



University of
South Australia

Advisory structures

POLICY NO: A-38.11

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AMENDMENTS:

- Academic Board Resolution 97/10/190
- Registrar – August 1998
- Academic Board Resolution 99/8/136
- Registrar – January 2001
- Academic Board Resolution 2004/3/69
- Academic Board – 24 September 2010
- Director: Student and Academic Services – January 2011
- Director: Student and Academic Services – 21 August 2017
- Director: Student and Academic Services – 28 November 2018
- Vice-Chancellor – December 2019

REFERENCE AUTHORITY: Provost and Chief Academic Officer

CROSS-REFERENCES:

- [A-35A: Quality Assurance and Improvement: Programs, Courses and Teaching Arrangements](#)
- [Program Approval Manual](#)

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Purpose

The University of South Australia's core business is educating professionals, creating and applying knowledge, and engaging our communities. Strong external relationships enable UniSA to receive current advice in order to maintain and improve the quality of its teaching, research, professional practice and service to the community.

This policy provides a framework for establishing Academic Unit and institute structures that provide advice from representatives of business, the professions, the not-for-profit sector, and the general community. It recognises that advisory structures may vary across the Academic Units and institutes because of differences in the nature of core business across UniSA, and the appropriate consultation processes with relevant external organisations.

Scope

This policy applies to all advisory groups and advisory meetings established within Academic Units, University institutes, University centres, and central units.

Policy

1. Executive Deans/ Provost or Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise and directors of University institutes¹ and University centres² will establish and maintain a coherent, efficient and effective approach to obtaining regular, reliable and timely advice about their core business from external stakeholders, through the establishment of advisory structures.
2. The activity undertaken by UniSA's advisory structures will be reported annually to Academic Board in accordance with the procedures set out in this document.
3. Advisory structures, as described in this policy, include established *advisory groups* and occasional *advisory meetings* with stakeholders about particular issues.
4. Advisory structures provide:
 - a. independent expert external advice to individuals and groups responsible for decisions about educational and research programs
 - b. advice about relevant trends in the demand for graduates and the graduate qualities required by employers and the community
 - c. comment on the structure and content of existing programs under review, and on proposed new programs (in accordance with the Program Approval Manual), and
 - d. advice on research trends and strategic opportunities for research.
5. Advisory structures will incorporate the particular requirements and business of the Academic Unit or institute and will ensure that participation in advisory groups by external representatives is not unduly onerous.

Establishment of advisory groups

6. Advisory groups will be established under written terms of reference, which are to be reviewed regularly.
7. The terms of reference for an advisory group will outline the following:
 - a. the purpose, overall role and responsibility of the advisory group
 - b. a clear statement of the responsibilities of the members and the University's expectations of them
 - c. the reporting requirements for the advisory group (see clause 8)
 - d. that the advisory group will meet at least twice per year
 - e. that there will be no more than 15 members
 - f. the membership of the advisory group (by position title not name of incumbent)

¹ University institutes include Scale & Focus approved research institutes.

² University centres include Scale & Focus approved research centres

- g. that the members will be appointed for an initial term of three years, and for a total of four consecutive terms. The terms of membership should include staggered terms of office to ensure continuity of membership
 - h. that a member's term ends after non-attendance of two consecutive meetings, where the member has not obtained leave of absence
 - i. that the quorum of the advisory group will be one half of the full membership plus the chair (or nominee). When a quorum is not present no resolution is to be made, but the members present may discuss matters and make recommendations, which will then be reported to, and ratified by, the next full meeting of the advisory group
 - j. that the chair will determine who, in addition to the members and executive officer, may/or will be expected to be in attendance at a meeting and issue invitations accordingly
 - k. that the chair will be an external member.
8. Advisory groups will report annually to Academic Board through the relevant Executive Dean/ Provost or Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise. Reports will include:
- a. an outline of the advisory activities of the previous year, and
 - b. current memberships of all established advisory groups.
- Specific reporting requirements are outlined in clauses 18, 19, 23 and 27.
9. The Executive Dean/ Provost or Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise or director of each University institute and University centre, responsible for the establishment of an advisory group, will designate one or more staff members to support the work of the advisory group (including attending meetings and undertaking the role of executive officer).
10. The executive officer of the advisory group is responsible for ensuring that membership of the advisory group is listed on the website.
11. With the exception of matters covered in this policy, advisory groups may determine their own procedures.
12. All costs associated with the administration of advisory groups or the convening of advisory meetings will be borne by the divisions, schools, institutes and centres, as determined by the division.

Establishment of advisory meetings

13. In addition to advisory groups established in accordance with this policy, Academic Units, University institutes or University centres may convene specific meetings with stakeholders to seek advice about particular matters, such as existing or proposed programs or research areas.
14. Advisory meetings will be convened by an appropriate member of UniSA staff. Invitations will be extended to a representative range of stakeholders who will be provided with relevant documentation about the issue under consideration. Outcomes of the meetings will be formally documented and reported to the relevant Executive Dean/ Provost or Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise, or the director of the University institute, or director of the University centre, or relevant organisational unit.

