



THE UNIVERSITY  
*of* EDINBURGH

**Senatus Academicus**  
**Governance Handbook**  
**2019-20**

Version 1, September 2019

Academic Services

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## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a reference guide to assist Senate Members to perform their duties effectively.

### 1. CONSTITUTION OF THE UNIVERSITY

In common with the other “ancient” Scottish Universities, and in contrast to the position in nearly all other pre-1992 Universities which are established by Royal Charters, the University of Edinburgh is constituted by the Universities (Scotland) Acts 1858 to 1996 and secondary or subordinate legislations: Ordinances, Resolutions and Statutory Instruments(SIs)/Secondary Statutory Instruments (SSIs). The Universities (Scotland) Acts make specific provision for three major bodies in the governance of the University:

- The University Court
- The Senatus Academicus
- The General Council

Further information can be found at:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/governance-strategic-planning/governance>

#### **1.1 The University Court**

The University Court (hereafter ‘Court’) is the University’s governing body and is the legal persona of the University. The present powers of the Court are defined in the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966 and as amended by Ordinances/Statutory Instruments/Scottish Statutory Instruments. They include, among others, the amendment of the composition, powers and functions of bodies in the University and the creation of new bodies, the administration and management of the whole revenue and property of the University, internal arrangements of the University, appointments, review of decisions of the Senatus Academicus (‘Senate’), and, on the recommendation of the Senate, the regulation of degrees and admission and discipline of students.

The 1966 Act stipulates the procedures by which Court may exercise its powers. These are:

- by Ordinance, which requires consultation with the General Council and the Senatus and then Privy Council approval;
- by Resolution, which similarly requires consultation with the General Council and Senatus but not approval by Privy Council;
- or by simple decision without the stated requirement for formal consultation

Emergency procedures are stipulated in the Act to accelerate the Ordinance and Resolution procedures in cases of urgency. Meetings of the Court are normally held five times a year. The University, as appropriate, initiates robust internal consultation and consultation with relevant external bodies and individuals and the outcome of these consultations are considered by Court as part of the decision making process. Further information on the Court can be found at:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/governance-strategic-planning/governance/university-court/about>.

University Court is supported in its work by five Standing Committees: Audit and Risk Committee; Exception Committee; Nominations Committee; Policy and Resources Committee; and Remuneration Committee.

Information on Court and Senate Committees, and other significant Committees and Groups, can be found on the Governance and Strategic Planning website: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/governance-strategic-planning/governance/university-committees>

### **1.1.1 Senatus Academicus representation on University Court**

Senate currently elects to the University Court four Assessors, of whom at least one must be a professor and at least one a non-professorial member of the academic staff. The four Senate Assessors on University Court are:

Professor E Bomberg	School of Social and Political Science	1 August 2016 to 31 July 2020
Professor A Tudhope	School of GeoSciences	1 August 2016 to 31 July 2020
Professor S Cooper	Business School	1 August 2018 to 31 July 2022
Dr C Phillips	Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies	1 August 2018 to 31 July 2022

When a vacancy arises for Assessors on Court, the Secretary will invite nominations to fill it. Each nomination should be signed by two Members of Senate who will be deemed to have formally proposed and seconded the nominee.<sup>1</sup> A Committee known as a Scrutinising Committee will be appointed by Senate to scrutinise nominations, to confirm the validation of the nominations and hear any appeal against disqualification by the Returning Officer. The Committee will consist of a representative of the University Court, a representative of Senate and a representative of the University Secretary.<sup>2</sup> An election will be required if more than one nomination is received for a vacancy. The voting will be by secret ballot. Regulations for the conduct of an election will be approved by an Ordinary Meeting of Senate and circulated to members of Senate.<sup>3</sup>

### **1.2 The Senatus Academicus**

Senate is the supreme academic body of the University and has responsibility for superintending and regulating teaching and discipline at the University, and to promote research.<sup>4</sup> Senate's role includes:

- Directing, regulating and promoting the teaching and research of the University;
- Discussing matters of strategic importance for learning, teaching and research development;

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<sup>1</sup> Order 23 of the Senatus Standing Orders

<sup>2</sup> Order 24 of the Senatus Standing Orders

<sup>3</sup> Order 25 of the Senatus Standing Orders

<sup>4</sup> Senate derives its power from Universities (Scotland) Act 1858 as amended by Universities (Scotland) Act 1889.

- Approving the award of degrees, including honorary degrees<sup>5</sup>
- Maintaining the quality and standards of the University's awards<sup>6</sup>
- Setting the academic regulatory framework<sup>7</sup>
- Regulating conduct of the students of the University
- Setting the high level policy and strategy on the advice and recommendation of the Senate committees working within the strategic direction contained within the University's Strategic Plan approved by Court and its underlying strategies
- Recommending or reporting to the Court as it may require
- Reporting to the Court on any matter referred to the Senate by the Court
- Making a request to Court for a Resolution
- Commenting on draft Resolutions
- Approving the conferment of emeritus status on retiring professors of the University
- Communicating policies approved by Senate or Senate committees

In order to implement certain decisions arising from these roles, Senate is required to recommend to Court the creation of a resolution. These include, for example, recommendations to institute new degree qualifications, to institute regulations for the awarding of degrees and to institute regulations governing student conduct.

