

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH WALES
PRIFYSGOL DE CYMRU**

GUIDANCE ON COMMITTEE SERVICING

This guidance has been produced by the Governance Unit and is intended as a brief guide for colleagues within the University who submit papers to the Governance Unit for Academic Board, the Board of Governors and its committees, and the Quality Unit for Quality Assurance Committee and the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Committee. It is also aimed at those who are responsible for servicing committees within their own faculties and departments. Staff with such responsibilities are asked to adhere to this guidance which we hope they will find provides valuable advice on best practice.

Training on minute writing is available, and details can be found in the University's Training and Development Programme.

Further information and advice is available from the Governance Unit:

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1. PREPARATION OF PAPERS

1.1 Formatting of Papers

1.1.1 *Font*

Papers should be set out in Arial font, pitch size 11, using single spacing on A4.

1.1.2 *Paragraph Numbering*

Number each paragraph on the paper. This assists during meetings when the papers are being discussed.

1.1.3 *Page Numbering*

Number each page of the document. This also assists during meetings when papers are being discussed.

1.1.4 *Structure of Documents*

When preparing large papers for committees include a short introductory paragraph or cover sheet, which includes a brief summary of what the paper is about, and the action needed from the committee - e.g. to approve, consider, recommend. Please also include the name of the author, their job title and the date that the paper was written.

If the paper is relatively short, often a cover sheet will not be needed. In this case please include the action required from the committee – e.g. to approve, consider, recommend, along with the authors name, job title and date at the end of the document, in bold font. A template for the structure of papers and an example of an introductory paragraph/cover sheet is provided in Appendix One.

1.2 Papers to be submitted to Governance Unit and Quality Unit for Board of Governors and Academic Board Committees

Papers must be submitted to the Governance Unit and Quality Unit electronically wherever possible. Avoid sending locked files as we need to add appropriate headings to documents.

1.2.1 *Numbering*

Avoid using automatic numbering. When changes are made to the document, e.g. adding headings or other formatting changes, the numbering can be affected which may not be noticed before printing.

1.2.2 *Headers and Footers*

Avoid putting text into the Headers and Footers (except page numbers in the footer). The Headers are used to add item numbers to the documents.

1.2.3 *Circulation Dates*

The Board of Governors and its committees, and the Academic Board, have one circulation date which will be communicated to colleagues providing papers. The deadline for papers is usually around two weeks before the meeting will be held. Second circulations should only be used in exceptional circumstances.

2. SERVICING COMMITTEES AND GROUPS

2.1 Responsibilities

2.1.1 *Chairperson*

The committee Chairperson needs to manage and facilitate meetings, ensuring that business is dealt with efficiently and successfully and that good, timely decisions are made. The Chairperson will need to ensure that each meeting has a clear purpose which is conveyed to all committee members in advance of each meeting via the agenda, which should be agreed with the committee Secretary. The Chairperson will need to control meetings authoritatively, ensuring that the most important items of business are dealt with effectively; sometimes, this may mean reordering the agenda as appropriate if, for example, a key member needs to leave early. Sometimes, a meeting may start to become complicated with unnecessary detail or members may begin discussing matters irrelevant to the item under scrutiny. In these cases, the Chairperson should either stop the discussion and summarise or ask members to summarise their main, relevant points, and also make sure that decisions and action points are clarified for the minutes. The Chairperson should maintain progress at the meeting and try to keep meetings as brief as possible.

2.1.2 *Secretary / Clerk*

If the Committee has a formal Secretary, they need to be fully conversant with the responsibilities of the Committee. The Secretary will need to work closely with the Chairperson, advising him/her as necessary and preparing and requesting papers for meetings from colleagues. The Secretary will also prepare and circulate minutes of meetings, drawing members' attention to action points for which they are responsible and making sure that they are completed. The Secretary will need to work closely with the Chairperson in ensuring that agendas and papers are of high quality and are circulated in plenty of time before each meeting. If the Committee has a Clerk, this person usually supports the Secretary by taking notes during meetings and writing the first draft of the minutes. Other arrangements for meetings, such as room bookings and sending out meeting requests are usually completed by the Clerk. It is useful to have a Clerk if the Secretary is expected to contribute to the meeting discussions.

2.2 Before Meetings

2.2.1 The Secretary should meet with the Chairperson at least two weeks before the meeting to agree what items should be included on the agenda.

