Chairman of Committee. They would have no vote and would not have general leave to speak.

Officers and staff of the University may be invited by the Vice-Chancellor to attend meetings of committees of the Council to assist in deliberations and to facilitate the business of the University.

16 Access to Committee Papers

Members of the Council are required to register their names annually with the University Secretary if they wish to receive sets of papers of committees of the Council of which they are not members.

17 Mobile Telephones

In order to ensure the smooth running of meetings of the Council and its committee's members are debarred from bringing mobile telephones to meetings. A telephone contact number will be given to members on which they may be contacted in an emergency.

18 Suspension of Standing Orders

Any one or more of the Standing Orders except Standing Order 5 may be suspended at any meeting so far as regards any business at that meeting provided that two-thirds of the members present and voting shall so decide.

19 Amendment of Standing Orders

Amendments to the Standing Orders may be made at any ordinary meeting by a simple majority of the Council provided that notice of the proposed amendment was given at the previous ordinary meeting in accordance with Standing Order 2.

NOTES:

Standing Orders of the Council are permanent and have a life span independent of the duration of individual Councils.