

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION COMMITTEE
STANDING ORDERS¹
2026/27

Preamble

Council has adopted the following common set of principles within which its committees operate.

- **Subsidiarity** - Handling of committee business through Council's main committees reflects the principle of subsidiarity, that decisions should be delegated to the lowest level appropriate to that decision.
- **Clarity** There should be clarity regarding the membership of the committee and the role of those in attendance, the flow of business to and from the committee, its terms of reference, delegations (both in matters delegated to the committee and by the committee), the reports coming to the committee and the reporting arrangements of the committee itself (e.g. to Council, to other bodies, to Congregation and the wider community of the collegiate University). Matters such as these are set out in the Standing Orders of a main committee of Council.
- **Flow of business** Where allowed by legislation and timeliness, most items should come to Council through one of its five main committees. Items normally should go to only one of those committees. If an item has to go to more than one, it should do so sequentially, so that a single report comes up to Council. The reason for an item coming through more than one main committee should be clearly documented for Council.
- **Timeliness** Handling also reflects the importance of timeliness. Ensuring timely decision-making may require Chair's Action; in such cases Chair's decisions are reported at the next available meeting.
- **Inclusivity** Consideration should be given to ensuring diverse membership of the committee and to conducting business in a way that encourages the full participation and engagement of all members to achieve effective decision-making.
- **Reporting** Items coming to Council should first and foremost enable Council members to exercise their duties as trustees. They therefore normally address key strategic opportunities and/or significant risks. These may be new risks not necessarily yet reflected in the current risk register.

Reports to Council should be brief and focussed. Detailed consideration, wherever possible, should already have taken place at the level of the reporting committee. Information recording this detailed consideration, in the form of minutes and supporting papers, is accessible to Council members via the SharePoint site.

¹ The requirement for Council's main committees to have Standing Orders is set out in Regulation 2.8 of Council Regulations 14 of 2002 <https://governance.admin.ox.ac.uk/legislation/council-regulations-14-of-2002>.

1. Membership

1.1 Eligibility for membership and procedure for vacancies

Eligibility for membership of all committees is set out in general regulations. See regulation 2 of Council Regulations 14 of 2002

<https://governance.admin.ox.ac.uk/legislation/council-regulations-14-of-2002>.

1.2 Period of membership²

Appointed, elected, and co-opted members of Research and Innovation Committee (“the Committee”), other than student members, shall, in the absence of provision in these regulations, or in the General Regulations of Council for Committees, to the contrary, serve for three years.

Such a member may serve no more than two full terms of office, and on completion of those two terms may not become an appointed, elected, or co-opted member of the Committee until a full term of office on that committee has passed. GPC may dispense the member from this requirement.

Student members shall serve for one year.

Further provisions concerning members whose appointment to the Committee is tied to other matters, e.g. membership of Council, and casual vacancies (where a vacancy occurs mid-way through a period of office), are provided in the regulations governing period of membership.

1.3 Composition of the Committee

The Committee’s composition, including its powers of co-option, are set out at regulations 6.1-6.3 of Council Regulations 15 of 2002

<https://governance.admin.ox.ac.uk/legislation/part-6-research-and-innovation-committee>.

1.4 Inclusivity and diversity

In reviewing its membership at its first meeting of the year, the Committee should consider whether to use its power of co-option to provide for a more diverse membership.

1.5 Eligibility to vote

Appointed, elected, and co-opted members of the Committee, other than student members, shall be entitled to vote, where at the Chair’s discretion, a vote is called.

2. Terms of reference

The Committee’s terms of reference are set out at regulations 6.4 of Council Regulation 15 of 2002

<https://governance.admin.ox.ac.uk/legislation/part-6-research-and-innovation-committee>

² Regulation 2.2 of Council Regulations 14 of 2002 <https://governance.admin.ox.ac.uk/legislation/council-regulations-14-of-2002>

3. Arrangements for meetings

3.1 Timing

Meetings of the Committee shall be normally held on Thursdays in week 2 and week 7 of each Full Term. The Chair may postpone or cancel meetings at their discretion.