Notes:

- a) The first item on the agenda will normally be the apologies. It is important to keep track of apologies leading up to the meeting to check if the meeting will be quorate. If there is a problem with quoracy leading up to the meeting, you will need to discuss with the Chair what they would like to do.
- b) After the apologies, the next item on the agenda should be the approval of the previous meeting's minutes, and then any matters arising from those minutes.
- c) If the meeting is the first one of the year, the first agenda items may be to welcome all members, especially new members, and to re-approve the terms of reference of the committee.

- d) If there are any matters arising from the previous meeting which are ongoing, you will need to agree with the Chairperson whether they should be included as agenda items or whether they can be covered under the 'Matters Arising' item.
- e) You will also need to agree with the Chairperson which are the most important items, requiring approval or detailed consideration etc, and which are for information only and this should be made clear on the agenda.
- f) Consider with the Chairperson the order in which items should appear on the agenda. The items for approval or detailed consideration should be dealt with before the items for noting.
- g) The agenda should note the date, time and location of the meeting.
- h) You may want to consider with the Chairperson if you should prepare an oral or written briefing to be given to the Chairperson before each meeting, to update them on any matters which occur between the agenda setting meeting and the meeting itself. A 'Chair's Agenda' could be provided, which is a copy of the standard agenda also including notes such as who has sent apologies, and who is presenting each paper in different colours to make it easily readable during the meeting.

An example of a draft agenda and 'Chair's Agenda' is provided in Appendix Two.

2.2.2 Agree with the Chairperson who should be contacted to provide papers and set deadlines for the papers to be submitted. It may be worth adding the date of the next circulation as the last agenda item of your meeting, or as a note somewhere on the agenda.

2.2.3 Have one circulation, at least a week before the meeting. Late papers should only be circulated in exceptional circumstances. If you need to have papers translated into Welsh you will need to allow time for this to be completed. Also consider if translation equipment is needed, and ensure it is ordered in advance of the meeting.

2.2.4 Tabling papers is not good practice but occasionally, someone may ask if they can do this and it will be the Chairperson's decision whether to allow it.

2.2.5 Try to minimise the amount of paper that is sent in hard copy to committee members. Consider using a SharePoint site for the papers for a meeting or you may wish to email the papers. Alternatively you could consider e-mailing or putting on SharePoint papers which are 'to note', and send out hard copies of papers which require decisions/approval. If you have student representation on your committee/group, please be mindful of their printing account and send them papers in hard copy whenever possible.

2.2.6 It is important to store papers for meetings in a clear way so they can be easily found and identified. An example of an effective file naming structure is as follows:

YY.MM.DD, Committee Initials, Agenda Item Number, Name of Paper
e.g. 09.02.18 Bd 2.1 VC's Report

This file naming structure ensures that the electronic documents are listed in item order, making them easier to refer back to.

2.2.7 If your committee reports to another committee, you will need to be aware of its schedule of meetings as it may mean that you will have deadlines to meet in terms of actions arising out of agenda items, or providing the minutes for consideration.

2.2.8 Ensure all papers are numbered according to the agreed agenda. Include the item number in the top right hand corner of the paper.

2.2.9 The meeting dates and times for the Academic Board and its Committees, as well as a selection of 'Other Working Groups' are drafted by the Governance Unit and distributed for consultation during the summer term. In the event of a meeting being cancelled or postponed, remember to let Central Room Bookings know. Organise a new meeting date and book a suitable room with Central Room Bookings. Also, let the Governance Unit know about the cancellation and the new arrangements so that the University Calendar can be updated.

2.3 **At Meetings**

2.3.1 The Secretary should arrive early and sit next to the Chairperson so that you can interact during the meeting.

2.3.2 When the members have arrived, check, together with the Chairperson that the meeting is quorate as it will not be able to proceed otherwise. The quorum is normally a third of the membership. If your committee has external membership (members who are from outside the faculty/department or external to the University), at least one of these members should be present.

2.3.3 Before starting the formal agenda, inform the committee of any apologies that have been received from members who are unable to attend.

2.3.4 Pass an attendance sheet around the table and ensure that everyone signs it, including anyone who may be 'in attendance'.

2.3.5 Keep a record of any action points arising from agenda items and include the member's job title against the minute in question to act as a reminder.

2.4 **Following Meetings**

2.4.1 You should aim to complete the first draft of the minutes within one week of the meeting, and send them to the Chairperson.

