

LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

GUIDE FOR COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND SECRETARIES

The purpose of this guide is to support chairs and secretaries in the operation of committees across the School; to enhance the quality of meetings; and to ensure consistency in recording decisions, actions, and minutes.

When the management of School committees was reviewed in 2002, certain general principles were agreed and these principles have been incorporated into this guide. Although this has been written primarily for School-wide committees, much of the guidance is relevant to other committees but some variations should always be made for departmental, divisional, consultative and discursive groups to ensure that the process is proportionate to the purpose of the meeting.

A list of School-wide committees and working groups can be found at <http://www.lse.ac.uk/intranet/LSEServices/governanceAndCommittees/committeesAndWorkingGroups/home.aspx>

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF COMMITTEE GOVERNANCE

All universities have a hierarchy of committees from the Council and Academic Board (or Senate) down to Faculty or Departmental Committees all of which operate with different degrees of formality. The LSE is no different. This guide sets out the general principles of committee governance, and provides some practical direction on how to prepare agendas and papers, conduct meetings effectively, and write up the minutes and maintain proper records of a committee's decisions and actions.

1. MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

To begin with, all committees should have an agreed membership and terms of reference.

1.1. Membership

Committees normally contain two categories of member: some members are 'ex-officio', which means that they are members of the committee by virtue of the post they hold in the School; other members are nominated or elected. Each committee will have a membership list which identifies the status and period of office of members if appropriate.

Details of the membership should form part of the agenda of the committee's first meeting of the academic session together with the committee's terms of reference to remind everyone of the committee's role and the areas with which the committee should be dealing.

With the exception of student committee members (who are appointed for one year, with the possibility of reappointment for a further year) committee members who are not ex-officio are appointed with the expectation that they will serve three years on the committee, up to a maximum of six years.

Not everyone who attends committee meetings will necessarily be a member of that committee. Most committees have people 'in attendance' who attend regularly to speak to papers or offer advice when it is required but cannot take part in the decision making.

1.2 Terms Of Reference

Each School Committee has terms of reference which govern its work and set out what it is authorised to do. These will normally specify what decisions the committee is empowered to take and the appropriate matters on which it may make recommendations to a parent body. Terms of reference should include the quorum for the meeting.

Unless specified otherwise in the terms of reference, committees should normally meet not less than once a term in order to discharge their duties effectively.

The agenda and supporting papers should be circulated in at least 5 working days in advance of the meeting and draft minutes and a summary of actions based on the minutes should be available for the Chair with the same time frame after the meeting.

To function efficiently, committees should have standing orders (rules) for the conduct of meetings which should include procedures for voting, calling extraordinary meetings and any arrangements for enabling the chair to take chair's action.

Each School committee is required to report annually to its parent committee on the business it has undertaken, the activities of its subordinate bodies and its intentions for future activities.

Parent committees of consultative fora and user groups may set up or disband a forum or group.

Working groups or project teams may be appointed to give in-depth consideration to specific issues. To ensure that they are properly focused, and that they do not continue in existence longer than they need to they should be given approved terms of reference including a clear "sunset clause" specifying their termination date.

1.3 Committee Vacancies

For committee vacancies for which the Academic Board is the appointing authority, replacements should be sought from the Academic Nominations Committee.

Vacancies for Lay Members of Council and Council Committees are handled by the Nominations Committee of the Court of Governors.

The governance team in the Secretary's Division services both committees.

Vacancies for student members of committees are filled by the Students' Union.

1.4 Conflict of Interest

In line with the [School's Ethics Code](#) and [Conflict of Interest Policy](#) potential conflict should be declared so that they may be appropriately managed. The proper manner of indicating a conflict or potential conflict of interest is to inform the chair in advance of the meeting.

At the beginning of every School meeting, there should be a standing item on the agenda on conflicts of interest. Members should be invited to declare any conflict or potential conflict of interest that may arise in the course of the meeting. Any members that become aware of a conflict that they have not declared at the start of the meeting should do so as soon as they become aware of the conflict. The minutes of each meeting should record whether or not any conflicts were declared. The Chair of the committee should decide if any declarations should lead to the member excusing themselves from all or part of the meeting. If the Chair has a conflict, the committee should agree for a member to act as Chair for the item.

2. THE ROLE OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Being a committee member is not only about attending meetings but about working with the other members of the committee to reach a consensus about the business before it.

Committee members should make decisions as a collective group. Collective responsibility entails members supporting a decision a committee has made even though the member may not have voted in favour of it, or may have been absent from the meeting. Members are responsible for ensuring that all decisions are taken in the best interests of the School and in accordance with the School's mission aims and objectives.

The full expectation of committee members is set out in Appendix 9.

The whole LSE community, including all staff, students, and governors of LSE, are expected to act in accordance with the principles which are set out in the LSE Ethics Code (Appendix 10) and in the [Committee Effective Behaviours Policy](#) (Appendix 11) which incorporate the 'Nolan Principles' of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Unless explicitly stated in the terms of reference, members of committees are not at meetings as representatives of a particular group. Members are on committees as individuals, and are chosen because they have skills, knowledge or interests relating to the areas dealt with by the committee. While members may be nominated or elected from a particular group and can bring the views of that group to the meeting, the interests of the School must always be the overriding consideration.

It is important to remember that, whatever the item under discussion, a committee is not empowered to discuss individuals, or individual cases, unless this is explicitly set out in the committee's terms of reference.

