

EDI 20-3 Hybrid Meeting Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to establish the right of allowing attendance at principle school committees through online means to facilitate participation of members who may not be able to attend in person. In particular this policy is aimed at those that may have other responsibilities and to facilitate them to contribute to the running of the school.

Context

An important aspect of creating an environment which encourages work-life balance is to create a flexible approach that allows people to take care of other responsibilities without being excluded from the business of the School and allowing them equal opportunities through enabling participation. The Covid-19 lockdown has made everyone acutely aware of online tools to allow meetings and discussions to take place. This policy aims to take advantage of these tools to provide additional flexibility for members of the school in attending and contributing to school committees rather than simply returning to in person meetings.

Commitment

The School of chemistry commits to facilitating those that wish to attend meetings of the principle School committees (Exec, School, EDI, Research, postgraduate, teaching, and safety) through electronic means (Teams, Zoom etc.) in a hybrid format.

Implementation (once in person meetings are resumed)

Meetings are scheduled at the start of each semester (see Meeting Hours Policy). The meeting will be moved to a room with a projector and a large screen (or a large flat panel display) to facilitate online attendance if requested (normally at least one week before the scheduled date – but best effort if shorter notice). USB based web camera and desk microphone will be also be obtained and available for use in the meeting room. Investigation of a fully online meeting should also be considered if several members request online attendance.

Chairs should be very aware of how the meeting is conducted if a hybrid (or online) model is used. The Chair of the meeting must conduct such meetings in a formal manner with questions or comments made by signalling to the Chair the desire to speak and being called upon by the Chair to do so. Free for all discussions, as often happens, should be stopped immediately by the Chair, as this will inevitably lead to the online attendees being excluded from the discussion.

Complaints

Any person feeling under pressure to attend a meeting in person, or feels that a hybrid meeting was conducted in a manner that excluded them from the discussion should first discuss the matter with the committee Chair. If this does not resolve the situation then they should discuss the issue with the Chairperson of the EDI committee or Head of School.

Version History

Version	Date	Description	Author
1.0	June 2020		Graeme Watson
	29 th September	Discussion at School Committee	Graeme Watson
	1 st December	Approved at School Exec	Graeme Watson

Impact

The impact is two fold.

- 1) Is the policy generally known and understood (change in environment)
- 2) Is it felt that this has helped facilitate members of the School contributing to committees?

How to measure impact

Survey questions

- 1) Are you aware of the School of Chemistry's policy on hybrid meetings to facilitate attendance at meeting using online mechanism?
- 2) Do you think the policy helps facilitate members of the School to contribute to the running of the School?

Statistics on the use of the online attendance will be collected from committee Chairs and summarised in the EDI annual report.