MEETING PROCEDURE HANDBOOK

(AND OTHER HELPFUL HINTS)

NSW TEACHERS FEDERATION
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1. **FEDERATION’S MEETING PROCEDURE**

**Introduction**

Different organisations have different ways of running meetings. The following notes describe how the Federation, at its various levels - workplace, department, branch, association, executive, council or conference - conducts its meetings.

With long experience and through comparisons with other organisations, Federation believes that our meeting procedure is the most effective and efficient for a union of our size and complexity.

If you have any ideas on how we can streamline our procedure, you can send your suggestions to the General Secretary who will forward them to the Federation’s Rules & Structures Committee.

Any meeting’s success depends on:

1. A clear understanding of what the meeting is meant to achieve i.e. the objectives
2. Meeting rules — commonly known as standing orders — together with the custom of the organisation and the common law.
3. The widest democracy.
4. Making effective decisions that have consensus.
Why have rules?
To aid democratic interchange of ideas.
To achieve a consensus.
To avoid disruption / monopolisation of the meeting.
To use available time efficiently.
To achieve an objective.
To transact the business effectively.
To develop effective policies and strategies.

When Associations are establishing their constitutions they should use the Federation’s Council Standing Orders as the basis of their meeting procedure to maintain some continuity in practices within the union. Workplaces – and other Federation forums – should do the same.

Workplaces should modify their procedure to suit their own limited numbers and other relevant factors, such as the time available. Consequently, the formal stages such as apologies, reading Minutes, and correspondence, may be dispensed with - unless directly relevant to the objective of the meeting.
Usually at a workplace meeting the Federation Representative will report on a matter and then move a motion relating to it.

Quorum
The rules or standing orders of some organisations lay down that no business may be transacted unless a certain number of members are present. This “quorum” may be a fixed number (forty Members in the House of Commons) or a proportion (one-quarter in County Councils).
Associations will set out their own quorum number in the Association’s constitution. They are free to set the quorum figure to suit the size and efficient operation of the Association concerned.
Workplaces don’t have any particular quorum except that determined by Fed-
eration members from time to time. Federation doesn’t insist on a particular quorum but leaves it up to the workplace to determine. There may be no quorum set at all.
AGENDA

MACHINERY MATTERS
E.G. APOLOGIES MINUTES TREASURERS REPORT

EXECUTIVE RECOMMENDATIONS
- CORRESPONDENCE REPORTS

MEMBERS
MOTIONS & REPORTS
E.G. • SCHOOL REPORTS • NOTICE OF MOTION • GENERAL BUSINESS
2. STAGES OF THE MEETING

Association level and above
The Agenda
• Meeting declared open.
• Apologies
• Election of timekeeper.
• Minutes of last meeting -
  “That the minutes be received” moved / seconded (usually circulated).
  “That the minutes be confirmed or adopted”, moved / seconded (debate the accuracy of the minutes).
• Business arising out of the minutes (if any).
• Correspondence - “That the correspondence be received” moved / seconded (usually a precis circulated).
• Question Time.
• Business Arising out of correspondence / questions.
• Treasurer’s Report - “That the report be adopted” moved / seconded, and
  “That the accounts be presented and passed for payment” moved / seconded.
• Executive Report.
• Business arising from the reports.
• Motions on notice.
• General Business
• Close of meeting.

Notes:
“Confirming the Minutes & Business arising from the Minutes”
There are two simple items of business which often cause trouble.
First of all, when the Minutes have been read, it should be moved and seconded that, “The Minutes be confirmed”. Objection can be taken to the Minutes only on the grounds of accuracy, not because the objector disapproves of what was decided. After the Minutes have been signed, the chairperson will ask if there is any business arising from the Minutes. Motions relating to matters mentioned in the Minutes should be moved, seconded and debated. Some items will, of course, come up later on the agenda, under “reports” or another item and the chairperson will usually remind the meeting of this.
The order of business items may be varied by motions from the floor e.g. “That the correspondence be now read” moved / seconded. Such motions can be moved only when there is no question before the chair. If such a motion is desired during the course of a debate a motion for adjournment of that debate must first be carried.
**Workplace level**
At the workplace or less formal level, the following would be sufficient:

The Agenda
- Meeting declared open.
- Federation Representative’s report.
- Questions.
- Business arising from the Federation Representative’s report.
- Motions on notice.
- General Business.
- Close of meeting.

Time is a scarce commodity so you need to get down to the urgent business without delay.

Don’t let formality become a barrier to good communication. On the other hand, don’t be so informal that the meeting degenerates into “group therapy”.

![Cartoon of a meeting with a sign that reads 'SCHOOL MEETING', a chair, and a federation representative.](image)
3. ESSENTIALS OF AN EFFECTIVE MEETING

Remember — at even the smallest workplace meeting it is essential that you have the following:
• An Agenda.
• Motion/s prepared.
• Time limits.
• A chairperson.
• Voting.

Agenda
• Gives prior notification of time and place for the meeting.
• Informs of subjects for discussion.
• Organises material in priority order.
• Formalises the procedure.
• Establishes time limits.
• Recommends action to be taken:
  - as requested by General Secretary or Association Secretary;
  - as initiated by staff or federation representative.

Motions
In drafting motions, keep the following in mind:
1. Clarity - of language
   - of issues involved.
   - of objectives set.
2. Short and to the point — each motion may need to be limited to one issue!
3. Action of some kind should be provided for — make sure it’s achievable!
4. Maximise support among the staff.
5. Save supportive argument for the debate — don’t clutter the motion up with it.
6. Organise a mover and seconder — don’t leave this to chance.
7. Be in line with Federation policies and procedures.

When a motion is carried by the meeting it becomes a resolution — the matter has been resolved!

