

Academic Governance Framework – Higher Education

Australian College of Natural Medicine Pty Ltd



Academic Governance Framework – Higher Education

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Introduction

This executive level document outlines the governance framework through which Australian College of Natural Medicine Pty Ltd (ACNM) delivers its higher education programs and academic priorities.

Australian College of Natural Medicine (ACNM) Pty Ltd trading as Endeavour College of Natural Health and Endeavour Wellness Clinic is a dual-sector provider of higher education and vocational education and training, servicing the natural health, wellbeing, and fitness sectors. The term 'College' within this document should be considered as the collective of all trading names relating to the provision of higher education.

ACNM Corporate Board (ACNM Board) has delegated responsibility for oversight of its academic governance to its Academic Council consistent with the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021* (Cth) (HES Framework). ACNM Board will also receive feedback from the student body through student representation on Academic Council's boards and committees, and its subsequent reports to the ACNM Board.

ACNM recognises the Australian Standard 8000-2003 Corporate Governance, as follows:

Corporate governance generally refers to the processes by which organisations are directed, controlled and held to account. It encompasses authority, accountability, stewardship, leadership, direction and control exercised in the organisation.

This Academic Governance Framework sets out the structure and terms of reference for each academic governing body.

ACNM recognises that there are several key principles that are commonly regarded as the basis of good governance including:

- Good strategy, planning and monitoring of the vision, mission and organisational values
- Sound risk management and compliance processes
- Composition and membership of the Academic Council, and its Boards and Committees
- The promotion and assurance of Academic Council, Education Board and Academic Discipline Committees' performance and effectiveness
- Continual improvement of reporting and monitoring.

Underlying Principles

The following principles underpin the governance structure of the College:

- ACNM is committed to the establishment, maintenance and promotion of sound governance within the College, including responsible and accountable management of the College.
- All international, national and state legislation, corporate responsibilities, accountability frameworks, regulations, codes of practice and standards that are applicable to the College form part of the governance framework.
- All College rules, codes of practice, policies, associated procedures and plans form part of the governance framework.
- All employees, students, sessional staff, contractors and agents of the College, by virtue of accepting employment, enrolment or other formal association with ACNM, agree to operate in ways that are in accordance with the ACNM governance framework.

Roles of Australian College of Natural Medicine Pty Ltd

Governing Bodies

Australian College of Natural Medicine Pty Ltd Board of Directors (ACNM Board) is the corporate governing body of the organisation. Responsibilities for academic governance have been delegated to the Academic Council, which in turn has delegated academic oversight and responsibilities to its boards and committees for higher education, as per their Terms of Reference.

The Academic Council has induction and professional development processes in place for Council members, procedures for the conduct of the Academic Council, its Boards and Committees, its meetings, guidelines to assist members to exercise their duties, and processes for review of overall and individual member performance and effectiveness. The Chair of the Academic Council meets with the ACNM Board quarterly, as an Ex-Officio Member of the ACNM Board of Directors to support effective communication between the bodies.

The Academic Council also receives advice from the student body by representation of student members (also members of the Student Partners group) on its Boards and Committees. While the Student Partners group is not an official academic governance body and therefore not represented in this document, the Academic Council recognises the importance of student input into the academic operations of the College (particularly given the College Value of Student Centricity and ensuring it is embedded into all areas of College life), and welcomes input and advice from students.

External Obligations

Australian College of Natural Medicine Pty Ltd (ACNM) Board of Directors is bound to meet the responsibilities of a proprietary company under the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth).

ACNM must comply with legislation enacted by State and Commonwealth Governments and is committed to doing so at every level.

Committees

With the agreement of the ACNM Board, Academic Council has established advisory Boards and Committees to assist in overseeing the academic governance functions of the College and providing timely advice to the Council.

- Each Board and Committee of ACNM has Terms of Reference which require agreement to and approval by the ACNM Board. The establishment of subsequent or additional sub-committees or working parties also require agreement and approval by the ACNM Board.
- The composition of Academic Council, and its Boards and Committees may include persons independent to the College, members of College staff, students and alumni of the College.
- The establishing Board or Committee shall receive reports as required from such sub-committees and working parties and have the responsibility to monitor and evaluate activities in respect of each sub-committee's functional responsibility.
- *Ad hoc* Advisory Committees may be recommended by the Council to the ACNM Board from time to time to advise on relevant matters.
- The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of ACNM Pty Ltd is authorised to attend any meeting of any of the bodies herein at their discretion.

Policy and Procedures for Performance Evaluation of Academic Council

Academic Council recognises that performance evaluation is fundamental to good governance. By regularly evaluating the performance of itself and its Boards and Committees, Academic Council can identify any gaps and develop strategies and actions for improvement. In accordance with good governance practice and national protocols of governance, the Academic Council will review its own performance on an annual basis.

Evaluation Framework

- Academic Council will create measurement instruments for the purpose of self-review of itself and all its Boards and Committees.
- Annually, the Academic Council will evaluate the College's conformance with the HES Framework and Corporate regulations, and report findings to the ACNM Board.

Each body within this governance framework must meet the following criteria:

- **Need** (must have a clear need for its existence and a clear purpose)
- **Unique Role** (must have a clearly defined role that is well-differentiated from the roles of other elements)
- **Adds Value** (either by making important decisions or by providing high-level advice)
- **Primary Focus** of the College is to ensure all decisions and recommendations are to meet criteria for the best student experience at all times
- **Active** (meets regularly or periodically as well as makes decisions or recommendations)
- **Stakeholder Input** (affords an opportunity for the relevant stakeholders to provide meaningful input into decisions).

Any new sub-committee should not be recommended for establishment unless it meets these criteria.

Any structural changes of this Academic Governance Framework are to be recommended by the Academic Council and require approval by the ACNM Board. On receipt of this approval, the changes are to be documented, actioned and this document updated and circulated by the Quality, Governance and Compliance team.

Quorum Arrangements

Overall, the quorum is half the membership plus one, of the filled positions. Vacant positions or co-opted members are **not** counted in calculating the quorum. The Chair or Chief Executive Officer may, in appropriate circumstances, declare the Academic Council quorate, so that the business of the College may continue in a timely manner.

