

UNIVERSITY OF KENT
COURT: STANDING ORDERS

1. Meetings

1.1 Ordinance 9.4 states that:

“An Annual General Meeting of the Court shall be held once in every academic year within fifteen months of the preceding meeting and at such yearly meeting an annual review of the University and the Annual Accounts shall be presented.”

Special meetings of the Court may be arranged at the request of the Council to consider business determined by the Council.

1.2 The dates, times and venues of Annual General Meetings will be published in the University Diary of Meetings, on the University’s website and any other appropriate place as determined by the Secretary of the Council and the Court.

1.3 Preliminary notice of the day, hour and venue of the meeting shall be sent by the Secretary or the Deputy Secretary to every member of Court not less than four weeks before the date of the meeting.

1.4 Not less than seven days before the date of the Annual General Meeting the Secretary or the Deputy Secretary will send the agenda to all members of Court and ensure that the annual review of the University and the Annual Accounts are published.

1.5 Not less than fourteen days before the date of a special meeting the Secretary or the Deputy Secretary 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.

1.6 Not less than seven days prior to the date of the special meeting the Secretary or the Deputy Secretary shall send to each member of Court the agenda, if necessary, for that meeting. No business other than that notified under 1.5 may be transacted.

2. Conflict of Interests

2.1 A member of Court with a conflict of interest may be required to withdraw for a particular item of business and/or any vote to be taken. A conflict of interest arises, or may appear to arise, where there is a possibility of personal gain for a member or gain to their immediate family (whether financial or otherwise), or there is a conflict with the commitments and obligations a person owes to another person or body.

2.2 Members should declare interests as follows:

2.2.1 **by giving notice before the meeting** concerned to the Chair.

2.2.2 **by declaration to the meeting** at the appropriate point.

2.2.3 University staff and members of Council should make declarations on annual basis for inclusion in the Register of Interests.

The Chair will determine whether the member concerned should withdraw for the item concerned and/or any vote taken.

3. Quorum

The quorum for a meeting of Court is twenty-five members.

4. Conduct of Meetings

- 4.1 It will be assumed that members have read all the circulated papers in advance of the meeting.
- 4.2 All members who speak should address the Chair and give precedence to the Chair.
- 4.3 All members should follow any instructions concerning the conduct of the meeting and the timing of agenda items given by the Chair.
- 4.4 With the exception of motions from the Chair, all motions put should have a proposer and a seconder and where a seconder cannot be found, the motion should fall.
- 4.5 Any amendment to a motion put to Court should have a proposer and a seconder and be put to a vote before the main motion.
- 4.6 Provided a motion is properly proposed and seconded, the Chair is obliged, after due discussion, to put it to the vote (unless Court votes that the motion should not be put or votes to proceed to the next item of business).
- 4.7 A motion "That the motion now be put" must, if properly proposed and seconded, be immediately voted on taking precedence over other business including 4.8 below.
- 4.8 A motion to move to the next item of business must, if properly proposed and seconded, be immediately voted on taking precedence over other business except 4.7 above.

5. Voting

- 5.1 Only members of Court present at a meeting are entitled to vote.
- 5.2 A simple majority of votes in favour of the motion put is required to approve a motion. The method of voting will be determined by the Chair, or by a decision of Court, depending on the circumstances of the meeting and the nature of the business.
- 5.3 The Chair may vote if they wish.
- 5.4 Where there is an equality of votes the Chair may use a casting vote (i.e. an **additional** vote to that specified in 5.3 above). If the Chair chooses not to exercise this power the motion will fall.
- 5.5 The numbers of votes and abstentions should be counted by the Secretary of the Council and the Court, or their nominee, and announced to the meeting by the Chair.

6. Lapses of Attendance by Members

- 6.1 Should a member of the Court fail to attend two consecutive meetings of the Court not having tendered apologies for absence such member shall cease to be a member of the Court. Provided always the Court can certify such failure to attend is due to a bona fide reason, such as ill health and ongoing recovery, preventing the member from undertaking the duty to attend Court meetings. Where this applies to an ex officio membership, this shall apply to the current office holder and not the office itself.

- 6.2 The Court's consideration of such bona fide reason referred to in 6.1 of this Standing Order can only be undertaken upon application by the member concerned no later than 56 days after the second meeting the member fails to attend.
- 6.3 Should a member cease to be a member of the Court pursuant to this Standing Order such cessation cannot be overcome by the member subsequently resuming attendance nor can retrospective approval of the Court be sought for an extension of time after the 56 day period referred to in 6.2 of this Standing Order.
- 6.4 In the event a disqualified member seeks to appeal disqualification pursuant to this Standing Order such appeal must be lodged in the 56 day period referred to in 6.2 of this Standing Order. Such appeal shall be determined by the Chair of the Court plus two other members. The disqualified member concerned will be given an opportunity to be heard either personally or through a representative otherwise the appeal will be decided upon written representations following which the decision of the Court will be notified in writing to the disqualified member.

7. Interpretation and Operation of these Standing Orders

- 7.1 The Chair's interpretation of these Standing Orders shall be final.
- 7.2 One or more of these Standing Orders may be suspended where one of the following conditions is met:
- 7.2.1 The Chair makes such a ruling;
- 7.2.2 A vote in favour of a motion to this effect is supported by two-thirds of the members of Court present at the meeting to which the motion is put.

In the first case the Chair's decision is final.

8. Amendment of Standing Orders

The procedure for amending these Standing Orders is as follows:

- i) Court receives a written request (submitted to the Secretary of the Council and the Court at least one month before Court's meeting) setting out the proposed change(s) and the reasons for the proposal(s);
- ii) a vote in favour of the proposal is supported by two-thirds of the members of Court present at the meeting to which the proposal is put.