

## **Senate Standing Orders**

The role and responsibility of Senate are set out in the University's Charter, Statutes and Ordinances.

### **1. Chair**

- 1.1 The Vice-Chancellor is the Chair of Senate. The longest serving Pro-Vice-Chancellor present shall act as Deputy Chair. In the absence of the Vice-Chancellor the Deputy Chair will act as Chair and the next longest serving Pro-Vice-Chancellor shall act as Deputy Chair.

### **2. Membership**

- 2.1 Senate members are appointed in accordance with the membership composition set out at Ordinance 5C.
- 2.2 Members should ensure that the responsibilities of Senate are exercised in the best interest of the University, rather than representative of any constituency (although noting that members will bring the views of their constituencies to the meeting), and there is a collective responsibility for all decisions.
- 2.3 Where an ex officio member of Senate shows satisfactory reason for being absent, they shall be entitled to petition the Chair of Senate to allow the presence of another officer of the University to attend Senate on their behalf. Where accepted, the substitute member shall have full power to speak and vote so long as the member for who they are substitute is absent. The Chair should not refuse any such reasonable request to do so.

### **3. Attendance**

- 3.1 Members should endeavour to attend all Senate meetings. Where members are unable to attend apologies should be submitted to the Committee Secretary in advance of the meeting.
- 3.2 Individuals who are not members of Senate may be invited to attend (parts of) Senate meetings as business requires. There are also a number of regular attendees who attend each meeting at the discretion of the Chair. These individuals do not have voting rights.

### **4. Senate Sub-Committees and Council**

- 4.1 Senate has sub-committees with defined terms of reference and membership, and including, where appropriate, delegated authority to take action on behalf of Senate. These sub-committees will regularly report (and not less than annually) on their work to Senate as well as make recommendations and seek approvals where relevant. In addition, Council will also regularly report to Senate on its work.

- 4.2 The normal expectation is that the sub-committee chair would be the principal conduit between bodies.
- 4.3 Senate is expected to recognise the responsibilities of Council as the governing body of the University and act in accordance with the requirements set out in the Charter, Statutes and Ordinances to take full account of the respective responsibilities of the two bodies in relation to one another.

## **5. Papers**

- 5.1 Papers, together with a coversheet, must be submitted by the relevant deadline, unless there is prior agreement for late submission. Authors of papers should follow the guidance for preparing Senate papers. The agenda and papers will normally be circulated seven calendar days before the scheduled meeting, electronically, to all members and other designated recipients.
- 5.2 The circulation of late/tabled papers require the agreement of the Chair.
- 5.3 The Chair is responsible for determining the final agenda items to be considered by Senate based upon the proposals of the Deputy Chief Executive (Operations) and Secretary. The Chair retains the right to alter the agenda and request the inclusion or omission of papers at any point (in the event that the information concerns the Chair then the Deputy Chair in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive (Operations) and Secretary will make a final ruling).
- 5.4 Senate members have a standing invitation to submit written questions relating to matters that are the responsibility of Senate to the Vice-Chancellor. The question will be addressed at the next appropriate meeting (in accordance with the set deadlines) and so long as it falls within the business of Senate.

## **6. Senate Discussion**

- 6.1 Normally substantive business will be presented to Senate by the relevant officer and/or chair of a sub-committee. Items for report do not need to be discussed unless there are any issues members wish to raise.
- 6.2 The Senate agenda provides indicative timing guides for discussion items, but this is not a set limit. Members are not restricted to the amount of times they may speak, but are requested to be mindful of the need for brevity and consider the amount/length of their interventions accordingly. The Chair is responsible for ensuring there is sufficient discussion of items, including that all members wishing to have an adequate opportunity to speak. The Chair may remind members for brevity or call to order a member that they consider is speaking outside of topic or the remit of Senate. The Chair may also determine that discussion should be brought to a close.
- 6.3 It is expected that members address colleagues with respect and courtesy.

6.4 The Chair may also ask a member to leave the room where they consider they may be conflicted with a matter under discussion or their behaviour is inappropriate.

## **7. Decision Making**

7.1 Senate decisions are normally made on the basis of consensus amongst members. Decisions may be made through a formal vote where the Chair determines that this is appropriate or where it is requested by a member. In the event of a vote, a proposal will be approved where a majority of members present vote in favour of the proposal. Voting at a meeting will be carried out by a show of hands of all members present or through electronic voting facilities. The Chair shall have the casting vote in the event of a tied position.

## **8. Confidentiality**

8.1 Members are expected to exercise discretion in the sharing and discussion of non-confidential Senate business. However, where Senate business is marked as confidential (under whatever category) it must not be shared with any person who is not a member of Senate without appropriate consent (e.g. from the Chair, the Deputy Chief Executive (Operations) and Secretary). Members are responsible for ensuring the secure storage (and disposal where there are hard copies) of papers and other information relating to Senate business. Members may provide hard copy documentation to the Committee Secretary for destruction. In the event a member discloses confidential information the matter would be drawn to the attention of the Chair by the Deputy Chief Executive Officer (Operations) and Secretary and further action would be determined based on the seriousness of the disclosure.

8.2 Papers and other information will be disclosed to all Senate members unless there is a good reason to withhold the information (for example due to a serious conflict of interest). If the withholding of information is disputed by the member the Chair will make a final ruling on whether it should be shared. In the event that the information concerns the Chair then the Deputy Chair in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive (Operations) and Secretary will make a final ruling.

## **9. Quorum**

9.1 One half of Senate members entitled to be present at any meeting shall constitute a quorum.

## **10. Meetings and Extraordinary Meetings**

10.1 Senate shall normally meet five times a year on dates that will be published prior to the start of the academic year. Occasionally meetings may be rearranged during the academic year where there is a specific need and good reason to do so and members will be provided with reasonable advance notification where this occurs.

- 10.2 Extraordinary meetings of Senate may be convened with the agreement of the Chair. The Deputy Chair and the Deputy Chief Executive (Operations) and Secretary must agree in the event that the reason for convening an extraordinary meeting concerns the Chair. Members shall normally be given at least seven days' notice of any meeting and the business to be transacted. Papers for extraordinary meetings will normally be circulated five days in advance of the meeting.

## **11. Minutes**

- 11.1 Senate minutes shall be taken by the Committee Secretary and approved at the following meeting. Approved minutes will be published on the University website with the exception of confidential items.

## **12. Declaration of Interests and other information requirements**

- 12.1 Members should declare any interests at the start of a meeting where they relate to a matter under discussion and/or during discussion where it is apparent there is a potential or potential for a perceived conflict of interest. The Chair will determine whether the member may participate in discussion and/or in decision-making and/or is required to leave the room (see also 6.4).
- 12.2 Members must also provide any other information that the University requires in order to fulfil its regulatory requirements.

## **13. Chair's Action**

- 13.1 The Chair (or Deputy Chair in the event of absence) has delegated authority to take action on behalf of Senate between meetings. Chair's action may only be taken where decisions are routine/immaterial matters and/or there is a need to expedite University business and it is reasonable not to call an extraordinary meeting. Chair's actions will be reported to Senate at the next reasonable opportunity.

## **14. Standing Orders**

- 14.1 The Chair has the final ruling on the interpretation of these Standing Orders, except for Chair's Action. The Chair will seek the advice of the Deputy Chief Executive (Operations) and Secretary on any question of interpretation of these Standing Orders. The Charter, Statutes and Ordinances shall take precedence in the event there is inconsistency with the Standing Orders.

September 2019