

Draft UNSW Rules relating to Academic Board and its committees – Consultation note

What are the UNSW Rules?

The [UNSW Rules](#) are made by UNSW Council pursuant to s 28 [UNSW Act 1989 \(NSW\)](#) and cl 64 [UNSW By-law 2005 \(NSW\)](#). They set out the framework for academic governance of the University, including how the Academic Board and its committees are constituted and operate, how representatives are elected, and the roles and responsibilities of those boards and committees.

Why are the UNSW Rules relating to Academic Board being reviewed?

The *UNSW Bylaw 2005* establishes the Academic Board as the 'principal academic body of the university' and tasks it with overseeing 'academic governance and the maintenance of academic standards'. The [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021 \(Cth\)](#) (HESF) set out a wide range of standards that UNSW must comply with and that fall within the scope of academic governance. The *UNSW Rules* provide Council with the opportunity to further clarify the functions of Academic Board in relation to the *UNSW Bylaw* and the HESF.

The *UNSW Rules* are undergoing review to improve clarity, readability, consistency, and better alignment with the HESF. UNSW-wide consultation on the Draft UNSW (Election) Rules was in August.

This set of draft rules relates only to the functions and powers of Academic Board and the committees reporting to it. That is, sections 2, 3 and the Schedules to the existing [UNSW Rules](#). They better articulate the scope of the functions of Academic Board and accommodate the July 2026 amendments to the HESF, including new and revised standards effective from 1 January 2027. The draft also simplifies the rules relating to Academic Board committees, specifying core committees and their chairs. It removes detailed terms of reference from the *UNSW Rules* which are determined by Academic Board.

Consultation and review process

Consultation with the UNSW Rules Review Reference Group, senior leadership and Academic Board informed the draft. Following this consultation, Academic Board will endorse the draft and Council will approve it.

Overview

Key changes proposed are:

- The existing Role of Academic Board is redrafted and expanded as Functions of Academic Board.
- Functions are grouped under headings and re-cast to align with wording in the HESF, with specific indications of the level and detail of assurance applicable for each function.
- Responsibility for oversight of student success, opportunity and wellbeing is now referenced.
- A minimum set of Academic Board committees is set out, with core purposes and ex officio chairs. The details of terms of reference, membership and additional committees or subcommittees are to be determined by Academic Board.

How can I provide feedback?

Staff and students are invited to provide feedback by **30 October 2026** via acad.board@unsw.edu.au.