

THE UNIVERSITY OF KENT

SENATE: STANDING ORDERS

1. INTRODUCTION

Statute 6 provides for Senate, Council and Court to “make, amend or repeal Standing Orders for governing the proceedings of those prospective bodies” [Statute 6.4]. The Standing Orders set out below, which relates to the conduct of Senate’s business and meetings, were formally adopted by Senate with effect from its meeting held on 29th June 1994 (Senate Minute 8558 refers [updated to reflect the University’s new Charter and Statutes from 2010]).

2. PREAMBLE

The membership and powers of Senate are set out in Ordinance 6 The Senate (see Appendix 1). The Vice-Chancellor is *ex officio* Chair. The procedure for the appointment of elected representatives is set out in Ordinance 7 The Election of members of the Academic Staff to the Senate and Ordinance 8 The Election of students to the Senate (see Appendix 2 and 3). The definition of reserved and non-reserved business is defined in Ordinance 12 The Regulation of Student Membership of Committees (see Appendix 4).

3. STANDING ORDERS

- (i) CHAIR (the Vice-Chancellor is *ex officio* Chair as prescribed in Ordinance)
 - (a) The Chair is responsible for ensuring that each meeting of Senate is conducted efficiently, expeditiously and properly in accordance with the requirements of the University’s Charter, Statutes and Ordinances and, as he/she determines, these Standing Orders and as appropriate to the business before it.
 - (b) That in the Vice-Chancellor’s absence Senate should be chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and in his/her absence by one of the Pro-Vice-Chancellors.
 - (c) That the Chair (or in his/her absence the Deputy Vice-Chancellor or a Pro-Vice-Chancellor) be empowered to act on Senate’s behalf between meetings on any matter within Senate’s powers as set out in Ordinance 6.
 - (d) That the Chair may be suspended from acting in such capacity at a particular meeting where the following conditions are met:
 - (1) A motion that the Chair should be suspended is stated, seconded and supported by four other members of Senate at the meeting.
 - (2) A Deputy Chair (following the provisions of 3(i)(c) above) then takes the Chair.

- (3) A vote in favour of the motion is supported by two-thirds of the members at the meeting.

The Deputy Chair then asks the Chair to withdraw and the Deputy Chair then decides whether or not to continue or to adjourn the meeting.

(ii) ELECTED MEMBERS

- (a) That in the case of a vacancy for an elected member occurring before the end of the normal period of appointment, arrangements should be made to fill this as soon as conveniently possible, as determined by the Secretary of the Council, for the unexpired portion of the original period of appointment.
- (b) That the appointment of elected academic members who do not attend three consecutive meetings without good cause should be deemed to have lapsed and their places refilled by election as soon as conveniently possible, as determined by the Secretary of the Council for the unexpired portion of the original period of appointment.
- (c) That substitution for an elected academic staff member who is unable to attend a meeting is not allowed.

Note: Substitution for appointed members and elected student representatives is, however, allowed provided advance notification is given. Substitutes have observer status and are not, therefore, entitled to vote.

(iii) OBSERVERS AND ADVISERS

- (a) That where Senate deems it appropriate one or more persons (i.e. office holders or named individuals) may be invited to attend meetings on a permanent basis or to attend part or all of a meeting either to observe or, where so invited by the Chair, to participate in the proceedings.

Note: In addition the Chair may, at his/her discretion, invite particular individuals to attend a particular meeting in order to observe or participate as he/she considers it appropriate.

- (b) That observers and advisers invited to attend meetings of Senate should not be entitled to vote.

(iv) MEETINGS

- (a) That, except in an emergency or when agreed otherwise by Senate, meetings should be held on a Wednesday afternoon in term-time commencing at 2 p.m.
- (b) That the dates, times and venues of meetings should be published in the University diary and/or any other appropriate place as determined by the Secretary of the Council.