Senate meets three times in each academic year. In addition there are three electronic distributions of non-contentious papers. Senate has delegated its authority to the Senate Standing Committees in a number of different areas which are covered in the Senate Standing Committees' terms of reference. Further information on Senate can be found at: <http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/senate>

### **1.3 The General Council**

The General Council<sup>8</sup> (hereafter 'the Council') consists of *ex officio* members during their terms of office; the Chancellor; the members of the University Court; the professors; the readers, senior lecturers and lecturers who have been in post for a year or more; all persons on whom the University has conferred degrees or the title of Honorary Fellow of the University; and those former members of the University Court, former professors and retired readers, senior lecturers and lecturers who have held office for at least three years, who have elected to maintain their membership. The number of registered members as at 1st August 2019 was 230,012.

The Council elects the Chancellor of the University and three Assessors on the University Court. According to the Act of 1858 '(the General Council) shall be competent to take into their consideration all questions affecting the well-being and prosperity of the University, and to make representations from time to time, on such questions to the Court, who shall consider the same and return to the council their deliverance thereon'; and the Court shall have power 'to effect

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<sup>5</sup> The Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor, a Vice-Principal, or the most senior professor present confers degrees, or honorary degrees, on behalf of the Senatus, at the Conferring ceremony.

<sup>6</sup> Delegated to the Quality Assurance Committee.

<sup>7</sup> Delegated to the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee.

<sup>8</sup> The General Council was instituted by the Universities (Scotland) Act 1858; its constitution and functions have been defined and altered by subsequent Universities (Scotland) and the Representation of the People (Scotland) Acts and Ordinances.

improvements in the internal arrangements of the University, after due communication with Senate, and with the sanction of the Chancellor; provided that all such proposed improvements shall be submitted to the University Council for their consideration’.

By the 1966 Act, the General Council was accorded power to consider both Ordinances and Resolutions in draft. The General Council also receives an annual report of the work and activities of the University and an audited financial statement. The work of the Council is conducted by its Business Committee.

Two statutory meetings of the General Council are held annually. Further information on the General Council including access to video coverage of the Council’s statutory half-yearly meetings, can be found at the following URL: <http://www.general-council.ed.ac.uk/>

## **2. ACADEMIC GOVERNANCE AT THE UNIVERSITY**

Academic Governance refers to the way that academic matters are governed; it is separate and distinct from corporate governance. Senate, as the supreme academic body of the University, is responsible for the academic governance of the University. It discharges its responsibilities in accordance with statutory legislation.<sup>9</sup> The composition of Senate is controlled by [University Ordinance 204](#). The Senate reports regularly to the University Court. In turn, it receives regular reports from the University Court and from each of the three Senate Standing Committees. It receives reports from other Senate Committees as the business requires it.

The information in this Handbooks reflects the governance arrangements for 2019/20. From 2020/21 the membership of Senate will change as part of the University’s implementation of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016. Information on the changes, and the consultation carried out on these changes, can be found on the Senate website at the following URL: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/senate/higher-education-governance-scotland-act>

### **2.1 Senate Committees**

Senate has the power to appoint committees as it considers necessary to carry out its functions and responsibilities. These committees need not be composed entirely of its own membership. Senate may delegate to any committee such powers as the Senate may think fit. Senate also has the power to abolish existing Committees. Senate may appoint members to Joint Committees responsible to both the Senate and the University Court.<sup>10</sup> With respect to delegated authority, Senate retains oversight through reporting from the relevant Committee as appropriate. Senate Standing Committees report annually to Senate on their activity for the year and request Senate’s approval for their planned strategy for the year ahead.

Following an External Review of Senate and its Committees in May 2019, Senate updated the structure and membership of the Standing Committees in order to continue to ensure effective

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<sup>9</sup> Universities (Scotland) Act 1858 as amended by Universities (Scotland) Act 1889

<sup>10</sup> Section 22 of the Standing Orders of the Senatus Academicus

academic governance. These changes are being implemented in 2019/20 and the committee information below provides the new committee structure and remits.

### *Standing Committees*

**Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC):** Responsible for the University's framework of academic policy and regulation, apart from those aspects which are primarily parts of the Quality Assurance Framework. More information on the Committee can be found at the following URL: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/academic-policy-regulations>

**Education Committee:** Responsible, on behalf of Senate, for taught and research student matters, particularly strategy and policy concerning learning, teaching and the development of curriculum. More information on the Committee can be found at the following URL: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/education>

**Quality Assurance Committee (QAC):** Responsible for the University's academic quality assurance framework. The Committee also acts as a planning forum for the discussion and promotion of developments in academic quality assurance, whether internally or externally driven. More information on the Committee can be found at the following URL: [www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/quality-assurance](http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/quality-assurance)

### *Senate Sub-Committee of QAC*

**Student Support Services Quality Assurance Framework Sub-Committee (SSSQAF):** The Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) Sub-Committee has delegated authority from QAC for the operational oversight of the Student Support Services Quality Assurance Framework (SSSQAF). It provides an overview of its findings to QAC, including commendations and recommendations. More information on the Sub-Committee can be found at the following URL: [www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/quality-assurance/subcommittee](http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/quality-assurance/subcommittee)