3. THE ROLE OF THE CHAIR

A committee chair has a worthwhile yet demanding role. To be effective and make the maximum contribution to the School, a chair needs a good understanding of the committee's role and responsibilities and should encourage members to participate fully in its work. In some instances committee chairs may also become ex-officio members of other committees because of their responsibilities.

The key roles of the chair are outlined below:

- to provide leadership and direction to the committee so as to facilitate the work of the School in pursuing its vision, mission and strategic direction within the committee's terms of reference;
- to see that the committee's business is conducted in an orderly fashion and to ensure that members obtain a fair hearing;
- to ensure that the work of the committee is consistent with its agreed remit and terms of reference and that issues of interest to other committees or to the wider organisation are appropriately referred;
- to ensure the committee does not take decisions outside its authorised powers;
- to ensure decisions taken by the committee are clear and unambiguous, and that responsibility for taking forward action points is properly allocated;
- to consult with other committee members and provide advice and support;

- to ensure that decisions represent the collective views of the committee or (in exceptional circumstances when consensus cannot be reached) a majority view;
- to determine in consultation with the committee secretary on the content of meeting agendas, the order in which items are taken and the amount of time to be devoted to each;
- to monitor the implementation of agreements and action points from previous meetings;
- to undertake ad hoc work as the chair of the committee (e.g. through the provision of advice and attendance at other relevant meetings & events);
- to support, on completion of the term of office, the incoming chair through the provision of advice and de-briefing;
- to direct any person to be excluded from a meeting for any item of business, for example, on grounds of confidentiality or a conflict of interest;
- to take decisions by chair's action in any matter which, in his/her opinion, is urgent, routine or not of sufficient importance to justify the calling of a meeting;
- to report chair's action to the next meeting of the committee.

Guidelines on how to chair a meeting can be found in Appendix 5.

In terms of Chair's action it is strongly recommended that committees should agree the circumstances in which they will grant delegated authority to the Chair to act on its behalf between meetings. Action taken under delegated authority will normally consist of business that would not have merited discussion at a committee meeting such the approval of minor / routine matters). Occasionally, matters may arise which are judged too urgent and important to await the next meeting of the committee and the Chair then has the option of calling a special meeting, consulting the members of the committee by correspondence, or dealing with the matter by chair's action. The chair should be careful not to take decisions by chair's action where it is inappropriate to do so, and not to exceed the scope of the delegated authority granted by the role.

4. THE ROLE OF THE SECRETARY

A committee secretary has a wide ranging role which includes the following responsibilities:

- to manage the committee's business. This involves preparing agendas in liaison with the chair and/or an agenda committee, monitoring the progress and scheduling of the committee's business, and ensuring that meetings run smoothly according to the guidelines set out below. (Committee secretaries should maintain a "rolling schedule" of business for the forthcoming session and beyond. This will include recurrent items, and one-off items which a committee has specified should be reviewed again at a particular time. This system will enable draft agendas to be drawn up in advance and help identify papers which may require early planning and extensive preparation).
- to ensure that the committee operates in accordance with these guidelines;
- to be thoroughly familiar with the committee's terms of reference so that appropriate advice on the committee's business in relation to them can be given on them when needed;
- to advise the chair on issues relating to the committee and to ensure that the chair is well informed;

- to be aware of the wider context in which the committee operates and in particular being able to relate its business to the School's strategic priorities;
- to brief the committee chair before the meeting to ensure that any difficulties in transacting business are anticipated and appropriate strategies for handling them identified. For some larger committees with a wide range of business, briefing may best be undertaken by means of a written brief prepared by the secretary in advance of a briefing meeting, for other committees the briefing meeting itself may be sufficient – each committee may set its own practice in this regard;
- to be familiar with the membership of the committee, when the periods of office of the members expire, and the procedure for replacing members;
- to take the minutes of the meeting according to agreed conventions and ensure that the necessary follow up action is taken.

CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

This section outlines the general rules and conventions for the conduct of the business of committees.

1. PREPARING THE AGENDA AND PAPERS

For all meetings the committee secretary should:

- receive items of business
- look at the agenda and papers for the corresponding meeting during the previous year
- create a shopping list of matters arising
- check pending items from the previous meeting

All items of business proposed for inclusion on the agenda for a meeting should be checked to ensure that they are consistent with the committee's terms of reference and that time is not wasted chasing or waiting for inappropriate business.

If those responsible for contributing items for an agenda have been given sufficient notice of deadlines and do not meet them, the committee secretary should normally drop the item from the agenda.

Having done this the secretary should consult the chair for any items he or she would like to discuss.

The next step is to draft an agenda. A template can be found at Appendix 1.

As noted above some committees have an agenda committee, the broad role of which is to construct the agenda in a way which reflects the nature and importance of different items and which allows adequate time for transaction of the business brought forward.

2. REPORT FORMAT

Committee reports should be brief, clear and to the point, and explain clearly their purpose. Details should be consigned to the Annexes.

Reports going to a School Committee should follow the format shown in Appendix 2, and be fronted by the cover sheet shown in Appendix 6. Committee members will expect the cover sheet to be tailored for them, to highlight the key points and implications of the paper and explaining exactly what the committee needs to approve, and why, addressing the key headings.

3. CIRCULATION OF PAPERS

Papers should normally be circulated at least five clear working days before the date of regular meetings.

Occasionally there will be important reports which a committee must consider at a particular meeting but which are not received in time for circulation by the normal stipulated deadline. Where necessary, in order to get the bulk of the papers for the agenda out on time, such late reports should be marked "To Follow" on the agenda top sheet and circulated as soon as possible with an explanatory note cross-referencing them to the agenda.