2.4.2 The minutes should be written in plain English in the past tense, referring to people's roles rather than their names, when they are mentioned in the minutes or in action to be taken. List those in attendance, also including the details of their membership capacity, i.e. 'HESAS Faculty Representative' 'Ex-officio member' or 'Nominee of the University Secretary', 'Students Union Representative'. They should be written in Arial font, size 11.

2.4.3 Thought should be given on the audience who will be receiving the minutes. Bear in mind that minutes of meetings often need to be read by those who were not at the meeting, e.g. when a sub-committee is reporting up to another committee, or where University staff in general have access to minutes of meetings. Acronyms should only be used after the title has been given in full.

2.4.4 Use the agenda to format the minutes, using the title of the agenda item as the title of each minute point. The minutes should usually reflect the order of discussion, for example, if an item was moved up the agenda to be considered first, this should be reflected in the minutes. The minutes should not be a verbatim account of the meeting, but a summary of the main points and actions arising from the discussion.

2.4.5 All secretaries of University committees must use a standard format for their minutes. A template using this standard format can be found at Appendix Three.

- 2.4.6 Minutes should be numbered from 1 each time.
- 2.4.7 Record action points clearly throughout the minutes, using bold font and the title of the person responsible for the action. An example of where an action point is used is included within Appendix Three.
- 2.4.8 Email the Chair with the draft minutes. Make any changes requested to the minutes, and once agreed by the Chair, email the agreed (but unconfirmed – they will be confirmed at the next meeting) minutes to committee members. If a committee member does not agree with something in the minutes, they should inform the Secretary who will ask the Chair to decide if they would like to amend the minutes or not. If the minutes are amended, the revised minutes should be circulated again to committee members. If the suggested change is not accepted by the Chair, this can be raised by the committee member at the next meeting if required.
- 2.4.9 Email any committee members or other colleagues who have been allocated action points to clarify what they need to do and by when they need to do it. If a colleague has an action allocated to them and they are not a committee member, it could be helpful to them and the committee if the secretary or a committee member liaises with them about the action they need to take. Chase these colleagues up if necessary to ensure that the actions are completed before papers are circulated for the next meeting of the committee. These actions should be included in a 'Matters Arising' paper at the next meeting, indicating progress on each action.
- 2.4.10 File the attendance sheet in the folder of committee papers. Use the attendance sheet to build up a log of members' attendance at committee meetings throughout the year so this will be available at the end of the year if requested by the Chairperson.
- 2.4.11 Attendance monitoring is important in order to ensure that the meetings are quorate, and that members are fulfilling their responsibilities as committee members. It helps to transfer the details from the attendance slips passed around at each meeting to an excel spreadsheet. An example of an attendance spreadsheet can be found in Appendix Four.

2.5 **Electing Committee Members**

- 2.5.1 This section of the guidance will be useful if members are elected to sit on the committee, e.g. a representative of the teaching staff from each faculty to sit on Academic Board. Detailed guidance on organising elections can be found [here](#).
- 2.5.2 Committee members are often elected for a period of office, usually two or three years, after which nominations should be sought for a new member of the committee.
- 2.5.3 To request nominations, draft a memo (an example can be found in Appendix Five) to be sent to everyone eligible to make a nomination (usually all the committee members). Set a deadline for nominations to be received, and if you receive more than one nomination, an election should be held.
- 2.5.4 For institutional wide elections, reprographics are able to design ballot papers which incorporate a watermark, which should help to maintain the integrity of the election by making it more difficult to produce copies of the ballot sheets. The ballot sheet could include a small paragraph about each candidate, their background and role, if appropriate. The Governance Unit are available to provide more advice on this if required. A sample ballot sheet is shown in Appendix 6.

- 2.5.5 Once the ballot sheets have been printed, send one to each person eligible to vote. Set a deadline for receipt of the completed ballot papers – try to make this deadline no more than two weeks after the papers are distributed. Ballot papers should be posted back to the person organising the elections.
- 2.5.6 Once the deadline has passed, count the ballot papers, and announce the newly elected member by a memo or email to all committee members.
- 2.5.7 In a separate email to the elected member, provide them with details of the committee; terms of reference, membership, and scheduled meeting dates.