### *Committees with Delegated Authority from Senatus Academicus who report to Senatus Academicus*

**Honorary Degrees Committee:** The Honorary Degrees Committee considers college and other nominations for Honorary Degrees and Fellowships of the University of Edinburgh and recommends awards to Senate. The membership of the Committee, nomination procedures, and a list of current recipients of Honorary Degrees and Fellowships can be found on the Student Administration website: [www.ed.ac.uk/student-administration/graduations](http://www.ed.ac.uk/student-administration/graduations)

**Senate Exception Committee:** Senate Exception Committee has delegated authority to make urgent business decisions which would otherwise require the Senate approval between the meetings of Senate, on the understanding that any matter so referred can be referred to the full Senate should this be the wish of the Exception Committee. Terms of reference and composition for the Senate Exception Committee can be found at the following URL: [www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/senatusexceptioncommitteetor.pdf](http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/senatusexceptioncommitteetor.pdf)

*Committees with Delegated Authority from Senatus Academicus which report to Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (membership is approved by Academic Policy and Regulations Committee).*

**Fitness to Practise Appeal Committee:** The University Senatus Fitness to Practise Appeal Committee provides the mechanism through which students can appeal against a decision made by the College Fitness to Practise Committee.

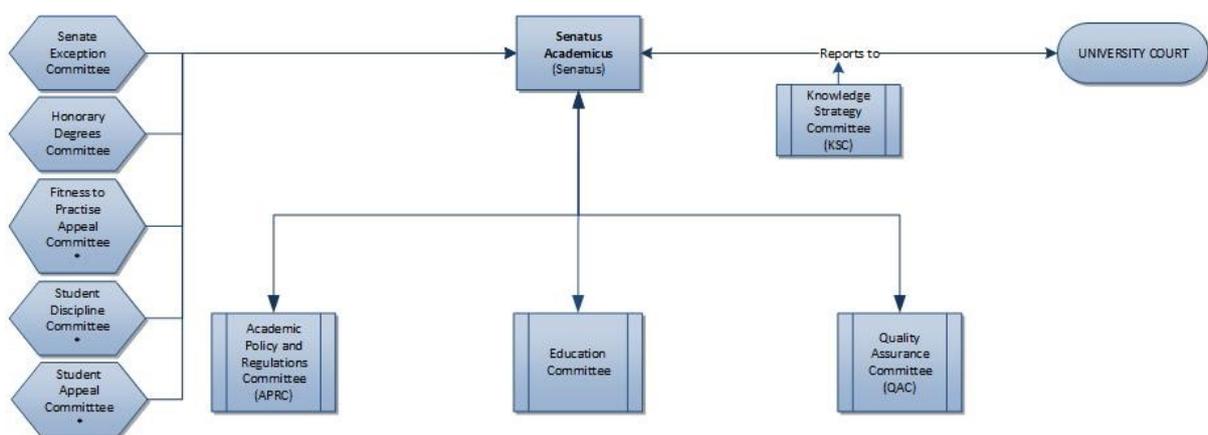
**Student Appeal Committees:** The Undergraduate Appeal Committee considers any appeals submitted by undergraduate students, whilst the Postgraduate Appeal Committee considers any appeals submitted by postgraduate students. Both Committees comprise a broad range of academic staff from each of the University's three colleges. More information on the appeal committees is available at the following URL: [www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/appeals/appeal-committees](http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/appeals/appeal-committees)

**Student Discipline Committee:** It is the role of the Student Discipline Committee to hear and adjudicate upon individual cases of alleged breaches of the Code of Student Conduct. Further information on the committee is available at the following URL: [www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/discipline-committee](http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/discipline-committee)

*Joint Senate and Court Committee*

**Knowledge Strategy Committee:** The Knowledge Strategy Committee's purpose is to oversee the University's knowledge management activities in the areas of Library, Information Technology, technology enhanced learning, Management Information and e-Administration on behalf of Court; and to give initial consideration to and advise on any other Court business in respect of the University's knowledge management activities. Further information about the committee is available at the following URL: [www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/governance-strategic-planning/governance/university-committees/jointsentatandcourt/knowledgestrategycommittee](http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/governance-strategic-planning/governance/university-committees/jointsentatandcourt/knowledgestrategycommittee)

**Figure 2: Senatus Academicus, its committees and inter-relationships**



**2.2 Senate Committee Membership**

When filling membership vacancies, Senate committees are mindful of the need to manage membership rotation in order to assure business continuity. The Standing Orders of Senate advise that there should be a balance between continuity of committee membership and the opportunity

for regular fresh input. Senate and Senate's Standing Committees include student representation arranged by Edinburgh University Students' Association.

### **2.3 Senate Committees' Annual Review and Report**

The standing committees of Senate submit an annual report to the final Senate meeting of the academic year. The report provides an overview of the major items of business completed by the committees over the past academic year and proposes strategic issues for the committees to focus on for the next academic year and beyond, for approval by Senate.

### **2.4 Devolution of Powers of the Senate**

In 2006 the following powers of Senate were devolved:

- Senate has the authority to admit, examine and withdraw students and to grant permissions, concessions and exemptions

These powers of Senate were devolved to the College Level.<sup>11</sup> In exceptional circumstances a concession to allow relaxation of a specific regulation may be granted by the appropriate Head of College. Where the Head of College does not have authority to award a particular concession, the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee may award the concession.

- Senate is responsible for course and programme approval<sup>12</sup>

Detailed programme proposals are considered by the school Board of Studies. They are then transmitted to the College Learning and Teaching Committee or equivalent for approval. Proposals which comply with the University's curriculum framework and academic year structure, or have no wider implications are approved at this level. The Academic Policy and Regulations Committee considers all other programme proposals. Where the programme requires the institution of a new degree qualification a resolution is required.