In some cases, provision may be made to allow inquorate meetings of other Boards or Committees to proceed, especially if an urgent matter needs to be considered. The decisions of any inquorate meeting will be ratified by a majority of members by flying minute as soon as possible following conclusion of the meeting, and at least within 14 days of the meeting occurring.

It is the responsibility of the Chair of any meeting to determine quorum (or otherwise) for the purpose of that meeting and its minutes.

Terms of Membership

Terms of membership of all external and/or independent members of any academic governing body are outlined in each Terms of Reference (below).

Unless otherwise specified in a specific body's Terms of Reference, internal staff will remain on the relevant body while they continue to be employed in the relevant position listed in the membership of the respective Terms of Reference.

Invited Guests

From time to time, guests (usually College staff) may be invited to participate in all or part of a meeting of an academic governing body. Invited guests will be listed as such on the minutes of that meeting.

Invited guests will be in attendance only to speak to relevant agenda items or to provide advice on certain items.

Invited guests will not:

- Be counted towards quorum
- Have rights of debate on matters other than when their advice is sought by a member
- Have rights to vote on meeting decisions.

Where a guest is invited regularly to attend a meeting of the Academic Council or its Boards or Committees (more than half of the meetings in any 12-month period), the need for that guest to become a formal member will be considered as part of the respective body's annual self-evaluation.

Induction Arrangements

All external new members will be asked to sign a Confidentiality Agreement prior to formally joining any academic governing body of the College. This Confidentiality Agreement will cover all academic governing body meetings the member attends for the full calendar year. The agreement will be renewed annually to ensure member details are updated and the College has relevant member biographical information for its website.

Before the first scheduled meeting of any committee for the year, the Chair or their nominee will meet with any new members to brief them on the Terms of Reference and schedule of business. A copy of all relevant governance documents will be provided to the new member.

Such a briefing will also be provided to any new member who joins a College academic governing body or working party during the year, preferably before the new member attends a meeting.

Secretarial Arrangements

A member of the Quality, Governance and Compliance team or the National Academic Administrator at the College will act as the Minute Secretary at each academic governing body, as noted within the Terms of Reference below. The Minute Secretary shall be in attendance at all meetings and shall have responsibility for:

- the compilation and circulation of agendas and accompanying papers for each meeting (in consultation with the Chair and/or other key members of the College leadership team)
- the recording and circulation of minutes.

Unless otherwise stated in the Terms of Reference, the Minute Secretary shall not have rights of debate or vote but may be called upon throughout the meeting to provide clarity or context where relevant to their role at the College.

Agendas and Minutes

Minutes, agendas and supporting documents shall be distributed to members of the relevant academic governing body at least five (5) working days prior to the forthcoming meeting. Meeting papers are distributed electronically.

Except with permission of the Chair, late papers or agenda topics will not be accepted and included in the forthcoming meeting. All papers must be submitted to the relevant secretariat for the body at least seven (7) working days prior to the forthcoming meeting.

Records, due to their nature, are subject to the requirements of regulatory and accreditation bodies and relevant State Acts and therefore must be retained in accordance with good record management practice. Responsibility for ensuring appropriate records management for the academic governing body rests with the Minute Secretary under the direction of the Chair of the body. The College shall keep minutes of each meeting. Meetings may be recorded for minutes preparation purposes only and recordings archived once minutes are confirmed. All documentation shall be retained in the College's primary electronic management system.

Dissolution of a Board or Committee

The ACNM Board has the power to both form and dissolve academic governing bodies under this Framework.

If the Chair of any governing body outlined in this Framework has just cause to believe that the body is no longer working to the Terms of Reference outlined below or is not able to function appropriately or make decisions due to regular impasse among members, the Chair of that Board or Committee can request that the ACNM Board dissolve the membership of the Board or Committee, effective immediately. Dissolution of a body by the ACNM Board does not mean it cannot be re-formed in future.

Independence of members

While the HES Framework does not require private higher education providers to have independent members on academic governing bodies, the College has a long history of including industry input into its academic course design and continues to consider independent members a vital part of its academic governance membership. The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) has outlined how it assesses 'independence' of members of institutional governing bodies¹ which the College has adopted for this Framework.

See [definitions](#) for further information on assessment of independence of members.

¹ TEQSA Guidance Note: Corporate Governance, version 2.4, 26 August 2019

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Academic Council

Preamble

Australian College of Natural Medicine Pty Ltd Board of Directors (ACNM Board) is responsible for directing and controlling the commercial business of the Company, including establishing and monitoring its strategy and business affairs, in accordance with the legal responsibilities of the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth).

The ACNM Board has delegated management of the operations of the College to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Members of the Senior Leadership Team contribute to the operation and compliance of the College with the HES Framework in accord with the scope, delegations and responsibilities of their position.

The ACNM Board has delegated academic governance responsibilities to the Academic Council. The Academic Council is responsible and accountable to the ACNM Board for the discharge and reporting of these academic governance responsibilities.

Academic Council approves the academic policies and procedures that underpin ACNM's higher education compliance with regulatory obligations. Academic Council reviews and monitors the performance of all academic areas of the College to assist with quality management, risk management, and continuous improvement.

ACNM Board has delegated the responsibility for operational policies to Executive Management (CEO and National Quality, Governance and Compliance Manager).

The Chair of Academic Council is also vested with the authority to make extraordinary decisions on behalf of the Academic Council should urgent and/or time-sensitive matters arise between meetings. Such decisions will be subject to ratification at a subsequent Academic Council meeting.

