



TERMS OF REFERENCE ACADEMIC APPEALS COMMITTEE

1. MEMBERSHIP

1.1 Composition¹

- at least 7 teaching staff members
- at least 3 students
- at least five appointed Chairs, all of whom shall be legally qualified, and one of whom shall be designated the Senior Chair

A majority of the members of the Academic Appeals Committee (the “Committee”) must be members of the Governing Council,² and such members must be a majority at all appeal hearings and meetings at which final decisions are taken on behalf of the Governing Council.

The duties of the Senior Chair shall be as indicated herein, and additionally, as specified by the Rules of Practice and Procedure (“Rules”) passed by the Committee itself.

When deemed necessary by the Senior Chair of the Committee, in order to satisfy the requirements of composition and quorum for an appeal hearing, additional members may be co-opted by the Senior Chair, from amongst members of the Governing Council. The Chair of the Academic Board must approve co-opted members from outside the Governing Council. The Chair of the Academic Board may also appoint for temporary periods an Interim Chair to chair individual hearings.

1.2 Term

- 1.2.1** Terms for teaching staff members and student members shall be for one year, commencing July 1, and may be renewed.
- 1.2.2** Terms for chairs shall be up to three years, commencing July 1, and may be renewed.

2. FUNCTION

¹ Pursuant to By-law Number 2 of the Governing Council, the Chairman and Vice-chairman of the Governing Council, the President and the Chancellor are *ex officio* voting members of the Committee. The Secretary of the Governing Council is an *ex officio* non-voting member of the Committee.

² Governing Council shall appoint Governing Council members of the Committee. Academic Board shall appoint non-Governing Council members of the Committee, including the Chairs. The Academic Board shall designate the Senior Chair.

- 2.1** To hear and determine appeals made by students against decisions of faculty, college or school councils (or committees thereof) in the application of academic regulations and requirements and to report its decisions, which shall be final, for information to the Academic Board. The name of the appellant shall be withheld in such reports.
- 2.2** To advise the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs from time to time on policy with respect to academic appeals throughout the University and on divisional appeal procedures.
- 2.3** To determine detailed procedures in its own operations and make rules governing the practice and procedure before it.

3. PROCEDURES

3.1 Appeal hearings

- 3.1.1** Appeals shall be heard by a panel of three Committee members provided that at least one student member and at least one teaching staff member is present, and that a majority of those present are members of Governing Council.
- 3.1.2** The appeal hearing shall be conducted by the Chair. The Chair shall be counted as one of the three required panel members. In the event that none of the Chairs is able to act, the Chair of the Academic Board may appoint an Interim Chair, who shall be legally qualified, to conduct a hearing. In that event, the Interim Chair shall be counted as one of the three required panel members.
- 3.1.3** Decisions with respect to the final disposition of an appeal will be carried by a simple majority of the panel hearing the appeal.
- 3.1.4** The Chair assigned to an appeal shall determine all questions of law. However, questions pertaining to the interpretation of University policies shall be determined by a simple majority of the panel hearing the appeal.
- 3.1.5** An appellant must have completed all levels of appeal open to them at the divisional level before filing a Notice of Appeal with the Committee.
- 3.1.6** An appeal to the Committee shall, except in exceptional circumstances, be commenced by filing a Notice of Appeal in accordance with the Rules of the Committee no later than 5:00 p.m. on the ninetieth (90th) calendar day after the date of the decision from which the appeal is being taken. Where this deadline falls on a day when the University is closed, the deadline shall be deemed to fall on the next regular business day of the University at 5:00 p.m.
- 3.1.7** The standard of review of an academic appeal is reasonableness.
- 3.1.8** The Chair may dismiss an appeal, after considering written submissions, on the grounds that it is not within the jurisdiction of the Committee.

3.1.9 Where an appeal has no reasonable prospects of success, the panel of the Committee hearing the appeal may dismiss the appeal (by unanimous decision) after considering the written submissions. Such appeals might be described in legal terms as frivolous or vexatious.

3.1.10 The *Statutory Powers Procedure Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. 22, as amended, applies to the Committee in a manner that is consistent with the reasonableness standard of review (in view of the fact that this is the final appeal body). The Committee may modify its rules of practice and procedure provided that they continue to conform to the mandatory requirements of the *Act*. Modifications must be reported to the Academic Board for information.

3.2 Policy meetings

In this section, “Terms of Reference” means any document setting out the guidelines for the composition and procedures of a divisional academic appeal body or the Academic Appeals Committee of Governing Council.

3.2.1 The Committee meets, as deemed necessary by the Senior Chair or one of the other Chairs acting as their delegate, to consider proposals concerning policies and procedures governing academic appeals at the divisional level and at the Governing Council level.

3.2.2 Policy meetings may be called in the following circumstances:

- (i) where significant changes are proposed to the Terms of Reference of a divisional academic appeal body;
- (ii) where a division intends to enact completely new Terms of Reference for a divisional academic appeal body where none had existed previously;
- (iii) when proposed changes to the Terms of Reference of a divisional academic appeal body may be contrary to the *Guidelines for Academic Appeals Within Divisions*;
- (iv) to consider or recommend changes to the Terms of Reference of the Academic Appeals Committee of Governing Council; or,
- (v) when, in the opinion of the Senior Chair, or delegate, a policy meeting is required to deal with any other matter.

3.2.3 The quorum for policy meetings is 6, excluding the Chairs, at least 3 of whom must be teaching staff members and at least 1 of whom must be a student. Motions in such meetings will be carried by a simple majority. The Chairs each have a vote in such meetings.

3.2.4 At the conclusion of a policy meeting, the Committee shall report its advice and recommendations for consideration in the following manner:

- (i) For items considered under 3.2.2(i), (ii) and (iii), the Committee shall report to the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs;
- (ii) For items considered under 3.2.2(iv), the Committee shall report to the Academic Board for information; and,³
- (iii) For all other items considered under 3.2.2(v), the Senior Chair or delegate, acting with the advice of the Secretary of the Governing Council, shall determine the appropriate body for reporting purposes.

May 22, 2002

Revision approved by the Governing Council:
June 24, 2025

³ Changes to the *Terms of Reference* are approved by the Governing Council on the recommendation of the Academic Board.