Reports or Minutes should only be tabled at the meeting if it is completely unavoidable as members often feel unprepared to discuss them in such circumstances.

The default mode for circulation of committee papers is still hard copy, but subject to the agreement of the committee concerned, papers may be circulated by e-mail or by being posted onto the LSE internal website. E-mail should be considered as the first option for circulating material to smaller, less formal bodies such as user groups, consultative fora and working groups. If a majority of members are happy to receive papers by e-mail, this may be adopted as the norm with hard copy being provided for members unable or unwilling to receive papers electronically.

Committee secretaries need to ensure that there is an electronically based distribution schedule for each committee for which they are responsible.

Distribution schedules include:

- full members of the committee, nominated and ex-officio.
- correspondence Members (if applicable)
- officers and others who regularly attend meetings of the committee
- others who may not regularly attend meetings but have functional responsibilities for the areas of activity falling within the committee's remit.

4. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

The house style for LSE minutes is shown in Appendix 3. Guidelines on reporting direct and indirect speech and the correct use of tense is covered in Appendix 4.

5. MANAGEMENT OF COMMITTEE PAPERS

Each committee secretary should hold two full set of papers for their committee: an electronic copy and a printed copy. If the Chair signs a copy of the minutes, these should be incorporated into the official set. Chair's Briefings should also be included in the meeting file. The meeting file should contain an alphabetical index of papers and a list of papers ordered by their numerical reference.

Any amendments made to the minutes when they are taken for approval should be entered manually by the committee secretary onto both the minute file and the official set of papers. Digital/ online copies of the approved minutes should show the corrected minutes (with the changes incorporated).

Agendas and papers for LSE School Committees should also be put on the School website for the relevant committee. Access to committee minutes on the website is controlled by the relevant divisional web editor who can limit access to committee members or specific audiences, as well as to confidential papers. Committee secretaries are responsible for ensuring that their own webpages are updated, in liaison with their dedicated web editor.

Committee minutes and papers provide a record of decisions and developments at the School underpinning the School's institutional memory. Committees reporting directly to Court, Council, Academic Board and School Management Committee must be retained permanently and transferred to the School Archive when no longer required for the active work of the committee. Guidance on the retention of committee records can be found at Appendix 8.

6. DISSEMINATION OF COMMITTEE DECISIONS

Any action taken on the basis of decisions made at a meeting should begin quickly after a committee has met and information about the decision should be disseminated promptly. For meetings requiring long and detailed minutes which take time to prepare, it can be helpful to produce an 'action sheet' in advance of (or in addition to) the minutes, showing the person responsible for carrying out the action and any deadlines agreed. Otherwise, draft minutes should be produced and approved as a draft by the Chair, preferably within 5 working days.

It is also important that business requiring the consideration of another committee is referred to the secretary of that committee by the secretary of the originating committee. When it can be anticipated in advance that an item of business will require consideration by more than one committee, the author of the paper has the responsibility for devising a timetable for scheduling consideration of the item in consultation with the secretary of the other committee(s).

In Consultative Forums and User Groups, the chair is responsible for ensuring that matters of concern are brought to the attention of the relevant unit or committee, which need not be the parent committee.

7. SCHEDULING AND CANCELLATION OF MEETINGS

The meeting date for all School committees are listed in the Calendar of Events. Committee secretaries are consulted about the scheduling of meetings each year by the member of the Secretary's Division responsible for compiling the schedule. The sequencing of meetings is important to improve the flow of business between committees, particularly upwards for approval.

Ad hoc meetings of committees are most easily arranged using a table which cross-references members to possible dates and times for the meeting to ascertain optimal availability. Reasonable notice (at least 5 working days) must be given of ad hoc meetings.

Where there is insufficient business to justify a committee meeting, or the date of a scheduled meeting has to be changed, the meeting should be cancelled/after consultation with the Chair, giving reasonable notice to members (at least 5 working days). Meetings of User Groups and Forums for which there is little business may with the Chair's approval be conducted by correspondence.

8. ANNUAL REPORTS AND REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS WITH SENIOR COMMITTEES

Each formal committee of Council / Academic Board is required to report annually to Council / the Board on the business it has undertaken, the activities of its subordinate bodies and its intentions for future activities. Council / Academic Board will determine in the light of the initial Annual Reports from the new committees whether changes to the nature of these reports is required. The suggested format of these reports is shown later in this guide.

9. RESTRICTED (or RESERVED) BUSINESS

Some matters of business should not be discussed in open session unless the committee's terms of reference allow for them to be (e.g. Promotions Committee concerning individuals; Finance or APRC concerning commercially sensitive material). In such circumstance individual members of

staff and students may be directed to withdraw from the meeting, and the minutes of that item will be recorded without detailed information, and /or kept separate.