- (c) That meetings of Senate should be held when one of the following provisions are met:
 - (1) The Chair, in consultation as appropriate, decides that the business in hand justifies the holding of a meeting previously timetabled.
 - (2) A member, supported by 12 members in writing requests that a meeting be held to consider one or more named matters.
- (d) That if the Chair, in consultation as he/she deems appropriate, decides that the business received for a timetabled meeting of Senate is insufficient to justify the convening of such a meeting, the meeting should be cancelled or not convened and any business held over until the next timetabled meeting.

(v) QUORUM

The quorum is defined in Ordinance 6, paragraph 6 as “one third of the total membership of the Senate”.

The question of whether Senate is quorate is relevant when decisions are taken or when Senate’s quoracy is challenged. Ordinance 6.6 determines what should be done when Senate is inquorate, as follows:

- (a) Ordinance 6, paragraph 6 states that “in the absence of a quorum, no business shall be transacted other than the adjournment of the meeting”.
- (b) Ordinance 6, paragraph 6 also states “at the adjourned meeting, the business for which the original business was called may be completed in the absence of quorum. The manner of summoning the adjourned meeting, and the period of notice to be given, shall be prescribed in the Standing Orders”.

The adjourned meeting should be held on the same day and time in the following week or on another day and time as determined by the members present at the inquorate meeting.

(vi) CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

- (a) That it should be assumed that members have read all the circulated papers in advance of the meeting.
- (b) That all members who speak should address the Chair of Senate and keep silence when the Chair speaks.
- (c) That all members should obey any instructions concerning the conduct of the meeting and the timing of agenda items given by the Chair.

- (d) That with the exception of motions from the Chair, all motions put should have a proposer and a seconder and where a seconder cannot be found, the motion should fail.
- (e) That any amendment to a motion put to Senate should have a proposer and a seconder and be put to a vote before the main motion.
- (f) That provided a motion is properly proposed and seconded, the Chair is obliged, after due discussion, to put it to the vote (unless Senate votes that the motion should not be put or votes to proceed to the next item of business).
- (g) That a motion "That the motion now be put." must, if properly proposed and seconded, be immediately voted on taking precedence over other business including (h) below.
- (h) That a motion to move to the next item of business must, if properly proposed and seconded, be immediately voted on taking precedence over other business except (g) above.

(vii) VOTING

- (a) That only members of Senate present at a meeting are entitled to vote.
- (b) That voting at meetings should be by a show of hands of those for and against a motion and of those who wish to abstain. A simple majority of votes in favour of the motion is required to approve a motion.

Note: In the case of, for example, appointments to sub or standing committees or to Council or other exceptional case as determined by the Chair or by a decision of Senate, voting may be conducted by a secret postal ballot.

- (c) That where Senate considers and takes a vote on a matter in which a member has a conflict of interest, he/she should give the Chair prior notice of interest (except where this is impossible) and/or declare this at the meeting and withdraw for any vote taken.
- (d) That the Chair should be entitled to have a vote if he/she wishes to use this.
- (e) That where there is an equality of votes the Chair may use a casting vote if he/she wishes (i.e. an additional vote to that specified in (d) above). If the Chair chooses not to exercise this power the motion will fail.
- (f) That the numbers of votes and abstentions should be counted by the Secretary of the Council or his/her representative and announced to the meeting of Senate by the Chair.

(viii) AGENDA

- (a) The agenda for meetings should be divided into non-reserved and reserved items as prescribed in Ordinance 12 and each should include provision for members to raise questions and business items. Other items should be included as determined by the Chair in consultation as appropriate.
- (b) That no additional business to the items on the agenda should be allowed after the deadlines given in (ix) below except with the permission of the Chair.