Time Limits
There will usually be 5 minutes for a report, 3 minutes for a mover and seconder and 3 minutes for the reply. These allocations allow fair sharing of time available and prevent discrimination between different participants in the meeting. An extension of time can always be moved, seconded and voted on, if necessary.

Chairperson
The members of the meeting elect the chairperson. It need not be the “President”. Preferably, the chairperson should not be the Federation Representative.
The Federation Representative is too busy making reports, answering questions, moving motions or entering debate to do this job.

It is necessary to have a focal point for the meeting. The chairperson fulfils this function. Speakers should speak to the meeting through the chair which in turn can clarify issues for the meeting, ensure time limits are met, adjudicate on any vote taken, keep to the agenda, maintain the correct order of debate, decide on a point of order, etc.

The chairperson represents the will of the meeting. The meeting itself will arbitrate between a member and the chairperson, if there is a dispute between them concerning the way the meeting is being conducted. The chairperson is, therefore, not a dictator but a guide for the meeting, assisting its smooth, democratic operation.

Without a chairperson you may have effective “group therapy” but you are unlikely to have a meeting which will make decisions democratically.
Voting
There should always be a vote. People often get used to a chairperson announcing an assumed consensus position that she/he has arrived at. That is a denial of the meeting’s right and responsibility to make a decision on the alternatives presented in a debate. To do other than have a clear public vote, where people have to make a commitment to a particular action or policy is a “cop-out”. People must get used to the responsibility of making decisions.

The chairperson will put amendments/addenda/motion in the order in which they were moved (i.e., 1st amendment first, 2nd amendment second, and so on). All amendments have to be put to a vote regardless of them contradicting an amendment previously carried.

The chairperson will say: “All those in support of the motion say “aye”, all those against say “no”. The results are declared on the basis of a simple majority, if necessary, in the following order of evidence:
1. The voices - estimation on auditory evidence
2. Show of hands - estimation on visible evidence
3. A count - actually count the hands and declare the numbers. Any member can ask for this.
4. A division - those for and those against physically congregate on separate sides of the room. They are counted again and the numbers declared.

The chairperson doesn’t have to wait for a request for a count or show of hands but can use her/his initiative if the evidence is unclear. She/he should always try to appear decisive and in control.
4. REPORTING TO A MEETING

In giving a report to a meeting keep the following in mind:
1. Brevity (5 minutes for a workplace meeting, 10 minutes for an Association meeting).
2. Provide a written report whenever possible.
3. Verbal delivery highlights the main points.
4. Emphasise issues relevant to the staff.
5. Avoid irrelevancies and unnecessary elaboration.
6. Be prepared - know your facts.
7. Stand up
   — physical presence;
   — eye contact;
   — posture appropriate.
8. Issues involved are clear.
9. Introduction - middle - conclusion
   - i.e., clear structure.
10. Assess the comprehension level/consciousness of staff.
11. Voice
    — delivery
    — variation.
5. THE PROCESS OF DEBATE

How a meeting normally proceeds

1. Mover and Seconder - substantive or procedural motion

2. Speakers from the floor. Order of Debate will be
   - against
   - for
   - procedural motion
   - amendment
   - amendment by way of addendum
   - points of order

3. Mover replies.

4. Chair puts amendments/addenda/motion to the vote in order they were moved.
Motions are either **Procedural** — dealing with the conduct of the meeting itself or, as the word implies, establishing a procedure which best deals with a substantive motion that may be before the chair.

1. A procedural motion takes precedence in debate when moved. It must be debated out. Some can be amended while others such as “the gag” can’t. (See the common examples below.)
2. If a procedural motion fails then the debate reverts to the substantive motion if one is before the chair.
3. If a procedural motion succeeds then the substantive debate interrupted lapses and the procedural motion is implemented.
4. Once a procedural motion is moved a new debate begins and restrictions on those who have spoken in the substantive debate are lifted.

**Substantive** — ordering something to be done or expressing a policy.

A motion starts with “That ...” (a longer form of “Be it resolved that ...”)

It must direct some person or group to take some specific action or express a policy on some matter.
All motions and amendments must be seconded before being debated. This should be done immediately after the motion or amendment has been moved but may be done after the mover makes a speech in support. The mover has 3 minutes to convince someone that their idea deserves support.

An amendment should be accepted unless it is obviously irrelevant or frivolous; or it is contrary to policy in a situation where policy must be upheld; or provision has been made elsewhere in the agenda for the proposal to be dealt with; or it is clearly a direct negative. A direct negative is not an amendment. If a motion “That we approve the report” is before the meeting, then the proper course for a member who wishes to have the report disapproved or referred back is to speak and vote against the motion, and not to try to move a negative amendment.

The chairperson should use their power to rule an amendment out of order with restraint. The chair should err on the side of generosity and leave the meeting to make the decision about the acceptability of an amendment or motion. Only if a motion or amendment is utterly irrelevant, a direct negative, or contrary to policy in a context where this cannot be proposed, should the chairperson rule it out of order. No-one who has spoken in the debate on the original motion or an amendment may move or second an amendment, though he or she may speak on a subsequent amendment moved and seconded by others, if he or she is recognised by the chairperson.

Addendum (or amendment by way of addendum)
Addendums (or addenda, as these might strictly be termed) can be proposed by anybody at the meeting. An addendum is what it sounds like - something added to the resolution but does not alter it in spirit or letter. For example, a meeting might be proposed on some union issue and somebody might request that the mover of the motion for the meeting accept the idea that the meeting hall be decorated with union posters on the particular issue and that material outlining the union’s case be made available in bulk to be taken from the meeting by members.

Addenda are treated in the same manner as amendments.

Mover’s reply
The mover of the original motion has the right of reply before the vote is taken. This speech must deal only with points made in the debate - not introduce new matter.

The mover of an amendment does not reply.