1. AGENDAS

- 1.1 An agenda is a list of items to be considered at the meeting. This forms the first page of the papers for the meeting.
- 1.2 The agenda begins with a formal notice of the meeting, showing the date, time and place when it will be held and the name of the secretary. Where the time or place of a meeting is unusual it is advisable to draw the attention of members to the unusual arrangements.
- 1.3 If members are asked to bring anything other than the distributed papers indicated in the list of items it should be made clear at this point, e.g. papers circulated for a previous meeting or diaries to arrange an extra meeting.
- 1.4 Order of agendas. The ordering of items should normally be as follows:
 - Declarations of interest.
 - Minutes of the previous meeting.
 - Matters arising from the minutes. This item should normally be dealt with orally and not made the subject of a separate written report. It should be kept as short as possible, conveying only relevant updating information on an item which is not covered elsewhere in the agenda top sheet. Matters arising ought to be included with related items on the agenda, where possible, so that the same topic does not appear twice.
 - Substantive major issues on which decisions are required in accordance with the committee's terms of reference (note: "decision" includes a recommendation to another body). This will often be an appropriate place at which to include reports from subordinate bodies which contain recommendations for approval
 - Other items requiring a decision
 - Matters for information and report not requiring decisions
 - Any Other Business
- 1.5 As with committee reports, the agenda should show below the final item of the agenda the date on which it was finalised.
- 1.6 The name of the secretary and the date should appear at the end of the agenda, together with the dates of all further meetings for the current academic year. The current membership and circulation may also be shown here.
- 1.7 Grouping of related items. Where appropriate, items dealing with related subjects should be grouped under a single agenda heading, but given separate report numbers.
- 1.8 Descriptions of agenda items. To assist members and others identify the issues to be considered quickly, and to allow the minutes to be produced more easily using the agenda top sheet as a template, short descriptions of each agenda item should be inserted after the title of the report on the agenda top sheet. It should be made clear on the agenda what the committee is asked to do.

SPECIMEN AGENDA

THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE NON-EXISTENT COMMITTEE DATE OF MEETING

There will be a meeting of the Non-Existent Committee at 2.00pm on Wednesday xx March 20xx in the Vera Anstey Room.

AGENDA

- 1. Declarations of Interest**
- 2. Minutes**
- 3. Matters Arising from the Minutes**
- 4. Business Item 1** **EC/01**
To approve.....
- 5. Business Item 2** **EC/02**
To approve.....
- 6. Business Item 3** **EC/03**
To consider and provide feedback on the proposals.....
- 7. Business Item 4** **EC/04**
To receive the report of the xx Sub-Committee
- 8. Any Other Business**
- 9. Date of Next Meeting**

Name
Secretary to the Non-Existent Committee
Date (final agenda agreed)

Further Meetings of the Non-Existent Committee

8 May 20xx
19 June 20xx

(Every report should be fronted by a cover sheet)

1. REPORTS

- 1.1 General Format. All reports should be brief, clear and to the point. Details should be consigned to the Annexes.
- Section 1 - purpose of the paper - what the committee is being asked to do.
 - Section 2 – background, to set the context for the committee’s consideration of the item
 - Section 3 – for consideration – brief resume of key issues and options
 - Section 4 – for decision: what exactly the committee is being asked to do, for example, approve or recommend approval of a set of proposals or a course of action, or choose between a range of options. Committee secretaries are responsible for ensuring that what is proposed in a committee report falls within the powers of the committee to resolve or recommend as defined by its terms of reference, and that where it is proposed another committee should consider something, the proposal also falls within the other committee’s terms of reference
- 1.2 Cover Paper. A cover paper should be attached to the front of all committee reports (see Appendix 6). Committees need different information to make decisions, and the cover paper is a way of drawing out the relevant key points for each committee, rather than having to rewrite the paper. Moreover, a cover paper enables members with little time available to absorb the key elements of the paper quickly so as to contribute towards the discussion.
- 1.3 Appendices/Annexes. Appendices help to clarify the main message of a committee paper by stripping out the detail from the general narrative, but attachments themselves should be kept as brief as possible. Where large appendices are involved, they should not normally be circulated but the paper or agenda top sheet should refer to their availability for inspection in a specified office or website.
- 1.4 Acknowledgement of authorship. The name of the author should always be shown on committee papers.
- 1.5 Consultation on committee reports. It is sensible and courteous to consult with administrative colleagues and heads of other operational units in the School if a committee report alludes to their areas of responsibility. It is not necessary for the committee chair to see and agree all reports before they are circulated – though they may see selected drafts.
- 1.6 If the report contains several recommendations these should be in bold in the report, and summarised at the end so that it is clear what the Committee is being asked to agree.
- 1.7 House Style
- Committee reports should use the LSE house style with the name of the Committee on the top left hand side of the page, the date of the Committee meeting, and the Committee reference on the right hand side (which will be provided by the Secretary of the Committee which is considering the report). Reports should also:

- a) use headings exactly which correspond with the titles listed on the agenda top sheet.
- b) use sequential numbering from the beginning of each academic year after the committee prefix (eg EC/1, EC/2, EC/3).
- c) use size 10, 11 or 12 Times New Roman or Arial font, with left hand or full justification.
- d) be spellchecked using a British-English spellchecker.
- e) be divided into paragraphs and sub-divided using any appropriate system e.g. legal style indented numerals (1, 1.1, 1.1.1) or lettering ((a), (b), (c)) or little roman numerals (i) (ii) (iii). Whichever system is used, it should be uniform and kept as simple as possible. Main headings of reports do not usually need numbering; the numbering used ought not to proceed beyond three levels.
- f) contain numbered pages. The numbers should be aligned at the centre or right hand side of the bottom of each page.
- g) show clearly the purpose of the report in the first few paragraphs and proposals and recommendations, indented and emboldened, at the end. If there are several proposals shown throughout the report they too should be summarised at the end.
- h) be dated and attributed.
- i) include attachments if appropriate conforming to the following conventions:
 - attachments to committee reports are labelled Annex A, B, C etc to the committee paper concerned eg EC/01 Annex C
 - attachments to minutes and sub-attachments to Annexes are labelled Appendix 1,2,3 etc eg Appendix 3 to Annex A of EC/02