## **3. DEFINITIONS**

### **3.1 Definitions of membership**

<b>Associate members of Senate</b>	Members of senate who only have partial rights or privileges. Associate members are not permitted to attend reserved business discussed at Senate.
<b>Elected members</b>	Where a membership position is held by election, the election process shall be managed in accordance with agreed procedures.
<b><i>Ex officio</i></b>	Members retain membership whilst they hold the relevant office.

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<sup>11</sup> See Paper D1 *Devolution of Powers of Senate*, Senate 22 March 2006.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*

### 3.2 Operation of Senate

#### **President of Senate**

The Principal is the 'President' of Senate, with a deliberative and casting vote. In the absence of the Principal, a Vice-Principal shall preside with the same voting power.<sup>13</sup>

#### **The Quorum**

Quorum refers to the minimum numbers of members who must be present for Senate to make valid decisions. One-third of the Senate shall be a quorum.<sup>14</sup> If at any meeting the attention of the President is drawn to the fact that a quorum is not present, those Senate members present may provisionally deal with such unopposed business as the President shall judge to be of a non-contentious character. Such business shall not include the approval of the Minutes of any previous meeting. All other business shall be deferred until the next Ordinary meeting of Senate. At a Graduation Meeting, it shall not be competent for any member to draw attention to the fact that a quorum is not present.<sup>15</sup>

## **4. COMPOSITION AND MEMBERSHIP OF SENATE**

#### *The composition of Senate as set out in University Ordinance 204*

The Principal & Vice-Chancellor. The Principal is President of the Senate, with a deliberative and casting vote.

All Professors of the University

Elected non-professorial representatives of readers, senior lecturers and lecturers

Elected university demonstrators and academic research staff

*Ex officio* members, who are not already in any of the categories above, these include Vice-Principals, Heads of Colleges, up to five senior figures appointed from each one of the three Colleges, the Chief Information Officer and Librarian, the Director of Library and University Collections, Heads of Schools within Colleges and up to nine other members holding a University or College office (other than those specified above).

**Professorial staff** who hold a substantive or personal chair are automatically members of Senate

**Elected members of Senate** are drawn from the following categories:

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<sup>13</sup> See Order 5 of Senatus Standing Orders

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*

- Readers, senior lecturers and lecturers
- University demonstrators and researchers

The calculation method for vacancies for the above categories were approved by Senate and Court at the September 2013 Electronic Senate and Court meeting 4 November 2013.<sup>16</sup>

Membership of elected members of the Senate commence on 1 August for a period of up to three years.<sup>17</sup>

#### **Current associated student representatives on Senate are as follows**

- Five elected Sabbatical Officers
  - Students' Association President
  - Vice President Education
  - Vice President Welfare
  - Vice President Community
  - Vice President Activities and Services
- Two elected Section Representatives to represent postgraduate students
  - Postgraduate Taught Students Representative
  - Postgraduate Research Students Representative
- Seven elected School Representatives
  - Three elected School Representatives from the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences
  - Two elected School Representatives from the College of Science and Engineering
- Two student representatives from the College of Medicine and Veterinary
  - Medicine, with one representative selected by the Edinburgh Medical
  - Students Council and one representative selected from the Veterinary
  - Students Council<sup>18</sup>

**Membership Vacancies:** Ordinance 204 outlines how vacancies in categories of Senate Membership are to be filled. Academic Services is responsible for organising elections to Senate in liaison with the Colleges in March and April each year. Any vacancies that occur at other periods during the year are filled as soon as practicable.

## **5. SENATE MEMBER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**New Members:** An induction event will be organised for both new and returning members annually. At this event, Senate members will be given a brief introduction to academic governance, an overview of the format of Senate, Senate members' responsibilities and the recent work of Senate.

Be collegial and constructive in approach

<sup>16</sup> See Paper e-S 13/14 1 F approved by Senate September 2013 which sets out the calculation method.

<sup>17</sup> New members in 2018 were elected for a two-year term because a new Senate model will be in operation from 2020 onwards. New members in 2019 were elected for a one-year term.

<sup>18</sup> See Paper e-S 17/18 1 C approved by Senate in September 2017 which covers the Students' Association Representation on Senate.

**Responsibilities and Expectations of Senate Members**

Attend each meeting and participate fully in the work of the Senate. This will involve looking ahead and consulting/gathering input in order to provide the broad spectrum of thoughts and opinions which are necessary for proper consideration of the area being discussed

Uphold the "seven principles of public life": selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership  
[www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/GaSP/Governance/CourtMembersCode.pdf](http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/GaSP/Governance/CourtMembersCode.pdf)

Take collective and individual ownership for the issues under the Senate's remit and for the discussion and resolution of these issues

Be committed to communicating the work of Senate to the wider University Community

Assess the impact of applying proposed new or revised policies and practices on the 'protected characteristic groups' set out in the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012, subject to relevance and proportionality. Further details can be found at:  
[www.ed.ac.uk/equality-diversity/impact-assessment](http://www.ed.ac.uk/equality-diversity/impact-assessment)

## **6. FORMAT OF E-SENATE AND SENATE**

### **6.1 E-Senate**

Senate has authority to conduct business electronically.<sup>19</sup> Each meeting of the Senate is preceded by an electronic Senate through which the majority of the routine formal business is conducted. Items of e-business are posted on the Senate webpage for eight days, during which time members are invited to submit any comments, observations or reservations by email to [senate.support@ed.ac.uk](mailto:senate.support@ed.ac.uk). Any comments are posted verbatim on a webpage accessible to those within the ed.ac.uk domain. Nil response from members is regarded as agreement.