Structure

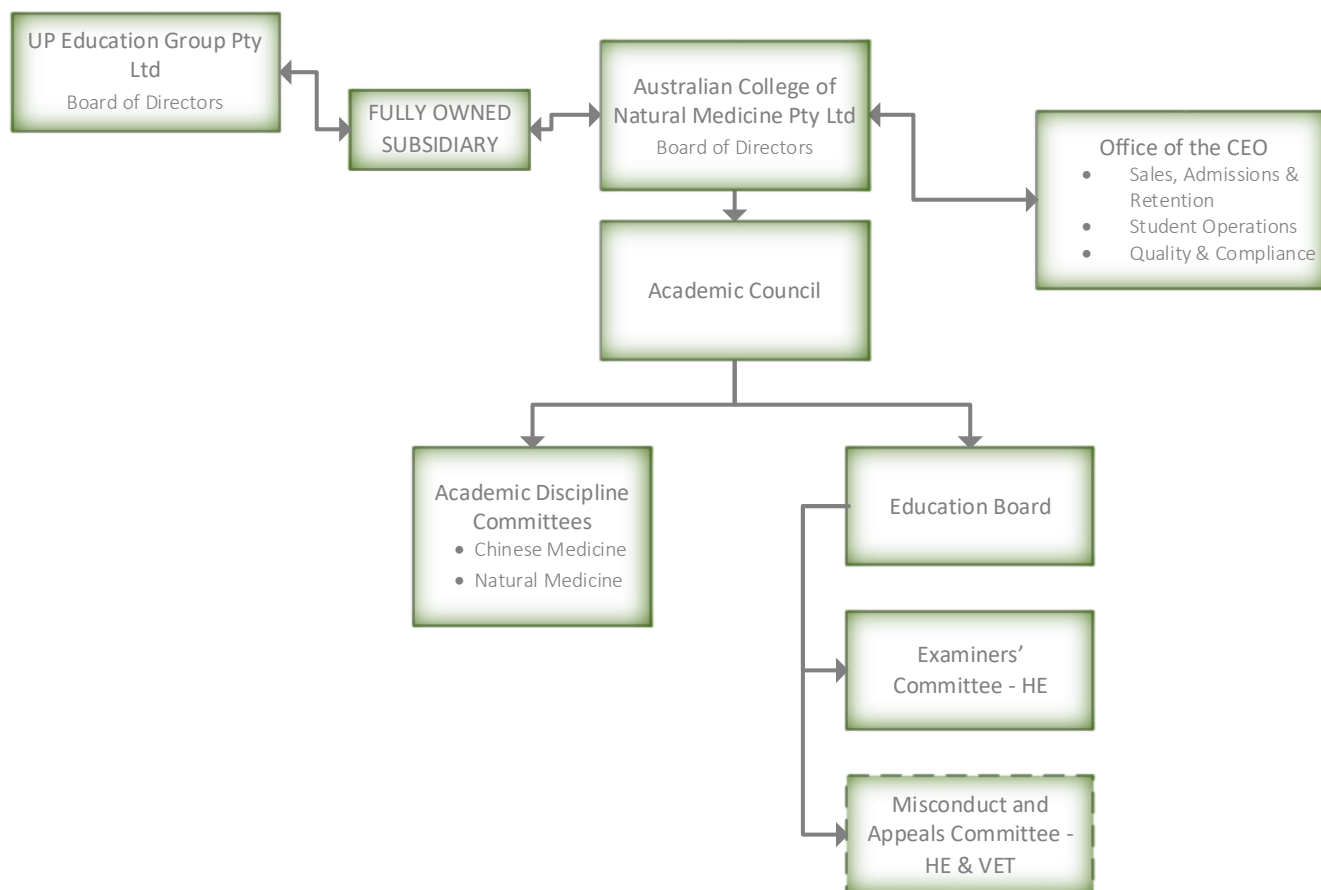
Academic Council receives and considers advice from the Education Board and the Academic Discipline Committees.

The Academic Council relies on the feedback and advice of its Boards and Committees to provide information by which progress and performance may be monitored and academic matters may be explored in order to provide Academic Council with the most appropriate recommended action for consideration. Academic Council will also seek input from the Senior Leadership Team where relevant. Academic Council will receive advice or recommendations from its Boards, Committees or internal staff via its agenda to which will be appended reports, analyses and supporting papers.

The ACNM Board reviews the overall academic governance structure and Terms of Reference on a two-yearly basis, or more frequently as needed. In this context, the Academic Council reports on a self-evaluation of its performance annually.

The diagram below outlines the Board and Committee structures of Academic Council.

Higher Education Academic Governance Structure



Dashed border denotes standing committees, convened only when necessary.

Membership

The ACNM's Academic Council includes members from higher education across Australia and from the ACNM, as well as from the professions and fields of study inherent to its role.

In some instances of membership, a stipend may apply.

The Chair is independent to the College and is appointed by the ACNM Board for a 2-year term, which is able to be extended a maximum of a further 1 year (up to 3 years maximum term). The Chair is also appointed as an ex-officio member of the ACNM Board. In appointing a Chair, the ACNM Board will consider the following:

- Considerable knowledge of and experience in senior positions in the higher education sector
- Experience chairing academic councils, boards and similar committees
- Experience in leadership and management roles within the higher education sector
- Academic qualifications, research and experience in the review of academic policy and procedure, with national regulatory frameworks
- Academic status – (preferably) an Emeritus Professor or Professor.

Other than the ACNM Board appointment of the Chair, the Academic Council has the authority to make recommendations of members to the ACNM Board. The composition of the Academic Council is made up of the following:

- At least two (2) Professors or senior academic staff from other higher education institutions, particularly in health-related fields and/or post-secondary pedagogy
- College Provost
- Dean – Higher Education

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- National Quality, Governance & Compliance Manager
- One (1) Alumni Representative from a Bachelor degree at the College who is now a practitioner in the field

Any casual vacancy in membership may be filled on nomination of a replacement by the remaining members of the Academic Council until such time as the original position is up for renewal.

The Chair of the Academic Council or the Provost can at any time invite other relevant guests (internal or independent) to attend all or part of a meeting.

The ACNM Board will advise the Chair of Academic Council of new membership to the Council in writing.

By nature of the delegation of powers, any member of the ACNM Board is eligible to attend a meeting of the Academic Council with rights of audience and debate at the meeting. It is expected that the Chair of the Academic Council will be notified in advance of this attendance by that Director.

Period of Office

Unless otherwise specified below, all independent (external) Academic Council positions shall be for a period of two (2) years. The maximum number of terms that can normally be served by these members consecutively is two (2) terms being a total of four (4) years.

Internal representatives remain members of the Academic Council for the period of their employment in the respective position.

The Alumni representative must be a graduate of a College Bachelor course of study who is now working as a practitioner in the chosen field of study, and will be considered an independent (external) member for the purposes of tenure (as outlined above).

The maximum number of members shall be nine (9) and the minimum number shall be six (6).