What is being voted upon?
Before the vote is taken, the chairperson will read out, or ask the secretary to read out, the exact terms of the motion or amendment concerned, so that everyone knows what he or she is voting about. In order to help the secretary get it down clearly, whomever moves a motion or amendment is often required
to provide it in writing to the chair immediately the motion or amendment is moved.

**Order of Voting**
When a vote is taken, any amendments are put to the vote first. Amendments are voted upon in the order in which they were moved. If all amendments are defeated, the original motion is put to the vote. When all amendments have been voted upon, if any amendments are carried, the motion as amended (usually called the substantive motion) is then put and voted upon.
# Procedure for a Single Motion

1. Mover of motion rises, announces and speaks to motion.

2. Chairperson asks is there a seconder.

3. Seconder of motion rises, seconds and speaks to motion.

4. Speakers from the floor speak to motion. A speaker is taken against motion, then a speaker in favour.

5. Mover of motion replies to debate.

6. Chairperson announces he will take vote and reads out exact wording of motion.

7. Chairperson takes vote on motion.

8. Chairperson announces result of voting - “I declare this motion lost/carried (by so many votes to so many).
**Procedure for a Motion with a Single Amendment**

1. Mover of motion rises, announces motion and speaks to motion.

2. Chairperson asks is there a seconder.

3. Seconder of motion rises, seconds and speaks to motion.

4. Speakers from the floor speak to motion.

5. Mover of amendment rises, announces amendment and speaks to amendment.

6. Chairperson asks if there is a seconder.

7. Seconder of amendment seconds amendment and speaks to amendment.

8. Speakers from the floor speak to amendment. (Including any that have spoken to motion).

9. Mover of motion can reply to debate.

10. Chairperson announces vote will be taken on amendment. First reads amendment.

11. Chairperson takes vote on amendment and declares result: “I declare amendment lost/carried (by so many votes to so many)”.

If amendment is **Carried**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>12. Chairperson announces vote will be taken on original motion as amended. Reads out exact wording of original motion as amended.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13. Chairperson takes vote on original motion as amended.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 14. Chairperson announces result of voting: “I declare the original motion lost / carried (by so many votes to so many)”.

**OR**

If Amendment is **Lost**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>12. Chairperson announces vote will be taken on original motion. Reads out original motion.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13. Chairperson takes vote on original motion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 14. Chairperson announces result of voting: “I declare the original motion lost / carried (by so many votes to so many)”.

8. GUIDING THE MEETING

Guiding the meeting from the chair

• Learn the rules of your organisation. Always have a copy of the rules at the meeting.
• Stick to the rules of the meeting procedure.
• Know what is on the agenda.
• Remember order of speakers.
• If there are a number of speakers maintain the order “for” and “against”.
• Do not permit more than one speaker at a time.
• All remarks should be addressed to the chairperson.
• If the discussion becomes heated have intervals between the speakers - i.e., lengthen the time between one speaker sitting down and the next being allowed to speak.
• Do not shout from the chair.
• When confronted by a point of order, take your time in coming to a decision.
• Explain your reasons for a decision.
• After an explanation is given from the chair do not engage in argument on the same point.
• Remember the time limits on the debate.

Some organisations have standing orders setting time limits for speakers. Where there are no standing orders, the chairperson may suggest time limits if there is a heavy agenda; or may do so during a debate if there are many speakers wanting a turn and time is running short.
Chairperson’s casting vote
Where, on a vote being taken, those in favour of a motion and those against it are equally divided, the chairperson has a special responsibility. This is what Citrine, in his ABC of Chairmanship, says on the matter:

“Normally he (the chairman) should not vote at all on general questions, but on any motion on which the members are equally divided for and against, he has the power to give a casting vote unless the standing orders expressly state the contrary.”

Three courses are open to the chairperson:
• To vote for the motion, when it will be carried, OR
• To vote against the motion, when it will be lost, OR
• To refuse to vote at all, when the motion will be declared “not carried” and may therefore be brought up again at a later meeting.

By convention the chairperson will not use the casting vote to create new policy but will vote against the motion.

Try not to forget commonsense, firmness and impartiality.

Taking a point of order
Any member can rise and call a point of order and speak briefly on the point. The Chairperson will rule on this point.

One of the most abused pieces of procedure is the point of order. This is far too frequently used by members as a point of interruption - as a means of intervening in the debate and taking the floor out of turn.

Points of order must deal with the conduct or procedure of the debate. A point of order is not justified merely because a member makes a statement that someone else feels is incorrect.

The member rising to put the point of order must prove one or more of the following:
(a) that the speaker is travelling outside the scope of the question;
(b) that unparliamentary language is used;
(c) that there is an infringement of the standing orders, or in the absence of standing orders, is acting contrary to the general custom of debate.

The most convenient time for raising a point of order is when no one is speaking, although there is nothing to stop you interrupting a speaker. At this stage any member may put to the chairperson a point of order in which the various items are to be taken, or anything else relating to the routine of the meeting.

How a point of order is handled:

| (a) Chair may hear the member on the point raised or hear further discussion from the meeting on the point |
| (b) Chair rules on the point raised and the meeting proceeds on the basis of that ruling or - |
| (c) Any member of the meeting may move dissent from the Chair’s ruling in consequence. |
**Dissent from the chair’s ruling**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(d)</td>
<td>Dissenter explains reasons for dissent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e)</td>
<td>Chairperson remains in chair and explains reasons for ruling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f)</td>
<td>Chair moves “That the chairperson’s ruling be upheld”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(g)</td>
<td>Meeting decides issue by majority vote - the members are the final arbiter of how the meeting will be conducted.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If the vote goes against the chairperson she/he simply alters the rule accordingly and the meeting proceeds. The chairperson does not vacate the chair.