Following the close of electronic business the Principal considers any comments received and decides, consulting as appropriate, whether the business may be concluded or should be referred to the Senate meeting. Any comments made are posted online (accessible only to University account holders). The e-Senate allows most of the formal Senate business to be dealt with electronically, thereby freeing up time at meetings for the discussion of high level academic issues. Any formal business not resolved via the e-Senate is referred to the next Senate meeting. The outcome of electronic business is reported at the next Senate meeting.

### **6.2 Senate Meeting**

Senate meets three times per year in each of October, February and June. Meetings begin with a presentation and discussion session on an issue of strategic importance, followed by consideration

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<sup>19</sup> See Order 8 of the Senatus Standing Orders

of any formal business. The agenda and papers are posted on the Senate web pages one week in advance of the meeting.

If members require any specific support to be put in place in order to attend the meeting of Senate (e.g. British Sign Language requirements), they are invited to inform Senate Support at: [Senate.Support@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Senate.Support@ed.ac.uk) so that arrangements can be made.

The agenda for a meeting of Senate typically comprises 3-4 sections:

**Presentation and discussion:** Senate receives presentations on a high level academic matter intended to generate discussion. Copies of Senate presentations are made available, where possible, on the Senate webpages:

[www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/senate/presentation-and-discussion](http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/senate/presentation-and-discussion) The Presentation and Discussion section of the meeting runs for 90 minutes.

Presentations and Discussion themes to be considered in 2019/20 are as follows:

- Support for Early Career Researchers
- Student wellbeing including Review of Student Support
- Curriculum Review

**Tea/coffee break:** The Tea/Coffee break lasts 15-20 minutes.

**Formal business for consideration:** This may include changes to University academic policies or the introduction of new academic initiatives for which Senate approval is required. It may also include items for information or on which Senate's observations are sought.

**Closed business:** Closed papers are usually sent by email to Senate members a week in advance of the meeting. Those who receive papers 'for information' may request a copy of the closed papers. They are not posted on the webpages (since these are publicly accessible). Papers which are categorised as 'closed' must have an exemption under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act or contain information which cannot be released due to the Data Protection Act.

**Reserved business (if required):** In the rare event of there being an item of reserved business that requires discussion, the Chair will ask all non-members of Senate and all associate members to leave for the duration of the discussion.

### **6.3 Contribution of Members**

A Senate member wishing to take part in any discussion shall rise and address him/herself to the President.<sup>20</sup> A Senate member should make it known to the President of Senate they wish to speak, whereupon the President permits the Senate member to speak.

### **6.4 Setting of Dates of Ordinary Senate Meetings**

The dates of meetings in any academic year shall be determined by the Senate at the final Ordinary Meeting of the previous academic year and published on the University's web site. In practice, the

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<sup>20</sup> See Order 18 of the Senatus Standing Orders

dates are set by the Head of Court Services in order to ensure that University Committees' business cycles are aligned.

### **6.5 Special Meetings of Senate**

Special Meetings may be called by resolution of the Senate or by the Principal, or on a requisition specifying the object signed by twelve members of Senate. Save in exceptional circumstances, a Special Meeting will be held within fourteen days of being called, and notice of the time, place, and reason for such a Meeting will be given to members by the Secretary as far as possible in advance: Special Meetings will not normally be held outside semester.<sup>21</sup>

### **6.6 Graduation Meetings**

A Graduation Meeting shall precede each Graduation Ceremonial, in order to approve the list of Graduands. At a Graduation Meeting, other business of a non-contentious character may, at the discretion of the President, be transacted.<sup>22</sup> In practice, this occurs extremely rarely.

### **6.7 Senate Exception Committee**

Senate Exception Committee has delegated authority to make urgent business decisions which would otherwise require the Senate approval between the meetings of Senate.<sup>23</sup>

## **7. PROPOSING BUSINESS**

Motions which members wish to bring forward to any meeting must be communicated in writing (this can be by email to [Senate.Support@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Senate.Support@ed.ac.uk)) to the Secretary of Senate in time to be entered on the Agenda (referred to as the Billet in the Senate Standing Orders). All motions must be proposed and seconded.<sup>24</sup> In practice, this must take place 10 days before the Senate meeting, see the deadline dates for receipt of Senate and e-Senate papers listed below in Section 10.

## **8. DEFINING THE NATURE OF BUSINESS**

The business of Senate can be Open, Closed, Reserved or Discussion based. Within each of these categories the item may be presented to Senate (a) for approval, (b) for formal noting or (c) for information. Open business constitutes the bulk of items falling within the jurisdiction of Senate. The only business which can be categorised as Closed is that which has (a) an exemption under the Freedom of Information or (b) information which cannot be released due to the Data Protection Act.

The Recommendation of Honorary Degree Report prepared by the Honorary Degrees Committee is an example of business which is Closed under the Freedom of Information Act. Business is only Reserved when it requires students and non-Senate members to leave the meeting.

