



The
University
Of
Sheffield.

Council, 29 April 2019

Composition of the Senate

Sponsor: President and Vice-Chancellor (Chair of the Senate.)

Author: University Secretary (Secretary to the Senate.)

1. Action

Council is asked to consider and approve proposals from the Senate to amend Regulation IX: The Senate, Section 2: Composition of the Senate, as set out below.

2. Background

The granting of the original Charter of Incorporation for the University of Sheffield allowed for the creation of:

‘a Senate of the University which shall, subject to the Statutes of the University and the control and approval of the Council, regulate and superintend the education and discipline of the University.’

Since 1905 the composition of Senate has been subject to changes, although these could be summarised as evolutionary.

In 1905 the original Senate consisted of:-

‘The Vice Chancellor, the Professors, the Deans of Faculties, the Registrar, the Librarian (if any) and such other members of the Boards of Faculties as the Court may after report from the Senate appoint.’

Although there were minor changes to the membership, over nearly eight decades, very little changed so that by 1980 composition consisted of:-

- (a) The Vice Chancellor
- (b) Professors
- (c) Deans of Faculties
- (d) The Librarian
- (e) The Director of Extramural Studies
- (f) The Director of the Institute of Education
- (g) Such members of the Academic staff of the University not included in the foregoing as the Court may after report from the Senate appoint
- (h) Such Faculty Officers as Ordinances may prescribe
- (i) The President, the Secretary, the Student Treasurer and the Academic and Welfare Secretary of the Union of Students

During 1982-1983 two working groups met – ‘*The Working Party on Powers, Functions and Structure of the Senate*’, and the ‘*Committee on the Function and Constitution of the Court and the Council*’.

Their proposals were considered by the Senate and the Council, which jointly recommended amendments to the Statutes governing the composition of both bodies. The amendments to the Statutes were approved by the University Court and the Privy Council and came into effect on 1 August 1983.

The statutory functions of the Senate and Council remained unaltered. The composition of the new Senate included a balance of ex-officio members and elected representatives of the academic and academic related staff of the University.

Thus by 1983-1984 composition of Senate consisted of:-

- (a) The Vice Chancellor
- (b) The Pro Vice Chancellors
- (c) The Deans of Faculties
- (d) Faculty Officers as the Regulations of Council may prescribe
- (e) Such Heads or acting Heads of Departments as Regulations of Council may prescribe
- (f) The Librarian
- (g) Representatives of the Academic and Academic related staff of the University. The number of such representatives shall be equal to the number of members under (a) to (f) above
- (h) The President, the Secretary, the Student Treasurer and the Academic and Welfare Secretary of the Union of Students.
- (i) A student member from each Faculty to be elected by and from the registered students of each Faculty
- (j) Not more than 6 chairmen of Committees who are not otherwise members of Senate, such chairmen to be co-opted by the Senate
- (k) The Professors appointed before the coming into force of this section, and remaining in office, provided that such Professors may permanently relinquish their membership of the Senate under this paragraph by writing addressed to the Secretary.

There have continued to be minor changes to composition of membership, reflecting the addition of certain organisational roles. It has though remained broadly similar to that developed during the review of 1982-1983.

3. Current Context

The new Office for Students regulatory framework (February 2018) introduced public interest governance principles, one of which stated:

‘Academic Governance: The governing body receives and tests assurance that academic governance is adequate and effective through explicit protocols with the senate/academic board (or equivalent).’

Council set up a joint *Council and Senate Task and Finish Group* to examine the mechanism for Council to provide (and receive) academic assurance (including a review of what information is routinely provided to Council on the academic performance of the University and its peers). The demand on Senate to ensure academic standards and improvement in the student experience and to provide assurance to the Council led to its agreement to review its own effectiveness.

The recommendations of the *Senate Effectiveness Review Group* were approved by Senate in June 2018 and included the principles that: the size of Senate, and the number of members in attendance at its meetings, should be appropriate to its purpose and the composition of Senate should reflect the diversity of the University's academic community.

As a result Senate commissioned a survey, the results of which were reviewed by Senate in October 2018 and as a result of that the University Secretary was asked by Senate to bring forwards proposed revisions to Regulation IX: The Senate, Section 2, Composition of the Senate, in consultation with the President and Vice-Chancellor, which:

- reduced the overall size of the Senate,
- maintained a balance of elected and ex-officio members,
- introduced constituencies to the elected category,
- revised the eligibility for election, to include Grade 7.

The membership of the Senate is set out in the University Regulations and the Council has the power to make, amend or repeal those Regulations.

To give effect to the consultation outcomes the final responsibility for amendment of the Regulations concerning the composition of the Senate lies with the Council. Proposed Regulations are set out in Annex One.

4. Consultation by the Senate

The survey questionnaire Senate commissioned during its Effectiveness Review was sent to all current and potential future staff members of Senate and to Student Union sabbatical officers. This included all academic members of staff, professional service staff on Grade 8 or above, Student Union officers, and colleagues currently in ex officio roles on Senate. This distribution ensured that all University staff and students with an interest in the work of Senate could contribute their views. There were 362 responses to the consultation. The results were reviewed by the Senate in October 2018 and informed this proposal.