The chairperson will only leave the chair when she/he wishes to enter the debate on a substantive or procedural motion. She/he may not resume the chair until that matter is resolved.
9. SOME IMPORTANT TYPES OF PROCEDURAL MOTIONS

Move the question be put (“the gag”)
If a member wishes to bring debate to a close the member may move at any
time during a debate “That the question be put”, provided no speaker is inter-
rupted and the person moving this procedural motion is granted the call.

The chairperson has the right to accept this motion without a seconder, but
it is usual to call for a seconder.

The mover and seconder must be persons who have not spoken previously
in the substantive debate.

If “the gag” is carried it means that the debate which has been interrupted
must close. No further debate is allowed with the exception that the original
mover can exercise right of reply. A vote is then taken on any amendments
and the original motion.

If the gag motion is defeated debate continues as before.

Move the meeting go into committee
This can be moved at any time.

Always put a time limit on the period of time involved, or the committee
stage will reduce time for the substantive debate.

By going into committee the strict order of debate is avoided and people
can speak more than once. The motion “to go into committee” must have a
seconder. The mover may have spoken previously in the debate. Discussion
and amendment is allowed before the procedural motion is put to a vote.

This is a very effective way of reducing confusion that may occur and
putting people in a more relaxed frame of mind. It is particularly useful where
people are not used to formal meeting procedure, or if time isn’t pressing and
it is thought useful to provide a freer forum for discussion.

Move the meeting proceed to the next item of business
If a member wishes to avoid a vote being taken he or she may rise and say, “I
move the meeting proceeds to the next item of business”, provided a speaker
is not interrupted.

This motion must be seconded.

Mover and seconder must be persons who have not spoken previously in
the substantive debate.

This procedural motion can be moved while there is an amendment before
the meeting. This is put to the meeting with discussion but without amend-
ment. If it is carried no vote is taken on the original motion. If lost the debate
proceeds as before.

Move adjournment of debate - also adjournment of meeting
It a member wishes to avoid a vote being taken he or she may move that the
debate be adjourned, provided a speaker is not interrupted. This procedural
motion can be moved while there is an amendment before the meeting. Mover and seconder must be persons who have not spoken previously in the substantive debate.

The chairperson allows discussion on any amendment of this motion, then puts it to the vote.

If this procedural motion is defeated it can be moved again after an interval. If this motion is carried, the mover has the right to reopen debate upon resumption of the debate/meeting.

**Move an extension of time for a speaker, or to extend the time for the debate.**

This motion may be amended - but without discussion.
**10. THE ORDER OF DEBATE**

**Keeping the balance between varying views**
This task often confuses people. They are not sure when a person is speaking whether they are in order or out of order. It is fairly simple for the chairperson of the meeting, if you keep the following in mind:

The next person to speak should, in some way, be at variance with the previous speaker (unless seconding a motion or amendment, or taking a point of order).

**Simple “for” and “against” process**
To keep a balance in debate, and to allow a sharing of views, the simplest form of debate would be as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original motion - mover/seconder</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaker against original motion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaker for original motion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaker against original motion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and so on, until time expires or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the “gag” is moved.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If no one wants to speak for the motion then the chairperson doesn’t waste time by asking if someone would like to speak against the motion. If there are no more speakers, then the matter has been debated out and the chairperson proceeds to take the vote after the mover has taken their right of reply. If there is no debate after the original mover and seconder have spoken, then there is no reply because there is nothing to reply to. The matter is put to a vote straight away.

**An Amendment is Moved**
Problems seem to arise when an amendment is moved:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original motion — mover/seconder.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaker against original motion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Amendment is moved/seconded. (It is taken as a speech against the original or previous amendment and appears to be out of order, but an amendment is always in order).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Next speaker will be at variance with this -</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i.e., • speaking against the amendment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or   • for the original,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or   • moving a further amendment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Even though a person may be at variance with a previous speaker they may be philosophically or tactically in sympathy with them.

It doesn’t mean that there shall be a clear antagonism. Even a small variation in wording in an amendment is sufficient.

The only limit on the number of amendments that can be put in a debate is time. A debate can consist of a whole series of amendments proposed one after the other. The view is held that by doing this, it exposes to the meeting the maximum alternatives to the original for the final decision of the meeting.

**A procedural motion is moved**

As mentioned previously, when a procedural motion is moved in a debate or at a meeting, it must be debated out before returning to the other business before the meeting. It takes precedence in the debate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>original motion - moved/seconded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>amendment (1) - moved/seconded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amendment (2) - moved/seconded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speaker against amendment (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>procedural motion</strong> - moved/seconded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amendments or speaker for or against procedural motion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is no right of reply for the mover.
(The procedural motion now has a life of its own. It must be resolved before returning to the substantive motion before the meeting.)

It may defer or cease the debate on the substantive motion.

If the procedural motion is defeated, you go on with the debate on the substantive motion. The procedural motion has merely interrupted the debate on the substantive motion; the next person to speak will be speaking in any way other than speaking against amendment (2).
**Guidelines in the order of debate**

There should always be an equal opportunity for expression of opposing views, provided that -

1. An amendment is always in order.
2. An amendment is always taken as a speech at variance with the preceding motion and/or amendment.
3. There is no limit on the number of amendments that can be moved.
4. The next person to speak should in some way be at variance with the previous speech.
5. A procedural motion takes precedence in the debate.
6. A person may speak (but cannot move or second further amendments) on an amendment if she/he has spoken previously on the original or other amendments.

A chairperson should tend to err on the side of generosity when allowing people to move amendments although her/his decisions can be adjudicated on by the meeting if someone takes a point of order. If a chairperson makes value judgements about the wording of an amendment, and refuses to accept it, declaring it “out of order” she/he is denying the right of the meeting to make that comparative judgement after debate. Unless, of course, it is clearly a direct negative, or obviously irrelevant or contrary to policy in a situation where policy must be upheld.