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<sup>21</sup> See Order 2 of the Senatus Standing Orders

<sup>22</sup> See Order 3 of the Senatus Standing Orders

<sup>23</sup> See Order 9 of the Senatus Standing Orders.

<sup>24</sup> See Order 7 of the Senatus Standing Orders

## **8.1 Records Management, Data Protection and Freedom of Information**

Members should ensure that they have an awareness of the implications of information legislation. Key points to note are:

- Members' notes could be subject to an information request. Good practice is for members to dispose of any notes once any actions are complete and to dispose of any papers after the meeting.
- If members receive an information request relating to Senate, they should always refer it to the Senate Clerk for action as soon as possible as there are timescales to be adhered to when processing a request.

Committee secretaries are trained in the implications of Freedom of Information and Data Protection legislation for committee servicing. In practice, this means that they will be able to advise on the classification of committee business (open or closed) and write minutes in the appropriate manner and format.

Members should note that agendas, papers and minutes of open committee business will be publicly available on the University's website.

Further information is available on the Records Management website at: [www.ed.ac.uk/records-management-section](http://www.ed.ac.uk/records-management-section)

## **9. SCHEDULE OF SENATUS MEETINGS 2018/19**

### **Ordinary meetings of Senate:**

- Wednesday 20 October 2019
  - Wednesday 5 February 2020
  - Wednesday 27 May 2020
- All meetings start at 2.00 pm*

### **E-Senate:**

Electronic Senate business will be conducted between the following dates during the current academic session:

- Tuesday 10 September - Wednesday 18 September 2019
- Tuesday 14 January - Wednesday 22 January 2020
- Tuesday 5 May - Wednesday 13 May 2020

## **10. DEADLINES FOR RECEIPT OF SENATE PAPERS**

All papers submitted to Senate must include a coversheet and should be submitted to Senate Support in a single document in Microsoft Word format. **Please note the coversheet has been updated for 2019/20 so please use the version on the website below.**

Coversheets are available at: [www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees](http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees)

### Deadline for Receipt of Senate Papers 2019/20

Meeting	Deadline for Papers
<b>E-Senate</b> Tuesday 10 September - Wednesday 18 September 2019	Friday 6 September 2019
<b>Senate</b> Wednesday 2 October 2019	Monday 23 September 2019
<b>E-Senate</b> Tuesday 14 January - Wednesday 22 January 2020	Friday 10 January 2020
<b>Senate</b> Wednesday 5 February 2020	Monday 27 January 2020
<b>E-Senate</b> Tuesday 5 May - Wednesday 13 May 2020	Friday 1 May 2020
<b>Senate</b> Wednesday 27 May 2020	Monday 18 May 2020

It is helpful to have early notification of any likely Senate agenda items. The Senate Secretariat ([senate.support@ed.ac.uk](mailto:senate.support@ed.ac.uk)) can advise on whether proposed business should be conducted via the electronic Senate or at a Senate meeting.

## 11. VOTING

Decisions of the Senate will<sup>25</sup> be taken by show of hands, unless a secret ballot is demanded. A Senate member may require his/her dissent from a decision to be recorded.<sup>26</sup>

## 12. DISSEMINATION AND COMMUNICATION OF SENATE BUSINESS

**The Minutes:** The University Secretary will be responsible for preparing Minutes of all meetings. Minutes of the previous Ordinary Meeting (including an Electronic Senate Meeting), or any intervening Special Meeting, or any Graduation Meeting and Ceremonial, will be submitted and approved at the opening of the meeting. They are saved to the website at: [www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/senate/agendas-papers](http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/senate/agendas-papers)

**Court Report:** A report of the business undertaken by an ordinary meeting of the Senate and a note of what took place at e-Senate is sent to the University Court for information or to request a resolution where required.

<sup>25</sup> except as provided in Order 25 of the Senatus standing Orders

<sup>26</sup> See Order 17 of the Senatus Standing Orders

### 13. AMENDMENT OF THE SENATUS STANDING ORDERS

Notification to amend or repeal a standing order should be made in the last preceding Ordinary Meeting of Senate (an Ordinary meeting of Senate includes an Electronic Senate meeting). Amendment or repeal shall require the approval of two-thirds of those voting on the Motion for amendment or repeal, provided also that at least fifty members vote in favour of such a Motion.<sup>27</sup>

### 14. AWARD OF TITLE OF EMERITUS PROFESSOR

When a professor retires from an established chair or a personal chair, the Head of the relevant College may decide to invite Senate to confer upon them Emeritus status. Since May 2012, the award of Emeritus Professor Status refers to the title of the individual's former Chair or discipline as agreed by the Head of the relevant College.<sup>28</sup> Senate will ask the Head of College to prepare a Special Minute which provides an overview of the Professor's career and their contribution to the University. The Special Minute is submitted to the Senate for approval. On approval the Special Minute is sent to the retiree. It is conferred for an open ended period. For further information regarding the procedure for the award of the title of Emeritus Professor please see Appendix Two.

### 15. RESOLUTIONS

There are two types of resolution of most interest to Senate, presented to Senate by Court:

1. Personal and Substantive Chairs
2. New degrees, degree regulations and the prescription of disciplinary procedures

Senate invites Court to draft the resolutions. It offers observations on the resolutions once drafted.

