



# School Advisory Boards – Terms of Reference

## Purpose and Creation of Advisory Boards

- 1.1. The purpose of Advisory Boards is to provide the Director or Heads or Directors of Departments, Institutes, Centres or Departmental Research Units or of Professional Service Divisions (referred to herein as 'units'), and the members of the unit's management team or committee, with an external perspective and advice, support and guidance on the work of the unit. All Research Centres at the School are required to have an Advisory Board.
- 1.2. Advisory Boards also provide the forum in which the legitimate interests and perspectives of external academic and non-academic members and funders of research are represented.
- 1.3. Advisory Boards will consider issues of strategy and policy to inform the leaders of the units to which they are appointed.
- 1.4. Advisory Boards may only be established with the approval of the School Secretary in units which have been formally established through the School's governance processes.
- 1.5. Advisory Board will not be involved in:
  - a. the making of appointments to Chairs or other faculty appointments due to the potential for inappropriate external interference;
  - b. activities carried out on an informal basis such as individual research programmes.

## Role and Obligations of Advisory Boards and their members

- 2.1 All Advisory Boards must operate in line with the School's Ethics Code and the Donations Acceptance Policy and with the Principles of Public Life (the Nolan Principles), and with the other policies and procedures of the School.
- 2.2 Advisory Boards must not attempt to direct or exert undue influence over academic matters in any way, or seek to limit the academic freedom of any individual academic or group of academics or of any unit within LSE or seek to restrict their capacity to operate independently. Advisory Boards

which are created as part of the terms of a grant or donation must guarantee the freedom of the academic unit and the School to utilise any funding for such purposes as it sees fit (within the terms of the agreement) and without interference.

2.3 Advisory Boards may advise in general terms on HR matters within the unit, and individual members of Boards may participate in an advisory capacity in selection committees making appointments with the agreement of the School Secretary. They may not however take part in the decision to appoint and must at all times respect the principles of academic freedom and the independence of the LSE.

2.4 The role of Advisory Boards and their members may include all or any of the following:

## Strategic and Policy Development

- a. To advise on general strategy for the unit in order to achieve its objectives;
- b. To advise on actions to be taken to advance the strategy and policies of the unit, for example: enhancing the performance of areas identified as making insufficient progress or where future difficulties in the achievement of its objectives are anticipated; new areas of research; or new collaborative opportunities;
- c. To advise and assist on fundraising and the mobilisation of relevant contacts (e.g., for research access or placement of students in internships). All fundraising activities should be coordinated through Advancement, and student placements should be coordinated with Careers;
- d. To advise on issues referred to the Board by the unit's Management Committee or equivalent;
- e. To advise on the unit's engagement and impact generating strategy and support its activities in implementing the strategy, for example supporting the investment in engaging with key audiences and potential users of the research; offering pathways into user groups;
- f. To advise the LSE Director on any issues within the scope of the Board's Terms of Reference, for example as part of a review process or at times of transition in the unit.

## External Support and Perspective

- g. To act as ambassadors on behalf of the unit, for example by attending its key events and networking with key players/audiences on its behalf;
- h. To act as a critical friend in relation to the overall shape, academic direction and relevance to policy and practice of the unit;
- i. To advise on the development of educational activities by the unit where relevant;
- j. To advise on trends in their fields and practices elsewhere.

## Reporting and Accountability

- k. To comment on the unit's draft annual report, where relevant.

## Arrangements for the operation of Advisory Boards

- 3.1. Advisory Boards will normally be chaired pro-bono by a member external to the School. The Chair and members should be on the basis of their ability to provide the benefit of their integrity, expertise and ability to contribute to the strategy and activities of the academic unit.
- 3.2. Appointments to Advisory Boards must be subject to appropriate due diligence and approval processes (including the declaration of any potential conflicts of interests) and be approved by the School Secretary.
- 3.3. The terms of appointment must include provision for members, including the Chair to be dismissed from the Board if they fail to follow the obligations of members set out in this Guidance on Terms of Reference, the School's policies or procedures, or otherwise fail to respect the principles of academic freedom.
- 3.4. Membership of the Board should provide for renewal on a staggered schedule. The normal membership term will be three years, renewable for a further term of three years and exceptionally a second further terms of three years, or renewable for a single term of five years. These time-limits may be extended or waived, by agreement with the School Secretary in order to provide continuity of representation on behalf of a significant external donor. In the case of institutional representation, it is expected that a single individual will serve a full term (without an alternate).
- 3.5. Members may include academics, respected practitioners or users of academic research, fund raisers and funders or their representatives. Advisory Boards should normally contain at least two members who are not members of LSE (including Court and Council). No more than two representatives from a funder should be appointed to an Advisory Board at any one time.
- 3.6. Members of Advisory Boards may not be current registered students or their parents.
- 3.7. To support academic freedom, government officials on an Advisory Board must act in a personal capacity only.
- 3.8. The Advisory Board will normally meet at least twice a year, and must convene at least once a year.
- 3.9. The Director or Head of the unit to which the Advisory Board is appointed or his or her representative must attend all meetings of the Advisory Board; other key members of the Management Team or Committee will normally attend at least one meeting of the Board each year.
- 3.10. The Director or Head of the unit to which the Advisory Board is appointed must provide the School Secretary with details of the members of the Board and a short report on its activities on an annual basis.

(Approved by Academic Board on 22.03.17)

## Review schedule

Review interval	Next review due by	Next review start
5 years	Mar 2022	Nov 2021

## Version history

Version	Date	Approved by	Notes
1	22/3/2017	Academic Board	

## Contacts

Position	Name	Email	Notes
Secretary to Academic Board	Connie Jacobs	<a href="mailto:C.E.Jacobs@lse.ac.uk">C.E.Jacobs@lse.ac.uk</a>	

## Communications and Training

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