University of Huddersfield

Standing Orders for the Conduct of meetings

1. General

These Standing Orders relate to procedures for the conduct of meetings of Council and its Committees, including the Senate. The Chair of the meeting, on the advice of the Secretary, shall be the sole arbiter on their interpretation.

2. Interpretation

In these Standing Orders, unless the context otherwise requires, the following expressions shall have the meanings indicated in this paragraph:

- 'Articles' means the Articles of Government of the University of Huddersfield;
- 'Council' means the Members of the University Council of the University of Huddersfield;
- 'The Chair' means the Chair of Council or Chair of a Committee;
- 'The Council and its Committees' means University Council and its Committees, and shall include Senate and its Committees;
- 'The Vice-Chancellor' means the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Huddersfield who is the Chief Executive as prescribed in the Articles of Government;
- 'External Member' means Independent Members as detailed in the Instrument of Government paragraph 3(3);
- 'The Secretary' means the University Secretary, or a secretary of a Committee designated by him/her;
- 'Original motion' means the first motion (ie formal proposal) or proposition in regard to a particular subject matter;
- 'Substantive motion' means the motion as amended by an amendment that has been carried.

3. Frequency of Meetings

3.1 In accordance with the Articles, the University Council shall normally hold an ordinary meeting at least three times per year and hold such other ordinary meetings as may be necessary for the efficient discharge of their functions. To this end the Secretary shall submit annually to Council for its consideration and approval, a calendar of its regular meetings and those of its Committees.

3.2 All meetings of the University Council and its Committees shall be summoned by the Secretary or in default by any two Members.

4. Notice of Meetings and of Business for Transaction

4.1 Every meeting, whether ordinary or special, and of any committee of the University Council, shall be summoned by notice in writing (including electronic means such as email), specifying the time and place of the meeting to each Member at least ten clear days before the date of the meeting in the case of an ordinary meeting and at least three clear days in the case of a special meeting. The nature of the business to be transacted at a special meeting must also be specified to each Member within the meeting notice.
4.2 At any time with the approval of the Chair or the Vice Chancellor or any two Members of whom one shall be an External Member the Secretary shall summon a special meeting of the University Council where only that business specified in the request shall be discussed.

4.3 Reports and documents to be considered at an ordinary meeting shall normally be circulated with the agenda; documents and reports requiring a decision by Council shall only be placed on the table at the meeting with the approval of the Chair.

4.4 Any Member wishing to submit items and reports for consideration by Council or its Committees should consult with the Chair and Secretary.

4.5 The format and presentation of reports shall be in accordance with the University's prescribed format.

5. Confirmation of Minutes

5.1 The minutes of every meeting of Council and its Committees shall be produced by the Secretary, and once approved by the Chair, a copy sent to all Members before the next ordinary meeting. At the next ordinary meeting, the draft minutes shall be confirmed formally subject to any necessary amendments or corrections to ensure accuracy.

6. Quoracy

6.1 The quorum for meetings of the University Council shall be one-third of the actual current membership of the University Council (rounded up to the next whole number where the calculation of one-third does not produce a whole number), with at least half of those present being External Members.

6.2 If a meeting of the University Council is quorate but the External Members are in a minority, a majority of the External Members present shall have the right to require that a decision be deferred to the next meeting.

6.3 A Member shall not be counted in the quorum present at a meeting in relation to a resolution on which he or she is not entitled to vote.

7. Voting

7.1 Every question to be determined at a meeting of the University Council shall be determined by a majority of the votes of the Members present and voting on the question. Where there is an equal division of votes, the Chair shall have a second or casting vote.

7.2 No Member shall be entitled to appoint any person to be his or her proxy to attend any meeting of the University Council, or to vote on his or her behalf, save that a Member may appoint by notice in writing to the Secretary, before the commencement of the relevant meeting, another Member to be his or her proxy at a Council meeting where any appointment to membership is to be made. In the absence of any direction to the contrary in the instrument of appointment of a proxy, the proxy may vote or abstain from voting on any resolution on behalf of the Member appointing him or her as he or she thinks fit. The vote given by a proxy shall be in addition to the proxy's own vote as a Member.

8. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

8.1 The University Council shall elect two of their External Members, normally on a 3-year term, to be Chair and Vice-Chair who shall be eligible for re-election on the advice of the Governance & Membership Committee.

