# Logo  Description automatically generated

# [Name of Committee or Group]

# TERMS OF REFERENCE

**Purpose:**

Describe the purpose of the committee. Answers to these questions could be included:

* Why was the committee formed?
* What will be accomplished by the committee?
* What is its initial role?
* What is its ongoing role?
* How does it relate to the Polytechnic as a whole?
* What key words describe its function (for example: advisory, decision making, research, consultation, forum for input)?
* Is this a constituency-based committee?
* Who are the key stakeholders or representatives?

Since the details follow, this section should be limited to a few concise sentences.

**Mandate:**

The mandate for a committee is usually established by an individual or a governance body. This should be specified in the opening paragraph of this section. Was the committee formed by an administrative officer? Was it formed by Deans’ Council, Service Council, Academic Council, or a Department Council? Was it formed to comply with legislation or a collective agreement?

The levels of authority must be specified in this section. The definitions are contained in the box at the end of the template. This set of definitions must be included in the final document.

For clarity, the levels of authority should be grouped wherever possible. A committee could have several levels of authority delegated to it by the person or group that provided its mandate. Helpful groupings may include:

Planning

Coordination

Policy Formation

Communication

Program or Service Decisions

Forum for Input and Response

Any other subtitle that groups different levels of authority and activity could be included. In each grouping, a mixture of levels of authority is possible.

**Relationship to other Committees:**

This section lists all the other committees that might have some interaction with this one and the specifics of that relationship. Do the other groups report to or receive reports from this one? Is there overlapping membership? Do the decisions of another group depend on input from this one or do the decisions of this group rely on input from other groups?

**Composition:**

Who is on the committee and how are they appointed? If this is a constituency-based committee, be clear regarding what constituencies are included.

**Accountability:**

Is this group accountable to a single person or to one or more governing bodies (for example, Board of Governors, Deans’ Council, Service Council, Academic Council, Department Council)? Accountability usually refers to the recipient of reports, recommendations, annual reports, minutes. The Chair of a committee is normally accountable to the group that established the mandate of the committee.

**REPORTING:**

This section specifies the frequency and nature of reporting. At a minimum, all committees submit annual reports to the body/bodies identified in “ACCOUNTABILITY” above, following the format below. For some committees, regular submission of minutes may satisfy the reporting requirements, and if minutes are submitted regularly an annual report is not required.

**Name of Committee**

**Reporting Period**

**Membership** (names of members and Chair, identify constituency represented if appropriate)

**Activities and Accomplishments** (may include how often the committee met, activities and major accomplishments)

**Responsibility:**

This section specifies the officer or governing body that assures the appointment of the committee and its continued operation.

**Administrative Support:**

This section specifies the office that maintains the records of the committee, establishes meeting times, delivers agendas, and carries out other arrangements for the committee. Normally, an administrative office is charged with these responsibilities for the sake of continuity and consistency (for example, the Office of the Vice President Academic and Provost).

**Operating Procedures:**

The following must be included:

* Meeting frequency and minimum numbers of meetings per year.
* The types and sources of information that the committee may access.
* Who may be called upon for assistance or information?
* The committee’s ability to strike sub committees or task groups and who may be appointed to these subgroups.
* Whether the meetings are open or closed (members only).
* How the chair is appointed (or elected).
* Who sets the agenda?
* Process for changing the Terms of Reference (how often are they reviewed, what governing body or officer approves the changes).

Levels of authority:

The following text box must be included in all terms of reference.

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| **Levels of Authority for Decision Making**: **Decision authority**: The right to make a decision or create a policy without consultation with other individuals or groups.**Principal authority:** The right to make a decision or create a policy with input and recommendations from other groups or individuals; such input may be accepted or rejected. Principal authority allows for the right to make decisions and create policy which is forwarded to another body for action. Decisions or policies may be forwarded to another group or individual for approval where such approval would not be unreasonably denied. Principal authority also permits policy creation within the guidelines established by another group or individual. Finally, principal authority accommodates decision-making or policy creation within the parameters set by another body.**Shared authority:** Authority to make decisions or create policy that is delegated equally to two or more groups or individuals where all parties are required to approve the decision or policy.**Recommending authority:** The right to make recommendations for approval by another group or individual, where the final decision may approve, reject, or amend the recommendations. Recommending authority specifies the requirement that the recommendations be received by the decision making group or individual before a final decision is made.**Advising authority:** The right to provide advice on a decision or policy created by another group or individual. The final decision may include or reject the advice provided. The group or individual making the decision in this case would be considered the principal authority. |