The Chair may call an extraordinary meeting at any time.

3.2 Declaration of personal interests

Members of the Committee will be asked to declare any interest that could give rise to conflict in relation to any item on the agenda at the beginning of the item in question. All interests so disclosed will be recorded in the minutes. If the Chair deems it appropriate, the member shall absent themselves from all or part of the Committee's discussion of the matter. Wording reflecting these provisions will be included at the beginning of every committee's agenda.

3.3 Order of Business

The order of business will normally be as follows, for both unreserved and reserved sections of the agenda:

1. Matters requiring active consideration (business that is 'above the line'):

1.1 minutes of the previous meeting (to be taken as read unless any objection is raised);

1.2 matters arising from the minutes;

1.3 other items requiring discussion and/or decision;

2. Matters not requiring active consideration (business that is 'below the line'):

2.1 matters arising from the minutes;

2.2 other items requiring approval or noting.

3.4 Quorum³

No business shall be transacted at any meeting of the Committee unless a quorum is present. For the Committee, a quorum is one third of those members eligible to vote upon the business of the committee (rounded to the nearest integer). For joint groups, this must include at least one University and one College member.

A member who is participating in a meeting by Teams, video-conference or any other means of communication which permits all members simultaneously to hear one another, shall be considered present and therefore shall count towards the quorum.

³ Regulations 2.6-2.7 of Council Regulations 14 of 2002 <https://governance.admin.ox.ac.uk/legislation/council-regulations-14-of-2002#collapse1397871>.

If a quorum is not present within half an hour from the time appointed for the meeting, or during a meeting a quorum ceases to be present, the business or remaining business of that meeting shall be deferred to another meeting, whether already scheduled or to be scheduled, or shall be dealt with by the Chair acting under delegated authority in accordance with these standing orders (see paragraph 9.3 below).

3.5 Chair's casting vote⁴

The person taking the Chair at any Committee meeting shall have a second or casting vote in the event of equality of voting.

3.6 Deputy Chair

At the start of each academic year, or at other times as necessary, the Committee shall appoint one of its members as Deputy Chair, to deputise as Chair in the event of the Chair's absence, or for an item in which the Chair has a conflict of interest.

4. Attendance at meetings

4.1 Voting members

Only individuals appointed, elected or co-opted to the Committee or listed in 4.2 and 4.3 below may attend meetings on a regular basis. On occasions when the appointee is unable to attend the appointee will still receive the papers and be able to raise any comments or questions through the Secretariat or with the Chair.

4.2 Officers in attendance

Where they are not members of the Committee, the following officers may attend any meeting of the Committee for the full agenda: the Director, Research Services, and the Assistant Registrar (Research). These officers may speak if invited, but are not entitled to vote.

4.3 Student members

The student members on the Committee are entitled to attend the unreserved business of a meeting, but not the reserved business and are not entitled to vote⁵.

4.4 Those invited for particular items

Other individuals may be invited to attend for particular items and participate in the discussion.

5. Confidentiality of the Committee's proceedings

5.1 Categories of business

⁴ Regulation 1.3 of Council Regulations 14 of 2002 <https://governance.admin.ox.ac.uk/legislation/council-regulations-14-of-2002#collapse1397861>.

⁵ Regulation 2.3 of Council Regulations 14 of 2002 <https://governance.admin.ox.ac.uk/legislation/council-regulations-14-of-2002>.

Unreserved business is the business of the Committee for which the student members may be in attendance. It may either be designated as 'public', 'internal', or 'confidential'.

'Public' business is not of a sensitive nature. All 'public' business may be discussed within the wider University and will be published on the University's website and will be open to the public.

'Internal' business may be discussed outside of the Committee, with other Committee sub-committee members or key departments in the wider University but because of certain sensitivities may not be made known to the wider University through publication on the University's website. 'Internal' papers are labelled as such and they may be further sub classified in order to denote where access has been given; for example 'Internal (Committee and Committee non-attending officers)'.

