

Role Description - Elected Member of Senate

Purpose of the Role

Senate is the University's principal academic decision-making body. It is responsible for the strategic development of the University's academic activities and for promoting its academic endeavour in education, research and innovation. Senate oversees the regulation, governance, standards and quality assurance of the University's academic work and provides assurance to Council that academic governance, quality and standards are adequate and effective.

Elected members contribute their knowledge, experience and judgement to Senate's collective consideration and decision-making. Members are expected to act in the interests of the University as a whole, while bringing relevant perspectives and experience from across the academic community. Elected members are not delegates of the constituency that elected them and are expected to exercise their own judgement in considering matters before Senate.

All members share responsibility for the effective conduct of Senate's business and are expected to contribute constructively to discussion, scrutiny and decision-making, demonstrating integrity, objectivity and accountability in carrying out their role.

Constitutional Responsibilities

The powers, duties and functions of Senate are set out in Statute 12 and Ordinance 8. See [The University's Governing Documents](#).

Appointment and Terms of Membership

Term of office:

One term of three years, with eligibility for re-election for a further three-year term. A one-year break is then required before standing again.

Time commitment:

- Five meetings a year (approximately three hours each, excluding preparation time).
- Additional *ad hoc* meetings for workshops/training/induction.
- Occasional *ad hoc* advice and decision-making between meetings.
- Members of Senate are normally expected to commit additional time as a member of a sub-committee or joint sub-committee with Council/Executive where Senate vacancies arise. [Access the full list of Senate committees](#).
 - Members of Senate may from time to time be asked to participate in student or staff casework processes where membership of a panel, committee or hearing is required, for example the Academic Staff Appeal Committee.
- Members of Senate are also eligible to stand for election to [Council](#) and/or [Court](#).

Appointment process:

Members are elected by [Academic Assembly](#) in accordance with the [University's Framework for Elections and Appointments](#).

Person Specification

N.B. Senate benefits from the breadth of skills and experience of its members and their range of perspectives. Length of service at the University is, therefore, not a criterion when standing for election.

1. Ability to take an institution-wide perspective and exercise independent judgement in the interests of the University as a whole.
2. Ability to contribute constructively to strategic discussion and collective academic decision-making.
3. Ability to scrutinise proposals, evidence and relevant data, identify material issues and ask appropriate questions.
4. Ability to identify and consider strategic academic risks and the effectiveness of proposed mitigations.
5. Ability to bring relevant knowledge and insight relating to academic activity, the higher education sector and the wider environment in which the University operates.
6. Commitment to the University's academic endeavour and to maintaining and enhancing academic standards, quality and the student academic experience.
7. Willingness to understand the University's constitutional and regulatory framework and Senate's responsibilities within it.
8. Ability to identify and appropriately manage conflicts of interest.
9. Commitment to integrity, transparency, good governance and the [Seven Principles of Public Life](#).
10. Ability to handle confidential and sensitive information appropriately.
11. Commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and to sustainability in the University's academic activities.
12. Ability and willingness to devote sufficient time to preparation for and participation in Senate and, where applicable, its committees.

Version information

Owner: Head of Governance

Date of last review: September 2026

This role description is reviewed by the Governance Team annually.