Quorum

The quorum for meetings of Academic Council shall be half the membership holding office at the time plus one (providing it includes at least one independent member). Meetings may be held face to face, by other verbal medium (e.g. teleconference or video conference) or a combination of these mediums; attendance by any of these means will be considered full attendance for the purposes of calculating a quorum.

Vacant positions are not counted in calculating the quorum. Co-opted members are not counted towards the quorum.

The Chair or Provost may, in appropriate circumstances, declare the Academic Council inquorate, so that the business of the Council may continue in a timely manner.

If Academic Council is inquorate, it will proceed 'in Committee' and the record of its deliberations at that meeting will be reviewed at the next quorate Academic Council meeting.

Chairing of Meetings

In the absence of the Chair, the Chair or Provost will appoint a proxy Chair for the meeting, who will assume the role and duties of the Chair. Where possible, that proxy Chair will be an independent member of the Academic Council.

Roles of Academic Council Members

All Academic Council members are required to agree upon appointment:

- To act in accordance with this Academic Council Terms of Reference
- To act in accordance with the interests of the College as a whole; and
- To maintain confidentiality of all matters discussed at Academic Council meetings or in other situations where they are representing the Academic Council.

The Chair will have rights of audience and debate as a representative of the Academic Council as an ex-officio member of the ACNM Board.

Accountabilities

The ACNM Board has delegated the institution's academic governance duties to the Academic Council. Academic Council is therefore primarily accountable to ACNM Board. Academic Council shall only account and report externally to others (e.g. regulators where the College delivers accredited courses) in accordance with, and subject to, the directions, delegations and limitations provided by the ACNM Board.

The Chair as a member of the Academic Council and ex-officio member of the ACNM Board, will ensure regular communication between the Board and Academic Council.

To facilitate this relationship, the Minutes (confirmed or unconfirmed) of the previous meetings of Academic Council and its Boards and Committees will be included with the ACNM Board papers as a standing agenda item.

In addition, the Academic Council Executive (Chair, Provost, Dean – Higher Education, and National Quality, Governance and Compliance Manager) will meet 1 - 2 weeks prior to each meeting to confirm the agenda and meeting priorities.

Members are expected to attend meetings and to be accountable to the Academic Council for non-attendance by providing apology when unable to attend. If a member is aware that they will miss a meeting, they are expected to seek an approved leave of absence from the Chair for up to two (2) consecutive meetings. If a member does not attend up to three (3) consecutive meetings of the Academic Council (regardless of approval of leave of absence), the Academic Council may seek to replace that member in their position on the Council.

Primary Responsibilities of the Academic Council

Academic Council's primary responsibilities will include:

- Implementing the College's academic governance framework and structure, and recommending changes where necessary.
- Overseeing implementation of major academic strategy, policy and procedural principles and reviews, consistent with legal and regulatory requirements and compliance obligations.
- Overseeing and monitoring the academic standards, activities and outcomes of the College within the quality and academic risk framework.
- Providing feedback and guidance to the ACNM Board on the College's HES compliance and higher education academic matters.

In undertaking its primary responsibilities, the Academic Council will determine, approve or advise on, any matters within its authority.

Functions of the Academic Council

The Academic Council holds authority over the College's academic governance through the following functions:

- Review, approve and monitor academic policies for the College to ensure that the quality of courses, processes and outcomes are maintained and compliant with national registration and that accreditation conditions of the courses are fulfilled.
- Monitor and review the implementation of the academic mission and higher education strategies of the College, as detailed in the College's Strategic Business Plan.
- Provide feedback on higher education course and academic strategies for the Strategic Plan, and feedback on operational plans, as needed.
- Ratify and recommend academic quality assurance, academic reviews, academic policy and advisory mechanisms to monitor quality standards in academic staffing, scholarship, courses and outcomes, student participation and attainment, and academic practice (particularly in learning and teaching).
- Monitor compliance of the College against the Higher Education Standards, and provide guidance and advice to the ACNM Board on compliance of the College against the Higher Education Standards.
- Monitor academic risk and provide advice to the ACNM Board on managing academic risk.
- Undertake required or requested higher education reviews and provide recommendations.
- Provide advocacy and support for the College to the Higher Education sector, State and Commonwealth statutory authorities, where necessary for the purposes of submissions or responses to reports from these sectors, as requested by the ACNM Board.
- Support the strategic educational and academic leadership of the College.
- Encourage further development of academic and industry-based knowledge through support and recognition of scholarly activity at the College and through external opportunities.
- Monitor and evaluate the quality and effectiveness of courses, learning and teaching, and educational outcomes, including consideration of the contextual and industry environments in which the College operates.
- Ensure a strong working relationship with the Education Board and Academic Discipline Committees through written and verbal reports from the Chairs, and seek information or take advice on relevant matters, as necessary.
- Review the recommendations and actions of the Education Board and Academic Discipline Committees in relation to their terms of reference.
- Review and recommend approval of new academic courses and amended academic courses (where the course structure has been changed) to the ACNM Board, including ratifying submission to regulators for accreditation/renewal.
- Monitor outcomes of appeals and misconduct processes, as determined by the Misconduct and Appeals Committee.
- Conferral of Higher Education awards, ensuring courses of study completed by graduands are consistent with approved courses.
- Report to the ACNM Board any matters relevant to academic programs, standards, policies and procedures.
- Consider and report on any matter referred to it by the ACNM Board.

Meeting Schedule

Academic Council shall meet at least four (4) times per annum.

Additional meetings may be scheduled on a needs basis to enable the Council to discharge its duties, to be scheduled at a date and time suitable to the majority of members.

Meeting Procedures

For the purpose of this Academic Council Terms of Reference, “meeting” shall include a meeting conducted face-to-face, by telephone (teleconference) and/or by audio-visual means.

Academic Council is empowered to seek advice and information as necessary from such other staff members and external stakeholders of the College as deemed appropriate. Such persons may be invited by the Chair of the Council to attend meetings where appropriate.

The secretariat of the Academic Council will be a member of the Quality, Governance and Compliance team.

Reporting

In order to comply with the reporting requirements of the ACNM Board and the governance responsibilities, the following reporting shall occur:

- Minutes of meetings shall be submitted to the ACNM Board
- Minutes of meetings shall be retained in the College’s primary electronic management system for use in regulatory reporting.

