



Faculty of Pharmaceutical Medicine Committee Guidance

**Responsibilities of Committee Chairpersons, Members
and Administrators**

September 2004

Kathryn Swanston
Laura Thornton

Faculty of Pharmaceutical Medicine - Committee Guidance

Introduction

The Faculty of Pharmaceutical Medicine has, as part of its ongoing process of risk assessment, undertaken to identify ways in which decision-making and subsequent implementation of decisions might be improved. As part of this exercise this document has been written to set out and clarify the responsibilities of Faculty committee members and administrators.

These guidance notes were approved and adopted by the Faculty Board on 28th September 2004. The document is intended to be used as a way of improving and standardising functionality and effectiveness across all Faculty committees and working groups. In order to achieve this all those involved in committee and working party activities are requested to adopt these guidelines of good practice.

It is proposed that an annual audit of committee effectiveness will be undertaken using a questionnaire, which would be sent to all Chairpersons, members and administrators of the Faculty's committees.

Responsibilities of Chairperson

Before Meeting

- Check that the actions allocated to you at the last meeting have been completed.
- In conjunction with administrator, monitor progress of actions allocated to committee members at last meeting and take any necessary steps to progress these.
- The content of the agenda/papers is ultimately your responsibility and you should ensure that meeting notifications, agendas and papers are sent out. In most circumstances this will be done in liaison with the administrator.
- If any special arrangements are needed for the meeting for e.g. AV equipment, please notify the administrator in advance of the meeting. Please also ensure that you email copies of presentations if necessary and also bring a copy with you.
- If you are unable to attend a meeting it is your responsibility to identify and brief an alternative chairperson in advance of the meeting, keeping the administrator informed.
- Prepare for meeting by reading papers, liaising with relevant people in advance and seeking clarification or additional information in advance of meeting. Be clear on the purpose and aims of the meeting.
- Try to ensure that any conflicts between members are resolved before the meeting takes place so that these do not interfere with committee business.
- Arrange a pre-meeting with administrator either immediately before or by telephone to discuss agenda and any last minute items received, to identify any potential problems and to ensure that all relevant information will be available at the meeting to facilitate decision-making. Ensure documents for tabling are available for photocopying well in advance of the meeting.

During Meeting

- You should aim to arrive at the venue at least 15 minutes before the meeting to ensure that everything is in place.
- Check you are familiar with the emergency evacuation procedures relating to the venue you are using.
- In order to ensure that the meeting proceedings are recorded fully, make sure that the administrator is present before you start the meeting and stop the meeting if the administrator has to leave the room. If this is not possible ensure meeting notes are taken during the administrator's absence.
- Start and finish meeting on time – this may increase attendance.
- Ensure quorum.
- Remind members to turn off their mobile phones.
- Open meeting by clarifying what the objectives of the meeting are.
- Ensure that all AOB items have been identified at start of meeting to allow effective time management.
- Ascertain any potential conflicts of interest at start of meeting and keep this under review as meeting progresses. Take appropriate action to manage any conflicts of interest that arise during the meeting.
- Agree minutes of last meeting. An amended copy of the approved minutes should be signed and dated by the Chairperson at the meeting or soon afterwards if substantial amendments are required.
- Check on progress of actions agreed at last meeting – this should be an Agenda item.
- Facilitate decision-making progress. Ensure points of decision are clear.
- Manage issues of confidentiality which arise during the meeting. Do not allow members to disclose confidential or personal information during the meeting, which is irrelevant to the business of the meeting. Agree how relevant confidential business will be recorded.
- Refer to Standing Orders or to other reference documents as appropriate.
- Ensure that all members have an opportunity to contribute to discussions and decision-making process. When generating ideas/suggestions as a group, ensure that these are not critiqued as they are offered. Get all the ideas on the table before critiquing. Waiting to critique will increase the amount of participation.
- Ensure all relevant factors are taken into account.
- Curtail extended discussions that are irrelevant to the business of the meeting.
- Request that attendees do not chat amongst themselves during meeting.
- Ensure that members observe good practice with regards to equal opportunities.
- Agree on an action plan, and what needs to be done by whom. A deadline and priority level should also be assigned to actions.
- Agree which items are to go forward for recommendation to a parent committee / Board.

- Ensure that the minute taker is clear on decisions and actions to be minuted. Summarise points as required.
- Ensure all items on Agenda have been covered and evaluate if the meeting objectives have been met.
- Identify agenda items for next meeting.
- Confirm date of next and any future meetings with members.

