

*Corporate and Information Governance Services*

*September 2018*

DRAFT Terms of Reference

SENATE COMMITTEE FOR ACADEMIC STANDARDS (SCAS)

# Establishment

The general function of Senate is to regulate all learning, teaching, research and academic support functions (paragraph 14(1)(a).

The Senate Committee for Academic Standards (SCAS) is a standing committee of the NWU Senate established in terms of paragraph 19(1) of the Statute of the North-West University.

# Purpose of the committee

SCAS is established for the purpose of considering matters related to the compliance, quality, relevance and responsiveness of the NWU formal academic offering and continuing education courses, and to make recommendations to Senate in this regard.

# Responsibilities of the committee

The Committee considers matters related to the following:

## Strategic matters impacting the formal and informal academic offering, including, but not limited to

* Alignment of qualifications, academic programmes and continuing education offerings with external and internal compliance requirements;
* Ensuring that the NWU PQM and CE portfolio remain relevant, responsive to internal and external needs, and aligned to the NWU strategic intent and required market direction;
* Monitoring the implementation of regulatory requirements in all matters related to the formal and informal academic offering;
* Identifying and mitigating risks related to non-compliance of any matter related to the formal and informal academic offering of the NWU.

## Matters related to the quality assurance of the formal and informal academic offering, including, but not limited to

Considering and approval of:

* amendments to existing formal academic offerings and continuing education courses within the scope of the internal and external regulatory framework;
* a viability/sustainability submission for a new qualification or academic programme or as required;
* a new qualification submission within the scope of the internal and external regulatory framework;
* a new academic programme submission within the scope of the internal and external regulatory framework;
* new modes of provision of an existing formal academic offering;
* the offering of an existing formal academic offering to another campus of the NWU;
* either the renewal of a continuing education offering, or a new continuing education offering.

## Matters related to the timeous annual finalisation of yearbooks

Any and all ad hoc items deemed to be of importance for the quality assurance of the formal and informal academic offering of the NWU.

# Authority

The SCAS, as a standing committee of the Senate, considers all matters related to the compliance, quality, relevance and responsiveness of the NWU formal and informal academic offering and recommends its decisions to Senate for approval.

# Membership

# Composition

SCAS comprises of the following *ex officio* members:

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|  | **Chairperson** |
| 1. | Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and Learning |
|  | **Standing members *ex officio* (part of approval workflow in SCAS system)** |
| 2. | School Directors or Deputy School Directors responsible for a SCAS submission |
| 3. | Senior Faculty Administrator(s) (SALA) |
| 4. | Deputy Deans Teaching and Learning and, where applicable, Deputy Deans Research and Innovation |
| 5. | CTL Directors: Faculty TL Support and, where applicable, Special Projects / CHEDR or a delegated functionary |
| 6. | Director: Qualifications and Academic Programme Planning or Manager External Regulation |
| 7. | Manager Student Administrative Systems or a delegated functionary |
| 8. | Director Strategic Intelligence or a delegated functionary |
|  | **In Attendance at SCAS meetings** |
| 8. | Chief Director: Library and Information Services or a delegated functionary |
| 9. | Director: Information Technology or a delegated functionary |
| 10. | Director: Financial Planning or a delegated functionary |
| 11. | Director: Facilities or a delegated functionary |
| 12. | Director: Student recruitment and marketing or a delegated functionary |
| 13. | Director: Quality Enhancement |

## Appointment of Chairperson and acting Chairperson

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and Learning is the chairperson of the SCTL.

In the absence of the Chair, the Chair will appoint an Acting Chairperson.

## Voting rights of members

All standing members have voting rights. Members in attendance, observers and visitors at SCAS meetings will not have voting rights.

## Secretariat

Secretariat services are provided by the SCAS Administrator.