Procedures for Academic Unit advisory groups³

15. Executive Deans/ Provost or Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise will establish one or more Academic Unit advisory groups under written terms of reference outlined in clauses 6 and 7 and determine their composition and membership.
16. In addition to the requirements for terms of reference outlined in clauses 6 and 7, the advisory groups established for an Academic Unit may, reflecting the range of disciplines involved and the external stakeholders engaged, include:
- a. an Academic Unit advisory group

- b. one or more program advisory groups
 - c. one or more campus advisory groups
 - d. one or more advisory groups for particular purposes.
17. In addition to the requirements for terms of reference outlined in clauses 6 and 7, and clause 16 above, the terms of reference for Academic Unit advisory groups will provide for the membership to include:
- a. senior representation from the relevant professions, industry bodies, community organisations and government organisations and from research partners;
 - b. alumni, and
 - c. relevant senior University staff as the advisory group's ex officio members.
18. At least once each year, the chair of each advisory group established for an Academic Unit will report to the relevant Executive Dean/ Provost or Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise on its advisory activities since the last report. (See clause 8.)
19. The Executive Dean responsible for each Academic Unit, or Provost/ Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise, will then report to the Academic Board on the Academic Unit's advisory groups and their membership. (See clause 8.)

Procedures for University institute⁴ advisory groups

20. The director of each University institute will, in consultation with the Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise, establish an advisory group under written terms of reference, as outlined in clauses 6 and 7.
21. In addition to the requirements for terms of reference outlined in clauses 6 and 7, the terms of reference for University institute advisory groups will provide for the membership to include:
- a. senior representation from the relevant professions, industry bodies, community organisations and government organisations and from research partners
 - b. the Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise or nominee (ex officio)
 - c. the director of the relevant research institute (ex officio)
 - d. a distinguished academic from an external research centre or research institute in a related field.
22. The composition and membership of University institute advisory groups will be approved by the Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise.
23. As part of an annual report on UniSA institute activities, the relevant institute director will report on the activity of the institute advisory group to the Research Leadership Committee. The Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise will then report to the Academic Board on the institutes' advisory group activities (See clause 8.)

Procedures for University centre⁵ advisory groups

24. The director of each University centre will, in consultation with the relevant Dean of Research, establish an advisory group under written terms of reference, as outlined in clauses 6 to 7.
25. In addition to the requirements for terms of reference outlined in clauses 6 and 7, the terms of reference for University centre advisory groups will provide for the membership to include:
- a. senior representation from the relevant professions, industry bodies, community organisations and government organisations and from research partners (by identifying the professions, organisations and partners)
 - b. the Executive Dean of the relevant Academic Unit (ex officio)

⁴ University institutes includes Scale & Focus approved institutes.

⁵ University centres include Scale & Focus approved research centres.

- c. the Dean of Research of the relevant Academic Unit (ex officio)
 - d. the director of the relevant recognised University research centre (ex officio)
 - e. a distinguished academic from a research institute, research centre, or a research group in a related field, and
 - f. a representative from the Research Leadership Committee.
- 26.** The composition and membership of University centre advisory groups will be approved by the Executive Dean of the relevant Academic Unit.
- 27.** At least once each year, the chair of each University centre advisory group will report to the centre board and Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise on the composition and membership and the advisory activities for that year. (See clause 8.)

Advisory structures policy (A-38.10)

Summary of responsibilities of advisory groups

RESPONSIBILITY FOR ...	ACADEMIC UNIT	UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE	UNIVERSITY CENTRE
Establishment of advisory group	The Executive Dean/ Provost or Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise establishes advisory groups within an Academic Unit (<i>cl 15</i>).	The director of each University institute in consultation with the Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise (<i>cl 20</i>)	The director of each University centre in consultation with the relevant Dean of Research (<i>cl 24</i>).
Approval of composition and membership	The Executive Dean/ Provost or Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise determines composition and membership (<i>cl 15</i>).	Approved by the Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise (<i>cl 22</i>).	The Executive Dean of the relevant Academic Unit approves the composition and membership (<i>cl 26</i>).
Reporting requirements — Requirement to report on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the advisory activities of the previous year, and • current memberships of all established advisory groups 	Chairs of advisory groups report to relevant Executive Dean/ Provost or Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise (<i>cl 18</i>).	Each institute advisory group reports to the institute board on an annual basis with the institute director reporting annually on the advisory group activities to the Research Leadership Committee.	Each centre advisory group reports to the centre board and Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise on an annual basis (<i>cl 27</i>).
	Relevant Executive Dean/ Provost or Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise then reports to Academic Board (<i>cl 19</i>).	The Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise then reports annually to Academic Board (<i>cl 8</i>).	The Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise then reports annually to Academic Board (<i>cl 8</i>) (<i>cl 8</i>).