'Confidential' business is of such a sensitive nature that it must not be discussed with anyone who is not a member of an attending officer. Confidential papers are labelled as such and will not be made known to the wider University through publication on the University's website.

Reserved business is the business of the Committee for which student members may not be present (see paragraph 7) and is always 'confidential'; relevant papers are marked accordingly. The expectation is that this category of business will be used as sparingly as possible. As a principle, items of business are reserved where a breach of confidentiality would have potentially serious consequences. The following matters will be ordinarily categorised as 'reserved' business, and therefore as 'confidential':

- a. issues of particular strategic sensitivity;
- b. issues of particular commercial sensitivity; and
- c. matters pertaining to specific individuals, such as honorary degrees and decisions on appointments, promotions, and other matters concerning the personal position of members of the staff of the University; and the admission of individuals and their academic assessment and personal affairs.

The list above is not exhaustive and there may be occasion on which matters falling outside those categories listed above need to be treated as 'confidential'. If this occurs, the expectation would be to provide the explanation to the Committee.

The student members shall receive the full agenda (edited as necessary in the opinion of the Chair) and papers, but not the papers or minutes relating to reserved business.

5.2 Treatment of different types of business

'Public' and 'internal' business may be discussed within the wider University. 'Public' business may be made known to the wider University through publication on the intranet, 'internal' business will not.

Business that is designated 'confidential' may be discussed in person only with:

- a. other members of the Committee;

- b. members of, and officers in attendance at, the committee(s) that have previously considered the issue;
- c. officers in attendance at the Committee;
- d. officers in receipt of the Committee papers; and
- e. where the business is unreserved, the student members of the Committee.

In exceptional circumstances, the Committee member may desire to discuss confidential issues with a person outside the groups in 4.1-4.3. In such a case, approval must be sought, with reasons, and obtained from the Chair in advance of the discussion taking place.

The Committee member may seek further information on an item from the officer specifically named in the paper as being the source of such information. The same designation of confidentiality will attach to the information provided as to the item on the agenda.

At its meeting, the Committee may alter either the designation of a paper, or its position within the agenda. For example, it may decide that a previously confidential paper should be designated as 'open'. If a change in designation is thought desirable following the Committee meeting in which the item was considered, the Chair has authority to approve such a change.

5.3 Discussion at meetings of the Committee

Irrespective of the categorisation of business, in all cases views expressed by others present at meetings of the Committee (either members of the Committee or those in attendance) during the course of the Committee meeting may not be disclosed to, or discussed with, anyone outside the meeting unless that person is either another member of the Committee, an officer ordinarily in attendance, or, with the exception of discussions of 'reserved confidential' business, the student members.

6. Papers

6.1 Circulation

Electronic copies of the agenda and papers will be published on the Committee's SharePoint site for members of the committee, officers in attendance, and others authorised to see the papers, normally seven days before the meeting.

Members of Council will have access to the Committee's SharePoint site.

Others for whom it is necessary for the discharge of their duties shall also have access to the Committee's SharePoint site, subject to endorsement by the secretary to the Committee.

The Keeper of the Archives shall have access to the Committee's SharePoint site to download the agenda and papers for permanent electronic preservation. A hard copy of the committee's papers shall also be sent to the Registry file.

6.2 Holding and disposal of papers

All information concerning the Committee, including its papers whether in electronic form or hard copy, must be held in accordance with the University's Information Security Policy⁶.

Members of the Committee and others in receipt of committee papers, including minutes, must ensure that hard and electronic copies of such papers in their personal possession are disposed of, when no longer needed by them; the secretary of the Committee shall make appropriate arrangements for the confidential disposal of any such papers which are returned to them.

7. Use of generative AI tools

7.1 Support in preparation of the minutes

The Committee Secretary will only use University approved AI tools to support the generation of a draft set of minutes based on a transcript of the meeting. Meetings will be transcribed via Microsoft Teams.

The Committee Secretary is responsible for reviewing and editing the generated draft to ensure it accurately reflects the discussions, decisions, and actions of the meeting. The Secretary retains full responsibility for the content and accuracy of the unconfirmed minutes.

