Heads of School Policy

Responsible Officer
Provost

Approved by
Vice-Chancellor

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Review by
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Relevant Legislation,
Ordinance, Rule and/or
Governance Level Principle
University of Tasmania Act 1992
Ordinance 14 – Academic Structure

Responsible Organisational Unit
Office of the Provost

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Heads of School Policy

1 Objective

Heads of School are key members of the management structure of the University of Tasmania and play a significant role in leadership, strategic planning, innovation and the achievement of the University’s Mission.

The objectives of this Heads of School Policy are to:

- clarify the roles and responsibilities of Heads of School
- describe the processes of their selection and reward
- detail the mechanisms provided by the University to support them in their position.

2 Scope

This policy applies to:

- College Pro Vice-Chancellor, Dean of Faculty and other members of the Senior Management Team
- Heads of School
- Deputy and Acting Heads of School
- Academic and professional staff of Faculties and Schools.

2.1 Role of Head of School

The prime role of the Head of School is to provide academic and strategic leadership to the School.

The responsibilities of Heads of School are outlined in more detail in Ordinance 14 - Academic Structure and the Academic Structure Policy. This Policy should be read in conjunction with those documents.

In fulfilling their leadership role, Heads of School pursue the following objectives:

(a) Building reputation

This will involve:

- helping set a clear vision and goals for the School and the Discipline(s) it is responsible for teaching
- encouraging and facilitating excellence in learning and teaching, research, research education and professional activities
- encouraging collaboration with other Schools and other internal academic organisational units as appropriate
- contributing to College, Faculty and University strategic planning processes
- representing the interests of the School in internal University of Tasmania forums
- representing the academic interests of the School, Faculty, College and the University of Tasmania in the wider world and building productive relationships and alliances on a local, national and international level.
(b) Attracting and energising people

This will involve:

- making staff aware of their role in the School, Faculty, College and wider community by developing and managing effective, transparent and consultative communication processes within their School, for example, induction, performance management and School meetings
- managing the professional development of all staff
- promoting the development of high quality units and courses

and, with the support of the College Pro Vice-Chancellor or Dean of Faculty and the appropriate administrative unit(s) of the University of Tasmania:

- overseeing and managing student issues including learning support and assessment, consultation, discipline and complaint resolution
- managing all other human resources issues, including recruitment, selection, staff performance and grievances.

c) Facilitating the culture and environment

This will involve:

- establishing and maintaining a positive, engaged and collegial culture using an inclusive and participatory management style
- facilitating planning at the tactical and operational levels in all areas (for example, academic, human resource, finance and infrastructure), and implementing change
- allocating duties to all staff
- ensuring effective internal procedures and activities, for example, teaching and assessment practices, post-graduate supervision, and the quality of information provided to students
- ensuring the internal practices conform to the University of Tasmania policy framework
- maintaining a fair and equitable environment and a workplace that is free from harassment and discrimination
- managing the finances of the School within budget guidelines
- pursuing opportunities to increase external resources
- managing School space in an efficient and appropriate way.

(d) Building a resource base

This will involve:

- developing and growing external relationships and sources of funds through entrepreneurial activities
- developing creative internal relationships to ensure best use of resources
- promoting opportunities where the Head and/or academic colleagues may be involved in identification and generation of resources
- identifying, promoting and supporting opportunities for academics to develop productive relationships across disciplines, particularly in theme areas.

(e) Interacting with communities of interest
This may involve:

- representing the interests and needs of the University and the School to the University’s external communities of interest;
- maintaining the School’s relationship with the broader professional community;
- representing the School to the external community by developing, promoting and maintaining links with appropriate industry, government, professional and community bodies;
- seeking opportunities for the School to meet industry and community needs.

2.2 Selection of Heads of School

Heads of School are appointed by the Vice-Chancellor following consultation with the appropriate Pro Vice-Chancellor or Dean. The Vice-Chancellor reports the appointment of Heads of School to the University Council.