### 16. SENATE RELATED PROJECTS IN PROGRESS 2019/20

Information on the projects which are being taken forward by Senate Committees in 2019/20 is available in the annual report of the Senate Committees (paper D):

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/20190529agendaandpapers.pdf>

### 17. ROUTINE FORMAL BUSINESS 2019/20

<b>September E-Senate/ October Senate</b>	<b>Special Meetings and Graduation Ceremonials</b> – (report available from Registry) For formal noting <b>Conferment of the title Emeritus Professor</b> – For approval <b>Draft Chair Resolutions</b> – Senate to provide observations on the draft resolutions
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<sup>27</sup> See Order 26 of Senatus Standing Orders

<sup>28</sup> Central Management Group, 23 May 2012, Paper I *Review of Honorary Appointments*

	<p><b>Edinburgh University Students' Association Priorities for 2019/20</b> – For information</p> <p><b>Senate Exception Committee Report</b> – Report on items approved over the summer period – for formal noting</p> <p><b>Annual Statement to the Scottish Funding Council on Institution-led Review Enhancement activity</b> – For formal noting and onward transmission to University Court</p> <p><b>Update on Senate membership</b> – For formal noting</p> <p><b>Communications from the University Court</b> – For formal noting</p> <p><b>Membership of the Knowledge Strategy Committee</b> – For information</p>
<b>January E-Senate/February Senate</b>	<p><b>Conferment of the Title of Emeritus Professor</b> – For approval</p> <p><b>Special Minutes</b> – For approval</p> <p><b>Draft Court Resolutions</b> – Senate to provide observations on the draft resolutions</p> <p><b>New Members</b> – For formal noting</p> <p><b>Communications from the University Court</b> – For formal noting</p>
<b>May E-Senate/ Senate</b>	<p><b>Annual Report of the Senate Committees</b> - Senate notes the major items of committee business from 2019/20 and approves the strategic issues proposed for the next academic year and beyond – for approval</p> <p><b>Amendment to the terms of reference for Senate Committees</b> – For approval</p> <p><b>Conferment of the Title Emeritus Professor</b> – For approval</p> <p><b>Special Minutes</b> – For approval</p> <p><b>Communications from the University Court</b> - may include draft resolutions on which Senate is request to provide observations</p> <p><b>Report from the Central Academic Promotions Committee</b> - report of the Out of Cycle Personal Chair recommendations of the Central Academic Promotions Committee.</p> <p><b>Draft Court Resolutions Chairs</b> – Senate to provide observations</p> <p><b>College Management Academic Infrastructure 2019/20</b> - For information</p> <p><b>Recommendations from the Honorary Degree Committees</b> – For approval</p>

## 18. SENATE AND SENATE COMMITTEES' ENGAGEMENT WITH STAKEHOLDERS

- Annual planning of Senate Committees' activity and review of Senate Committees' operations at the Senate Committees' Away Day
- Direct consultation in relation to proposal/initiative development
- Annual reports to Senate and Court on Senate Committees' activities
- Annual reporting to external stakeholders, for example, Scottish Funding Council and Quality Assurance Agency
- Communicating Senate committee related initiatives and policies to key stakeholders in the University via email

- Publicising Senate committee related initiatives and policies via the website <http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/policies-regulations/new-policies> and the Senate Committees Newsletter <http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/newsletter>
- Monitoring of external HE and legislative developments to benchmark, to identify action to be taken to ensure compliance, to identify and adopt good practice and appropriate strategic development and practice within the University

## 19. USEFUL CONTACTS AND WEBLINKS

Senate Standing Orders are available at: [www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/senatusstandingorders.pdf](http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/senatusstandingorders.pdf)  
Ordinance 204 which governs membership is available at:  
[www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/ordinance204.pdf](http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/ordinance204.pdf)

### Senatus Academicus

Senate Clerk: Kathryn Nicol

Ext: 51 4979

Email: [SenateSupport@ed.ac.uk](mailto:SenateSupport@ed.ac.uk)

Website: [www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/senate](http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/senate)

### Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

Committee Secretary: Ailsa Taylor

Ext: 50 2366

Email: [ailsa.taylor@ed.ac.uk](mailto:ailsa.taylor@ed.ac.uk)

Website: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/academic-policy-regulations>

### Education Committee

Committee Secretary: Philippa Ward

Ext: 51 6083

Email: [Phillippa.Ward@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Phillippa.Ward@ed.ac.uk)

Website: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/education>

### Quality Assurance Committee

Committee Secretary: Brian Connolly

Ext: 51 4481

Email: [brian.connolly@ed.ac.uk](mailto:brian.connolly@ed.ac.uk)

Website: [www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/quality-assurance](http://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees/quality-assurance)

## 20. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In preparing this Communication Strategy, the University benchmarked against similar documents prepared by University College Cork, Ireland, University of Glasgow, and Heriot Watt University.  
<http://www.ucc.ie/en/academicsecretariat/academiccouncil/academiccouncilcommitteehandbook/>  
[http://www.gla.ac.uk/media/media\\_239124\\_en.pdf](http://www.gla.ac.uk/media/media_239124_en.pdf)  
<http://www.hw.ac.uk/committees/senate/documents/senatehandbook.pdf>

*Senate Clerk, Kathryn Nicol (Academic Policy Officer)*

## Academic Services Appendix One

### Terms used by Senate Committees

**Senate Committee:** A Senate committee is a body established by Senate. A Senate committee has delegated authority on behalf of Senate to undertake specific actions, roles or responsibilities set out in its terms of reference. Standing Committees of Senate may recommend the direction of the academic strategy which is considered and approved by Senate. Any changes to the Senate committee's terms of reference and composition must be approved by Senate.