Under no circumstances should the movers/seconders of amendments or the original mover be permitted to agree to the withdrawal or their propositions or amalgamation with others. Once a motion or amendment is put to a meeting it then becomes the property of the meeting and only the meeting, in the formal vote after debate, can make the decision about the fate of a particular motion or amendment. It may seem efficient to allow this “horse-trading” but it infringes the right of others at a meeting and if permitted at all, should be only after the chairperson has asked if there are any objections. One objection is sufficient to oblige the chairperson to refuse permission.
An example of a debate:

Original Motion moved/seconded

e.g. “That a 20% salary increase be claimed”

The debate then proceeds

The next person to speak will either

oppose the original motion

or

move an amendment (1)

e.g. moved/seconded -

“That a 30% salary increase be claimed”

The chairperson at this stage will decide if the next person to speak is in order, on the basis of who spoke last.

So, depending on who spoke last in the debate, the next person to speak will either

support the original motion

or

oppose amendment (1)

or

support the original motion

or

move an amendment (2) by way of addendum to amendment (1)

e.g. moved/seconded - “That a 30% salary increase be claimed and that it be retrospective to 1st January”
Remember the speaker shall be at variance with the previous speaker.

Continuing the procedure the chairperson will, depending on who spoke last in the debate, ensure that the next person will either oppose the original motion (if the last person had supported the original motion) or combinations of these as long as they are at variance with the previous speaker or a further amendment (3) to the original motion.

- or oppose amendment (2)
- or support amendment (1)
- or support the original motion

For example, moved/seconded: "That a 25% plus $1,000 salary increase be claimed".

If the debate ends at this stage the chairperson has the following motion and amendments in the order in which they were moved:

Original Motion “That a 20% salary increase be claimed”.

Amendment (1) “That a 30% salary increase be claimed”.

Amendment (2) “That a 30% salary increase be claimed and that it be retrospective to 1st January 1982”.

Amendment (3) “That a 25% plus $1,000 salary increase be claimed”.

Each amendment must be put to the vote.

Amendment (1) is put first and the meeting is making a choice between it and the original motion.

Let’s assume it is carried. This means the original motion will not be put on its own.

Amendment (1) now takes the temporary status of the “original”. Amendment (2) is put next. The meeting is now making a choice between amendment (1) - which has already been endorsed - and amendment (2).
Let’s assume that amendment (2) also is carried. This means amendment (1) is rejected and amendment (2) takes the temporary status of the “original”.

Amendment (3) is put next. The meeting now makes a choice between amendment (2) and amendment (3).

Let’s assume amendment (3) is lost. We are then left with amendment (2):

“That a 300/0 salary increase be claimed and that it be retrospective to 1st January 1982.”

The chairperson puts this to the meeting finally, because it now becomes the “original” or surviving motion. If it is defeated, you have no substantive resolution from that debate.

As you can see, each voter at the meeting has, in this case, the right to exercise four votes.

**Further help required?**

It may sound complicated, but with practice - like all things - formal meeting procedure becomes less complicated. In fact, it is quite a simple and efficient way of making decisions when everybody understands the rules and approaches the exercise with a positive motivation to reach collective decisions which meet the needs of the group.

Of course, the only way to learn is to attend some meetings. Application of theory is the best way to reinforce the rules outlined in this booklet. So make sure you attend and participate in your workplace Federation meeting - and your local Association meeting where applicable.

If you want to go into the matter a little further, why not attend a Basic Trade Union Training Course, in which, among other skills and information, a simulation games is played in a sessions dealing with meeting procedures. The role-play provides an opportunity to practice in a less threatening atmosphere before launching yourself on “meetings”. Course programs are available from Federation’s Trade Union Training Officer, your Organiser, or on the website at www.nswtf.org.au
Secretary, assistant secretary and chairperson play key roles in ensuring smooth running of meeting.

**Chairperson**
- arrive punctually, putting no one in a position to complain;
- start meeting when quorum is present (so as not to cut down on meeting time);
- acquaint yourself with business which is to be dealt with - removes hesitancy, misquotations (secretary also needs to be there early to acquaint chairperson of these problems/matters);
- have materials in order so you do not have to conduct a search for things;
- do not open meeting casually, but in a business-like manner;
- not a bad idea to work out a timetable to avoid unnecessary time on minor matters - members appreciate a chairperson who does not let discussion go;
- judge time when to ensure decision is reached
- do not let speakers (particularly guest ones) ramble on;
- chairperson should not be frightened to make suggestions re time and procedure from chair;
- need to ensure that matters members wish to raise are given priority so they do not become alienated;
- reports should be given at front of meeting rather than from body of meeting - in front of people - gives greater sense of importance - also enables chair to quietly notify speaker of time expiry.

*Chair*  
*Secretary*
**Secretary**
- keeps chairperson fed with information;
- should keep correspondence in file - have available at all meetings;
- should prepare agenda - have printed, if possible;
- if correspondence is read, should be done clearly, intelligently, efficiently - standing - do not mumble or read in monotone or read too fast (good idea to reduce amount of correspondence) - read correspondence on same item together;
- good practice is to read each item separately;
- write to guest speaker - notify time allowed - when, where, etc.;
- needs energy, punctuality, organising ability, carefulness, tact, orderliness, versatility, and knowledge of work;
- if you lack experience, do not worry - if you have energy, you will pick up the others;
- in Federation, have knowledge of responsibilities to the organisation as set out in the Rules.