8.2 The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the University Council. If the Chair is absent from any meeting, the Vice-Chair shall preside. If both the Chair and Vice-Chair are absent from any meeting, the Members present shall elect a Member to act as Chair of that meeting.

8.3 In the event of a vacancy in the office of Chair or Vice-Chair, the University Council shall elect at their next meeting a new Chair or Vice-Chair to hold office for the unexpired term of office of the Chair or Vice-Chair in whose place he or she is appointed.
9. Procedures in cases of urgency

9.1 The Chair shall be empowered, following appropriate consultation, to deal with matters of urgency arising at any time not delegated to a Committee of Council, or for which it is inexpedient to await a meeting of Council. Such action shall be reported to the next meeting of Council. Specific monetary levels of delegation are covered in the University’s Formal Scheme of Delegation.

10. Conduct of Meetings and records thereof

10.1 The agenda for the Council and its Committees shall conform in style and format to the standard prescribed by the Secretary. The agenda shall differentiate between those items that are for consideration and those for noting, and shall be arranged in such order by the Secretary as may appear most convenient for consideration by the meeting. However, the Chair may at any meeting vary the order so as to give precedence to any business of special urgency.

10.2 The Secretary shall make arrangements for the preparation and maintenance of minutes and records of proceedings of Council and its Committees, including the safekeeping and disposal of confidential documents and records.

10.3 The minutes of the University Council, any committee or sub-committee and of the Senate, when confirmed as a correct record at the next meeting, shall in the absence of obvious error be conclusive evidence of matters stated.

10.4 Under arrangements approved by the University Council, the agenda of every meeting of the University Council, or any committee or sub-committee, the Senate and any committee or sub-committee, the draft minutes, if they have been approved by the Chair of the meeting, the reports or papers considered at meetings and the confirmed minutes of such meetings shall be available for inspection by any member of staff or student of the University.

10.5 The Chair of Council or the Chair of any committee or sub-committee may exclude the agenda, reports, minutes or papers from their respective Committees from publication or inspection under Standing Order 10.4, any material relating to:

(a) a named person employed or to be employed at the University;

(b) a named student of, or candidate for admission as a student to, the University;

(c) any other matter which, in the opinion of the Chair or the Chair of any committee or sub-committee is deemed confidential.

10.6 The minutes of the Council and its Committees shall conform to the standard prescribed by the Secretary. They shall record the names of those present, including those in attendance, and apologies received and shall form the basis for the record of Members’ attendance to be maintained by the Secretary. The resolutions of Council and its Committees shall be recorded in the minutes and differentiate between a recommendation and a decision taken under delegated powers.

10.7 Subject to the University Council normally holding an ordinary meeting at least three times per year (see paragraph 3.1) a written resolution (including electronic means such as email) signed by all Council Members or the Members of any Committee, shall be as valid and effectual as if it had been passed at a duly-convened meeting.

10.8 Following a meeting of Council or its Committees, the draft minutes shall be submitted by the Secretary to the relevant Chair normally within 10 working days for approval or any necessary amendment. The draft minutes so approved shall be circulated within 15 working days of the meeting to which they refer.

10.9 The Vice-Chancellor, as Chief Executive, shall have the right to receive papers, to attend and to speak at all meetings of Council and its Committees. In the event of the Vice Chancellor being unable to attend any meeting he or she is entitled to attend, he or she may
nominate one or more Holders of a Senior Post (although not a Member) to attend and speak at that meeting on the Vice Chancellor’s behalf.

10.10 The Vice-Chancellor, as Chief Executive, and the Secretary shall have the right to advise Council and its Committees and be heard if a matter under discussion is deemed by them to be ultra vires.

10.11 The Chair of a meeting is responsible for the conduct of the meeting and is entitled to the co-operation of Members in ensuring the fair, effective and expeditious transaction of business and the observance of the courtesies of debate. The Chair shall:

   i. decide the order in which Members may be called to speak;
   ii. so advise and admonish a Member whose speaking is irrelevant to the subject under discussion or whose conduct impedes the fair and orderly process of discussion;
   iii. offer rulings on points of order;
   iv. decide whether or not to suspend or adjourn or conclude a meeting that is being disrupted.