**Sub-Committee:** A sub-committee is a body normally created by its parent Committee to carry out one or more aspects of that Committee's work (the parent Committee) for the indefinite future and may relate to specific operational issues on behalf of the parent Committee.

**Advisory Group:** An advisory group to a Senate Committee is established to provide expert advice on a particular issue or project.

**Task Group:** The work of Senate and its Senate committees is supported by limited life task groups. Task groups are assigned a specific body of work which will be outlined in a remit and the membership will reflect the task in hand. A task group's membership need not necessarily be comprised of committee members. A task group reports to its parent committee on a regular basis. Joint Senate committee task groups can be established. In these circumstances the joint task group's terms of reference and composition is approved by both parent committees. The joint task group reports regularly to both parent committees. It is for the parent committee to decide the format it wishes to receive reports and recommendations from the task group. Once the task group has completed its business, it will be stood down.

**Terms of Reference:** Terms of reference, sometimes referred to as a remit, describe the purpose and structure of a committee. Typically they contain the purpose and role; the remit; composition; governance and operational arrangements.

**Convener:** The role of the Convener of a Senate Committee is to ensure the effective conduct of the committee (within the terms of reference), ensuring that the business is being progressed and facilitating meaningful discussion and sound decision-making.

**Co-opted members:** A member selected for a committee, normally due to their expertise. Co-opted members normally serve for a fixed term as defined in the terms of reference.

**In attendance:** The Convener may invite individuals by invitation for specific meetings or agenda items. Note individuals who are '*in attendance*' at a Committee meeting are **not** members.

## Appendix Two

### Emeritus Professors Procedure

#### 1. Eligibility for Emeritus status

Emeritus status is awarded to professors of the University of Edinburgh who are retiring from their personal or established chair and who have made a distinguished contribution to the life of the University. When seeking approval for Emeritus status on behalf of a retiring professor, the College will produce a Special Minute which formally recognises their distinguished contributions during their careers (see Section 3).

Emeritus status will not be awarded to a professor who leaves to take up a professorial position with another academic institution or to Honorary Professors.

The title of Emeritus Professor does not have a limited time period. Where an individual has been awarded Emeritus Professor designation, and subsequently returns temporarily to a role within the University at Professorial level, which requires a contract and payment by the University of Edinburgh, they may be granted the title of 'Professorial Fellow.' Their Emeritus Professor designation will be held in abeyance until their contract with the University at Professorial level has ended.

#### 2. Contribution to the University and Access to Resources

Emeritus Professors are experienced academics who are held in high regard by both former colleagues and the wider University community. While there is no requirement for Emeritus Professors to make a contribution to the University, they are nonetheless an important part of University life. They should therefore be regarded as properly part of the University community and should be given every appropriate opportunity to contribute to it.

Emeritus Professors are entitled to access to University resources, including library services and email, plus additional resources if they are bringing in money for the University.

#### 3. Approval of Emeritus Status

Approval for Emeritus status must be sought at the point that the professor retires from their personal or established chair. When a Professor indicates their intention to retire from their personal or established chair, the relevant Head of School<sup>29</sup> must consider whether Emeritus status is warranted and, when this has been confirmed, request approval from the Head of College.

If the Head of College approves the award, they should inform the Head of School and request the preparation of a Special Minute. The Special Minute is a brief statement of around 500-550 words on the distinguished contribution that the Professor has made to the University of the Edinburgh and a note on how they intend to spend their retirement. Care should be taken to ensure the accuracy of the Special Minute, since a copy will be retained in the University records.

The Head of College must then contact the Senate Support team in Academic Services with a copy of the approval and the Special Minute, requesting approval for Emeritus Status for the retiring professor.

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<sup>29</sup> Hereafter, 'Head of School' may refer to the Head of School or suitably delegated member of staff.

The Senate Support team will then submit the name of the retiring professor, along with the Special Minute, to Senate for formal approval. Emeritus Professor appointments will carry the title of their former Chair or discipline. (For example, the holder of the Buchanan Chair of Genetics would become an Emeritus Professor of Genetics). When the retiring professor is female, the title of Emerita Professor can be awarded.

If Senate approves the conferment of Emeritus Status, the Senate Support team will write to the professor to confirm that they have been awarded Emeritus Status and will enclose a copy of the Special Minute. Copies of the letter will be sent to the Head of College.

#### 4. Withdrawal of Emeritus Status

Awards of Emeritus status do not have a limited time period. However, there are circumstances under which the status may be withdrawn, as set out below:

- Where the individual has accepted a contract of employment with the University at Professorial level, meaning that their Emeritus Professor designation has been held in abeyance (see section 1).
- Where the actions of the individual, either within or outwith the University, could result, or have resulted, in negative publicity for the University
- Where the individual has been found to have breached University policies or procedures, and where that breach would have ordinarily led to formal disciplinary action, if the holder of Emeritus status had been an employee of the University.

Any proposal to withdraw Emeritus status must be agreed by the relevant Head of College and communicated to Senate before it is communicated to the individual concerned.