SPECIMEN REPORT

THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

NEC/14

NON-EXISTENT COMMITTEE

Xx June 20xx

REPORT TITLE

1. Purpose of paper

1.1 To approve the proposals in this report.

2. Background

2.1 point 1

2.2 point 2

3. Subject Matter / Issues

3.1 Issue 1

3.2 Issue 2

3.3 Issue 3

4. Proposals / Recommendations

4.1 The Committee is invited to approve the recommendations in paragraphs 3.1 to 3.3

Name

Position

Date

1. MINUTES

1.1 The minutes of a meeting record in a clear and concise form:

- the positions and/or formal recommendations and/or formal decisions which a committee has taken, consistent with its Terms of Reference
- the documentation which the committee had before it to enable it to reach that position and/or recommendation and/or decision
- as appropriate, the key points in the documentation and in discussion which led to the committee's position/formal recommendation/formal decision

1.2 Minutes are not intended to provide a verbatim account of all the contributions made to a meeting. Committee secretaries will however find it helpful to take detailed notes in the event of a query on the Minutes when they are submitted for approval to the next following meeting of the Committee.

1.3 For some fora summary reports of decisions may be compiled rather than minutes. It may however sometimes be appropriate to record discussion at greater length so that the fact of consultation is evident concerning some important documents.

1.4 Structure of Committee Minutes.

1.5 Minutes should follow the following structure.

RECEIVED: a report circulated to or tabled for the committee.

REPORTED: additional facts (not arguments, views, or opinions) of which the committee was informed

NOTED: the key points in a report which contributed to a position, recommendation, or resolution taken by the committee. Important additional points made in discussion should be recorded anonymously using this heading

AGREED: a consensus reached by the committee, but not a formal decision; or a further action not within the power of the committee

RECOMMENDED: a recommendation to a superior body that the committee's terms of reference enable it to make

RESOLVED: a decision made within a committee's terms of reference

It is essential that the above key words are used accurately and consistently to structure the minutes, because the Minutes often provide the authority for a course of action.

1.6 In minuting large items, it is often preferable to break up the Minutes into sub-sections reflecting the main themes of the subject under consideration, with each sub-section following the structure set out.

1.7 Minutes should be given headings and structured in such a way that will enable them to be easily found in future. Minutes dealing with items under Matters Arising from the Minutes should have sub-headings to aid identification.

1.8 Minutes of committees which report to parent bodies should be arranged in 3 parts:

Part One: printed on green paper (for minutes of Court, Council, Academic Board, and sub-committees), concerns matters resolved by the committee or relating to matters of internal information or references (other than formal recommendations) to other committees

Part Two: printed on white paper, constitutes the report of a committee's recommendations to a parent committee

Part Three (if necessary): printed on yellow paper, is concerned with 'reserved business' (items which exclude certain members, or which are not for general circulation).

1.9 Format of Minutes

Minute Numbering

Minute numbering should start at 1 at the commencement of each membership year for the committee concerned; each separate paragraph, whether introduced by a key word or not carries an individual, legal style indented, minute number. The headings for each item in the minutes are not numbered.

Sub paragraphs within each minute are designated by any appropriate system, as previously mentioned.

Minute Headings: Use of Capitals

The minuting of long discussions is made easier to read if minute headings are in capitals and subsidiary headings are in upper and lower case only.

Fonts and Justification

Minutes should be normally be written using size 11 or 12 Times New Roman or Arial font, with left hand or full justification.

Page Numbering

Each committee paper should have numbered pages. The numbers should be aligned at the centre of the bottom of each page.

Emboldening for Recommendations

The text of a recommendation in minutes should emboldened; or highlighted by indentation and double sidelining on the left hand side of the text.

Action Sheets

Action sheets should be produced for every meeting so that it is clear who is responsible for taking forward action that the committee has agreed. The committee

secretary and chair should agree how to manage action sheets – e.g. whether to attach them to the minutes, or keep them separate.

Committee secretaries should check their action sheets periodically to ensure that the actions specified on the committee's behalf have been carried out.

1.10 Approval of Minutes.

There are three levels of minute status:

- draft – the secretary has written them
- unconfirmed – the process by which the draft minutes may be agreed for distribution prior to formal confirmation, usually with permission from the Chair
- confirmed – the committee itself has agreed them.

1.11 Minutes of a meeting are not formally adopted until they are approved at the next following meeting of the committee. However, if meetings are held several months apart, consideration should be given to circulating the unconfirmed minutes shortly after the meeting so that members are reminded of the discussion and any matters which have been agreed. These should be recirculated with the agenda when the committee next meets.

SPECIMEN MINUTES

THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

NON-EXISTENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 1.00pm on XX March 20XX

Present: Professor C. Hair (Chair), Dr B. Present, Professor H. Ere, Dr B Clear

In attendance: Dr A. Dission, Mr A. Ministrator (for item 18)

Apologies: Dr C Thru

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1. REPORTED by the Chair, that members should declare any interest they had in relations to items of the agenda
2. NOTED, no members declared any interest in relation to items on the agenda.