After Meeting

- Ensure confidential documents are shredded.
- Approve minutes and other documents drafted by administrator.
- In conjunction with the administrator, contact any members absent from the meeting who should be informed of any issues that have arisen.
- Complete any actions allocated to you.
- In conjunction with administrator, monitor progress of actions allocated to committee members at last meeting and take any necessary actions to progress these.

Responsibilities of Committee Members

Before Meeting

- Try to keep date of next meeting free and ensure all relevant colleagues are aware of this commitment.
- Notify administrator of apologies as soon as possible to allow monitoring of quorum and rescheduling of meeting if necessary.
- If unable to attend, arrange for any item of business which you are responsible for to be reported in your absence by an appropriate colleague member, alternative member, the Chairperson and / or via a written report – inform chairperson /administrator.
- Send Agenda items to chairperson or administrator as soon as possible.
- Send AOB items to chairperson or administrator in advance of meeting i.e. do not wait until the meeting itself.
- Prepare for meeting by reading papers in advance and seek any clarification or additional information in advance of meeting.
- Ensure actions allocated to you at the last meeting have been completed by the deadline or next meeting.
- If you are responsible for reporting on a specific area liaise with relevant administrator for any updated information as appropriate.
- Take meeting papers to meeting (please advise administrator in advance of the meeting if replacement papers are required). If you have any documents for tabling please make these available for photocopying well in advance of the meeting.
- If any special arrangements are needed for the meeting for e.g. AV equipment, please notify the administrator in advance of the meeting. Please also ensure that you email copies of presentations if necessary and also bring a copy with you.

During Meeting

- Bring agenda and papers with you.
- Sign attendance sheet.
- If you have a mobile phone, ensure that this is on the silent setting or turned off.
- If you know that you need to leave early, notify the Chairperson so that the agenda can be re-ordered as necessary.
- Inform Chairperson of any AOB as early as possible and before the meeting if possible.
- Declare any potential conflicts of interest at start of meeting, in order that committee may agree how these should be managed.
- Decisions taken may be binding therefore members should use the meeting as an opportunity to participate fully in any discussions.
- Refrain from chatting to other attendees during the meeting.
- Avoid the use of jargon or acronyms that others may not understand.
- Avoid extended discussions that are irrelevant to the business of the meeting.
- Observe good practice with regards to equal opportunities and issues of confidentiality.
- If you distribute any handouts, ensure that the administrator has a copy to enable accurate minute taking.

After Meeting

- Complete actions allocated to you reporting progress to the chairperson and administrator.
- Note dates of future meetings in diaries and try to keep these dates free if possible.
- Ensure confidential documents are shredded.

Responsibilities of Administrator

Before Meeting

- Complete actions allocated to you at last meeting.
- In conjunction with chairperson, monitor progress of actions allocated to committee members at last meeting and take any necessary actions to progress these.
- Send advance notification of meeting; ask for confirmation of attendance and call for agenda items – 2 weeks before.
- Establish attendance to ensure quorum will be achieved.
- Venue – arrange and confirm catering, AV. Ensure any special access arrangements are made.
- Agenda and papers
 - Indicate timings on Agenda, including a target finish time and schedule additional time for networking/socialising.
 - Divide items for discussion, information, and ratification so that appropriate emphasis is given to key items.
 - State the purpose of each agenda item under its general heading to ensure clarity. Ensure that all relevant information is available so that it is taken into account.
 - Agree agenda and papers with Chairperson at least 2 weeks before meeting.
 - Mark supporting papers to link them to a particular item on the agenda.
 - Include separate list of agreed actions from last meeting.
 - Circulate at least 1 week before meeting by paper or email.
- Arrange a pre-meeting with Chairperson either immediately before or by telephone to discuss agenda, last minute items received, to identify any potential problems and to ensure that all relevant information will be available at the meeting to facilitate decision-making.
- Make a limited number of spare copies of papers available for meeting for emergency use.
- Keep committee papers in committee preparation files so that in the event of your absence a colleague can continue preparation and / or attend the meeting with all available information to hand.
- Make preparations for any voting that will be needed – clarify the rules in standing orders or committee guidance and, in particular, what to do in the event of an equality of votes. Failure to do this may result in a decision being declared null and void at a later date. Inform chairperson of these points.
- Dates - set dates for next calendar year by September of the previous year if possible. Make necessary enquires to ensure that dates do not conflict with other FPM events, other events within related sectors, religious festivals or other notable dates.
- Prepare for meeting by reading agenda, papers and last set of minutes.
- Items to take to meetings: -
 - Committee folder
 - Travel expense forms
 - Copy of Standing Orders
 - Notebook and pens
 - Name cards/badges
 - Catering
 - AV if required