5. Senate Size

Senate's constitutional maximum number of members is currently 163, making it one of the largest in the country. An analysis of Senates across Russell Group institutions, where information is available, showed that the majority of the University's peers now have a Senate of between 60 and 80.

Responses to an earlier question at Senate indicated a strong preference for substantially reducing its size, to between 50-100. This broadly reflected the average number of members who actually attended Senate meetings (around 75) and it is anticipated that wider changes, already agreed, to enhance Senate's effectiveness, would lead to increased attendance (and participation) rates.

A clear majority sought for the elected category being divided into constituencies by Faculty.

6. Proposals

6.1 Heads of Department and Faculty officers

It is proposed to reduce the number of Heads of Academic Departments (HoDs) on Senate to 26, to be allocated by Faculty on a similar basis as the elected category is allocated (see 6.2 below.) It is proposed the Faculty Vice President's develop an appropriate process to identify which HoDs should become members of the Senate, nominated from amongst the HoDs in that Faculty, and to permit nominated deputies to attend in the absence of the Senate

member. In the Senate Effectiveness Review, this category of membership was found to be less highly attending and it is intended this proposal would reinforce their representative role and therefore the responsibilities of membership. It is also proposed to provide continued ex-officio membership for the Vice-Presidents and Faculty Directors of Learning, Teaching, Research, and Innovation.

6.1 Reflecting the academic community

There was a preference at Senate for making changes to better represent different academic career stages, for example at present only grade 8 staff (and above) are eligible for election which precludes grade 7 early career academics and University Teaching Associates from becoming members, thereby limiting the range of perspectives available. The proposal in Annex One changes the criteria for elected members from grade 8 to include staff in grade 7 and above.

University Regulations currently provide for a majority of Senate members to be comprised of senior members of the academic staff¹ and it is proposed this principle be retained.

The survey showed a preference for introducing constituencies by Faculty. There was also a preference expressed at Senate to separate the elected category out so that Academic, Teaching, and Research Staff are elected by Faculty and Professional Services staff form a distinct constituency. It is, therefore, proposed that the elected academic, teaching and research staff places on Senate be divided in number in proportion to the size of the electorate in each Faculty, to be determined annually ahead of elections (i.e. based on the number of grade 7 (and above) academic, teaching and research staff.) Allocated on this basis, the number of places on Senate in 2019-20 for elected academic members would be as shown in Table 1 below:

Faculty	Elected academic Members.
Arts & Humanities	2
Engineering	6
Extra Faculty ²	1
Medicine	5
Science	5
Social Sciences	7
Total	26

Table 1: proposed allocation of the elected academic, teaching and research places on Senate

7.3 Chairs of Senate Committees

The current composition of Senate permits up to six Chairs of committees who are not otherwise members of the Senate to be members, co-opted by the Senate. Members under this category serve for one University year and shall be eligible to serve for further such periods. The Senate Effectiveness Review introduced a principle, agreed by Senate, that chairs of Senate committees and Senate representatives on Senate committees should be members of Senate, and so these have not been counted separately. Currently the Chair of the Senate

¹ Regulation IX:2.2 permits the Senate to co-opt such members as may be necessary to ensure that the senior members of the academic staff shall constitute the majority of the Senate.

² Extra Faculty includes DLL, MLTC, ELTC and the AMRC

Budget Committee is the only Chair of a Senate Committee on Senate who would not otherwise be on Senate in another category. This is set out as follows:

Committee	Chair	Membership of Senate
Employability Board	Dr Peter Blenkinsop	Not applicable. External Chair
Learning & Teaching	Professor Wyn Morgan	Ex-officio as Vice-President Education
Military Education	Dr Jonathan Rayner	Not applicable. The Chair rotates between the University of Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam University.
Research and Innovation	Professor Dave Petley	Ex-officio as Vice-President Research & Innovation
University Research and Ethics	Professor Peter Bath	Head of Department
Senate Academic Assurance	Professor Mary Vincent	Elected member until 2021.
Senate Budget	Professor Richard Jackson	Chair of a Committee who is not otherwise a member
Senate Nominations	Professor Gill Valentine	Ex-officio as Provost & Deputy Vice-President

In transition to a new membership (see below) any Chairs not otherwise on Senate would have to be nominated by the Faculty as one of their HoDs (if they are a HoD) or elected as one of the faculty elected members. In future only Senate members would be appointed as Chairs of Senate Committees.

7.4 International Faculty

The existing constitution of Senate provides the Principal of the International Faculty and three academic Heads with membership. This is largely symbolic, as they do not routinely attend. Representation can be achieved in other ways.

7.5 Professional Services Staff

Members of Professional Services staff (Grades 8 and above) are eligible for election under the current Regulations; the University Librarian is an ex-officio member. Professional Services staff currently comprise around 16 of the total Senate membership. The knowledge and expertise of professional staff can play an important part in Senate discharging its responsibilities for the academic quality and standards of the University.