2.6 **Induction of new members**

Following the initial email from the Secretary a short meeting should be arranged between the new committee member and the committee Chair. The Chair should explain the work of the committee in more detail, and provide the minutes of the last two meetings.

2.7 **Things to consider when servicing committees**

- The Freedom of Information Act
- The Data Protection Act
- The University Records Management Policy
- The University Publication Scheme

Details on these issues can be found [here](#):

3. APPENDICES

Appendix One – Cover Sheet

Item XX

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH WALES
PRIFYSGOL DE CYMRU**

NAME OF COMMITTEE/BOARD – e.g. **ACADEMIC BOARD**

DATE OF MEETING – e.g. **WEDNESDAY 6 MARCH 2013**

TITLE OF PAPER – e.g. **STUDENT RETENTION**

SUMMARY OF PAPER– e.g. “The attached paper provides an update on student enrolments as at 10 February 2013.”

RECOMMENDATION – e.g. “Members are asked to note the report.”

NAME OF AUTHOR

TITLE

DATE

e.g.

Item 4.1

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH WALES
PRIFYSGOL DE CYMRU**

**ACADEMIC BOARD
WEDNESDAY 6 MARCH 2013**

STUDENT RETENTION

The attached paper provides an update on student enrolments as at 10 February 2013.

Recommendation: Members are asked to note the report.

**Joe Bloggs
Retention Manager
13 February 2013**

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH WALES
PRIFYSGOL DE CYMRU**

**LEARNING AND TEACHING ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE
MONDAY 20 FEBRUARY 2013**

PAPER TITLE

1. Introduction

Provide an introduction to the paper, highlighting the major issues that you will be discussing in the body of the paper.

2. Body of Paper

Include sub headings and any graphs/tables that will aid discussion if necessary.

3. Conclusion

Clearly state the conclusion to the discussion, or the issue that needs to be addressed

Recommendation: *The Learning and Teaching Enhancement Committee is asked to approve/note/recommend the above proposals.*

**Joe Bloggs
Retention Manager
13 February 2013**

Appendix Two – Agenda Template

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH WALES
PRIFYSGOL DE CYMRU**

COMMITTEE NAME

**DATE TIME
LOCATION**

AGENDA

Apologies for absence

1. Minutes

1.1 To approve the minutes of the meeting held on (date) *(attached)*

2. Matters arising

2.1 To receive a report of matters arising from the meeting of (date) *(attached)*

3. Chairperson's report

3.1 To receive a report from the Chairperson *(attached)*

4. First substantive item title

4.1 Brief description of the item *(attached)*

5. Second substantive item title

5.1 Brief description of the item *(attached)*

6. Third substantive item title

6.1 Brief description of the item *(to follow)*

Other items as specified on the agenda

17. Date of Next Meeting

17.1 The next meeting will take place on (date) in room XXX.

The deadline for papers will be (date).

Appendix Two – Chairs Agenda Template

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH WALES PRIFYSGOL DE CYMRU

COMMITTEE NAME

DATE TIME LOCATION

AGENDA

Apologies for absence

Apologies have been received from:

John Cole

Paul Jones

Ann Smith

Sarah Oliver

Welcome to first meeting:

Susan Smith, the new Student Union President

Tom Hughes, the new elected representative of HESAS

1. **Minutes** (*Chair to present*)
 - 1.1 To approve the minutes of the meeting held on (date) *(attached)*
2. **Matters Arising** (*Chair to present*)
 - 2.1 To receive a report of matters arising from the meeting of (date) *(attached)*
3. **Chairperson's report** (*Chair to present*)
 - 3.1 To receive a report from the Chairperson *(attached)*
4. **First substantive item title** (*Joe Bloggs to present*)
 - 4.1 Brief description of the item *(attached)*
5. **Second substantive item title** (*Sue Williams to present*)
 - 5.1 Brief description of the item *(attached)*
6. **Third substantive item title** (*John Cole was going to present this paper but he is ill and sent apologies – Phil Cooper is in attendance to present in his place*)
 - 6.1 Brief description of the item *(to follow)*

Other items as specified on the agenda

17. **Date of Next Meeting**
 - 17.1 The next meeting will take place on (date) in room XXX. The deadline for papers will be (date).

