

Agenda Management and Guidelines to Committee Chairs

1. Agenda Management

The agenda for the Senate and its committees and others is divided into two parts, viz. Part A and Part B. For those items of a non-controversial nature and/or usually requiring no discussion, for instance, the confirmation of the minutes of the previous meeting, noting of activities or receiving of reports, they will be grouped under Part A of the agenda. Part B of the agenda usually consists of items for discussion, and those substantive items will be indicated (for instance in bold type) in the agenda, and the Committee Chairman will determine whether these be discussed first or later. If a member wishes to raise discussion for item(s) under Part A of the agenda, he/she should notify the Secretary in writing of his/her intention at least 24 hours before the meeting. Under such circumstances, the item(s) concerned will then be transferred to Part B for discussion at the meeting. If no request has been received, the items in Part A of the agenda would be accepted/approved as read, and no discussion will take place at the meeting. It is anticipated that such arrangement will enable the meeting to be more focused on issues/policies.

On the other hand, unless for urgent items as approved by the Chairman, no substantive items should be raised at Any Other Business (AOB). Any substantive item raised under AOB will require a discussion paper well beforehand.

2. Guidelines to Committee Chairs

The Chair of a Committee is:

- (a) To determine that the meeting is properly constituted and that a quorum is present.
- (b) To inform himself/herself as to the business and objects of the meeting.
- (c) To preserve order in the conduct of those present.
- (d) To confine discussion within the scope of the meeting and reasonable limits of time. As a general guideline, the maximum duration of a meeting should be within 3 hours. If it is considered that there are too many items for consideration at a particular meeting, it is advisable to hold an additional meeting for the Committee. Indicative time limit for each item, for instance 5 minutes, 15 minutes and 30 minutes should be set, so that members can have a general idea of the time limit and be more focused in the discussion as far as practicable. However, members should be told that it is not intended to limit their freedom. The primary aim of time limit is to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of meeting, as the longer the meeting, the less efficient it is. In addition, members should be given to understand that the interests of the University/students should take precedence over Departmental/Unit interests.
- (e) To decide whether proposed motions and amendments are in order.
- (f) To formulate for discussion and decision questions which have been moved for the consideration of the meeting. Also, to ensure that there is appropriate consultation on discussion items before the meeting as appropriate, so as to facilitate the discussion.
- (g) To decide points of order and other incidental matters which require decision at the time, and to ensure there is no repeat of discussion previously made, and that there is no re-opening of issues previously discussed/considered unless otherwise necessary.
- (h) To ascertain the sense of the meeting by:
 - (i) putting relevant questions to the meeting and where necessary taking a vote thereon;
 - (ii) causing a poll to be taken if duly demanded.

- (i) To deal with the record or minutes of the proceedings.
- (j) To adjourn the meeting where prevailing circumstances justify that course.
- (k) To declare the meeting closed when its business has been completed.
- (l) The Chair can have any other powers and duties as delegated by the appointing authority.
- (m) The Chair can co-opt* additional members (normally not exceeding 20% of the total membership) as deemed appropriate. However, caution should be exercised in doing so.

* A co-opted member shall have the same rights of a full member on the committee unless otherwise specified. The term of membership shall not normally be more than two years.