**Assistant/Minute Secretary**
- key role;
- good idea to have rough Minute book in triplicate - one copy to secretary (for correspondence), one to publicity officer (for report in journal) and the book for her/himself for record of Minutes;
- better to have Minutes typed and given out;
- basic requirements at Association meetings - get movers’/seconders’ names - get accurate wording of motion;
- sit next to chairperson so as to assist him/her with wording of motion;
- original notes should be kept in case Minutes are challenged.

**Time-keeper**
- essential to the efficient running of a meeting;
- keep to standing orders, e.g. limit reports to ten minutes, mover of a motion; three minutes seconder; reply three minutes - if a speaker needs an extension the meeting will grant it, if it considers it necessary;
- meetings are relatively short and there is usually a lot of business to get through;
- meetings are meant to transact the business at hand not to indulge in group therapy via unrestricted talk sessions;
- time limits prevent individuals from dominating a meeting;
- insist that chairperson keep to the time limits and call a point of order if these are breached (e.g. limit for a debate of 20 minutes);
- have a copy of the standing orders setting out the time limits, readily at hand.
12. Running an Effective Association Meeting

Be sensitive to (a) planning (b) execution (c) follow-up

Planning
1. Prior to sending meeting notices an executive meeting should be held.
   The chairperson and secretary for the meeting should, in particular, be involved in this planning - they work as a team!
   a. Potential business.
      - workplace reports (verbal)
      - correspondence (from General Secretary, workplaces, other)
      - guest speakers (Federation, outside)
      - reports (Council, Association committees, delegates, Organiser, Treasurer, Association executives etc)
      - business ‘arising’
      - notices of motion
      - general business
   b. Give a priority order to the items above.
      - Any Order of Business as set out in Association Constitution will limit your freedom here.
      - Prepare a recommendation for the variation of order of business when it is necessary.
   c. Recommended motions should be prepared on issues of importance.
      - General Secretary may sometimes request that a specific motion be moved
      - Executive must exercise its leadership responsibilities.
      - Consider maximum support with maximum effectiveness!
      - Don’t simply act as a cipher for the Federation - be creative.
   d. Correspondence should be summarised in writing for distribution.
      - e.g. date, origin - subject (example. 13 April 1999. General Secretary - re staffing/salaries campaign
      - recommended motions added when necessary.
   e. Reports should be written and copies provided.

Execution
The majority of the work is done if the planning has been well done
1. Arrive early and start on time.
2. Chairperson and secretary work together to expedite the business.
3. Chair must be decisive, audible and brisk.
4. Time limits must be jealously guarded.
5. All material to be dealt with should be organised into the order in which it will be considered.
6. Limit reports, if written, to 5 minutes (max), 10 minutes (max), if not.
7. Chair should make suggestions to resolve problems or to reduce time-wasting debate.
8. All motions and amendments to be handed to the chairperson - in writing.
9. Encourage maximum participation and make people feel welcome.
10. Stick to the order of business as decided by the meeting.
11. Chair should be conversant with the standing orders and operate according to them.
12. Get through the machinery items quickly (e.g., confirmation of the Minutes, etc.).
13. Organise a mover and seconder of recommended motions.
14. Sufficient copies of the agenda - incorporating reports and recommendations - should be available, together with any other relevant printed material.

Follow-up
Unless this is done efficiently, the planning and execution steps have been in vain.

1. Minutes - at least 2 copies: one for the record, and one for the secretary to work from in implementing decisions.
2. Inform the General Secretary of decisions relevant to Federation.
3. Act directly on resolutions that don’t require any reference to Federation.
4. Feed-back to the membership the results of any decision via:
   - a bulletin
   - special written reports,
   - an item in the local press or Federation journal.
   - the minutes of the meeting.
   - the agenda of the next meeting.
13. REGULAR RESPONSIBILITIES OF ASSOCIATION SECRETARIES - A CHECKLIST TO ASSIST YOU

Feb/March
Annual General Meeting
   1. Advertise the meeting.
   2. Indicate positions to be elected
   3. Annual report.
   5. Appoint honorary auditors
   6. Decide honoraria for year.
   7. Elect Returning Officer.
   9. Seek names for possible Proxies for Council &/or Conference

Encourage the election of Fed Reps & Women’s Contacts in all workplaces.

March
Topic for Annual Conference due for submission before 4pm on 3rd Wednesday in March.
Notify Association of correspondence from Federation re biennial election of Association Annual Conference Delegates.

No later than 31 March
Arising from the AGM, inform the General Secretary of:
1: Statement of receipts & expenditure - within 1 months of AGM

Within 1 month of AGM
2: Names of Executive officers, plus time, dates & venue for Association meetings

April
Proposed Amendments to Federation’s Rules - in 2001 and triennially thereafter by 4pm on 2nd Wednesday in April.

Throughout the year
Notify General Secretary of:
   1: Changes to Association Constitution.
   2: Changes in Association Officers.
   3: Resolutions the Association wishes the Federation to act upon.
   4: Resolutions that indicate Association views.
   5: Motions for consideration in the Motions from Association section of the Council agenda.
   6: Any problems/questions re Association delegates to Council.

May
1. Vote on Topic for Annual Conference and submit vote before 4pm on third Wednesday in May.
2. Motions from Association for Annual Conference to be submitted in line with advertised deadline.

**June**
1: Advise Federation of any questions/problems re Association delegates to Annual Conference.
2: Inform Association Annual Conference delegates of any names of proxies they can approach.

**August**
Advise Association of correspondence from Federation re election of Association delegates to Council.
14. AN ASSOCIATION MODEL CONSTITUTION—
INCLUDING STANDING ORDERS FOR CONDUCT OF
MEETINGS

1. Name
This association shall be the _____________________________ Teachers Association of the NSW Teachers Federation.

2. Objects
   (a) To advance the interests of its members.
   (b) To promote the objects of the NSW Teachers Federation as set out in the Rules of the NSW Teachers Federation.