Review and Reference

Terms of Reference, governance and the functioning of Academic Council shall be subject to review at least annually by the ACNM Board to ensure that it is operating effectively, fulfilling its functions and reviewed for continuing relevance. Academic Council will undertake a self-evaluation of performance at its last meeting of the calendar year annually. Areas requiring further attention will be highlighted, discussed and recommended to the ACNM Board.

Education Board

Rationale

The College has a governance structure that promotes the goals of excellence and accountability in teaching and scholarship, quality in academic service delivery, strategic academic planning and positive and productive relationships with external educational and professional bodies and industry partners.

The Education Board provides advice to Academic Council on the College's core academic activities in higher education, teaching and learning, and academic quality. The Council also looks to the Education Board to provide reports that ensure appropriate quality assurance processes are in place relating to higher education courses, delivery and academic services, and that academic standards are maintained.

The Education Board also provides feedback to the Academic Council on the development and recommendation of academic policies and procedures pertaining to the delivery of higher education courses and academic services.

Membership

- College Provost (Chair)
- Dean – Higher Education
- At least two (2) senior academic staff members from other higher education institutions with expertise in teaching and learning
- Head of Teaching and Learning
- Head of Department – Foundational Studies
- Director of Student Operations
- One (1) Student Representative from the Student Partners group

Period of Office

All independent / external Education Board positions shall be for a period of two (2) years. The maximum number of terms that can normally be served by these members consecutively is two (2) terms (each of two years), being a total of four (4) years.

Quorum

The quorum for meetings of the Education Board shall be half the membership holding office at the time plus one. Meetings may be held face to face, by other verbal medium (e.g. teleconference or video conference) or a combination of these mediums; attendance by any of these means will be considered full attendance for the purposes of calculating a quorum.

Terms of Reference

The Education Board shall provide general leadership in academic quality and service delivery of approved higher education courses, and is charged with the responsibility for:

- Monitoring of academic quality including the student academic experience and the delivery of higher education courses.
- Providing recommendations to the Academic Council on matters of teaching and learning, and academic quality.
- Maintenance of high academic standards in learning and teaching and academic student support services.

The Education Board shall be responsible to the Academic Council and will have the following functions in addition to any other functions delegated to it by the Academic Council:

- Consider and make recommendations to Academic Council on higher education strategy and academic planning.
- Consider and make recommendations to the Academic Council on any issues affecting those policies of the College which relate to the College's higher education academic quality.
- Review matters arising from the Examiners Committee and the Misconduct and Appeals Committee, and make any recommendations to Academic Council.
- Oversee and report on the quality and integrity of the College's academic activities relating to the conduct, assessment and continuous improvement of standards of teaching and learning.
- Develop and implement policies, procedures and guidelines for measuring College teaching and learning activities, student experience and academic support which ensure the academic services provided aspire to be of the highest standard, and which inform the College's response to external quality audits of the College's operations.
- Monitor and recommend improvement strategies for academic quality metrics including student progress, student engagement, student attrition rates, cohort analysis, distributions of grades, student feedback, graduate destination / employment / professional outcomes.
- Monitor approved specific rules and regulations for, and academic content of, all higher education courses and subjects offered at the College including academic conduct of students.
- Monitor and review scholarly activity of all academic staff (permanent and sessional), and College support for scholarly activity.
- Actively encourage and consider nominations for excellence in teaching.
- Make recommendations to the Academic Council of potential new higher education courses and/or fields of study, or the potential modification or discontinuation of existing courses or fields.
- Receive and act on the advice of the Academic Council.

The Education Board:

- May request and obtain information relevant to the College's academic affairs from any Board, Committee, Department or staff member of the College
- Will report to the Academic Council after each meeting and shall also report on matters submitted to it by Academic Council
- After approval of its recommendations, internal members of the Education Board will ensure the recommendations are disseminated and implemented at the appropriate levels within the College within the remit of their positions.

Alternate Chair

The Chair shall nominate a proxy Chair if they are absent for a meeting.

Meeting Schedule

The Education Board shall meet at least four (4) times per annum prior to Academic Council meetings and, where possible, to coincide with calendar requirements for approval of higher education policies and courses. Additional meetings may be scheduled on a needs basis to enable the Board to discharge its duties.

Meeting Procedures

For the purpose of this Education Board Terms of Reference, “meeting” shall include a meeting conducted face-to-face, by telephone (teleconference) and/or by audio-visual means.

Education Board is empowered to seek advice and information as necessary from such other staff members and external stakeholders of the College as deemed appropriate. Such persons may be invited by the Chair of the Board to be in attendance at meetings where appropriate.

Staff and external stakeholders of the College may request the opportunity to address the Education Board at any time and this request will be considered and approved by the Chair of the Board.

The secretariat for the Education Board will be the National Academic Administrator.

Sub-committees and Working Parties

Current standing Sub-Committees of the Education Board are:

- Examiners Committee
- Misconduct and Appeals Committee – Higher Education (convened when necessary)

Other sub-committees may be established from time to time with the approval of the ACNM Board.

The Education Board may co-opt persons as deemed appropriate to serve on its sub-committees and/or working parties.

Reporting

In order to comply with the reporting requirements of the Board and the governance responsibilities, the following reporting shall occur:

- Minutes of meetings shall be submitted to the Academic Council
- Minutes of meetings shall be retained in the College’s primary electronic management system for use in regulatory reporting.

Review and Reference

Terms of Reference and the functioning of the Education Board shall be subject to review at least every two years by the Academic Council to ensure that it is operating effectively and fulfilling its functions and reviewed for continuing relevance. Each year the Education Board will undertake a self-evaluation of performance based on the template provided by Academic Council. Areas requiring further attention in the following year will be highlighted and recommended to the Academic Council.

Academic Discipline Committees

Rationale

The College has a governance structure that promotes the goals of excellence and accountability in teaching and scholarship, quality academic service delivery, strategic academic planning and positive and productive relationships with external educational and professional bodies and industry partners.

The ACNM Board has established Academic Discipline Committees (ADCs) in accordance with external higher education accreditation and registration requirements to oversee development and accreditation of College higher education courses.

ADCs are an important mechanism for connecting the College with external advice, industry and professional communities. These committees bring independent members' experience and perspective for the College to consider future academic options and monitor the quality of existing higher education courses and provide another measure of assuring the competitive quality and relevance of the College higher education course offerings.

