

**UCU Council**

**‘Internal Rules & Objectives’**

**30 January 2018**

# Internal Rules (as approved on January 30, 2018)

*Bearing in mind that at UCU the Council combines the duties of two different consultative bodies: the Faculty Council (in Dutch Faculteitsraad) and the Degree program advisory committee (in Dutch Opleidingscommissie), the UCU council adopts the following Internal Rules:*

The Status of the Internal Rules

**Article 1**

1. All regulations set forth in this document will be upheld from the moment from its adoption until the end of August 2019.
2. The internal rules of procedure function as the by-laws of the UCU Council’s rights, duties and definition as set forth by the “Reglement” of University College Utrecht. From such a status derives that the “Reglement” ought to be considered of higher preference, in legal authority, than these Rules.
3. Changes to this Internal Rules may occur only by means of a two-third majority vote in favor of such changes by all members of the UCU Council, following the procedures established in this Internal Rules.
4. Exceptions to this Internal Rules may only be made in cases where no feasible alternative exists, to be decided **unanimously** by all UCU Council members.

Terminology

**Article 2**

1. “UCU” refers to University College Utrecht, the international Liberal Arts & Sciences honors college of Utrecht University.
2. “UCU council” and “CC” refers to the UCU council, the official co-decision making body of University College Utrecht, as defined in the “Reglement” of University College Utrecht.
3. “EB” refers to the “Executive Board” of the UCU council as defined in article 8 of this Policy Manual.

Language Use

Article 2 *bis*

English will be the official language of the UCU Council with regard to internal and external communication. Exceptions to this rule are applicable, especially regarding meetings organized by Utrecht University to be held in Dutch.

Duties and responsibilities

**Article 3**

1. The UCU council is responsible for executing those tasks of a faculty council (Dutch: ‘faculteitsraad’) and program committee (Dutch: ‘opleidingscommissie’) applicable to UCU as defined by the WHW and the UCU reglement. As such UCU council is vested with ratification and advisory powers including but not limited to:
   1. Ratifying institutional educational plans as well as the establishment and discontinuation of programs
   2. Giving, or deciding not to give consent to the Academic Rules and Regulations for the next incoming cohort.
   3. Giving advise on the OER (UU ARR).
   4. Giving consent on the proposed yearly UCU budget within the constraints agreed upon with the UCU management as attached to the reglement.
   5. Giving advice on the establishment of new UCU governing bodies
   6. Giving advice about, or consent to any proposal that is presented by the UCU management whenever applicable.
   7. Proactively monitoring the quality of the education offered at UCU, by means of, at least, the examination of course evaluations.
   8. Proactively monitoring the decision making process within the UCU management, and inquiring for clarification or explanation whenever deemed necessary.
   9. Proactively initiating new projects or proposals that aim to improve UCU in the broadest sense of the words.
   10. Making itself aware of the interests and opinions of the students, staff members and faculty members it represents whenever deemed necessary.
   11. Taking up issues brought up by individuals whenever deemed appropriate and necessary.
   12. Listening to the students concerns and issues and taking these into account when advising on UCU proposals, projects, rules and governance.
   13. Providing a vision developed together with the MT of where UCU should be going. Providing broad vision based advice.
2. Members of the UCU council are expected or invest significant effort into the fulfillment of their mandate as official representatives.[[1]](#footnote-1) This includes but is not limited to attending meetings, preparing meetings thoroughly and sufficiently, and actively participating in the decision-making process within the Council.

Rights

**Article 3 *bis***

* 1. All members of the UCU council are entitled to remuneration for their work.[[2]](#footnote-2) This however must be agreed with the management team.
  2. The UCU council is vested with the following rights:

1. Right of consent concerning:

Institutional plan

The design of quality assurance systems

The main points of the budget

ARR

1. Advisory rights concerning:

University affairs

Policies relating to the education program

Models for course and examination regulations (OER in Dutch)

UCU’s vision

1. Right of initiative

The UCU council has the right to bring matters related to the education program and personnel affairs to the attention to the management team on its own initiative.

* 1. Right to appeal before an independent body in cases when the MT disregards our denial of consent.[[3]](#footnote-3)

Composition

**Article 4**

1. The Council consists of two fixed sections, each consisting of four members:
   1. The students, four students elected yearly by student body of UCU, in other words, ASC representatives.
   2. The staff and faculty members, four UCU staff and faculty members elected bi-yearly by and from the staff and faculty members of UCU.

Chair and Vice Chair

**Article 5**

The Council has a “Chair” and a “Vice Chair”.

