

Chair's Vacation Powers

The expression "vacation powers" refers to acts or decisions that would normally require the authority of Council or Senate but are made between meetings of either body, and particularly over the summer vacation. For Senate, these require the authority of the Vice-Chancellor (under powers authorised annually by Senate), or a Pro-Vice-Chancellor, acting in the absence of the Vice-Chancellor (under Statute 6). Acts or decisions made on behalf of Council require the authority of the Chair of Council (under Ordinance 3), the Vice-Chair of Council, acting in the absence of the Chair of Council, or Chair of the relevant Council Committee acting in the absence of both the Chair and Vice-Chair of Council (variation to Ordinance 3, approved by Council July 2007).

The essential features of the procedure to ensure that such decisions are properly taken and reported are:

- that the individual seeking authority should take full responsibility for preparing the request and ensuring that it is reported back to the relevant Committee or body upon receipt of the Vice-Chancellor's (and, where appropriate, the Chair of Council's or other authorised individual's) authority
- that there is a central record of the actions taken under vacation powers

The agreed procedure is set out more fully below:

1. the relevant administrator (or faculty officer) prepares the written request for authority. This should make clear whether the authority of the Chair of Council (or deputy) is required (e.g. in respect of the appointment of Visiting Professors) or simply the authority of the Vice-Chancellor or Pro-Vice-Chancellor
2. the request should contain a clear annotation to show the committee and the meeting date for the subsequent report i.e. 'for report to (Committee/Senate/Council), date'
3. the Vice-Chancellor or Chair of Council, as appropriate, signals his approval (or otherwise) and adds, if necessary, a note indicating any specific committees or bodies to which he would wish the decision to be reported
4. the proposal and its approval are returned to the administrator through the internal post
5. the administrator takes a copy of the paperwork containing the Vice-Chancellor's or Chair of Council's authority and files it in a central file for the purpose held by the Secretary's Office (with a copy for the Academic Registrar in the case of matters for Senate).