

Governance Framework Policy

Fact box

- **Policy owner:** President
- **Policy category:** Governance: Council
- **Policy status:** Approved
- **Approval body:** Council
- **Endorsement body:** Executive
- **Related policies:**
 - [Fit and Proper Person Policy](#)
- **Last amended:** 7th Feb. 2023
- **Relevant HESF:** 6, 7.3.1f

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish the key principles underpinning governance at Alphacrucis University College (AC).

Scope

The policy applies to the whole of AC, its campuses, programs and members.

Policy

Governing authority in AC is vested in the Council and its various committees, and implemented by the Officers of AC through its various divisions, departments and committees.

Authority and Ethos

Policy formation and operation at AC is based in the legal entity known as Alphacrucis University College Limited. All definitions and policies developed and operating within AC are only valid insofar as they are based on the Constitution of AC. The Council and Councillors of AC draw their authority from this source and policy formation at AC is directed towards objects stated in the Constitution of AC.

Doctrines

AC shall have such doctrines as are expressed from time to time in Article 4 of the Australian Christian Churches United Constitution, and may require its staff and faculty to hold to the same. In addition, Council may at its discretion draw up a statement of faith and practice which is in agreement with Article 4 of the United Constitution, should it consider that such a statement of faith and practice would be helpful in the pursuit of AC's mission, vision, values, and objectives.

Governance

The Council sets the strategic direction of AC, seeks accountability from the management of AC and, by this, ensures the emergence of a positive, creative Christian community for learning and teaching, as well as scholarship and research.

The primary concerns of Council, on behalf of the stakeholders of AC, are.

Corporate Governance;

Academic Governance;

AC Management.

1. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Corporate governance at AC lies with Council and includes the values, principles and processes by which AC is directed and controlled. The responsibilities of the Council are outlined in the Constitution. These responsibilities include but are not limited to the following activities:

to appoint the President and monitor his/her performance;

to approve the mission and strategic direction of AC as well as the annual budget and business plan;

to oversee and review the management of AC and its performance;

to establish policy and procedural principles, consistent with legal requirements and community expectations;

to approve and monitor systems of control and accountability;

to oversee and monitor the assessment and management of risk across AC;

to oversee and monitor the academic governance of AC;

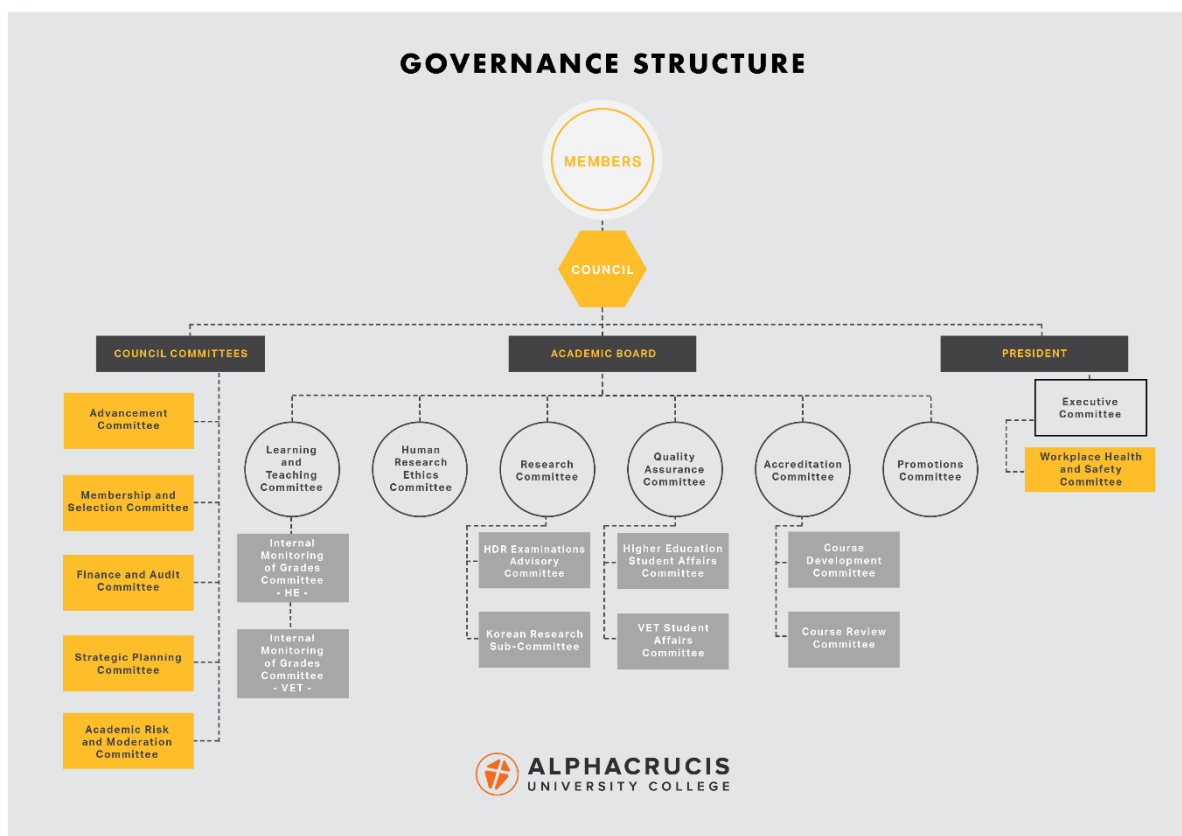
to approve significant commercial activities of AC;

