

# Honorary Degrees Committee Charter

## Introduction

1. The Australian National University (ANU) Council has established the Honorary Degrees Committee (the Committee) under the *Honorary Degrees Rules 2015*.
2. This Charter sets out the Honorary Degrees Committee's objective, authority, composition and tenure, roles and, and reporting and administrative arrangements.

## Objective

3. The objective of the Committee is to provide advice and make recommendations to the Council on proposals for the awarding of an honorary degree by the University.

## Authority

4. The Council authorises the Committee, within the scope of its role and responsibilities, to:
  - obtain any information it needs from any employee and/or external party (subject to their legal obligation to protect information);
  - discuss any matters with external parties (subject to confidentiality considerations); and
  - request the attendance of any ANU employee, or Council member at Committee meetings.

## Composition and Tenure

5. In accordance with the *Honorary Degrees Rules 2015*, the Committee will consist of:
  - ex officio, the Chancellor, as Chair;
  - ex officio, the Pro-Chancellor;
  - ex officio, the Vice-Chancellor;
  - ex officio, the Deputy Vice-Chancellors;
  - 3 other members of Council, appointed by the Council, who may not be a student or an employee of the University;

- 1 member of the academic staff drawn from the ANU College of Engineering and Computer Science, the ANU College of Health & Medicine, or the ANU College of Science
  - 1 member of the academic staff drawn from the ANU College of Arts and Social Sciences, the ANU College of Asia and the Pacific, the ANU College of Business and Economics, or the ANU College of Law
  - either the President of the Australian National University Postgraduate and Research Students' Association Inc. or the President of the Australian National University Students' Association Inc., appointed by the Vice-Chancellor after consultation with both Presidents.
6. The Vice-Chancellor may appoint a member of the Council, being a person who is not:
- already a member of the Committee; or
  - a member of the staff of the University; or
  - a student at the University;
- as an alternate member of the Committee for the purposes of a meeting where the Chancellor, Pro-Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor or the 3 members of Council are unable to attend.
7. The Vice-Chancellor may appoint a Pro Vice-Chancellor as an alternate member of the Committee for the purposes of a meeting where a Deputy Vice-Chancellor is unable to attend.
8. The Vice-Chancellor may appoint a person who would be eligible in the relevant category as an alternate member of the Committee for the purposes of a meeting where a member who is a member of the academic staff or a student is unable to attend.
9. In the absence of the Chancellor at a meeting, the Pro-Chancellor or, in the absence of the Pro-Chancellor, a member of the Committee elected by the Committee, must act as Chair for the meeting.
10. Members will be appointed for up to two years and are eligible for re-appointment.
11. The Council will have regard to the University's objectives on gender equity, and the need for both continuity and regular renewal, in filling positions on the Committee.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

12. The Committee exercises such functions, responsibilities and authorities as may be assigned or delegated to it by Council from time to time, but only such executive powers as are explicitly delegated to it.

13. The Committee's responsibilities, subject to revision by Council, are to monitor, review and make recommendations to Council with respect to:
- a. proposals for the awarding of an honorary degree by the University;
  - b. the criteria and procedural arrangements for the awarding of honorary degrees by the University; and
  - c. the revocation of the awarding of an honorary degree, consistent with University procedures.

## **Responsibilities of Members**

14. Members of the Committee are expected to understand and observe the legal requirements of the *Australian National University Act 1991*, the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* and the *Honorary Degrees Rules 2014*.
15. Members are also expected to:
- act in the interests of the ANU;
  - contribute the time needed to study and understand the papers provided; and
  - apply good analytical skills, objectivity and good judgment.

## **Reporting**

16. The Committee will regularly, but at least once a year, report to the Council on its operation and activities during the year. The report should include:
- a summary of the work it performed to fully discharge its responsibilities during the preceding year;
  - details of meetings, including the number of meetings held during the relevant period, and the number of meetings each member attended.
17. The Committee may, at any time, report to the Council any other matter it deems of sufficient importance to do so.

## **Administrative Arrangements**

### **Meetings and Planning**

18. The Committee will ordinarily meet at least three times per year on dates determined by the Committee, subject to there being honorary degree proposals to consider.
19. A proposal for the award of an honorary degree must be considered highly confidential until the Council resolves to admit the person concerned to the degree. If the

Committee decides not to accept a proposal, the Committee Secretary must inform the proposers accordingly.

20. The Chair is required to call a meeting if asked to do so by the Council and decide if a meeting is required if requested by another Committee member.

21. A forward meeting plan of meeting dates and locations will be agreed by the Committee each year.

### **Attendance at Meetings and Quorums**

22. A quorum will consist of 6 members of the Committee.

23. A member (or alternate) may vote on a resolution at a meeting of the Committee by email or in writing, if notice of the resolution is given, and the member (or alternate) submits their vote to the Committee Secretary before the commencement of the meeting.

24. Meetings can be held in person, by telephone or by videoconference.

25. Meetings of the Committee are closed and confidential, and attendance at meetings by non-Committee members, including members of the Council, are only by invitation from the Chair.

### **Secretariat**

26. The Corporate Governance and Risk Office will provide secretariat support to the Committee.

27. The Corporate Governance and Risk Office will be responsible for the presentation of proposals for honorary degrees to the Committee.

28. The Corporate Governance and Risk Office will ensure the agenda for each meeting and supporting papers are circulated, after approval from the Chair, at least 10 days before the meeting.

29. The Corporate Governance and Risk Office will ensure the minutes of the meetings are prepared and maintained. Minutes must be approved by the Chair and circulated to each member of the Committee.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

30. Upon joining the Committee and then once a year thereafter, Committee members will provide written declarations to the Council declaring any material personal interests that would preclude them from being members of the Committee. External members will be asked to consider past employment, consultancy arrangements and related issues in making these declarations. Council will need to be satisfied that there are sufficient processes in place to manage any real or perceived conflict.

31. Committee members must declare any material personal interests at the start of each meeting or before discussion of the relevant agenda item or topic. Details of material personal interests declared by Committee members, and actions taken, will be appropriately recorded in the minutes.

### **Induction**

32. The Corporate Governance and Risk Office, will maintain a program of induction, training and awareness-raising for Committee members, with the objective of enabling the Committee to keep abreast of contemporary developments and leading practices to assist them to meet their Committee responsibilities.

### **Assessment and Review**

33. The Chair of the Committee, in consultation with the Chancellor, will initiate biennially a review of the performance of the Committee, and this Charter, with appropriate input sought from the Council, the Vice-Chancellor, management and any other relevant stakeholders, as determined by the Council. The review of performance will be conducted on a self-assessment basis unless otherwise determined by the Council.

*Approved by resolution of the ANU Council meeting of 2 October 2015.*