

University Court: Standing Orders

as amended by the Court
on 29 January 2005
and confirmed on 28 January 2006
and further amended on 26 January 2008
and further amended on 31 January 2015

I CONSTITUTION

(1) Purpose

The Court has the right to receive annual reports on the working of the University, to discuss any matters relating to the University and to convey its opinions thereon to the Council or the Senate.

(2) Membership

The membership shall be in accordance with Statute 8 and Ordinance 13.

(3) Chairperson

The Chancellor, who shall be the Head of the University, may preside over meetings of the Court. There shall be one or more Deputy Pro-Chancellors who, in the absence of the Chancellor, or during a vacancy in that office, shall preside over the Court or, by agreement with the Chancellor, shall chair meetings of the Court in the presence of the Chancellor. The person who chairs the annual meeting of the Court shall be deemed to be the Chairperson, including at any special meetings of the Court, until the day of the next annual meeting.

(4) Secretary

The Chief Administrative Officer and Secretary, by himself or herself or by his or her nominee, shall act as Secretary of the Court and of its committees and shall make and keep safe minutes of Court meetings and take such action as the Court directs. He/she shall forward to all members minutes of any meetings as soon as reasonably possible after that meeting takes place. He/she shall receive and record members' suggested amendments to such minutes, so long as such amendments are notified to him/her within fourteen days (or such other time as he/she will have specified) from the date of his/her dispatching the original minutes.

II MEETINGS

(1) Annual Meeting

- (a) The Court must hold an annual meeting once in every calendar year within fifteen months of the preceding annual meeting to receive the Vice-Chancellor's report on the working of the University and the audited Statement of Accounts presented by the Council.
- (b) Preliminary notice of the day, hour and venue of the meeting shall be sent by the Secretary or his/her deputy to every member of Court not less than four weeks before the date of the meeting. Such notice shall include:
 - (i) attendance form;
 - (ii) invitation to members to suggest matters to be included on the agenda;
 - (iii) nomination form(s) for co-optations to Court;
 - (iv) list of Council members;
 - (v) list of Court members.
- (c) Not less than seven days (and preferably fourteen so as to allow ten days for the return of any ballot forms) before the date of the annual meeting the Secretary or his/her deputy shall send out to all members of the Court:
 - (i) agenda;
 - (ii) Vice-Chancellor's report on the working of the University (if not previously circulated);
 - (iii) audited Statement of Accounts;
 - (iv) a supplement, if necessary, to the Court membership list under II (1) (b) (v) above;
 - (v) minutes of the previous annual meeting and of any special meeting(s) held since the date of the previous annual meeting;
 - (vi) the papers or documents to be considered at the meeting.

(2) Special Meeting

- (a) A special meeting of the Court may be convened at any time by the Council, or on the written request of not less than fifty members of Court.
- (b) Not less than fourteen days before the date of a special meeting the Secretary or his/her deputy shall send to each member of Court a notice stating:
 - (i) the day, hour and venue of such meeting;
 - (ii) the general nature of the business to be transacted.
- (c) Not less than seven days prior to the date of the special meeting the Secretary or his/her deputy shall send to each member of Court the agenda, if necessary, for that meeting.

(d) No business other than that notified under (b) may be transacted.

(3) Meetings Generally

(a) The Council will fix the day, time and venue of all meetings of Court.

(b) If any meeting is adjourned to another day, notice of the time, day and venue of the reconvened meeting will be given to all members of Court. Only business unfinished at the time of adjournment will be transacted at the reconvened meeting. (N.B. – see Standing Order IV (2) for meetings adjourned to the same day.)

(c) The proceedings of any meeting will not be invalid because any member has not received notice or agenda papers.

III AGENDA

(1) A meeting will not be competent to transact any other business than that mentioned in the agenda, or notice of the meeting under Standing Order II (2) (b), or directly arising therefrom EXCEPT that, at an annual meeting the Chairperson may, with the consent of the Court (see VI (4)) table business which does not appear on the agenda but which he/she considers to be of sufficient importance or interest to be considered at that meeting.

(2) Where a member desires any matter or nomination to be included in agenda, he/she must so notify the Secretary or his/her deputy in writing not less than fourteen days before the meeting in question.

(3) Any documents which a member wishes to be considered at a meeting must be submitted to the Secretary or his/her deputy not less than fourteen days before the meeting.