Appendix Three – Minute Template

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH WALES
PRIFYSGOL DE CYMRU**

NAME OF COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON DATE

Present: xxxxxxxxxxxx (Chairperson)

Then a list of members' names in alphabetical order, including the designation of each member in brackets after the name

xxxxxxxxxxxxx (Secretary)
xxxxxxxxxxxxx (Clerk)
xxxxxxxxxxxxx (FBS Faculty Representative)
xxxxxxxxxxxxx (Students Union Representative)

Apologies: List of members who have given apologies, in alphabetical order, including the designation of each member in brackets after the names.

In Attendance: List of people in attendance, if any, in alphabetical order.

1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON DATE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.

or

The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record subject to the following amendment(s) being made:

Include the Minute number and amendment needed.

Action: Secretary

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING OF DATE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

2.1 Matter Arising 1 (*title of item from previous minutes and minute reference*)

It was noted that.....

2.2 Matter Arising 2 (*title of item from previous minutes and minute reference*)

Members were informed that.....

3. TITLE OF NEXT AGENDA ITEM

3.1 The Committee received a progress report on xxxxxxxxxxxx. The Chairperson reported that

3.1.1 Sub-heading 1

3.1.2 Sub-heading 2

3.2 The Committee discussed the proposal that.....and the following issues were raised:

3.3 Following the discussion, it was concluded that The Committee agreed the proposal, with the following amendments

Action: Chair/Secretary

Other items as specified on the agenda

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Appendix Four – Attendance Monitoring

Member	Oct-12	Dec-12	Mar-13	Jun-13
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	P	P		
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	P	P		
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	P	P		
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	P	P		
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	P	A		
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	P	P		
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	A	A		
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX		P		
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX		P		
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	P	P		
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XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	P	A		
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	P	A		
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	A	P		
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	P	P		
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	A	A		
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	P	P		
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX				
In Attendance:	Secretary	Secretary		
	Clerk	Clerk		

Key

P – Present

A – Apologies sent

Blank red box – Absent with no apologies sent

Appendix Five – Election Memo Template



Memo

To: Members of XXX Committee

Date: dd/mmm/yyyy

NOMINATION OF MEMBER OF XXX COMMITTEE

The term of office of ***name***, one of the members of ***XXXX*** Committee will expire at the end of July XXXX. In the light of this, nominations are invited for one new member to serve for the period ***Date*** to ***Date***. If more than one nomination is received, a postal election will be held during the period ***Date*** to ***Date***.

Completed nomination forms should be returned to ***Name***, ***Department/Faculty*** by ***Date and Time***.

Authors Name

Faculty/Department

NOMINATION OF MEMBER OF XXX COMMITTEE

We, the undersigned members of XXX Committee, nominate the following to serve for the period ***Date*** to ***Date***.

Nominee:	Name:.....	Dept/Faculty:.....
	Signature of Nominee
Proposed by:	Name:.....	Dept/Faculty:.....
Seconded by:	Name:.....	Dept/Faculty:.....

This form must be returned to ***Name***, ***Department/Faculty*** by ***Date and Time***. Please note that it is the responsibility of the nominee to ensure that completed forms are returned by the afore-mentioned time and date and that forms are appropriately signed. No nominations will be accepted after this date and time.

Appendix Six – Sample Ballot Sheet



To: Members of the Permanent Academic and Non-Academic Faculty Staff, Faculty of
[Faculty Name]

Date: dd/mmm/yyyy

ELECTION OF REPRESENTATIVE TO SERVE ON ACADEMIC BOARD

At the end of the period during which nominations could be accepted for one permanent staff representative to serve as the Faculty of XX representative on Academic Board, XX nominations were received. A ballot will therefore be held in the period from 9.00 am on Monday dd/mmm/yyyy to 4.30 pm Friday dd/mmm/yyyy.

Please send completed ballot papers (please see reverse) marked for the attention of *[Name of Returning Officer]*. Ballot papers will not be accepted after 4.30 pm on Friday dd/mmm/yyyy.

The candidates are:

Nominee 1, Title, Department

Nominee 2, Title, Department

etc...

[Name of Returning Officer]

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH WALES
PRIFYSGOL DE CYMRU**

ACADEMIC BOARD: ELECTION OF FACULTY REPRESENTATIVE

Please note that you may vote for **ONE** candidate:

Name	Denote Choice with an 'X'
------	------------------------------

Nominee 1
Title, Department

Nominee 1
Title, Department

Etc...

Candidate Summaries

Nominee 1
Summary ...

Nominee 2
Summary ...

Etc