(ix) NOTICE OF BUSINESS AND CIRCULATION OF PAPERS

- (a) That the following deadlines should be set:
 - A. Submission of reports of Standing or Sub-Committees or items of business: the Secretary of the Council to be notified at least two weeks before the date of the meeting and actual Paper(s) given to the Secretary of the Council at least 10 days prior to the date of the meeting.
 - B. Items from members should be submitted in writing to the Secretary of the Council by 12.30 p.m. on the Monday before Senate's meeting.
- (b) The agenda should be published and circulated no later than the Thursday preceding the meeting of Senate. If necessary a second circulation of papers should be made on the Monday before Senate.
- (c) That no paper should be laid on the table at Senate except with the permission of the Chair and as arranged by the Secretary of the Council or his/her representative.
- (d) That papers should not be published or discussed outside the University except with the express approval of Senate or of the Vice-Chancellor on its behalf.

(x) DEFERMENT OF ITEMS

That an item of business may be deferred where one of the following conditions are met:

- (a) Senate receives a request to this effect from the Chair of the Committee or the individual from whom the item originated;
- or
- (b) a vote in favour of deferring the item is taken by Senate;
- or
- (c) the Chair makes such a ruling subject to deferment being for not more than one meeting.

In the last case the Chair's decision is final.

(xi) RECONSIDERATION OF ITEMS

That except where specifically decided otherwise by Senate or with the permission of the Chair, decisions reached by Senate should not be reconsidered for at least one term.

(xii) INTERPRETATION AND OPERATION OF THESE STANDING ORDERS

- (a) The Chair's interpretation of these Standing Orders shall be final.
- (b) That one or more of these Standing Orders may be suspended where one of the following conditions are met:

- (1) The Chair makes such a ruling.

Note: This provision excludes Section 3(i)(d) above.

- (2) A vote in favour of a motion to this effect is supported by two-thirds of the members of Senate present at the meeting to which the motion is put.

In the first case the Chair's decision is final.

- (c) That the procedure for amending these Standing Orders is as follows:

- (1) Senate receives a written request (submitted to the Secretary of the Council at least 10 days before Senate's meeting) setting out the proposed change(s) and the reasons for the proposal(s);
- (2) a vote in favour of the proposal is supported by two-thirds of the members of Senate present at the meeting to which the proposal is put.

Attached: Appendices 1, 2, 3 + 4

KRG/HAP
26.09.2012

**PROPOSALS TO DELEGATE ROUTINE AND STRAIGHTFORWARD
RESPONSIBILITIES AND REDUCE PAPERWORK APPROVED WITH EFFECT
FROM 1 AUGUST 1999***

*An extract from Paper S98/25 concerning the above, which Senate approved on 10/3/99, is given below.

“Senate

Over the years Senate has taken a number of measures to deal with routine matters and reduce paperwork which do not appear to have caused any difficulty.

The following measures are suggested for consideration and implementation with effect from 1 August 1999:

(i) **that the following items be removed from agendas for the Senate’s meetings or from reports to Senate:**

These matters are all routine and straightforward and are rarely, if ever, discussed at the Senate’s meetings. Information on all of the items listed could continue to be available on request to the appropriate University officer.

Non-reserved business

- Lists of Agreements with other institutions signed by the Vice-Chancellor on behalf of the University
- Lists of HEFCE and other important documents received (included with the reports of the Academic Planning Committee)
- Analysis of first degree results*
- Lists of research grants and contracts accepted by the University (included in reports from the Council)

*This is considered by the Board for Undergraduate Studies and details included in the Blue Book (now the Board for Learning and Teaching).

Reserved business

- List of academic and non-academic staff leaving the University’s employment (included in Reports of the Proceedings of the Council).
- Lists of Approved Study Terms and Unpaid Leave.
- List of approved Visiting and Non-Professorial Honorary Appointments.
- Appointment of Examiners. (Papers not circulated but available for consultation at meetings on request*)
- Award of Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates (as previously*)
- List of final year debtors.

*Only one such request since June 1985.

(ii) **that the following Senate responsibility (defined in Statute XVIII*) is delegated as suggested** (*now Ordinance 6.5.7):

- The suspension or removal of examiners “for negligence or misconduct during their term of office and, in case of death, illness or resignation of an examiner, or in case of his suspension or removal, to appoint a substitute who shall have authority to act during the examination in progress or next ensuing”.