(4) The Secretary or his/her deputy shall not include matters on the agenda where notification has not been given to him/her under (2) and (3) above.

(5) The Secretary or his/her deputy, in consultation with the appropriate chairperson, and having taken any further advice which he/she deems necessary, may refuse to include any matter or document in agenda and shall give reasons for such refusal. If the matter is raised personally at the meeting by the person who requested its inclusion, the refusal shall be open to discussion.

IV QUORUM

- (1) The quorum is defined as being those members who are present at an annual or special meeting and who also constitute one-quarter of the total current members of the Court.
- (2) If after one hour from the hour set for the commencement of a meeting there is no quorum the Secretary or his/her deputy may adjourn the meeting to such hour of the same day as he/she thinks fit.
- (3) If there is no quorum at the postponed time the meeting will be adjourned to such a day, hour and venue as will thereafter be fixed by the Council.
(N.B. – see Standing Order II (3) (b) for meetings adjourned to another day.)

V GENERAL PROCEDURE AND FUNCTIONS OF CHAIRPERSON

- (1) The order of business will follow the agenda although questions of procedure will be dealt with as and when they arise (but see (3) (g) below).
- (2) The Chairperson shall conduct the meeting and except as is otherwise provided in these Standing Orders, or in case of a vote of no confidence in the Chairperson, the Chairperson's decision on any procedural matter shall be final.
- (3) The Chairperson may also:
 - (a) with the assent of the meeting, determine that questions and/or motions be put without any or any further debate;
 - (b) determine the order of speaking and restrict any speech to no more than three minutes;
 - (c) prevent any members speaking twice on the same subject;
 - (d) rule any member, question or material out of order;
 - (e) with the assent of the meeting, terminate discussion on any item of business;
 - (f) permit or refuse permission for the circulation of material to members;
 - (g) with the assent of the meeting, vary the order of business.
- (4) All remarks should be addressed to the Chairperson and questions to officers of the University shall only be put with the Chairperson's consent and through the Chairperson.
- (5) When the Chairperson speaks all other members of the Court shall be silent.

- (6) The Chairperson shall continue to hold office until the next annual meeting (see I (3), and in consultation with the Secretary and/or his/her deputy, shall determine what business may be transacted by correspondence between meetings and what should be the subject of a special meeting. All such determinations shall be drawn to the attention of the next annual meeting of the Court.

VI SPECIFIC PROCEDURAL MATTERS

(1) Questions

- (a) A member may only ask a question on a point which:

- (i) is included in the agenda; or
- (ii) arises from matters under consideration; or
- (iii) relates to procedure

and in any event, only in accordance with Standing Order V (4) above.

- (b) Where an oral answer cannot conveniently or properly be given a written answer shall be circulated as soon as possible to all members of Court.

(2) Motions

- (a) Motions are matters to be put to the vote and fall into one of the following categories:

- (i) those listed on the agenda or directly arising therefrom;
or
- (ii) for amendment of a motion or amended motions; or
- (iii) for a vote to be taken or not to be taken; or
- (iv) for a ballot; or
- (v) for adjournment of the meeting, or any specific item of business raised at the meeting, either for a stated period or for an indefinite period; or
- (vi) for the closure of a debate; or
- (vii) of no confidence in the Chairperson.

- (b) All motions must be proposed and seconded before being discussed, amended or voted upon.

- (c) Motions listed on the agenda must be proposed either by the person or one of the people who gave notice of that motion to the Secretary in accordance with Standing Order III (2) or by a person duly nominated in writing by the original proposer. A motion not so proposed will be deemed to have been withdrawn unless Court adjourns consideration of the motion.

- (d) Once a motion has been proposed and seconded, motions for amendment shall be taken in the order in which they are proposed and shall be voted upon prior to voting upon the original motion. Amendments so made shall be duly incorporated into the original motion. Amendments or amended motions may be further amended by proper procedure.
- (e) Notwithstanding V (3)(c), the proposer of an original motion shall always have a right of reply and nobody shall speak after he/she has exercised his/her right of reply.

(3) Discussions

Discussions may take place subject to: (a) the Chairperson's rulings on any subject in the agenda or any matter arising therefrom; or (b) any procedural point.

(4) Assent

Where the Chairperson must seek assent of Court he/she will be deemed to have the assent if there is, on a show of hands, a simple majority of members present in favour of assent. There shall be no ballot in such cases (see VII below).