MINUTES

3. RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on xx January 20xx.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Minute 2.3

3. NOTED: that the situation had now been addressed locally.

Minute 4.6

4. NOTED: that the matter would come back to the Committee meeting on xx June 20xx.

REGULATIONS FOR NON-EXISTENT POLICY 1

5. RECEIVED, NEC/11, a proposal to amend the Regulations pertaining to Non-Existent Regulations.
6. REPORTED, by the Chair:
- (a) that at its meeting on xx November 20xx, the committee had considered a report on the Non-Existent Regulations which had highlighted the kinds of issues which the Committee considered;
 - (b) that in light of its discussion of the report, the Non-Existent Committee had requested that the Regulations should be revised to take account of concerns raised;
 - (c) the Committee members were invited to comment on the proposals changes to the Regulations and recommend them to the Academic Board if appropriate.
7. NOTED, in discussion:
- (a) There was considerable support for a change to the Regulations to clarify the rules;
 - (b) There was a view that it would not be unreasonable to extend these Regulations to students on non-existent courses;
 - (c) There were no financial implications to these changes.
8. RESOLVED, to recommend the changes to the Non-Existent Regulations for approval by Academic Board

ANNUAL REPORT

9. RECEIVED, NEC/12, the annual report of the Non-Existent Sub-Committee.
10. REPORTED, by the Chair of the Non-Existent Sub-Committee that the majority of the committee's work had been carried out by correspondence due to difficulties in convening meetings, but the arrangements had proved very effective.
11. AGREED, to thank the committee for its sterling work.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

12. NOTED: The date of the next meeting would be on Monday xx June 20zz at 1pm in the Vera Anstey Room

Reporting on Discussions at Meetings

APPENDIX 4

The purpose of this note is to assist minute takers with the correct use of tenses and timeframes when drafting the minutes of a meeting. This can be very confusing at times for a minute writer, and the purpose of this note is to provide some practical advice, if not an explanation about the reason for the way it is.

This note is intended for those who never learned any grammar, as well as for those who have forgotten what they once knew.

If you want to know more about active and passive voices; indicative, subjunctive, conditional and imperative moods; infinitives, participles, and gerunds, Chambers English Grammar is a slim treasure to consult.

Direct and Indirect Speech

Saying exactly what someone has said is called direct speech, and it appears within quotation marks ("...") word for word.

For example:

The Chair said, "This is the most interesting report that I have ever read."

However, we don't tend to use direct speech in minutes, or report what people have said *verbatim*, although it can sometimes be useful to make a note of this in your own handwritten notes.

Indirect or reported speech doesn't use quotation marks to enclose what the person said, and it doesn't have to be reported word for word. When reporting speech the tense usually changes. This is because when we use reported speech, we are usually talking about a time in the past. The verbs therefore usually have to be in the past too.

Using the previous example:

The Chair said that the report was the most interesting report she had ever read.

As a rule, when you report something someone has said you should go back a tense. Here are some examples of this in action:

<i>Direct speech</i>	<i>Indirect speech</i>
She said, "I object to the proposal." (present tense – simple)	She said she <u>objected</u> to the proposal (past tense – simple)
He asked, "Why are you objecting to the proposal?" (present tense – continuous)	He asked why she <u>was objecting</u> to the proposal. (past tense – continuous)
She said, "I made my view clear when I objected to the proposal at the Committee." (present perfect – simple)	She said she <u>had made</u> her view clear when she had objected to the proposal at the Committee. (past perfect – simple)
She added, "I have been objecting to the proposal for six years." (present perfect – continuous)	She added that she <u>had been objecting</u> to the proposal for six years. (past perfect – continuous)
She also said, "I objected to it at the Board meeting as well."	She also said she <u>had objected</u> to it at the Board meeting as well.

(past simple)	(past perfect)
She said, "I was teaching earlier."	She said she had been teaching earlier
(past continuous)	(past perfect continuous)
There are no changes if someone says she or he "had" done or "had been" doing something, e.g: he said "I had been daydreaming at the meeting."	He said he had been day dreaming at the meeting

Here are some special verbs:

<i>Direct speech</i>	<i>Indirect speech</i>
Will - he said, "I will write the minutes tomorrow."	He said he <u>would</u> write the minutes tomorrow
Can – she said, "I can attend the meeting."	She said she <u>could</u> attend the meeting.
Must – he said, "I must borrow a computer to work at home."	He said he <u>had</u> to borrow a computer to work at home.
Shall – she said, "Who shall I ask to chair the meeting."	She said who <u>should</u> she ask to chair the meeting.
May – he said, "I may resign if the proposal is agreed."	He said he <u>might</u> resign if the proposal was agreed.
Could, would, should, might and ought to – do not change	She said she would / ought to / might write a book on university management

Changes of Time and Place

If a reported sentence contains a reference to time, you must change it to fit in with the time of reporting. The following list should help you:

<i>Direct speech (today)</i>	<i>Indirect speech (historical)</i>
Today	Yesterday
This evening	That evening
These days / years	Those days / years
Now	Then
A week ago / a month ago	A week before / a month before
Last weekend	The weekend before last / the previous weekend
Here	There
Next week / month	The following week / month
Tomorrow	The next day / the following day

1. What makes a good Chair?

- Preparing well by reading all the papers and secretary's brief
- Developing a good understanding of the issues and topics being discussed
- Being impartial and listening carefully to the discussion
- Ensuring that all members have an equal chance to express their point of view
- Preventing points being repeated, or the discussion moving away from the main issue
- Being able to sum-up the points made in discussions
- Understanding when to end the discussion or move to a vote

2. Before the Meeting

Chairs should meet with the secretary to agree and order the agenda. Committees will set deadlines for the receipt of items and for accompanying reports. Important business should be much higher up the agenda than routine matters.

