



UNSW Council & Council Committees – Frequently Asked Questions

What does Council do?

Council is the governing authority of the University, established under section 8 of the University of New South Wales Act 1989. As the University's governing body, Council acts for and on behalf of the University in the exercise of the University's functions, controls and manages the affairs and concerns of the University, and promotes the objects and interests of the University. The Presiding Member of Council is the Chancellor, [Mr David Gonski](#) AC.

Council has established the Finance, Audit, Risk, Nominations and Remuneration, and Honorary Degrees Committees to assist it in connection with the exercise of its functions.

Who are the Members of Council?

[Council's 15 members](#), led by the Chancellor, represent the interests of the University and community, bringing to the body a variety of internal and external perspectives. Members contribute expertise in a range of areas, including finance, commercial activities, law, governance and management, and planning and development. Council is able to draw on additional specialised expertise through the appointment of external members to Council committees.

Council and Council committee members serve the University on a voluntary basis.

What does the Presiding Member of Council do?

The Chancellor leads the Council members and plays a key role in the corporate governance of the University.

The Chancellor, by virtue of office is a member of every committee constituted by any by-law or rule or any resolution of Council, and every board and Faculty of the University. The Chancellor may preside at any meeting of any such committee, board or Faculty and has all the rights and powers of the presiding member of any such committee, board or Faculty.

The University Secretary provides assistance to the Presiding Member of Council.

Where can I locate Council Policies?

Policies approved in accordance with the University's Policy Framework are published on the [Policy Website](#).

Do I have to be a member to attend a Council Meeting?

The University Council policy on open Council meetings was determined by [resolution CL 91/020](#) on 25 March 1991. In summary:

- a) Council meetings are only open to members of the University, that is staff, students and graduates.
- b) Observers will be admitted on a "first in, first served" basis.

- c) Bookings should be made at the Chancellery reception on the day of the meeting, where observers will be issued with a pass.
- d) Observers are not allowed to take in electronic recording equipment or cameras.
- e) Observers have no speaking rights.
- f) Observers will be admitted after confidential items have been dealt with.
- g) Observers will be requested to leave if a confidential item emerges in the course of discussion.

Procedures for members

Leave of Absence

The *University of New South Wales Act 1989* provides (Schedule 1, Section 2) as follows:

"The office of a member of the Council becomes vacant if the member..... in the case of an appointed or elected member, is absent from 3 consecutive meetings of the Council of which reasonable notice has been given to the member personally or in the ordinary course of post and is not, within 6 weeks after the last of those meetings, excused by the Council for his or her absence".

Members of Council are requested to advise of their reasons for any inability to attend meetings so that leave of absence may be sought.

Motions on Notice

Rule 6 (a) of Section 1 of the University of New South Wales Rules provides that:

"At ordinary meetings, unless otherwise decided by the Council, no motion initiating any subject for discussion shall be made except in pursuance of a notice of motion given to the Secretary to Council ten clear days before the meeting of the Council at which the motion is to be moved".

Members may also seek leave to raise an item of business without notice at any Council meeting. Whether such matters may be considered is then at the discretion of the Council.

Council Member Expenses

Council members may claim for reimbursement of expenses of items such as travel, postage, fax and telephone incurred in connection with Council and/or Council Committee business. Members wishing to claim expenses should complete a Council Member Expense Claim form, available from Governance, and submit, with original tax receipts, to Head of Governance at council@unsw.edu.au.

How do I submit a paper to Council or its Committees?

To submit a paper to Council or its Committees, submit for review to the Vice-Chancellor's office, via the University Secretary using the template, available from council@unsw.edu.au.

How do I contact the Council or its Committees?

The University Secretary can provide assistance. Email council@unsw.edu.au.