

# Open Convocation Policy

## **General Policy**

1. All Bencher meetings, as described in Rules 80, 81, 90 and 91 of the Rules of the Law Society of Saskatchewan, will be open to the public.
2. To facilitate public attendance, notice of meetings will be published on the Law Society website.
3. To further facilitate public participation, the minutes of each Bencher meeting will be published on the Law Society website.
4. Any document mentioned on the Benchers' agenda which is not explicitly excluded by the Benchers is available to the public.

## **Rules for Attending Bencher Meetings**

1. Notice of attendance should be given to the Executive Director to ensure proper facilities are booked.
2. No audio or video recording devices or cell phones will be allowed at the meetings.
3. Members of the public will not be allowed to speak, unless invited by the Chair.
4. Members of the public must observe and obey all rulings of the Chair.
5. Members of the public will be required to leave if the meeting is declared closed to the public.

## **Procedure for Declaring a Meeting Closed to the Public**

1. At the outset of each Benchers' meeting, the Benchers and staff shall meet in the absence of the public to review and adopt the final Bencher agenda.
2. During this initial meeting, at the request of any Bencher and with a simple majority vote, any agenda item may be moved from the open agenda to the closed agenda, or vice-versa.

3. During this initial meeting, at the request of any Bencher and with a simple majority vote, any document may be excluded from public access or the Benchers may impose conditions on the release of document.
4. Once the Benchers have fixed the agendas for both the open and the closed sessions and designated documents excluded from public access, the President may convene the open or the closed meeting.
5. When the President convenes the open meeting, the President shall advise the members of the public present of any changes made to the draft agenda for the open session.
6. The Chair may declare a meeting closed.
7. At the request of any Bencher anytime during a meeting and with a simple majority vote, the Benchers may declare an agenda item to be closed or a document excluded from the public.
8. The Benchers shall at all times state reasons on the record for holding a closed session or for excluding a document from public access.
9. Criteria for excluding the public or a document may include the following:
  - a. Matters related to negotiations between the Law Society and other external organizations or the government.
  - b. Matters relating to lawyers' insurance.
  - c. Matters that could harm an investigation or matters relating to an investigation prior to a member being charged.
  - d. Matters that could harm the security of the Law Society or an individual.
  - e. Matters that could breach the confidence of an individual or organization.
  - f. Matters where privacy outweighs the public interest.
  - g. Matters involving Law Society personnel.