3. At the Meeting

- a) Be aware of the [Committee Effective Behaviours Policy](#) (Appendix 11).
- b) Start the meeting on time. This shows respect for those who turned up on time. Starting late to accommodate late-comers will re-enforce their view that it is acceptable to arrive late.
- c) Introduce yourself and welcome everyone, especially new members. This will make them feel comfortable.
- d) Thank everyone for their time. If it is the first meeting of the committee (or the first of the academic year), it is good practice for all members to introduce themselves.
- e) At the start of the meeting, review the overall agenda briefly to identify any pressure points and timing issues.
- f) At the start of each agenda item, outline the purpose of the discussion and the type of action needed (e.g. for decision, or information). Introduce speakers who are attending to speak to reports.
- g) Keep the meeting focussed, on time and encourage equal participation and contribution from members.
- h) Don't become a participant in the discussion, force your own ideas on the meeting, or criticise the values and ideas of others.
- i) If you have been involved in preparing the item of business under discussion have someone else chair the meeting so you can take part in the debate.
- j) Summarise key points at the end if the discussion has been lengthy but avoid talking too much.
- k) Ensure that all members understand any jargon, initials or acronyms – not everyone has equal knowledge or understanding.
- l) Ensure that all the key points are agreed and minuted and actions assigned to individuals where appropriate with the proposed time-frame and feedback required.
- m) Ensure unresolved items or issues raised during the meeting are noted for later attention and how they will be followed-up, e.g agenda item for following meeting, or to be dealt with outside the meeting.

4. Closing the Meeting

- a) End the meeting on time. This shows respect for the participants and will encourage people to commit to staying to the end.
- b) Clarify that minutes and actions will be reported back to members within the normal School timescale;
- c) Thank everyone for coming and for contributing towards the meeting.

5. After the Meeting

- a) Confirm with the secretary that they have a record of all key discussions, outcomes and actions.
- b) Check carefully the draft minutes sent to you by the secretary, make any necessary amendments and return promptly.
- c) Arrange any follow-up discussions.

APPENDIX 6

[Insert Committee Name]
[Date / month / year]

[Paper Reference No]

[SUBJECT]

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1.1 Purpose of paper | What is the paper about and what are you hoping to achieve? |
| 1.2 Background | What are the important points you want to highlight for <u>this</u> committee? Don't forget, every committee will have a different focus. Include the rationale, options, and key points extracted from the report. |
| 1.3 Recommendations | What are the recommendations you want approved? |
| 1.4 Consultation and approval process | Clearly state the decision trajectory (approvals history, where will the paper go next)? |
| 1.5 Strategic context / student impact | How do the recommendations relate to the School's priorities or strategic plan? What will be the impact on students, and the student experience? |
| 1.6 Risk assessment and mitigation | Analyse the major risks associated with the proposal and explain how these risks will be managed. Ensure explicit reference is made to any relevant risks on the Strategic and Operational risk registers. Dan Bennett, Risk Manager can provide further advice and a copy of the Risk Registers - d.bennett@lse.ac.uk |
| 1.7 Financial considerations | If your paper has any financial implications you need to state what they - if none, you should state that. If the Committee you are sending your report to doesn't have financial authority you should discuss the paper with the Finance Director who will advise how to deal with the issue. If the committee does have financial responsibilities add the expenditure implications here, in an annex if detailed. |
| 1.8 Inclusivity considerations | Has the policy passed an Equality Impact Assessment ? |
| 1.9 Ethical considerations | Are any of the six core principles in the Ethics code engaged? The Ethics Manager can provide further advice and information – ethics@lse.ac.uk |
| 1.10 Environmental considerations | Are any of the issues in the school policies relating to sustainability engaged? |
| 1.11 Responsibility for implementation | Who has responsibility for implementing the recommendations, if approved? |
| 1.11 Author Name | [Name] - [Job title] |
| 1.12 Report Sponsor | [Name] - [Job title] |
| 1.13 Release of Paper | Release information. Is it blocked, embargoed, subject to redaction? |

Note: this cover note should be attached to the front of all committee reports. It should be a focused report for the specific committee concerned, highlighting the key points of the paper and explaining exactly what you need the committee to approve, and why, addressing the key headings.

APPENDIX 7

EXAMPLE DECISION / ACTION SHEET

Some committees prefer to produce a decision / action sheet after each meeting, particularly if the minutes are going to take more than 5 days to write and be approved, but some committees like them to be produced in addition to the minutes. Action sheets should show decisions made, and action required to implement a decision, including the name of the person responsible and the date by which the action should be carried out.

For small meetings, it is acceptable to use an action / decision sheet in lieu of minutes.

Action and Decisions arising from the xxx Committee on xx month 2017

1.	Item or minute number	Decision / action to be taken, by whom, and by when
2.	Minutes of previous meeting	Agreed.
3.	Name of item (Minute 1.2)	Agreed, that..... Action: John Smith Completion target: xxxxx
4.	Name of item (Minute 2.5)	Agreed, that..... Action: John Smith Completion target: xxxxx
5.	Name of item (minute 3.4)	Recommendations (a) and (b) agreed. Action: Chair Completion target: xxxxx
6.	Name of item (minute 6.1)	Not approved due to concerns about..... Action: Chair Completion target: xxxxx
7.	Name of item (minute 8.1)	Noted
8.	Any Other Business	None

Committee retention scheduling

Not all committee agendas, minutes and papers produced by the School need to be kept permanently. The main committees of the School receive papers containing a large amount of detailed information from which the historical record of the School can be sourced. The committees listed below will be kept permanently.

