

# Senate Governance

Academic year 2025/26

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## Introduction and scope

1. For the purposes of this document, academic governance can be defined as the structures, policies and processes that are in place to assure the setting and maintaining of academic standards and the quality of the student experience. *Senate Governance* sets out how the University's academic governance works in relation to structure, function and operation. It is informed by the Office for Students' Regulatory Framework<sup>1</sup> (including the ongoing conditions of registration) and the Quality Assurance Agency Quality Code for Higher Education<sup>2</sup>.

## Academic governance - structure

2. Senate is the body where academic issues are debated and scrutinised. According to the Terms of Reference (see Appendix 1), the Senate has responsibility (under the control and approval of Council) for oversight and assurance of the Academic Endeavour of the University, as set out in Charter and Statutes. It is supported by other committees and a sub-structure below that extends to Faculty and School/Department level. A diagram of the committee structure is shown on the following page:

### Senate committees/panels

- University Education Committee (UEC)
- University Research and Innovation Committee (URIC)
- Senate Progression and Conferment Executive (SPACE)
- University Promotions Committee
- Honorary Degrees Committee
- Senate Nominations Committee
- Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression (AFFE) Committee
- Access and Participation Governance Panel

### UEC sub-committees

- Quality Enhancement Sub-committee
- Student Experience Sub-committee
- Academic Partnerships Sub-committee
- Regulations Sub-committee

### URIC Sub-committees

- Doctoral College Board
  - Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee (PGR)
- People, Culture & Environment
- Research Integrity and Governance Committee
  - Animal Welfare Ethical Review Body
  - Non Animal (Scientific Procedures) Act
  - University Ethics Committee

### Faculty committees

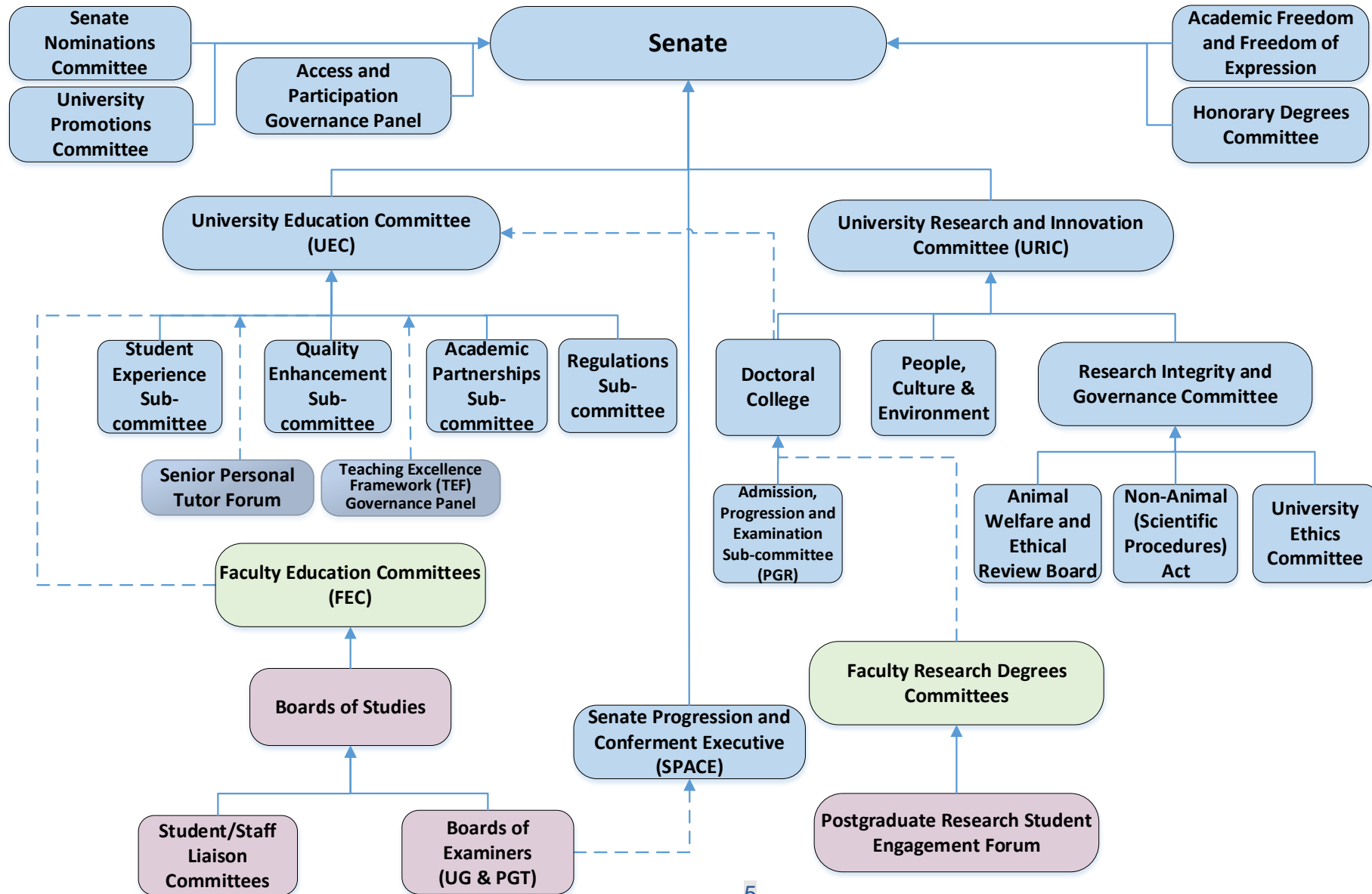
- Faculty Education Committees (FECs)
- Faculty Extraordinary Board of Studies
- Faculty Research Degrees Committees (FRDCs)