Suggested delegation: Vice-Chancellor. (In practice the Vice-Chancellor would act in such a case.)

Note: For the record it should be noted that Senate has previously delegated the following responsibilities designated in Statute XVIII (Statute 6):

- aspects of academic provision (Paragraph 4(i)**) – to BUGS* and BRPS* as set out in Ordinances XXVI and XXVII (**now Ordinance 6.5.1). (*now the Learning & Teaching Board, the Research and Enterprise Board and the Graduate School Board)
- authorization of Degrees (except honorary degrees), Diplomas and Certificates (Paragraph 4(iii)**) – BUGS* and BRPS* as set out in Ordinances XXVI and XXVII. (*as above) (**now Ordinance 6.5.3)
- the appointment of internal examiners (Paragraph 4(v)* of Statute XVIII) to academic departments and Faculties (*now Ordinance 6.5.5)
- recommendations for appointment of external examiners – to the Vice-Chancellor (Paragraph 4(vi)*. (*now Ordinance 6.5.6)
- award of prizes – to the Faculties (Paragraph 4(xix)*) (*now Ordinance 6.5.17)
- academic staff appointments and the appointment of the Librarian (i.e. original appointments and promotions up to Senior Lecturer [but **not** appointments of Pro-Vice-Chancellors, Deans, Masters*] – to appointment boards and the University Academic and Research Promotions Committee respectively.

*Since 2002 appointed by appointment boards. In recent years the appointments of all staff listed have been delegated to appointment boards.

(iii) **that the following additional responsibilities are delegated as indicated:**

- appointment of External Assessors (which arises under Ordinance 31 Accreditation and Validation): to the Vice-Chancellor provided that such appointments do not exceed 6.

Note: Under Ordinance 31 Senate determines the maximum number of Assessors. No maximum figure has been determined. At present there is 1 Assessor. In the past there have been up to 6.

- (iv) **that the resolution that the Reports of committees* of the Council be forwarded to the Council via the Senate be rescinded.**

This would include reports of the following bodies: Administrative Services Quality Assurance Committee, Estates and Buildings Committee⁺, Finance and Resources Committee, Staff Policy Committee, University Safety Committee^o.

*no longer exists (disestablished with effect from 31/7/2001)

⁺replaced by the Estates Management Board from 1/9/99 (subsequently renamed the Estates Board and disestablished with effect from 31 July 2004)

^onow Safety, Health and Environment Executive Committee

This resolution was originally agreed by Senate and Council in June 1994, both bodies having noted that by Statute Senate has the power “to discuss and to declare an opinion on any matter whatsoever relating to the University. [Ordinance 6.5.16] It was intended to ensure that Senate had an opportunity to comment on a wide range of matters *before* consideration by the Council and for the Council to take account of Senate’s views, if any. (The alternative being that Senate is informed *after* such decisions are taken by Council, via the Report of its proceedings.) In practice the timing of meetings and the resources available to support such arrangements have not always allowed the agreed arrangement to be honoured and, generally, Senate’s comments have been minimal. This has not, however, apparently caused any difficulty. Clearly some reports (e.g. from the Staff Policy Committee) are likely to be of greater interest to Senate than others; in practice it has always been possible for Senate to see the Staff Policy Committee’s reports before Council.

It is suggested that for the future the previous resolution is replaced by the following arrangements:

- (i) Staff Policy Committee’s reports should, wherever possible, be forwarded to Council via Senate.
- (ii) brief reports on appropriate items in the reports of other Council committees should be included in the Reports of the Proceedings of the Council except that non-routine items of obvious interest/relevance to Senate* should, wherever possible, be brought to the Senate’s attention *before* the Council takes its decision.

*As decided by the Vice-Chancellor. This has generally been done in the recent past. This might include, for example, items relating to the University’s financial position which affects academic provision, structure of future.”

KRG/AH/HAP

26.09.2012 (amended to reflect new Ordinance references from 2010 (15.11.2010))