Unconfirmed minutes will be formally approved by the Committee members at the subsequent meeting in line with standard committee procedures.

7.2 Retention of the data

Generated meeting transcripts will be retained only until the corresponding minutes have been formally approved by the Committee. All transcripts will be securely stored by the committee Secretary during this retention period. After approval, transcripts and related AI-generated responses will be deleted.

Committee members who attended the relevant meeting may request access to the transcript during the retention period. Requests should be directed to the Committee's Secretary.

7.3 Member Notification and Consent

Committee members will be informed/reminded in advance of each meeting that the meeting will be transcribed and AI tools will be used to help prepare minutes. At any point before or during a meeting, a member may raise a concern regarding the recording or transcription. Members may request that recording be paused or for no recording to take place. In such cases, the decision on whether to proceed rests with the Chair of the Committee.

8. Self-review⁷

As a main committee of Council, the Committee shall carry out a self-review of its operations and

⁶ <https://www.infosec.ox.ac.uk/>

⁷ The provisions governing self-reviews are at regulation 2.5 of Council Regulations 14 of 2002 <https://governance.admin.ox.ac.uk/legislation/council-regulations-14-of-2002>.

effectiveness at least every five years and shall report its findings to Council with recommendations for change where appropriate.

9. Risk register

The Committee will review its risk register each Michaelmas term and Trinity term to ensure that the appropriate risks are identified and that suitable and effective mitigations are proposed.

10. Delegations

10.1 Powers delegated by Council to the Committee

Other than those set out in Part 6 of Council Regulations 15 of 2002, Council has made no specific delegations to Research Committee.

10.2 Other powers relating to the Committee set out in regulations

Suspension of regulations⁸

Council, or, in a case falling within the delegated authority of any of the main standing committees of Council, ... that committee, may..., by a resolution carried by not less than two-thirds of the members present and voting, suspend the operation of any regulation, other than a regulation made by the Rules Committee under Statute XI, to cover some specific case.

10.3 Powers delegated by the Committee to its chair

The Chair of the Committee shall have power to give approval to any matter that falls within the Committee's terms of reference, provided that the Chair is satisfied that the case for urgency is such that approval cannot await the next meeting of the committee, and subject to report of the decision at the next meeting. When the likely need for an urgent decision between meetings is foreseen, a report should be brought to the committee outlining the current position and asking for prospective approval of Chair's action on the committee's behalf. In case of doubt or difficulty, the Chair may, at their discretion, seek approval from other members of the Committee by correspondence.

11. Reporting

11.1 Reports to Council⁹

The Committee shall report to Council as needed to fulfil its remit. In so doing, it shall also refer to Council any matter that in the opinion of the committee requires the attention of Council.

The Committee shall make a regular report to Council, which draws out themes and issues across the relevant year, identifying the key strategic opportunities and significant risks.

In addition to substantive items that are referred to Council, the Committee shall make available its minutes and supporting papers to Council on the business it has considered. Individual items may be

⁸ Section 20 of Statute VI.

⁹ Regulation 2.4(2) of Council Regulations 14 of 2002 "They shall make reports and recommendations to Council as they consider appropriate, subject to such policies and guidelines as Council lays down by regulation or otherwise."
<https://governance.admin.ox.ac.uk/legislation/council-regulations-14-of-2002> .

marked 'public', 'internal', or 'confidential'.

11.2 Bodies reporting to the Committee

Terms of reference of the following Committees and Sub Committees may be found <https://unioxfordnexus.sharepoint.com/sites/OxIntranet-research-innovation/SitePages/research-innovation-committee.aspx>:

- Central University Research Ethics Committee (CUREC)
- Research Degrees Panel (reports jointly to Education Committee and Research and Innovation Committee)
- Intellectual Property Advisory Group (IPAG)
- John Fell Fund Committee (reports jointly to PRAC and Research and Innovation Committee)
- Knowledge Exchange and Impact Sub-Committee (KEISC)
- Research Portfolio Committee (RPC)
- REF Project Board
- Research Staff Steering Committee
- Research Practice Sub Committee