The College recognises the need for structural diversity as an essential element of the College. As such, two ADCs are currently established: Academic Discipline Committee – Natural Medicine, and Academic Discipline Committee – Chinese Medicine.

Academic Discipline Committees are established to:

- Provide advice and recommendations on course design and structure, and educational approaches / strategies in core/foundational and discipline-specific subject areas.
- Provide advice and recommendations on new course proposals.
- Consider applications for accreditation of new courses and reaccreditation of existing courses, and provide recommendations for submission / approval to the Academic Council.
- Consider and approve changes to learning outcomes and assessments at subject level
- Review existing courses and subjects.
- Provide feedback on academic policies as required.

Academic Discipline Committees shall advise the Academic Council on matters pertaining to College higher education courses in accordance with these Committees' Terms of Reference.

Membership

ADCs are to include external members drawn from higher education and industry. Independent membership should be reflective of the broad range of knowledge, skills, and/or attributes represented by the discipline profile. Individual independent members may not necessarily be appointed as representatives of a specific constituency but for their individual contributions to an appropriate mix of perspective across the committee.

Independent Members will include:

- At least two (2) persons from public or private sector higher educational institutions who offer similar courses of study or who are active in industry scholarship

Internal Members:

- National Quality, Governance & Compliance Manager (Chair)
- Head/s of Department for the relevant discipline/s
- Head/s of Department for any supporting discipline/s
- One (1) academic staff member from a relevant discipline
- One (1) Student representative currently enrolled in one of the relevant courses

Other persons with expertise in areas relevant to the Committee's work may be co-opted if required.

Period of Office

Members shall normally serve on an Academic Discipline Committee for a term of two (2) years. Members may serve consecutive terms if appropriate to their membership.

Quorum

The quorum for ADC meetings shall be half independent plus half internal (of the members holding office at the time) plus one. Meetings may be held face to face, by other verbal medium (e.g. teleconference or video conference) or a combination of these mediums; attendance by any of these means will be considered full attendance for the purposes of calculating a quorum.

Terms of Reference

ADCs are established in order to support the development and delivery of all higher education courses and awards to be conferred by the College.

ADCs shall be directly responsible to the Academic Council. The ADCs will have the following functions:

- Consider and approve the structure, workload, and content of course(s) and ensure the relevance to professional and community trends.
- Provide advice on the comparability of the course(s) to similar courses at universities, other private higher education providers, or other registered training organisations.
- Monitor issues relating to quality of the course(s), and make recommendations as to the quality of curriculum development and assessment.
- Provide advice and recommendations on new course proposals including course structure, workload, objectives, content, specific Clinical applications (where applicable) and assessment.
- Oversee mapping of course structures and curriculum with the Australian Qualifications Framework and College graduate attributes.
- Make recommendations on admissions requirements, outcomes, content, assessment and rules for graduation for specific courses.
- Approve subject outlines, and updates to subject outlines through subject development and review processes.
- Provide feedback on the course(s) with a view to future review and development.
- Offer early input, advice and evaluative comment on new course proposals in terms of industry relevance and professional practice and report to the Academic Council on whether the development of the course should continue or be modified.
- Consider annual course reports from Heads of Department for the relevant discipline and cases for continuing courses and proposed course improvements.
- Assess any suggestions of major changes to a course and report to the Academic Council on whether the changes should be supported.
- Review existing courses at least every 5 years to ensure structure, workload, objectives, content and graduate outcomes remain relevant.
- Provide advice on opportunities to extend the effectiveness of collaboration with other tertiary institutions, professional associations, industry stakeholders, government and community organisations.
- Take into consideration any written feedback from professional associations regarding new or updated courses.

- Consider and report on any matter referred to it by the Academic Council or Education Board.

Alternate Chair

The Chair shall nominate a Deputy Chair if they are absent for a meeting.

Meeting Schedule

The ADCs shall meet at twice per year, after which each Committee shall report to the Academic Council and Education Board at the next available meeting. Additional extraordinary meetings shall be called to consider further development of curricula and/or changes to the course(s) as part of the cycle of continuous improvement in curriculum development and delivery. Additional meetings may be scheduled on a needs basis to enable the Committees to discharge its duties.

Meeting Procedures

For the purpose of this Committee policy and associated procedures, “meeting” shall include a meeting conducted face-to-face, by telephone (teleconference) or by audio visual means.

The ADCs are empowered to seek advice and instruction as necessary from such other staff members and external stakeholders of the College as deemed appropriate. Such persons may be invited by the Chair of the committee to be in attendance at meetings where appropriate.

The secretariat of the Academic Discipline Committees will be the National Academic Administrator.

Reporting

In order to comply with the reporting requirements of this ADC and the governance responsibilities, the following reporting shall occur:

- Minutes of meetings shall be submitted for consideration to the Academic Council
- Minutes of meetings shall be retained in the College’s primary electronic management system for use in regulatory and institutional reporting.

Review and Reference

Terms of Reference and the functioning of the ADCs shall be subject to a periodic review at least every two years by the Academic Council to ensure that it is operating effectively and fulfilling its functions and reviewed for continuing relevance. Each year the ADCs for each discipline will undertake a self-evaluation of performance. Areas requiring further attention in the following year will be highlighted to the Academic Council.

Examiners Committee

Rationale

The College has a committee structure that promotes the goals of excellence and accountability in teaching and scholarship, quality in academic service delivery, strategic academic planning and positive and productive relationships with external educational and professional bodies and industry partners.

The Examiners Committee shall advise the Education Board on outcomes of undergraduate Semester results and results of the online study cohorts which ended during that Semester. An External Moderator will be appointed to review a sample of results for monitoring of academic progress and the activities undertaken by the departments to assess students' achievement of learning outcomes for each subject in which they are enrolled, and to write an External Moderators Report on the academic outcomes of each semester. This report will be considered at a meeting of the Examiners Committee. As a result of the Minutes taken at meetings of the Examiners Committee, and any issues highlighted in the External Moderator's reports, the departments will investigate issues and report to the Education Board on the results of these investigations and any further outcomes, particularly recommended changes to the delivery and/or assessment of subjects. These reports will then be tabled at Education Board and Academic Council for notation and approval.

