Literary Committee  
Xx date 2004

An Example  
University of Western Sydney

Purpose
To apprise senior staff of the protocol, style, content and preferred approach to the preparation and presentation of papers for the Board of Trustees and associated University committees.

Background
The Board of Trustees, Executive and related committees are the key deliberative and decision-making bodies of the University community. The Board has Statutory responsibilities under the University of Western Sydney Act 1997 and other legislative instruments for the prudent, lawful and informed management of the University by setting and monitoring strategy and policy for the University.

Discussion
As for all Boards and executive decision-making bodies of large organisations, a key element of informed consideration of the University’s direction is the papers provided. The quality – including the clarity, accuracy and relevance – of these papers is critical in guiding, informing and supporting the Board and Executive in their responsibilities. They also convey to external members the professionalism of the University.

The preparation, publication and distribution of committee and Board papers can be bedevilled by late, incomplete, unfocussed, ungrammatical or idiosyncratic papers, which then have to be returned to the originator, rewritten or withdrawn from the agenda.

The Secretaries are not resourced to research and rewrite agenda items, nor is this their responsibility.

Agenda items for meetings must arrive in the appropriate format and be well written, comprehensive, proofread and grammatical so they can be slotted into the agenda and sent off for printing or copying. If the writers are unsure about what is called for, an early conversation with a supervisor or Secretary to the committee will often clarify this, or give time for further discussion or research. Most papers have to be considered and approved by University Executive members before being forwarded for committee meetings and this has to be taken into consideration in timelines.

Recommendation
That Executive and VCAC agree to promulgate these requirements for meeting papers and to work with staff to ensure they are timely, of high quality and enable committee members to make informed decisions.

Professor Janice Reid  
Vice-Chancellor