3. Membership
Membership shall be open to any member of the NSW Teachers Federation subject to relevant sections of the Federation’s Rules.

4. Associate Membership
Any member of another NSW Teachers Federation association may become an associate member on the payment of two dollars ($2.00) per annum. Such members may participate in debates with all rights except those to vote and to stand for executive.

5. Government
The government of the association shall be vested in the general meetings of its members. Between meetings an executive consisting of:
   (a) the president
   (b) two (2) vice-presidents
   (c) the honorary secretary
   (d) the honorary assistant secretary
   (e) the honorary treasurer
   (f) the honorary publicity officer
   (g) the honorary social officer
   (h) five (5) executive members
   (i) women’s co-ordinator
   (j) federation councillors who are not otherwise members of the executive shall act on behalf of the Association, subject to the endorsement of their decisions by the general meeting.

6. Meetings
   (a) General Meetings
      Ten general meetings, including the annual general meeting (which shall be held in February or March), shall be held each year.
   (b) Special meetings
      The president and honorary secretary shall summon a special general meeting when requested to do so by executive, by resolution of a general meeting, or on receipt of a requisition signed by thirty (30) finan-
cial members. At any special meeting the business shall be confined to that specified in the notice calling such meeting. Members shall be given at least three (3) days’ notice of a special meeting.

(c) Executive Meetings

Executive Meetings shall be held prior to all meetings other than special meetings. Members of the executive who absent themselves from two (2) consecutive meetings without obtaining leave of absence shall be deemed to have vacated their positions.

(d) Annual meetings

(i) An annual report shall be presented to this meeting, covering the main activities of the Association for the year preceding such meeting. It shall contain a list of officers, councillors (together with the attendances of the latter) and the annual balance sheet. The annual report shall be posted to each school with sufficient number for each member.

(ii) The election of the executive, the honorary auditors and the alternates to Federation council shall be held.

(iii) Honoraria shall be decided prior to election.

(e) Quorum for meetings

At all general meetings the quorum shall be twelve (12) members of the Teachers Association. At all executive meetings the quorum shall be five (5) members. Thirty (30) minutes shall be allowed before a meeting lapses.

(f) Admittance to meetings

(i) All members present at any meeting of the Association shall sign the attendance book.

(ii) Members may be required to show their membership cards for the purpose of verification of membership.

(iii) Three (3) members of the executive shall decide admittance of persons whose names are not on the membership list or who cannot produce a membership card.

7. Duties of Officers

(a) President

The president shall preside at all meetings when present and shall have a casting vote only, but shall be eligible to vote in elections.

(b) Honorary Secretary

The honorary secretary shall attend to all matters as set out in the Rules of the Federation.

(c) Honorary Assistant Secretary

The honorary assistant secretary shall assist the honorary secretary where necessary and officiate in the absence of the honorary secretary. He/she shall be responsible for the recording and reading of the minutes of the general, annual and special meetings, and of the
executive meetings.

(d) Honorary Treasurer
The honorary treasurer shall keep a record of all moneys received and disbursed, shall furnish a financial statement and table it at each meeting, shall at the annual meeting present a statement of receipts and expenditure and a balance sheet, duly audited, and shall keep a separate banking account in the name of the association with the president, honorary secretary and honorary treasurer to be signing officers, any two (2) to sign all withdrawals.

(e) Vice-President
The vice-president shall preside in the absence of the president. If neither president nor vice-president is present the meeting shall elect a chairperson.

(f) Honorary Publicity Officer
The honorary publicity officer shall be responsible for publicising the activities of the Association.

(g) Social Officer
The social officer shall be responsible for organising social activities on behalf of the Association.

(h) Women’s Co-ordinator
The women’s co-ordinator shall represent the Association in women’s activities and shall involve the Association in these activities.

8. Auditing Accounts
Two auditors shall be appointed at the annual general meeting. They shall examine all accounts and certify as to their correctness or otherwise.

9. Elections
(a) (i) Elections of the executive shall be by preferential ballot at duly constituted meetings as set out in this constitution and nominations shall be taken at the meeting. Nominations signed by financial members and indicating the acceptance of the nominee shall be valid if received by the honorary secretary before the meeting.
(ii) Councillors shall be elected in accordance with the Rules of the Federation.

(b) Conference delegates shall be elected in accordance with the Rules of the Federation.

(c) Each Councillor/Conference Delegate is responsible for nominating their own Proxy, should they require one. To assist in this matter, the Association may maintain a list of members willing to act as Proxy delegates.

(d) Vacant offices arising from any cause shall be notified to the Federation and filled in accordance with the Federation’s Rules.

(e) Returning Officers
At the November general meeting, two (2) members who are not
themselves candidates for any position shall be elected as returning officer and deputy returning officer to conduct all ballots in the association. The honorary secretary shall conduct the election of the returning officer and deputy returning officer.

(f) The chairperson and returning officers shall have the right to vote as ordinary members. In the event of a tie, the election shall be decided by lot.

10. Alteration of the Constitution
Any general meeting of the Association may amend this constitution, provided that notice of the proposed amendment is given at a previous meeting and all schools are notified at least seven (7) days in advance.

11. Application of Funds
Funds may be used as decided by a general meeting.

MODEL STANDING ORDERS FOR AN ASSOCIATION

1. Order of Business
The order of business, unless otherwise determined by the Association, shall be:-

a. Welcome and apologies. Expression of sympathy and condolences.
b. Confirmation of minutes and business arising therefrom.
c. Election of a timekeeper.
d. Executive report. Questions for up to three minutes on each item of the report.
e. Business arising out of executive report.
f. Workplace reports
g. Treasurer’s statement and accounts.
h. Correspondence to be summarised and tabled, except those items that the executive decided should be treated more fully.
i. Motions of which due notice has been given.
j. General business which shall be taken at each meeting not later that 5.15pm.