Members of the Examiners Committee, being the Chair, Director of Student Operations the National Quality, Governance & Compliance Manager, the Head of Teaching and Learning and a Head of Department (rotating position, nominated by the Chair) are, as a group (the Executive), vested with the power to make decisions on behalf of the Examiners Committee. This executive will meet between formal meetings to approve grade release for each teaching period throughout the year. Such decisions will be subject to ratification at a subsequent Examiners Committee meeting.

Membership

- Dean – Higher Education (Chair)
- Director of Student Operations
- Head of Teaching and Learning
- National Quality, Governance & Compliance Manager
- All Heads of Department

Period of Office

Members shall serve on the Examiners Committee for the period of time they hold the relevant position at the College, and will be replaced on the Committee by the new incumbent at such time as they relinquish that position.

Quorum

The quorum for meetings of the Examiners Committee meetings shall be half of the members holding office at the time plus one. Meetings may be held face to face, by other verbal medium (e.g. teleconference or video conference) or a combination of these mediums; attendance by any of these means will be considered full attendance for the purposes of calculating a quorum.

Terms of Reference

The Examiners Committee is established in order to support the ongoing academic rigour of all higher education courses and awards to be conferred by the College.

The role of the Examiners Committee is to ensure the assessment tasks and timing, moderation and release of grades are undertaken in a timely fashion, including student progression and achievement and performance at the subject level and course level.

The Examiners Committee shall be directly responsible to the Education Board and will have the following functions:

- Consider Results Reports from each academic department and examine the patterns of student academic outcomes, identify any anomalous patterns and recommend suggested processes to address these.
- Approve final grades for all students.
- Monitor issues relating to quality of the courses and assessment arising out of identified anomalies in Department Results Reports, and make recommendations as to the quality of assessment.
- Report to the Education Board on outcomes of results of a teaching period, including any issues identified by the committee, outcomes of investigations emanating from these, and recommended changes to delivery and/or assessment procedures of subjects as a result of this process.
- Review proposed list of exclusions based on consistent failure to progress, maintain adequate GPA or repeat subject failures.
- Consider and report on any matter referred to it by the Education Board, Academic Council or the Dean – Higher Education.

Secretarial Arrangements

For the purposes of the Examiners Committee, the appointed Minute Secretary shall not have rights of audience, debate or vote.

The secretariat for the Examiners Committee will be the National Academic Administrator.

Alternate Chair

The Chair shall nominate a Deputy Chair if they are absent for a meeting.

Meeting Schedule

The Examiners Committee shall meet at the end of each semester, prior to release of results for that semester. The Examiners Committee shall also meet for post-results release moderation and consideration of external moderation reports at least eight (8) weeks into the following semester but before the end of that semester.

The Executive of the Examiners Committee will meet regularly throughout the year to approve grade release for each teaching period. Additional meetings of the full committee may be scheduled on a needs basis to enable the Committee to carry out its duties.

Meeting Procedures

For the purpose of this Committee policy and associated procedures, “meeting” shall include a meeting conducted face-to-face, by telephone (teleconference) or by audio visual means.

The Examiners Committee is empowered to seek advice and instruction as necessary from such other staff members and external stakeholders of the College as deemed appropriate. Such persons may be invited by the Chair of the committee to be in attendance at meetings where appropriate.

Reporting

In order to comply with the reporting requirements of this Examiners Committee and the governance responsibilities, the following reporting shall occur:

- Minutes of meetings shall be retained in the College's primary electronic management system for use in regulatory reporting and institutional management.
- A summary of actions and recommendations from Examiners Committee shall be reported to Education Board, appended with Education Board commentary, and forwarded to Academic Council for consideration, as part of the next practicable meeting cycle following each Examiners Committee meeting.

Review and Reference

The functioning of the Examiners Committee shall be subject to review at least every two years by the Education Board to ensure that it is operating effectively and fulfilling its functions and reviewed for continuing relevance. Each year the Examiners Committee will undertake a self-evaluation of performance. Areas requiring further attention in the following year will be highlighted to the Education Board.

Misconduct and Appeals Committee – Higher Education

Rationale

The College has a committee structure that promotes the goals of excellence and accountability in teaching and scholarship, quality in academic service delivery, strategic academic planning and positive and productive relationships with external educational and professional bodies and industry partners.

A Misconduct and Appeals Committee shall be convened to investigate either:

- complaints and appeals under Stage 3 – Appealing the Original Decision of the College's Complaints and Appeals Policy (International or HE); or
- allegations of student misconduct under Stage 4 – Student Misconduct Committee of the College's Student Misconduct Policy (HE).

Membership

- Chief Executive Officer
- Provost
- Minute Secretary – Director of Student Operations (DSO).

As this is an ad hoc committee, members shall be invited to attend the committee by the DSO (the standing Minute Secretary of this committee) when necessary.

Period of Office

As this is an ad hoc committee, members shall serve on the Misconduct and Appeals Committee for the length of time a particular investigation is underway. Members may serve on this committee for consecutive investigations if deemed appropriate.

Quorum

All members of the Misconduct and Appeals Committee appointed to investigate a matter must be present at all meetings regarding that matter. Meetings may be held face to face, by other verbal medium (e.g. teleconference or video conference) or a combination of these mediums; attendance by any of these means will be considered full attendance.

Terms of Reference

The Misconduct and Appeals Committee shall be directly responsible to the Education Board and will have the following functions:

- Investigate the complaint or allegation of misconduct, which may include reviewing the available evidence or seeking additional evidence or clarification on matters from staff or students, ensuring appropriate confidentiality is maintained.
- Interview staff or students as required, including those against whom the complaint or allegation of misconduct is made and the complainant, ensuring all parties are offered the right to have their chosen support person in attendance at the interview.
- The Chair must determine any question relating to admissibility of evidence and any other question of law.
- Determine, on balance of probabilities, whether the complaint or allegation is founded or not and if relevant, recommend the penalties (if any) to be imposed on the student, maintaining appropriate confidentiality.

- In exceptional circumstances where there are substantial grounds to believe that it is necessary in the interests of justice and procedural fairness, consider the matter afresh according to the merits of the case.
- Refer a matter back to the Dean – Higher Education, as appropriate, for further consideration and recommendations.
- Notify the student of the committee's decision in writing.
- Notify any other person of the decision and reasons where proper, ensuring appropriate confidentiality is maintained.