* 1. While the Chair is elected by the staff and faculty member section, the Vice Chair is elected by the ASC.
  2. The Chair and Vice Chair are elected for a term of one academic year.
  3. A member cannot be Chair or Vice Chair for more than two consecutive terms.
  4. The Chair and Vice Chair cannot be members of the same section as defined in article 4.1 of this Policy Manual
  5. The Vice Chair is one of the student representatives

Tasks and responsibilities of the Chair and the Vice Chair

**Article 6**

1. Chair:
   1. The Chair takes final responsibility for the proper, effective and timely organization of the UCU Council and ought to serve as an example of the embodiment of the laws and by-laws of the Council.
   2. The Chair is in charge of the facilitation of Council meetings.
2. Vice Chair:
   1. The Vice Chair takes the final responsibility for the UCU Council during periods of time when the Chair is not available
   2. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair will be in charge of facilitating the meetings of the Council.
   3. The Vice Chair is expected to be available for the support of the chair in all tasks, whenever deemed necessary.
3. Together the Chair and Vice Chair form the Executive Board, as defined by article 8 of this Policy Manual.

Secretary (derogated till the MT affords us a Secretary)

**Article 7**

1. The UCU council appoints a Secretary.
2. The Secretary has the responsibility to take minutes of each of the meetings relevant to the Council’s internal functioning, at least including UCU council meetings.
3. The Secretary may, and has the responsibility to, interrupt a meeting temporarily to inquire for clarification when clarification is deemed necessary for minutes-taking.
4. The Secretary has the responsibility to circulate the preliminary minutes of each meeting, a maximum of 48 hours after each meeting.
5. The Secretary may be discharged of its position if the UCU council deems it necessary.

Executive Board

**Article 8**

1. The Executive Board (abbreviated as “EB”, as defined by article 2.3 of this Internal Rules) of the Council consists of the Chair and the Vice Chair.
2. The EB is chaired by the Council’s Chair.
3. The EB is in charge of:
   1. Calling for meetings of the UCU council (hereafter referred to as “meetings” unless indicated otherwise).
   2. Setting and dispatching the agendas of the meetings.
   3. Communicating with the UCU management.
   4. Representing the UCU council towards external parties.
   5. Preparing the meetings in such a way that an effective and efficient discussion can take place in the broadest sense of the words.
   6. Following up on decisions that are taken during meetings whenever necessary.
   7. Guaranteeing the quality and timely circulation of minutes of meetings, as part of the Secretary’s responsibilities.
   8. Finding a Secretary when there is none, or when a Secretary replacement is in order.
   9. Any other tasks the UCU council delegates to it.
4. It is the EB’s duty to guarantee smooth and effective functioning of the UCU council.
5. The EB meets at least biweekly during the UCU semesters and the UCU summer term.
6. The EB takes decisions unanimously, in the spirit of conclusions reached by full UCU council meetings.
7. The EB informs all UCU council members about the outcomes of its meetings.
8. The EB may not take formal decisions on behalf of the UCU council as defined in the UCU council’s formal rights and duties, nor may it take decisions that structurally influence the UCU council’s way of working.

Committees

**Article 9**

1. 1. The UCU council may decide to install committees that are in charge of a specific set of topics.
2. Members of committees do not have to be members of the UCU council.
3. Possible committees include but are not limited to:
   1. A committee concerned with governance and legal issues
   2. A committee concerned with communication between the UCU council and the UCU community
   3. A committee concerned with quality management of the educational program at UCU as well as with personnel issues.
   4. A committee concerned with an evaluation of the ARR.
   5. A committee concerned with the college’s finances.
   6. A committee concerned with campus facilities and working conditions.

2. Each committee may propose the adoption of documents, projects or strategies deemed necessary to fulfill the duties and achieve the goals of the UCU council more effectively. However, committees cannot make decisions on behalf of the UCU council.

3. Working methods among the committees and between the committees and the management team may be established, provided approval of at least two/third majority of the total members of the UCU council.

4. Committees may work jointly with the MT in improving or propose a new document / policy. However, the work resulted from such committees is considered a proposal from such committee and cannot be considered a proposal from the UCU council until the later formally approves it and it is stated in a formal email to the MT.

Meetings

**Article 10**

1. Frequency:
   1. The UCU council meets at least once a month during the UCU semesters and the UCU summer term a Tuesday afternoon.
   2. Meetings are announced at least seven working days in advance.
   3. Additionally, the UCU council may schedule extra meetings whenever deemed necessary to properly and effectively fulfill its tasks as defined in article 3 of this Internal Rules.
2. Meeting agendas:
   1. The agenda of every UCU council meeting is set by the Executive Board.
   2. The preliminary agenda of every meeting is dispatched by the EB at least three working days in advance. All relevant documentation, unless deemed impossible by the EB, is sent together with the preliminary agenda.
   3. Every UCU council member may propose agenda points anytime. A point may not be included in the agenda if it is not sent to the EB at least 48 hours before the beginning of the meeting, in which case the inclusion of the point will be up to the decision of the EB or the full UCU council as present in the respective meeting.
   4. The final agenda of a meeting is dispatched at least 24 hours before the beginning of the meeting.
3. Minutes:
   1. The minutes of the full UCU council meetings are the basis for the execution of UCU council decisions by individual members, the EB or committees charged with any executive task.
   2. The EB is in charge of guaranteeing the accuracy of minutes taken of all UCU council meetings, following article 8.3.g of this Internal Rules.
   3. Minutes of meetings are not final until the UCU council has approved them in the meeting after the meeting the minutes were taken.
4. Guests and Observers:
   1. UCU council meetings are open to the UCU general public. As a consequence, community members wishing to partake in meetings may either be considered to be “guests” or “observers” by the Chair of the UCU council.
   2. “Guests” are individuals considered to be competent in particular areas concerning the UCU council that have been invited by the UCU council, or members of UCU-related communities willing to make a proposal, or to contribute with an idea, to the UCU council on a relevant matter.
   3. “Observers” are all those individuals partaking in UCU council meetings that are not UCU council members, as specified in article 4, or UCU council guests, as specified in article 10.4.b of this Internal Rules. Observers may only be allowed to participate in discussions occasionally, only if deemed relevant by the member facilitating the meeting (normally the UCU council’s Chair).