10.12 Every notice of motion by Members for inclusion in an agenda shall be made in writing and submitted to the Secretary in accordance with Standing Order 4. The following motions may be moved without notice:

   i. appointment of a Chair of the meeting at which the motion is made
   ii. motion relating to the accuracy of the minutes, the closure, or adjournment of the meetings, the order of business, or to note next business;
   iii. reference to a Committee;
   iv. adoption of reports and recommendations of Committees or the receipt of the reports of officers and any consequent resolution;
   v. leave to withdraw a motion;
   vi. amendments to motions;
   vii. motion to hold a secret ballot;
   viii. suspension of standing orders.

10.13 A motion or amendment shall not be approved unless it has been proposed and seconded.

10.14 When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except the following:

   i. that the motion be amended;
   ii. that consideration of the motion be postponed;
   iii. that the meeting be adjourned;
   iv. that the debate be adjourned;
   v. that the question be now put;
   vi. that the subject of debate be referred back to a Committee.

10.15 Every amendment shall be relevant to the motion on which it is moved.

10.16 If an amendment is rejected, other amendments may be moved on the original motion. If an amendment is carried, the motion as amended shall become the substantive motion and the motion upon which any further amendment may be moved.

10.17 A further amendment shall not be moved until the meeting has disposed of every amendment previously moved.

10.18 On the resumption of an adjourned debate, the Member who moved the adjournment shall be entitled to speak first.

10.19 The proposer may withdraw a motion or amendment with the concurrence of the seconder and with the consent of the meeting.

10.20 A Member may, with the consent of his or her seconder and of the meeting, alter a motion that he or she has proposed or of which notice has been given if the alteration is one that could have been moved as an amendment thereto.
10.21 Any Member may, during a debate, raise a point of order calling attention to the alleged breach of order and specifying the standing order referred to. No discussion shall be allowed on points of order, and the Chair of the meeting, having taken the advice of the Secretary, shall be the sole arbiter as to interpretation.

10.22 Under Standing Order 10.4, staff and students of the University may have access to:
   i. agenda for meetings, and documents considered from the date at which the meeting takes place, subject to confidentiality provisions under Clause 10.5;
   ii. minutes of meetings once approved by the Chair and circulated to Members (save for items of business reserved as confidential under Clause 10.5);
   iii. signed and approved minutes once confirmed by the meeting to which they have been submitted.

10.23 These shall be made available in the University Library and migrated over a period to Wisdom (the University’s document management system).

11. Limitation of Business

11.1 The Chair may refer for consideration at the next meeting, any matter raised by a Member which is not specified in the agenda for the meeting. However, in the case of any urgent matter, the Chair may, if he or she considers it can be properly dealt with at the meeting, so deal with it.

12. Staff/Student Interests and Related Matters

12.1 Staff Members shall not by virtue of their employment by the Corporation be deemed to have a pecuniary interest for the purpose of Article 7.9 but:
   (a) a Staff Member shall withdraw for any part of any meeting of the University Council or a committee or sub-committee at which there is consideration of the appointment or promotion of a member of staff of the University or consideration of the suspension, dismissal, resignation or retirement of a member of staff unless the other Members present invite such a Member to return;
   (b) a Staff Member shall not take part in the consideration of his or her own promotion, suspension, dismissal, resignation or retirement except as provided by these Articles.

12.2 A Student Member shall withdraw from that part of the meeting of the University Council at which there is consideration of:
   a) the conditions of service or the appointment, promotion, suspension, dismissal, resignation or retirement of any member of staff or prospective member of staff of the University or;
   b) any matter relating to any named student or prospective student, unless the other Members present and entitled to vote at the meeting by a resolution invite him or her to return in which event the Student Member shall not vote on any question relating to any such matter.

13. Suspension of Standing Orders

13.1 Any one or more of these standing orders may, in case of urgency, or upon a motion by a Member under Standing Order 10.11, be suspended at any meeting of Council so far as it concerns any business at such meeting, provided that the majority of Members present and voting so decide.

14. Variation and Revocation of Standing Orders

14.1 These Standing Orders may only be varied or revoked by decision of Council. Any motion to vary or revoke any of these Standing Orders shall, when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next meeting of Council, when it shall consider the matter together with a report thereon from the appropriate officer or Committee.