to approve the Annual Report of AC; and

to positively contribute to the growth and development of AC through fostering excellent external relations.

Council may delegate its powers or functions to a member of Council, a committee of Council or a member of AC staff.

AC Governance Structure



Appointment of Subcommittees and Advisory Groups of Council

Council may delegate any of its powers and or functions (not being duties imposed on Council as the Councillors of AC by the Act or the general law) to one or more subcommittees. Any subcommittee so formed shall conform to any regulations that may be imposed by Council and subcommittee members shall have one vote.

Council may appoint one or more advisory boards consisting of such persons as the Council members thinks fit.

All acts done by any meeting of Council or of a subcommittee or by any person acting as a Councillor shall, notwithstanding that it is afterwards discovered that there was some defect in the appointment of any such Councillor or person acting as aforesaid, or that the Councillors or any of them were disqualified, be as valid as if every such person had been duly appointed and was qualified to be a Councillor.

Committee Membership and Terms of Reference can be found in the Council Standing Committees Terms of Reference Policy.

Operation of Committees

1. Chair of Committees

The Chair of each Committee of Council will be responsible for providing leadership to the Committee and ensuring that the Committee fulfils the responsibilities it has been given. The Chair's responsibilities include the dissemination of proper information and agenda and minutes to

Committee members, the coordination of the follow up of actions or resolutions of the Committee, and the induction and development of new Committee members.

The Chair will provide a report to Council at its next scheduled meeting on the activities of the Committee and any issues about which Council should be aware.

2. Authority of Committees

The Committees of Council are authorised to review or investigate any aspect of AC's operation or its subsidiaries, within the defined responsibilities of the Committee, and obtain, with the approval of Council, any information or legal or independent professional advice needed to carry out its assigned responsibilities.

3. Appointment of non-Councillors to Council Committees

Non-Councillors with appropriate expertise as defined in a Committee's Terms of Reference may be appointed on the basis of a three year term, renewable at the discretion of the Chair.

A person appointed to a Committee of the Council who is not a member of Council will be bound by the same rules and standards as members of Council and will be indemnified by AC to the same extent as a member of Council under AC's Constitution.

Where the Chair of a Committee appoints a member who is not a member of Council, the Chair will seek the endorsement of Council at its next scheduled meeting.

4. Election of Members of Council to Committees

Unless otherwise provided in the PPM, members of Committees will be elected by Council by a simple majority of Councillors present at the meeting at which the election is held, and in a manner as determined by the Chair of Council.

5. Establishment of ad hoc Committees, Working Groups & Working Parties

Council may, at any time, establish a subcommittee, working group or working party of Council.

Strategic Framework

The mission, vision, values, graduate attributes and goals of AC are articulated in the Strategic Plan. AC develops a rolling five year Strategic Plan against which performance is reviewed annually. The Strategic Plan sets out the Mission, Vision and Values of AC and establishes its broad objectives consistent with its objects and the contemporary environment in which it operates. The Strategic Plan provides the framework within which management and staff of AC can identify priorities to ensure that AC meets the objectives set out in the Plan.