2. Suspension of standing orders
Any member may move the suspension of the standing orders to discuss a definite matter of urgent importance to the association, such to be submitted in writing to the chairperson within the first half-hour of any meeting. The meeting shall decide whether the matter is sufficiently urgent to merit suspension or otherwise. No motion for the suspension of the standing orders shall be declared carried unless it has the support of three-fifths of those voting.

3. Notices of Motion
Notices of motion must be in the hands of the honorary secretary at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting.

4. Motions and Amendments
All motions and amendments except formal motions, such as adjournment,
must be handed to the chairperson in writing prior to the mover of the motion and/or amendment speaking thereon. All amendments once moved shall be voted on.

5. Committee
   a. Any meeting of the association either before proceeding to consider any matter, or during the consideration of such matter, may on motion to that effect, resolve itself into committee of the whole for consideration of such matter.
   b. Such motion may be moved without notice, and on being seconded shall be put to the meeting without debate.
   c. The meeting shall be deemed to be in committee only during the consideration of the matters specified in the motion.
   d. While in committee there shall be no limit to the number of times a member may address the chair, but a member shall not speak for more than three minutes at any one time.

6. Time for debate
   The mover of a motion shall be allowed five (5) minutes, subsequent speakers three (3) minutes, and the mover three (3) minutes in reply, subject in each case to the will of the meeting to grant extensions of three minutes to each speaker. The time for discussion of each motion shall be limited to 20 minutes unless extended by express resolution. The timekeeper shall notify the chairperson one minute before the close of such 20 minutes that the time allowed is nearing expiry, and the Chairperson shall inform the meeting of the fact. When an oral report is given, a limit of ten (10) minutes will be allowed; with extensions of time subject to the will of meeting. Three (3) minutes shall be allowed after each report for questions.

7. Members must rise and address the chair
   Any member desiring to propose a motion or an amendment, or to discuss any matter under consideration, must rise and address the chairperson.

8. Chairperson rising to speak
   When the chairperson rises during the debate, the member, when speaking or proposing to speak, shall sit down, so that the chairperson shall be heard without interruption.

9. Point of order
   No member, when speaking, shall be interrupted, unless a point of order is raised, when he/she shall sit down, and the member raising the point shall first state the point of order, and the chairperson may then either hear that member on the point, hear further discussion, or decide at that stage, but such point shall be decided before the debate proceeds.

10. Order of debate
    Except when the meeting decides to go into committee, after a motion has been duly moved and seconded speakers shall only be heard alternatively against and for the motion, and failing any member rising for the other side,
the motion shall be put. Any motion or amendment not seconded shall not be further debated but shall lapse.

11. Amendments
   The question having been proposed, it may be amended by leaving out, substituting or adding words. The chairperson shall not receive any amendment that is a direct negative of the motion, or which does not preserve the substance of the motion. During the debate on the first amendment it shall be competent for members to move further amendments.

12. Members may speak once only on motion or amendment
   No member shall speak more than once to a motion or an amendment, except when the meeting is in committee.

13. Point of Clarification
   Members may rise on a point of clarification, provided no other member is speaking. The point requiring clarification shall be addressed to the chairperson who may reply or direct the point to the mover of the motion for answer in reply to the debate.

14. Right of reply
   The mover of the original motion shall have right of reply.

15. Submissions of motions and/or amendments
   No further discussion shall be allowed or questions asked after the mover of the original motion has replied. Once the mover has replied the question shall be submitted to the vote, and it shall be resolved in the affirmative or negative on the voices or by a show of hands, if demanded. All amendments shall be voted on in the order in which they are received.

16. Division
   If at least ten (10) members signify their desire by standing, a division may be taken. Any member shall have his/her name recorded as to how he/she voted if so desired.

17. Question be now put
   It shall be in order to move, without discussion, when no other speaker is addressing the chair, “That the question be now put”. On being duly seconded and carried, it shall entail the submission of the motion at once to the meeting after the mover has replied. Any member who has previously spoken upon the question under discussion may not move the motion.

18. Adjournment of debate
   A motion for the adjournment of the debate may be moved by a member who has not moved or seconded an amendment or motion then before the meeting. If seconded, it shall supersede the motion or amendment before the meeting and shall be a new question upon which any member may speak whether he/she has already spoken on the main question or not. The mover has no right of reply.

19. Next business
   When a motion or an amendment is under discussion, it shall be competent
for any member, other than those who have already spoken to such motion or amendment, to move that the meeting proceed to the next business. An amendment to this motion shall not be accepted, nor shall the mover have a right of reply.

20. Dissent from the chairperson’s ruling

Any member dissatisfied with the chairperson’s ruling may move dissent in the following terms, “That the chairperson’s ruling be dissented from”. In such cases, only the mover shall be permitted to speak, except the chairperson, who may subsequently state reasons for the ruling given. No seconder to the motion is required. The motion shall be put to the meeting by the chairperson without further discussion in the following form: “The motion is that the chairperson’s ruling be upheld”. The chairperson may vacate the chair during the discussion of this motion.

21. Chairperson’s privilege

When on the floor of the meeting the chairperson shall enjoy the privileges and be subject to the same rules as other members of the association. He/she shall not return to the chair until the motion has been resolved.

22. Recommittal

It shall be competent to recommit any motion at the same meeting, provided that two-thirds of those present vote for recommittal, but the debate shall be limited to 10 minutes.

23. Motion to rescind

No motion to rescind a motion passed by a meeting shall be accepted by the honorary secretary unless signed by thirty (30) members and unless received fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting that is to consider rescission.

24. Time and termination of meetings

General meetings shall be held at 4.00pm and conclude no later than 6pm. Meetings may be extended to conclude the item of business before the chair.