# Meeting arrangements

The following meeting arrangements apply:

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| **Frequency** | SCAS meets at least twice annually, meetings are scheduled to report to Senate meetings. |
| **Extraordinary meetings** | An extraordinary meeting may be called when deemed to be necessary by the Chairperson. |
| **Quorum** | The quorum of the meeting will be half (50%) plus one of all the members. |
| **Notice** | At least 21 days before the meeting date, the Secretariat electronically notifies of the time and place where the meeting is to be held.  At least 2 days before an extraordinary meeting, the Secretariat electronically notifies, provides the reason for an extraordinary meeting, as well as the time and venue.  The minutes of the previous meeting will be enclosed and members are requested to provide the Secretariat with input by the closing date for the agenda. Should no response be received by this time, it will be assumed that the members agree with the record. |
| **Agenda** | At least 7 days prior to the meeting, the Secretariat provides the complete agenda pack electronically to all members. |
| **Attendance register** | An attendance register will be circulated by the Secretariat at the beginning of each meeting. Every member present must sign the attendance register. The attendance register is proof of attendance for purposes of minuting. |
| **Confirmation of Minutes** | An ordinary meeting, after being constituted and opened, commences with reading and confirming (by means of the chairperson signing) of the minutes of the previous meeting(s).  Any objection to the minutes is raised and disposed of before the minutes are confirmed. The minutes may be regarded as read if a copy of the draft minutes was provided to members prior to the meeting.  Minutes will be a true reflection of the previous meeting, and will contain all views expressed under the heading “noted”. Decisions made by the committee will reflect under the heading “resolved”. |
| **Decision-making process** | Matters are decided by means of general consensus. The Chairperson might however decide when a decision should be taken by means of a voting procedure.  The Chairperson may decide that voting must be by secret ballot, provided that voting for persons must always be by secret ballot.  The Chairperson has an ordinary vote, but must in addition exercise a casting vote in the event of an equality of votes on any matter.  The number of votes in favour of or against any proposal is not recorded in the minutes, unless the Chairperson so decides. |
| **Revoking of a resolution** | The revoking of any resolution entails a formal process by means of which a member is to table a formal written request for a rescission, motivating the reason for the review of the resolution in question, as well as providing a suggestion for a resolution. |
| **Conflict of Interest** | A member may not take part in the discussion of or vote on any matter in which the member has a direct financial or other interest, unless the member first discloses the nature and extent of the interest and obtains the leave of the meeting to take part in the discussion or vote.  All committee members mush indicate any conflict of interest at the agenda point allocated therefor and must also indicate a conflict of interest on the attendance register by indicating the agenda item where the conflict arises in writing next to his/her name. |
| **Point of Order** | A point or order, clarification or information may be raised against any member, in which instance the ruling of the Chairperson is binding and cannot be challenged.  Should the above point of order, clarification or information be immediately challenged by a member, the ruling is put to the meeting for determination – without it being discussed, and the decision of the meeting is final. |
| **Disrespectful / Disorderly conduct** | Anyone attending a meeting who, after having been requested to refrain from disrespectful or disorderly conduct, continues to disobey a ruling from the Chairperson, must be requested to leave the meeting.  If that person does not leave the meeting immediately, such a person could be removed from the meeting with the assistance of Protection Services. |
| **Voting** | All matters are decided by majority of votes cast.  The Chairperson or the meeting may decide that voting must be by secret ballot, provided that voting for persons must always be by secret ballot. (Para 9(16) of the NWU Statute).  The Chairperson has an ordinary vote, but may in addition exercise a casting vote in the event of an equality of votes on any matter.  The number of votes in favour of or against any proposal is not recorded in the minutes, unless the meeting so decides.  At the request of a member the chairperson may direct that the vote of such member be recorded.  The views of a member who is unable to attend a meeting may be submitted in writing but may not count as a vote of such member. |
| **Apology** | An apology will be noted when a member electronically submits it to the Secretariat and/or the Chairperson, at least one day prior to the meeting.  Members absent from the meeting without above mentioned apology are noted as “without apology”.  The views of a member who is unable to attend a meeting may be submitted in writing but may not count as a vote of such member. |
| **Recording of meeting** | At the opening of the meeting, the Chairperson indicates that a recording will be made for minute purposes.  The recording is archived for historical purposes, but once the minute is approved and signed, the minute constitutes the record of the meeting. |
| **Round Robin Process** | The Chairperson may electronically submit urgent matters in-between scheduled meetings. The Secretariat will assist in this process.  At least two thirds of the members have to electronically confirm their involvement in the process by giving feedback, approval or non-approval. When a majority of members reaches agreement it is taken as a resolution. The secretariat shall continue submitting the request for round-robin until response had been received from at least two-thirds of the members.  Such resolution is equivalent to a resolution of the committee and must be recorded in the minutes of the next meeting. |
| **Resources and Budget** | A centralised budget regarding the matters of this committee is managed within the Qualifications and Academic Programme Planning Unit.  Members are responsible for their own travel and accommodation costs. |
| **Records management** | All records of the committee (terms of reference, membership list, agendas, minutes, attendance register, correspondence, etc.) will be kept electronically (on the SCAS shared drive). |
| **Access to records of the committee** | Committee members have automatic access to all records of the committee. All other interested parties must complete a request form in terms of the Promotion of Access to Information Act, which will be assessed in terms of the prescriptions contained in the Act. |