The Strategic Plan is the responsibility of the Strategic Planning Committee. The strategic planning and review process commences in July each year, resulting in a report from the Strategic Planning Committee being delivered to Council in August, recommending variations and refinement of objectives, approaches and outcomes. The budget process is undertaken cooperatively with schools and budget centres to produce an operational plan for each department of AC. The operational plans will contain planned outcomes in terms of deliverables or performance targets. These plans are reviewed annually in light of the planned priorities of AC, and are modified where necessary to reflect changes in the contemporary environment of AC.

The Council is responsible to ensure that:

The Strategic Plan is consistent with the objects of AC as stated in the Constitution;

There is a clear alignment between AC's mission, vision and goals and the priorities identified each year;

Objectives and priorities are developed with appropriate analysis of AC's circumstances and external environment and with appropriate rigour;

Resources are sufficient to implement planned objectives and priorities;

Performance indicators are measurable and provide the Council with a clear foundation on which to assess the success of AC in meeting its objectives.

The President is responsible to the Council for the performance of AC in meeting the objectives set out in the Strategic Plan.

Councillor Induction and Training

Councillors need to maintain currency in skills, knowledge and commitment to the objects of AC. Best practice and continuous improvement are necessary goals for both the Council and every Councillor. Improvement processes will be provided for Councillors in order to inculcate and enhance the competencies of effective governing boards. Council will seek to integrate these competencies in assessable ways into its processes by conducting a New Member Induction seminar to orient members to the programs and operation of AC and their obligations and responsibilities as Council members.

Council Self-Evaluation and External Moderation

The Council will periodically conduct self-evaluations, highlighting elements of concern and recommendations for improvement. Council will also periodically commission an external moderation of AC governance to ensure appropriate, effective and innovative operations across AC.

2. ACADEMIC GOVERNANCE

The Academic Board is established by the AC Constitution as the principal academic body at AC. All academic bodies at AC report to the Academic Board. The Board has the following commitments:

Engagement in teaching and research informed by modern scholarly developments;

Open independent intellectual inquiry by its faculty and students;

Development and maintenance of an academic culture of sustained and published research;

Ensuring its academic policies, systems and procedures are acceptable to stakeholders and accrediting bodies;

Promoting academic policies, systems and procedures which compare with sound practice developed in Australian and international higher education.

Relevant policies include the Academic Board Terms of Reference Policy and the Academic Board Membership Policy. Terms of Reference for the subcommittees of Academic Board can be found in the Academic Board Standing Committees Terms of Reference Policy. Faculties may also establish advisory committees to seek expert strategic advice regarding academic programs.

Member Induction and Training

Academic Board members need to maintain currency in skills, knowledge and commitment to the objects of AC. Best practice and continuous improvement are necessary goals for both the Academic Board and every member. The Chair of Academic Board will ensure the induction and training of new members, as well as regular professional development and training of all Academic Board members.

Self-Evaluation and External Moderation

The Academic Board will periodically conduct self-evaluations, highlighting elements of concern and recommendations for improvement. Council will also periodically commission an external moderation of Academic Board to ensure appropriate, effective and innovative operations.

3. AC MANAGEMENT

Council appoints and monitors the performance of the President and oversees and reviews the management of AC. All officers and staff of AC other than the President are appointed, overseen and reviewed by the President or responsible management. A clear distinction is maintained between governance and management responsibilities.

The President sets the administrative framework within which the operations of AC are carried out, and allocates roles and responsibilities to and through the AC Executive. Within those frameworks, roles and responsibilities, staff are encouraged and expected to make responsible decisions with integrity. Executive also ensures that staff best interests are ensured and that staff have input and involvement at AC.

Executive is responsible to the President and exists in order to manage the day to day functions of AC along the lines established by the policies and strategic plan of AC. It may also perform such other duties as may be delegated to it by the President from time to time. Executive may delegate any of its powers or functions to sub-committees or advisory boards.

Terms of Reference can be found in the Executive Terms of Reference Policy.

Responsible for implementation

President

Key stakeholders

Whole of AC