The Pro Vice-Chancellor or Dean will identify appropriate individuals for appointment following broad consultation with the School’s academic and professional staff. Whilst the incoming Head will typically be a senior academic staff member, in all cases the Pro Vice-Chancellor or Dean will nominate the staff member best meeting the selection criteria.

Whilst potential candidates will usually be sourced from within the University of Tasmania following consultation with the School’s academic and professional staff, there may be situations where an internal appointment may restrict the School’s capacity to achieve strategic changes. Similarly, the University may wish to diversify the academic leadership profile to reflect the gender and cultural profile of the University. In such situations, should resources allow, it may be appropriate for the Pro Vice-Chancellor or Dean to put a case to the Senior Management Team to look outside the University for a new Head of School.

2.3 Term of Appointment

The term of each appointment will be up to five (5) years, subject to a minimum appointment of three (3) years, with the possibility of renewal.

2.4 Reward and Recognition

Each Head of School will negotiate a personalised package with the Pro Vice-Chancellor or Dean that may include any or all of the following elements:

(a) salary loading
(b) research assistance
(c) leave provision
(d) teaching assistance.

Further information in this regard should be sought from Human Resources.

Distinguished service as Head of School will be a relevant factor for consideration in future promotion applications.

2.5 Support

The University will:
(a) provide Heads of Schools with appropriate administrative support, at a level that takes account of School size, complexity, budget and need
(b) expect the incoming Head of School to undertake a lower level of teaching duties than other members of the School
(c) allow Heads of School to negotiate with the Pro Vice-Chancellor or Dean for periods of time per year for research activities
(d) expect that all School staff will support the Head of School. In some situations it may be appropriate for the Head of School to share aspects of the leadership role with senior academics. In consultation with the Pro Vice-Chancellor or Dean, Heads of School should delegate, as appropriate, elements of their responsibilities
(e) provide the Head of School with ready access to specialist support from the various administrative units within the University of Tasmania
(f) provide a professional development and training program to better equip and support them in their role
(g) provide formal mechanisms to foster communication with other senior managers including: an annual retreat; establishing a Heads of School Reference Group and an annual briefing from the Vice-Chancellor.

2.6 Deputy Heads of School

Each School will have a Deputy Head of School who is appointed by the Vice-Chancellor following consultation with the Pro Vice-Chancellor or Dean and the Head of School. In larger Schools it may be appropriate to have more than one Deputy Head.

The Head of School will consult with other School staff in the appointment of the Deputy Head, with proposed Deputies subject to the same selection criteria that apply to Heads of School.

The role of the Deputy Head is to be negotiated with the Head of School. Heads of School may delegate tasks while retaining overall authority and responsibility for each area, which provides the Deputy Head with the opportunity to develop skills and knowledge in particular areas and experience a University leadership role.

The Deputy Head is the nominated Head of School when the delegated Head of School is absent from the University. In such circumstances (and unless otherwise specified), the Deputy Head exercises all those responsibilities usually delegated to the Head of School.

Deputy Heads will be remunerated at the rate of Head of School if they act in that position for a minimum of 30 calendar days accumulated within any twelve month period. Payments will commence once the 30 day condition is met. To facilitate payment, Human Resources must be provided with advice from the Head and Deputy Head to this effect, specifying the period(s) where the Deputy has acted as Head of School.

3 Definitions and Acronyms

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<th>Term/Acronym</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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Acting Head of School
A member of academic staff (usually the Deputy Head of School) who acts as manager of a University School during periods when the Head of School is absent from the University.

Deputy Head of School
A member of academic staff appointed by the Vice-Chancellor to act as the deputy manager of a University School, usually for a period of one or two years.

Head of School
A member of academic staff appointed by the Vice-Chancellor to act as manager of a University School.

Organisational Unit
College, Faculty, School, Centre, University Institute, other University Entity, Division, Section or University Business Enterprise.

4 Supporting Documentation

- Delegations Policy
- Schedule of Human Resources Delegations (Part A) – Academic Staff
- Schedule of Human Resources Delegations (Part B) – Professional Staff, English Language Centre, Senior Managers and Above

5 Versioning

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