# Reporting

This committee reports to Senate.

# Guiding documents

The following documents guide the operations of this Committee and any subsequently approved national policy or communique as published in the Government Gazette or NWU policies as approved by Senate or the University Management Committee and ratified by Council:

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| **National regulatory framework** | **Authority** |
| Articulation Policy for the Post-School Education and Training System of South Africa | Department of Higher Education and Training (Government Gazette 40545, 13 January 2017) |
| Criteria for Programme Accreditation | Council on Higher Education, Higher Education Quality Committee, Sept 2004, revised June 2012 |
| Department of Higher Education and Training’s Position on online programme and course offerings | Department of Higher Education and Training, 22 March 2017 |
| Distance Higher Education Programmes in a Digital Era: Good Practice Guide | Council on Higher Education, 2014 |
| Higher Education Act (101/1997) and subsequent Amendments to the Act | Department of Higher Education and Training (Government Gazette 18515, 19 December 1997) |
| Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework | Department of Higher Education and Training (Government Gazette 38116, 17 October 2014) |
| Learning to Teach in Higher Education in South Africa | Council on Higher Education, Higher Education Monitor 14, 2017 |
| Level Descriptors for the South African national Qualifications Framework | South African Qualifications Authority (Government Gazette 35548, 27 July 2012) |
| Minimum Admission Requirements for Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor’s Degree Programmes requiring a NSC/V | Department of Higher Education and Training (Government Gazette 32743, November 2013) |
| National Policy and Criteria for Designing and Implementing Assessment for NQF Qualifications and Part-Qualifications and Professional Designations in South Africa | South African Qualifications Authority (Government Gazette 38246, 28 November 2014) |
| National Qualifications Framework Act (67 of 2008) | Department of Higher Education and Training (Government Gazette 32233, 22 May 2009) |
| Policy and Criteria for the Registration of Qualifications and Part Qualifications on the National Qualifications Framework | South African Qualifications Authority, March 2013 |
| Policy for the provision of distance education in South African universities | Department of Higher Education and Training (Government Gazette 37811, 7 July 2014) |
| Policies on the Recognition of Prior Learning, Credit Accumulation and Transfer, and Assessment in higher education | Council on Higher Education, August 2016 |
| Revised Policy on the minimum requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications | Department of Higher Education and Training  (Government Gazette 38487, February 2015) |
| Strategic Policy Framework on Disability for the Post-School Education and Training System | Department of Higher Education and Training, March 2018 |
| White Paper for Post-School Education and Training | Department of Higher Education and Training, 16 January 2014 |
| Work-integrated Learning Good Practice Guide | Council on Higher Education, 2011 |
| Classification of Educational Subject Matter | Department of Basic Education , 1982 |

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| **Institutional regulatory framework** | **Status** | **Authority** | **Date** |
| Academic Programme Management Policy | Approved | Council | 20 June 2008 |
| Assessment and Moderation Policy | Approved | Council | 22 June 2007 |
| General Academic Rules | Approved | Council | 21 September 2017 |
| Library and Information Services Policy | Approved | Council | 28 March 2018 |
| Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty and misconduct | Approved | Council | 10 June 2011 |
| Recognition of Prior Learning Policy | Approved | Council | 21 September 2007 |
| Study Guide Policy | Approved | Council | 21 September 2007 |
| Teaching and Learning Policy | Approved | Council | 22 June 2007 |
| Work-Integrated Learning and Service Learning | Approved | Council | 23 June 2016 |
| Presentation of Short Courses at the NWU | Approved | Council | 17 September 2010 |
| Quality Policy | Approved | Council | November 2016 |

This terms of reference was approved by Senate on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.