### School committees

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/regulatory-framework-for-higher-education-in-england/part-v-guidance-on-the-general-ongoing-conditions-of-registration/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/the-quality-code>

- Boards of Studies
  - Boards of Examiners
  - Student/Staff Liaison Committees
- Postgraduate Research Student Engagement Fora



## Academic governance - function

- 3 The [Charter](#) is the overall instrument of governance of the University and sets the University's objectives in the pursuit of learning and the advancement and dissemination of knowledge. The [Statutes](#) and [Ordinances](#) provide detailed information about the running of the University in terms of its governance. They present information on the roles and responsibilities of the officers of the University, including the Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor and the core statutory bodies and committees.
4. The academic governance structure is responsible for the consideration and approval of academic-related strategies, [Regulations](#), [Codes of practice](#), policy statements and related information and committee terms of reference and membership. Strategies set out the high-level approach to achieving a particular set of aims. Regulations are the basis of the University Quality Framework under which the academic activities of the University are carried out. They are structured into two areas: academic regulations, which govern programmes of study, and student regulations, which govern student behaviour and procedures for student complaints and appeals. Policy statements clarify the University's position on a particular matter, often prior to developing a *Code of practice* or a *Student Procedure*. [Codes of practice](#) set out policy and provide operational advice on how a particular process is carried out. Terms of reference and membership describe the activities of a committee, the limits of its authority and those who attend the committee in a particular capacity.
5. The following table sets out the levels of authority for the approval of the various types of documents.

Type of document	Considered by <sup>3</sup>	Approved by
New strategy	UEC / URIC	Senate
Amendments to existing strategies	UEC / URIC	UEC and/or URIC – Senate informed of amendments
Regulations – new and amended	UEC on recommendation of Regulations Sub-committee / Doctoral College / URIC	Senate
Codes of practice and Student Procedures	UEC Sub-committees / Doctoral College / URIC	UEC – on recommendation of Regulations Sub-committee (Senate informed of new Codes and Procedures)
Policy statements	UEC / URIC	Senate
Amendments to terms of reference and membership – UEC and URIC	UEC and URIC	Senate
Amendments to terms of reference – UEC sub-committee	Relevant sub-committee	UEC

<sup>3</sup> Depending on the subject, documents are considered by either UEC or URIC/Doctoral College Board or all.

Amendments to terms of reference – URIC sub-committee	Relevant sub-committee	URIC
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### Academic governance - operation

6. Senate's mode of operation and membership are prescribed in the [University Ordinances](#). Within its terms of reference Senate takes oversight of academic matters but delegates responsibility for detailed consideration of policy issues and the management of quality assurance to its sub-committees.
7. The terms of reference and membership for academic governance committees are set out in the Appendices, see paragraph 9 below. Students are represented on all levels of committees in the structure (with the exception of those dealing with examination matters and research management and governance). Further information on student involvement in academic governance and quality assurance is given in the [Code of practice for student voice](#).

### Chairing of Committees and Sub-committees

8. For senior academic staff, the chairing of University-level committees is an expectation of the role. It is normally the case that UEC and URIC are chaired by the relevant Pro-Vice-Chancellor, who can delegate this role to an Associate Dean as required. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor appoints the chairs of the committee's sub-committees. The chairing of Faculty-level Committees is within the remit of relevant Associate Deans. Staff who chair Boards of Examiners and Boards of Studies are provided with appropriate briefing by the University in support of those roles. In the absence of the Chair, a nominated Vice-Chair assumes the role of Chair.

### Terms of reference and membership of Senate substructure committees and groups

9. All Appendices to *Senate Governance* are now published separately on the [Quality Framework website](#), alongside this document. This is to ensure that all relevant information regarding Terms of reference for various committees, sub-committees and groups could be updated more efficiently and accessed directly:

[Appendix 1 – Senate](#)

[Appendix 2 - University Education Committee](#)

[Appendix 3 - Quality Enhancement Sub-committee](#)

[Appendix 4 - Student Experience Sub-committee](#)

[Appendix 5 – Academic Partnerships Sub-committee](#)

[Appendix 6 – Regulations Sub-committee](#)

[Appendix 7 – Senate Progression and Conferment Executive](#)

[Appendix 8 - University Promotions Committee](#)

[Appendix 9 - Honorary Degrees Committee](#)

[Appendix 10 – Senate Nominations Committee](#)

[Appendix 11 – Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression Committee](#)

[Appendix 12 – Access and Participation \(APP\) Governance Panel](#)

[Appendix 13 - University Research and Innovation Committee](#)

[Appendix 14 – Doctoral College Board](#)

[Appendix 15 – People, Culture & Environment](#)

[Appendix 16 – Research Integrity and Governance Committee](#)

[Appendix 17 - Admission, Progression and Examination Sub-committee](#)

[Appendix 18 - Animal Welfare Ethical Review Body \(AWERB\)](#)

[Appendix 19 – Non-Animal \(Scientific Procedures\) Act 1986 \(NASPA\)](#)

[Appendix 20 – University Ethics Committee](#)

[Appendix 21 - Faculty Education Committees](#)

[Appendix 22 - Faculty Extraordinary Board of Studies](#)

[Appendix 23 - Faculty Research Degrees Committees](#)

[Appendix 24 - Boards of Studies](#)

[Appendix 25 - Boards of Examiners](#)

[Appendix 26 - Student/Staff Liaison Committees](#)

[Appendix 27 - Faculty Postgraduate Research Student Engagement Forum](#)

[Appendix 28 – Senior Personal Tutor Forum](#)

[Appendix 29 – TEF Governance Panel](#)