

Senate Terms of Reference and Role Descriptor

2024-25

Governance instruments

1. Charter

Point 8: There shall be a Senate of the University which shall, subject to the general control and approval of the Council, be responsible for academic standards and the direction and regulation of academic matters.

2. Statutes VI.

THE SENATE

1. The Senate shall, subject to the general control and approval of the Council, be responsible for academic standards and the direction and regulation of academic matters.
2. The majority of members of the Senate shall be elected members.
3. The Senate shall have the power to discuss and declare an opinion on any matter whatsoever relating to the University and to request that the Council consider such opinions.
4. The membership and powers of the Senate shall be further prescribed in the Regulations.

3. [Regulation 4: Senate](#)

4. Composition

Ex-officio:

- Vice-Chancellor
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost
- Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Culture, Equalities and Inclusion)
- Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students)
- Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Global and Civic Engagement)
- Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)
- Executive Dean for Faculty of Media, Arts and Humanities
- Executive Dean for Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine
- Executive Dean for Faculty of Social Sciences
- Executive Dean for University of Sussex Business School
- Dean of the Medical School
- University Librarian
- Chief Digital Transformation Officer
- Dean of the Sussex Researcher School
- Director of Research and Innovation
- Director for the Student Experience
- USSU Officers- Education and Employability Officer, International Students' Officer and Diversity, Access and Participation Officer

Elected representation:

- 5 academic elected representatives for Faculty of Media, Arts and Humanities

- 5 academic elected representatives for Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine
- 5 academic elected representatives for Faculty of Social Sciences
- 5 academic elected representatives for University of Sussex Business School
- 2 Professional Services representatives
- 1 Student UG representative per Faculty, 1 PGT representative and 1 PGR representative

Role Descriptor

Role and Responsibilities

Senate is the senior academic body of the University, established in the Charter and responsible to Council for 'academic standards and the direction and regulation of academic matters' (Statute VI. 1). This encompasses teaching, examining and research as well as oversight of quality assurance and standards of the education provided by the University.

Senate's powers and responsibilities are delegated by Council, and it is chaired by the Vice-Chancellor, as the head of the institution and the 'chief academic and administrative officer of the University'.¹

Senate oversight of academic governance is delegated to its sub-committees, Faculties, Schools, and divisions; through these delegations Senate seeks assurance on effectiveness, quality, and compliance.

Powers of Senate

The powers and functions of Senate, as defined in Statute VI and Regulation 4, include the following:

- Directing and regulating teaching and examination
- Promoting research
- Authorising the award or annulment of degrees
- Regulating admissions and the discipline of students
- Declare an opinion to Council on any academic matter and ask Council to consider it
- Discuss and declare an opinion on any matter whatsoever relating to the University²
- Recommending changes to the academic organisation of the University³
- Advising Council on any proposed alterations to the Ordinances, Statutes and Regulations of the University, that fall within Senate's remit.

Regulatory Assurance

The Office for Students, the sector's first regulator, was established as part of the Higher Education and Research Act 2017.

The Office for Students' objective is to ensure that all students, from all backgrounds, with the ability and desire to undertake higher education are supported to access, succeed in, and progress beyond Higher Education. This includes ensuring students receive a high-quality experience and progress into employment or further study.

Senate is, on behalf of Council, responsible for receiving assurance that the University is compliant with the conditions of registrations within its remit: Condition A: Access and Participation; Condition B: Quality and Standards; and Condition C: Consumer Protection Law.

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¹ Charter point 6.

² Statute VI, point 3.

³ Organisation of University and Regulation 4.