



COURSE ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Terms of Reference

The Curriculum Council seeks input from teachers and school administrators; training sector, industry and university partners; parents and the wider community directly and through a range of expert committees, committees, working parties and reference groups.

For each of the WACE courses, the Council has set up an advisory committee comprising teachers from all school systems and sectors, university representatives and, as appropriate, representatives from TAFE, industry and community.

The committees are responsible for providing advice to the secretariat on matters related to:

1. syllabus development, review and accreditation
2. school assessment and moderation
3. the design and appropriateness of external assessments, and
4. trends and issues related to the implementation of the course.

Membership

The committee will comprise up to 20 members selected by the Curriculum Council through a stakeholder and self-nomination process. Typically, members will be appointed initially for three years. After this period, members will be replaced on a rotational basis.

A chair will be nominated by the committee annually. Where there is more than one nomination, the Council secretariat will conduct a selection process. A Council secretariat officer will act as the Executive Officer for the committee.

Membership of committees will reflect the enrolment patterns across the systems and sectors and the nature of the course though typically the systems/sector representation will be a 2:1:1 ratio (DET: AISWA: CEO). Each committee will typically, and as appropriate, consist of:

- a majority of practising teachers (up to 10)
- a non-school-based member from each school system/sector
- one professional association representative
- up to two university representatives
- up to two training/industry representatives
- one community representative.

Only nominated members of the committee can attend the meetings. Other experts can be invited as appropriate to provide input and participate in discussions on an ex officio basis.

Selection criteria

The following criteria will be applied in deciding the final formation of each committee.

1. The need for inclusion of members with expertise in at least one of the following areas:

- knowledge of and expertise in the teaching the curriculum area
- moderation and school assessment
- examination construction and marking
- industry post-school or community perspective.

2. The need for inclusion of members with perspectives on:

- values
- inclusivity
- Indigenous education
- the needs of students requiring special consideration, as applicable
- post-school destinations (employment, training and university).

Nomination process

Nominations are requested from the Department of Education and Training (school education and vocational education and training), Catholic Education Office of WA, Association of Independent Schools of WA, universities, professional associations and the community or relevant industry. Each of the nominating bodies will take into account requirements with regard to the composition of the committee and the selection criteria.

In addition, expressions of interest as part of a pool will be called for teachers interested in participating as members. This will be done through the council circular at the beginning of each year. [Please note: in the first instance, members of ARM panels and reference groups may continue in their capacity as confirmed through their respective nominating agency.]

The secretariat will compile a list of nominees, check the overall composition of the group to ensure there is breadth and depth of stakeholder representation and expertise, an appropriate balance across school systems/sector and, in the case of teacher self-nominees, consult with systems/sector before final appointments are made.

Country nominations will be accepted but no funding is available for travel and accommodation. Country members will have the option of participating via teleconference or videoconference.

Meetings

The committees will meet approximately four to six times each year and be supported by council secretariat officers. The executive officer will be responsible for liaising with the chair, organising meetings, preparing agendas and any relevant meeting materials, preparing records of meetings and circulating materials.

Committees will arrive at course-specific advice through consensus discussion rather than individual voting. Where there are different positions presented, these should be recorded. Although they are not decision making bodies, for meetings to be effective, at least three quarters of members should be present. However, actions/recommendations need to be endorsed or otherwise by all members –those not present at a meeting need to be followed up out of session and their views recorded.

Any member who does not attend two consecutive meetings without due cause, or who has neglected to make arrangements to ensure their constituency has representation, will be requested to provide an explanation and may subsequently be replaced.

Committee meetings will usually be held at the Curriculum Council on weekdays from 4-6pm. Membership of the committee is voluntary and there is no payment for attendance at these meetings.

The chief examiner of the course examination committee will be invited to attend the first course advisory committee meeting of the year when the examination and results are discussed. The chief examiner will receive records of meetings of the committee and may be invited to attend meetings during the year.

Role of committee members

Committee members, as experts in their own right, are encouraged to play an active role in the deliberations of the committee. As representatives of particular constituencies, they are expected to have a process in place for collecting the views of their constituency and representing those at committee meetings.

All committee members will be asked to confirm and declare any conflict of interest at each meeting given that individuals' circumstances may change.

The chair of the committee is to be elected by the committee members annually and usually at the first meeting.

The executive officer of the committee is typically the curriculum and assessment officer for the course. The relevant moderation officer should also attend meetings and provide additional support and relevant agenda items.

To promote good practice and ethical conduct, committee members will:

1. acknowledge and respect the Council's role, and the legitimate interests of the government and the responsible Minister, concerning the Council's role and the operations of the organisation
2. be accountable to the system, sectors or professional body they represent
3. be responsible for their own actions and behaviour, and recognise the need for ethical discernment and truthfulness
4. act professionally, courteously and with sensitivity, respect and concern for the wellbeing of others in the group
5. treat others fairly and impartially, respect privacy, observe confidentiality, and value the cultural diversity of others
6. recognise and appreciate the contribution of their colleagues in the group and contribute to making the working environment harmonious and supportive enabling the group to achieve agreed goals, and
7. arrive at recommendations through a process of consensus decision-making.

Code of conduct

The Curriculum Council is the link between the committee and the public and therefore committee members, in accordance with the Curriculum Council Act 1997 (which states that a member of a Council committee or any other person delegated to perform a function of the council 'must not directly or indirectly, record, disclose or make use of information obtained in the course of duty except in prescribed circumstances') should not circulate draft discussion papers or confidential data or make public comment on behalf of the committee without first gaining the approval of the chief executive officer.

The following principles apply to all committee members:

1. Before accepting a position on a formally constituted course advisory committee, nominees must declare formally, in writing, to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) any potential conflicts of interest, (financial, material or partiality interests) directly relating to the course or examination.
2. Prior to accepting appointment to a course advisory committee, individuals must inform the CEO of their commercial interest in any text or resource; creation/supply of written/online teaching or assessment materials; or any other commercial interest associated with the course; or personal relationship (parent, tutor) to any students in their final year of the course (examining group only).
3. Preference is to appoint people to course advisory committees who do not have a conflict of interest. However, in some courses particular people may have unique knowledge and experience. This may be the case in small candidature courses. Nominees who have a potential conflict of interest may be declared ineligible to participate.
4. Full time employees of the Council are not eligible to be members of these committees. If a part time staff member is not sure whether his or her circumstances constitute a conflict of interest, he or she should consult the CEO. Should a staff member's circumstances change, creating a potential conflict of interest, this must be declared in writing to the CEO.
5. Each conflict of interest declaration will be considered by the CEO, with reference to the Chairperson of the Council, and individuals will be advised that they can either continue to perform their stated public duties with certain conditions or that they will need to either remove themselves from the position or relinquish their duties.
6. If the CEO receives a declaration of conflict of interest which reveals an unacceptable circumstance, or if an undeclared circumstance is deemed to constitute an unacceptable conflict of interest, the CEO may ask the person concerned to withdraw from the duties and/or take appropriate and reasonable action to remove the conflict of interest.

7. The CEO may advise individuals that they can continue to participate on a committee provided they agree to a set of conditions which could include, for example, abstaining from discussing any matters that have a direct relationship to, or influence on, the area of conflict of interest.
8. If committee members are in doubt about their roles on the various committees, they should discuss the matter with the CEO.