COMMITTEE PAPERS FOR PERMANENT RETENTION

- Court of Governors and its directly reporting committees
 - Chair and Vice-Chair Selection Committee
 - Nominations Committee
- Council and its directly reporting committees
 - Audit Committee
 - Estates Strategy Committee
 - Ethics Policy Committee
 - Finance Committee
 - Remuneration Committee
 - Health and Safety Committee
- Academic Board and its directly reporting committees
 - Academic Nominations Committee
 - Academic and Student Affairs Committee
 - Academic Planning and Resources Committee
 - Agenda Committee
 - Research Committee
- School Management Committee (and predecessors to this committee)

A record copy of the papers of these committees should be transferred to the School's Archives, either in paper or electronic form yearly at the end of the academic year.

OTHER COMMITTEE PAPERS

Long term committees, boards and working groups

Other committees, boards and working groups with a life over three years should keep records for current year plus nine. Once the committee, board or working group is no longer active, the last sets of papers should be sent to offsite storage if paper or transferred to the School's Records Manager/LSE Archivist/Governance Team if electronic to be destroyed at the end of their retention period.

Short term committees, boards and working groups

Other committees, boards and working groups with a life of three years or under should when no longer active transfer papers to offsite storage if paper, or to the School's Records Manager/LSE Archivist/Governance Team if electronic. They will then be kept for current year plus 6.

Being a committee member is not only about attending meetings but about working with the other members of the committee to reach a consensus about the business before it.

Committee members should make decisions as a collective group. Collective responsibility entails members supporting a decision a committee has made even though the member may not have voted in favour of it, or may have been absent from the meeting. Members are responsible for ensuring that all decisions are taken in the best interests of the School and in accordance with the School's mission aims and objectives.

The whole LSE community, including all staff, students, and governors of LSE, are expected to act in accordance with the principles which are set out in the LSE Ethics Code (Appendix 10) and in the [Committee Effective Behaviours Policy](#) (Appendix 11), which incorporate the 'Nolan Principles' of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Unless explicitly stated in the terms of reference, members of committees are not at meetings as representatives of a particular group. Members are on committees as individuals, and are chosen because they have skills, knowledge or interests relating to the areas dealt with by the committee. While members may be nominated or elected from a particular group and can bring the views of that group to the meeting, the interests of the School must always be the overriding consideration.

It is important to remember that, whatever the item under discussion, a committee is not empowered to discuss individuals, or individual cases, unless this is explicitly set out in the committee's terms of reference.

Specifically, committee members should

- Endeavour to attend all meetings, or send apologies to the chair for absences.
- Provide comments on papers where you are unable to attend.
- Prepare for the meeting by reading the agenda, papers and any emails before the meeting.
- Talk to the chair before the meeting if you need to clarify anything.
- Arrive on time. Stay to the end.
- Participate fully in the meeting, listening to what others have to say, contributing positively to the discussion, and providing concise comments.
- Draw attention to any potential conflicts of interest that may arise in the meeting.
- Fulfil any responsibilities assigned to you at the meeting and be prepared to report back on your progress at the next meeting.
- Maintain confidentiality where required.

The Committee Effective Behaviour Statement

The School expects the highest ethical standards and seeks to foster an inclusive environment. As a community we value equality of opportunity, respect and diversity in acknowledging and respecting a broad range of social, cultural and personal beliefs, and we expect everyone to demonstrate mutual respect, open-mindedness and transparency. This extends to all School committees including within Departments and Service Divisions.

All committee members, whether academic, professional services, student and external members, are collectively responsible for the decisions of the committee. Debate and disagreement are expected within discussions, however all members should be seen as equal and their views and opinions should be treated with respect.

Committee Chairs will challenge any inappropriate attitudes, language and behaviour which does not meet these standards. For example, being rude, overbearing, talking over others, making inappropriate remarks or gestures (including sexist or racist comments) and belittling others' opinions, abilities and experiences.

This statement supports five of the six principles: Responsibility and Accountability, Integrity, Intellectual Freedom, Collegiality and Equality of Respect and Opportunity.

What to do if members have concerns about any behaviour which contravenes the Committee Effective Behaviour Statement

Committee Chairs will consider how to respectfully address any inappropriate attitudes, language and behaviour. Within the meeting this might be done by reminding members of this Committee Effective Behaviours statement and the wider [Effective Behaviours Framework](#). It may be necessary for the Chair to follow up outside of the meeting with both parties. In serious cases, such as those that have been the subject of persistent and / or highly inappropriate behaviour from another committee member should contact the School's Ethics Manager for further advice: ethics@lse.ac.uk

Review schedule

Review interval	Next review due by	Next review start
3 years	October 2021	July 2021

Version history

Version	Date	Approved by	Notes
1.0	16/10/2018	SMC	

Links

Reference	Link
Ethics Code	Ethics Code
Effective Behaviours Framework	Effective Behaviours Framework .

Contacts

Position	Name	Email	Notes
Ethics Manager	Stephanie Allison	ethics@lse.ac.uk	

Communications and Training

Will this document be publicised through Internal Communications?	<u>Yes</u> / No
Will training needs arise from this policy	Yes/ <u>No</u>
If Yes, please give details	