During Meeting

- You should aim to arrive at the venue at least 15 minutes before the meeting to ensure that everything is in place.
- Consider whether specific seating arrangements would enhance the effectiveness of the committee meeting.
- Check you are familiar with the emergency evacuation procedures relating to the venue you are using.
- Have list of apologies and attendance sheet available.
- Ensure that attendees sign the attendance sheet or that you record who is present accurately.
- Monitor maintenance of quorum during meeting and alert Chairperson if any problem arises with regard to this.
- Take minutes; clarify any uncertainties with chairperson during meeting or afterwards to ensure minutes are accurate.
- Record start and finish times and when members arrive late or leave early.
- Refer to Standing Orders or to other reference documents as appropriate.

- Once meeting has started try to avoid leaving your seat or the room e.g. to make refreshments or photocopies. If this is unavoidable ensure that someone else continues to make notes or request that the Chairperson halts committee business.
- Ensure the Chairperson signs the previous minutes.

After Meeting

- In conjunction with the Chairperson, contact any members absent from the meeting who should be informed of any issues that have arisen.
- Hard copy of agreed signed minutes kept in a minute book or appropriate folder.
- Draft minutes: record name of charity, name of committee or type of meeting, date and time of meeting, apologies for absence, names of people present including the capacity and for which items they were present, include a signature and date field for the Chairperson's signature.
- Minutes should record decisions/actions taken and also indicate the factors which led to that decision. It is important to show that all relevant factors were taken into account.
- Avoid the use of jargon, undefined acronyms or abbreviations in the minutes.
- Ask chairperson to approve draft minutes; these then become unconfirmed minutes until approved at next committee meeting. Circulate unconfirmed minutes to committee members no more than 2 weeks from committee meeting.
- Complete actions allocated to you reporting progress to the Chairperson as necessary.
- In conjunction with Chairperson, monitor progress of actions allocated to committee members at last meeting and take any necessary actions to progress these.
- Keep copy of your notes for later reference.
- Ensure confidential documents are stored securely or shredded as necessary.
- Maintain a list of members and their contact details.

General Points

Charities and Meetings

- Need to consult standing orders regarding any specifications. Charity Law strictly adheres to any specifications in governing documents and if these are not adhered to a decision made may be regarded null and void at a later stage.
- Unless otherwise specified in governing document a meeting is defined as one where members can see and hear one another. This is why decisions made by email or teleconference would need to be ratified at a face-to-face meeting or videoconference.

Quorum

- Each committee should be clear what its quorum is. If this is not specified in Standing Orders it should be established by the committee. This should normally be a 2/3 majority present. If a quorum is not achieved or maintained throughout the meeting, binding decisions cannot be made. When a recommendation is made to a parent committee by a standing committee or subcommittee it should be made on the basis of a quorate decision. If it is not based on a quorate decision it must be clearly stated in the appropriate place in order that the parent committee is aware of this.

Constitution

- Each committee should have clear procedures for how many members it should have and how members are appointed and terms of office. These points may be specified in Standing Orders. Committees, which have powers 'delegated to it by the Board' should have a majority of members who are also Board Members. A list of committee members should be approved annually by the Board at the last meeting before the AGM.

Remit/Terms of Reference

- Each committee should have a Remit/Terms of Reference. This may be defined in Standing Orders.

Objectives and Review of Performance

- At the start of each annual cycle each committee should, with guidance from the Board, set objectives for the year, which should be closely linked to the overall objectives of the Faculty. Progress against these should be reviewed on a regular basis.

Working Parties of the Board or other Committee

- Working parties should be set up with a clear remit defined by the Board or parent committee and any necessary timetables and reporting requirements stated. A chairperson (interim or permanent) should be identified by the Board to progress work particularly during the early stages.
- The chairperson should liaise with the Faculty Administrator to ensure that appropriate administrative support is identified and planned.

Reference Documents

CC48 Charities and Meetings

Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators and the Charity Commission

Minutes and Notetaking

Gatehouse Training & Development Courses

Websites

www.meetingwizard.org

Acknowledgements

We wish to acknowledge the following people for their valuable input and guidance in the preparation of this document.

| | |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|
| Jane Barrett | Faculty of Pharmaceutical Medicine |
| Catherine Bell | RCP London |
| Anne Brannan | Medical Council on Alcohol |
| Jenny Bunby | JCHMT |
| David Hurford | Medical Council on Alcohol |
| Razvana Kurkic | Faculty of Pharmaceutical Medicine |
| Barry Muzzeroll | Faculty of Pharmaceutical Medicine |
| Frances Quinn | Faculty of Occupational Medicine |