



Guidelines for course board meetings

Chalmers' course evaluation process

Version 2016-11-23

About these guidelines

According to the process description for Chalmers common course evaluation process ([C 2016-1300](#)) a course board meeting should be held after each course which has had more than 10 registered participants. In this document the purpose of these meetings is described, as well as how they should be carried out and what constitutes a rewarding course board meeting.

The purpose of course board meetings

The overall purpose of course board meetings at Chalmers is to give students, the examiner and a representative of the programme board of the programme the opportunity to discuss the conditions for students' learning in each course, to identify what has worked well in the course and also if something should be changed for the next run of the course.

The meeting is an important complement to the course survey which is sent out to all students who took the course, and when the course survey has been discussed at the course board meeting a nuanced and more comprehensive understanding of the course, which can be used as constructive guidelines in the further development of the course, should have been reached. The learning activities in the course and how they contribute to students reaching the learning outcomes of the course should be the focal point at course board meetings.

One further purpose of course board meetings is to identify good examples and best practice which the programme board representative can spread to other courses. Course board meetings also constitute a valuable point of contact between programme boards and the teaching staff of the programme's courses and gives the programme board insight into the teaching of the programme.

Who participates in course board meetings, and what are their roles?

All members of the course board, that is, the examiner of the course, the student representatives and one representative of the programme board, are invited to the course board meeting. For some programmes, the Student Union Educational Committee tied to the programme owning the course is invited, and sometimes also the vice head of department responsible for education at the department instructing the course. The examiner may also always invite other staff involved in the course.

The programme board representative chairs the meeting, is responsible for the meeting minutes and represents the programme perspective. The student representatives represent all students who took the course. The examiner represents the teaching staff of the course.

Under certain conditions the programme can choose not to have a representative attending the meeting (see section 6.5 in the [process description](#)). At such meetings the examiner chairs the meeting and is responsible for the meeting minutes.

Which documentation and information should be used at the meeting?

The main documentation used at the course board meeting is the result of the course survey. The result of the survey (with comments) should be sent out to all members of the course board before the meeting by the person who invited to the meeting. If nothing else is stated in the invitation, the survey should be available to all participants at the meeting, either on paper or digitally through eg. a projector.

Apart from the results of the course survey, the course board meeting minutes from the previous course run should be available at the meeting and any suggestions for changes from those minutes should be brought up.

The examiner and the student representatives should also share what was discussed at the mid-course meeting.

If the grades of the course have been reported when the meeting is held, statistics on the grade distribution should also be available at the meeting. These statistics are easily accessible for Chalmers staff in the decision support system's [course evaluation module](#).

What's the agenda at a course board meeting?

A course board meeting can be held in different ways, but the most common way is to start by discussing the meeting minutes from previous course run's course board meeting and what was discussed at the mid-course meeting, followed by going through the survey question by question. By using the survey as an agenda of sorts for the meeting you make sure that all important aspects of the course is covered in an adequate way and that the student comments in the survey really comes to use. The template for course board meeting minutes is also structured according to the survey.

Some programme board representatives choose to, instead of going through the survey question by question, discussing around the different themes that emerge through the student comments. This can be a great way to highlight certain aspects in the discussion and making sure that you get to discuss all topics, as long as you make sure that the student representatives and the examiner gets the opportunity to discuss all the topics that are covered in the survey. The topic which needs to be covered are as follows:

- Students' prerequisites
- Learning outcomes
- Course structure, teaching and literature
- Course assessment and its connection to the learning outcomes
- Course administration
- Course work-load
- How cooperation between student and teacher has worked
- How cooperation between students has worked
- What has worked especially well, and if something should be changed for next run of the course.

It is as important to highlight what has worked well in the course, as if anything has worked less well. It is also important that the discussions really clarify why something has worked well or less well and do not stop at mere statements. In order to make the course board meeting as rewarding as possible for all parties, it is important that all participants at the meeting contribute to facilitating constructive discussions.

The goal of the course board meeting should be that there after the meeting is a clear understanding what has worked well and potentially less well in the course, as well as concrete suggestions on how to change things which might have worked less well. Concrete suggestions are of great help to examiners and the department instructing the course in course development.

The person chairing the course board meeting is responsible for making sure that the discussions mainly revolve around the learning activities of the course and how the constructive alignment in the course has worked. The learning outcomes as such may also be discussed, but that discussion is also held in other fora and is not the main purpose of this process.

When discussing cooperation between students, and between student and teachers, it is important to be sensitive to things which may indicate discrimination and unequal treatment etc. Chalmers has a responsibility to make sure that its students and teachers alike are treated well.

What characterises a rewarding course board meeting?

A rewarding course board meeting is a meeting where all participants are motivated to share their view of the course and where everyone has a nuanced and more comprehensive understanding of the course after the meeting. A rewarding meeting notices the learning activities which has worked especially well and leads to concrete suggestions for changes if needed.

To reach this, it is necessary that all participants feel that their opinion matters, that there is a will in all participants to discuss the course openly and without preconceptions, and that the participants give each other time to evaluate suggested changes. It is also important that the examiner has an active dialogue with the student representatives during the course, and explains which expectations they have on them as representatives for the students taking the course.