VII VOTING

- (1) Voting for appointments under Standing Order VIII must be by post unless the number of valid nominations received and discussed exactly matches the number of vacancies (see VIII (5)). Where there is only one vacancy voting shall be by the alternative vote. Where the vacancies exceed one voting shall be by the single transferable vote and in both cases the regulations proposed by the Electoral Reform Society shall apply.
- (2) Unless otherwise provided in these Standing Orders, voting shall be by simple majority of members voting EXCEPT for the following motions, which must be proposed, seconded and supported by two-thirds of the members present:
 - (a) no confidence in the Chairperson;
 - (b) for the variation, revocation or suspension of Standing Orders which shall become effective from the next following annual or special meeting.
- (3) In votes requiring a simple majority the Chairperson shall have a casting vote in the case of equality of votes for and against.
- (4) The Secretary or his/her deputy and/or persons appointed by him/her shall act as tellers and the Chairperson's announcement as to the result shall be final.

VIII APPOINTMENTS OF CHANCELLOR AND PRO-CHANCELLOR

- (1) The Court appoints the successor to the first and subsequent Chancellors; and on recommendation of the Council appoints the successors to the first and subsequent Pro-Chancellors.
- (2) The Court may, if it is the wish of a quorate meeting, delegate to a search committee the responsibility for presenting one or more nominees to the post of Chancellor. The search committee, once set up, shall be the sole group to whom nominations shall be addressed.
- (3) All nominations, whether direct to the Court or to a search committee, must be signed by the proposer and seconder, and the person nominated must state in writing that he/she is prepared to stand.
- (4) After receiving nominations for the offices of Chancellor, and a recommendation or recommendations for the office of Pro-Chancellor, such nominations and recommendation(s) shall be set down on the agenda. No vote for appointment to these offices shall be taken at a meeting, unless the number of such nominations matches the number of nominations for the post (see (5)).
- (5) If the number of valid nominations received and discussed exactly matches the number of vacancies for the posts under (1), the person(s) nominated may be approved by a show of hands at the conclusion of the discussion.
- (6) If more nominations than vacancies have been received, or the Court does not approve by a show of hands, the Secretary or his/her deputy shall prepare full minutes of the said discussion(s) under VIII (4) above and shall, as soon as possible after the meeting, forward to every member of Court:
 - (a) a copy of such minutes; and
 - (b) a ballot paper for postal voting; and
 - (c) instructions as to voting procedures.

IX TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF APPOINTMENTS

- (1) Members of Court will normally hold office for a period of three years but will then be eligible for appointment for further periods of three years. The normal maximum term of office shall be three terms of three years. The exceptions to this are:
 - (a) ex officio members who will remain members for so long as they hold the office entitling them to Court membership; and
 - (b) sixth form student members for whom the maximum term shall be two years or whenever they cease to be a student of their school or college, whichever is earlier.

X **GENERAL**

(1) Interpretation

- (a) In case of any conflict between the Charter and Statutes on the one hand and these Standing Orders on the other, the relevant provision of the Charter or Statutes shall prevail.
- (b) ‘The Charter’ shall mean the Charter establishing Lancaster University dated 14 September 1964.
- (c) ‘The Statutes’ shall mean the Statutes of Lancaster University as revised and approved by the Privy Council on 23 March 1971 and further revised on 29 March 1974, 18 November 1987, 28 October 1992, 16 July 2002, 3 July 2006, 10 October 2007, June 2009, November 2009 and March 2010.
- (d) The Chairperson’s ruling on the application of these Standing Orders or as to any procedural matter shall not be challenged by any member of Court save by a motion of no confidence in the Chairperson, and such a motion of no confidence shall never be out of order.

(2) Invalidity of Acts of Court

No act or resolution of the Court will be invalid by reason only of a vacancy in the body or any want of qualification by or invalidity in the election or appointment of any member of Court, whether present or absent.

(3) Resignations

- (a) Any member (other than *ex officio* members) listed in Classes I and II may resign from Court by writing addressed to the Court.
- (b) The Chancellor and the Pro-Chancellor being officers appointed by the Court, must address their resignations from office to the Court.

(4) Attendance

Every member attending a meeting shall present himself/herself to the clerk responsible for the attendance register.