Secretarial Arrangements

The DSO shall be the standing Minute Secretary for the Misconduct and Appeals Committee, unless a conflict of interest is either self-declared or identified by a member of the ad hoc committee. In such a case, the DSO will appoint another appropriate member of staff to act as Minute Secretary.

The Minute Secretary shall be in attendance at all meetings and shall have responsibility, as directed by the Chair, for the compilation and circulation of agendas and accompanying papers and the recording and circulation of minutes. The Minute Secretary shall not have rights of vote.

Meeting Schedule

The Misconduct and Appeals Committee shall meet on an ad hoc basis as allegations or appeal requests are received.

Meeting Procedures

For the purpose of this Committee policy and associated procedures, "meeting" shall include a meeting conducted face-to-face, by telephone (teleconference) or by audio visual means.

The Misconduct and Appeals Committee is empowered to seek advice and instruction as necessary from such other staff members and external stakeholders of the College as deemed appropriate. Such persons may be invited by the Chair of the committee to be in attendance at meetings where appropriate, however appropriate confidentiality must be maintained.

Reporting

In order to comply with the dual reporting requirements of this Misconduct and Appeals Committee and the governance responsibilities, the following reporting shall occur:

- Annual summary reports of meetings and outcomes shall be submitted by the DSO for consideration to the Academic Council and Education Board of relevant cases heard throughout the previous year. Details of particular decisions outlined within this report may be made available on request.
- Academic Council may be provided with any recommendations of the Misconduct and Appeals Committee on matters of policy and procedure arising out of its investigations.
- Annual summary reports of meetings will be retained in the College's primary electronic management system for use in regulatory and institutional reporting.

Review and Reference

Terms of Reference and the functioning of the of the Misconduct and Appeals Committee shall be subject to review at least every two years by the Education Board to ensure that it is operating effectively and fulfilling its functions and reviewed for continuing relevance.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Body	For the purpose of this document, reference to a 'body' is made to refer to any one or more of the Councils, Boards, Committees, or Sub-Committees outlined within this Academic Governance Framework.
College	The Australian College of Natural Medicine Pty Ltd trades as Endeavour College of Natural Health (Endeavour), Endeavour Wellness Clinic and Endeavour Short Courses. For the purpose of this document, any reference to 'College' or 'the College' should be considered a reference to each or any of these respective entities or trading names.
Dissolution	The act of 'dissolving' a Council, Board or Committee; involves the breaking up of the membership of the body and dismissing all members from their duties on that body. Following dissolution of a body, some former members may be invited to form membership of a re-constituted (re-formed) new body.
Emeritus (Professor)	A professor who has retired from active academic / teaching roles but retains the title of their former position, usually as a formal acknowledgement of their contribution to their field of academia.
Ex-officio	By virtue of their official position with the organisation.
Governance	The system of management of the organisation. For the purpose of this document, this refers to the hierarchy of Councils, Boards and Committees overseeing the quality and accuracy of the academic work of the College.
'in committee'	If the Academic Council is inquorate, it may decide to continue its work and will be considered 'in committee'. Decisions may be made and acted upon in this state, however will be reviewed by the next quorate Council meeting.
Independent	<p>Related to independence of members.</p> <p>The College considers that an independent member of an academic governing body is a person who is independent from management and who does not have (or intend to have) any material or significant dealings with the College that could interfere with the exercise of independent judgement of meeting documentation (including courses, policies and other documents).</p> <p>Where members of academic governing bodies are paid fees for undertaking their responsibilities, the College does not consider this to compromise their independence; however, payment for other roles (e.g. transactions with related parties) may compromise independence.</p> <p>The College will have regard to any constraints where there are legislative Standards that determine the composition of a governing body. Following is a selection of characteristics seen to be indicative</p>

	<p>of the independence of an external member of an academic governing body.</p> <p>The member:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has not had a business or employment relationship or other material contractual relationship with the College within the last two (2) years • Does not have a direct or indirect material financial interest with the College • Is not involved in the day-to-day management or academic functions of the College and is not allied with the interests of management • Is sufficiently impartial and disconnected from the College's operations, such that they are in a position to hold management to account and act in the organisation's best interests • Does not have a material personal interest (i.e. does not stand to gain, benefit or suffer a loss) in the outcome of a Council / Board / Committee meeting • Is free of any interest, position, association or relationship that might influence, or reasonably be perceived to influence, their capacity to exercise independent judgement in decisions of a Council / Board / Committee meeting • Has not been a member of the Council / Board / Committee for such a period (e.g. longer than two terms) that their independence may have been compromised. <p>Elected staff or executives can be members of academic governing bodies but would not be considered 'independent' as they are employed by the College. Students would not be considered independent either, however alumni who have not been associated with the College for at least two (2) years would.</p>
Inquorate	Not meeting the requirements of a quorum.
QILT	The Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT) are a suite of government endorsed surveys for higher education, covering the student life cycle from commencement to employment. The data from these surveys is made publicly available on the QILT website (qilt.edu.au) to help drive quality improvement of the sector.
Quorum	The number of members of a body required to be present to make official decisions (usually a majority; specific quorum requirements are outlined in each Terms of Reference). If quorum is not met, the body may still operate inquorate, however flying minutes will be sent to all members for formal ratification of any decisions by a quorum.
Ratify / Ratification	To formally confirm a decision made by others. For the purpose of this document, decisions made by inquorate bodies must be formally ratified by a quorum of members of that body (usually by flying minute or at the subsequent meeting). Alternatively, the Academic Council may ratify a decision made by the Council executive out of session.

Stipend	A minimal payment sometimes made to external members of bodies who may be taking time out of other paid work to attend to meetings and other work of the body.
Terms of Reference	The document outlining the rationale for, structure, expectations, and responsibilities of a particular body.

Abbreviated Terms

Abbreviation	Full Title
ACNM	Australian College of Natural Medicine Pty Ltd
ADCs	Academic Discipline Committees
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
Cth	Commonwealth (relating to legislation)
DSO	Director of Student Operations
ECNH	Endeavour College of Natural Health
HE	Higher Education
HES Framework	Higher Education Standards Framework
TEQSA	Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency
VET	Vocational Education and Training