Quorum

**Article 11**

1. a. The UCU council may only take formal decisions when a majority of its members is present of whom at least two members of each of the two fixed sections of the UCU council as defined by Article 4 are present.
2. b. If the required number of members is not present the decision needs to be postponed until the next meeting.
3. c. If the required number of members is again not present during this next meeting, formal decisions may be taken.

Voting

**Article 12**

1. 1. Before proceeding to a vote, the chair formulates the decision to be taken.
2. A vote takes place when at least one UCU council member requests to have it. Otherwise a decision may be taken by acclamation.
3. 2. All UCU council members are given the opportunity to briefly explain their vote.
4. In case of an equal number of votes in favor and votes against, a proposal is rejected.
5. 3. Voting happens orally or by raising hands, unless decided otherwise by the Chair or by a majority of the members present. In case of a vote about individuals, voting will always be anonymous.
6. 4. A UCU council member may vote in favor or against a proposal. Abstaining is not an option.
7. 5. Authorizations:
   1. In exceptional cases, to be decided by the Chair, an absent member may authorize a present member to vote on his/her behalf in which case the authorized member will have an own vote and the vote authorized by a second member.
   2. To authorize a present member at a meeting, the absent member needs to authorize the present member by informing the Chair in writing before the start of the UCU council meeting. The Chair will communicate this to the rest of the UCU council members present at the meeting.
   3. An absent member who has authorized a present member counts towards the quorum as defined in article 11.1 of this Internal Rules.
   4. Email proposals to be sent on behalf of the UCU council would be shared via slack and will be discussed for at least 72 hours (of three working days) before a decision is taken on its content and when to send it to the MT.

Openness and transparency

**Article 13**

1. All UCU council meetings are open to all students, faculty and staff members of UCU.
2. Parts of UCU council meetings may be carried out privately, especially when individuals are discussed, up to the decision of the EB.
3. The UCU council is obliged to exercise openness, within the framework of the possible. This includes but is not limited to:
   1. Announcing its meetings in advance on the UCU intranet.
   2. Publishing (abstracts of) its approved minutes whenever possible.
   3. Openly announcing the opportunity of visiting a meeting.

Confidentiality

**Article 14**

1. UCU council members are obliged to treat information confidentially whenever they can reasonably assume this is necessary. Information about individuals always needs to be treated confidentially, unless indicated otherwise.
2. The same confidentiality rules apply to the UCU council’s Secretary.
3. If a member of the CC does not respect this confidentiality rule, the CC may impose sanctions.

Communication

**Article 15**

1. Official form of communication among the members of the UCU council is via email. However, the UCU council may adopt other forms of official communications such slack platform.

2. With the aim of striving for an efficient communication to the UCU community and accountability, the UCU council has the faculty to create new communication platforms to converse its working methods, advices and achievements, inter alia.

3. Two-third majority must vote in favor in order to approve new communication channels related to matters outlined in previous paragraphs (1) and (2).

4. Communication Procedure is established in Annex II to this Internal Rules.

Transparency and reporting process

**Article 16**

1. The reporting period takes place during the last two weeks of each semester. Each committee and the EB will present a report of its activities during the semester to be approved by the UCU council in one of its scheduled meetings.

2. The reporting results should be the basis of the UCU council yearly report to be make available in the UCU council’s official website.

Transition

**Article 17**

1. The transition period will run from the election of the new council to the end of August. During the summer the newly elected board will be taking up the tasks of the old board. The former board, however, will remain responsible during this period, and will provide assistance and advice whenever requested by the new board.

2. It is the responsibility of the former board to compile a transition document containing all relevant information before the start of every academic year, including agreements related to the remuneration of the board’s members.

3. The outgoing CC commits to meet with the incoming CC within a month of the election of the latter.

1. The amount of hours to be invested are to be agreed with the MT, and revise constantly to make sure the amount of hours fairly reflects the invested time. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The UCU council agrees with the MT on the exact remuneration to be received. When the ter [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Our UCU internal *reglement* is silent on this issue, however all University Council enjoys this right of appeal. Once our reglement includes our right of appeal, this article would need to be adapted. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)