The majority of respondents to the questionnaire supported proposing that in the elected category any Professional Services representation should fall under 30% of the total elected members, preferring Professional Services members to be present as ex-officio members or in attendance on an ex-officio basis.

It is proposed the Director of Academic Services is added as an ex-officio member alongside the University Librarian.

It is proposed to continue to provide for an elected group of Professional Services staff but limited in total number, where there is currently no limit.

Others might be afforded the opportunity to contribute by regular or periodic attendance, without full membership or powers of decision-making, and in the preparation of papers

presented to Senate or through the work of its sub-committees in developing proposals to bring to Senate.

7.6 Student Representation

Student representation has been amended in the proposal so that it remains proportionate to the smaller overall size of the total Senate membership. The current Regulation permits not more than 15 student members (of 163 members) and details the sought composition in a way which restricts flexibility and choice by the Students' Union. The proposal maintains the proportion and provides more discretion to the Students' Union.

7. Implementation

The proposed Composition reduces the overall maximum constitutional size of the Senate to 84 members from 163 members.

A clean start is proposed, where existing members of Senate are demitted from membership based on the ending of the existing constitution from 31 July 2019 and Senate would be (re-)appointed based on the revised constitution, if adopted by Council.

Nominations would be sought for all elected places. Some differentiation would be required in the initial terms (one, two and three years) to create phasing for succession. It is proposed that the initial terms are allocated, in thirds, based on the number of votes received, so that those with the least votes have shorter terms, and come up for re-election first.

8. Timescale

If Council agree the proposed new Regulation, in Annex One, it is proposed this be effective from 1 August 2019, triggering new appointments based on the new Composition and the conduct of an 'all-out' election in the elected category.

Dr Tony Strike
University Secretary
April 2019

Annex One

Regulation IX³:

The Senate

2. Composition of the Senate

2.1 The Senate shall consist of:

2.1.1 The President & Vice-Chancellor (1)⁴.

2.1.2 The Provost & Deputy Vice-Chancellor (1)

2.1.3 The Vice-Presidents and Heads of Faculty (5).

2.1.4 The Vice-Presidents for Education and Research and Innovation (3).

2.1.5 The following Faculty Officers:

- the Directors of Learning and Teaching (5);
- the Directors of Research and Innovation (5).

2.1.6 Heads or acting Heads nominated from the following Departments to the Senate by and from each of the Faculty, with the number from each Faculty (including extra-Faculty provision) being equal to those set out in accordance with 2.1.7 below (26)⁵:

Animal and Plant Sciences, Archaeology, Architecture, Automatic Control and Systems Engineering, Biomedical Science, Chemistry, Chemical and Biological Engineering, Civil and Structural Engineering, Clinical Dentistry, Computer Science, East Asian Studies, Economics, Education, Electronic and Electrical Engineering, English, Geography, Health and Related Research, Health Sciences, History, Infection, Immunity and Cardiovascular Disease, Information School, Journalism Studies, Landscape Architecture, Languages and Cultures, Law, Lifelong Learning, Management, Materials Science and Engineering, Mathematics and Statistics, Mechanical Engineering, Medical School, Molecular Biology and Biotechnology, Music, Neuroscience, Oncology and Metabolism, Philosophy, Physics and Astronomy, Politics, Psychology, Sheffield Methods Institute, Sociological Studies and Urban Studies and Planning.

2.1.7 Academic, Teaching, and Research Staff of the University in Grades 7 and above with twenty-six (26) elected by and from that population in each of the Faculties. Such representatives shall normally hold office for three years, with approximately a third being open to election each year. These shall be elected by Faculty constituencies, the total to be divided in number in proportion to the size of the electorate in each Faculty, to be determined annually.

2.1.8 Student members comprising six (6) in total from:

- the President,
- the Education Officer,
- four other representatives nominated by the Students' Union.

2.1.9 Professional Services staff members comprising six (6) in total from:

- the Director of Academic Services.
- the University Librarian.
- four Professional Services staff in Grades 7 and above elected by and from the Professional Services staff of the University.

³ These are in draft, and not the Regulations themselves.

⁴ The numbers in brackets are for reference only and will be removed from the Regulation itself.

⁵ The proposal regarding the organisation of departments within the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health, on the Senate agenda, has been adopted here.

- 2.3 Members appointed under paragraph 2.1.8. and 2.1.9 shall be members only in respect of the powers of the Senate under paragraphs 1.1.4 to 1.1.11.
- 2.4 Deputies are not permitted except in the following categories and subject to the following conditions, who may appoint a deputy for a specific meeting:
- 2.4.1 a Head or acting Head of Department may appoint a deputy from the Heads of Department of the Faculty concerned;
 - 2.4.2 the Director of Library Services and Director of Academic Services may only appoint a deputy from their own direct reports;
 - 2.4.3 an Officer of the Students' Union who is a member under paragraph 2.1.8 may appoint a deputy from the Sabbatical Officers or the Students' Union Council member nominated for this purpose by the President of the Students' Union.
 - 2.4.4 The University Secretary must be notified in advance by the member of Senate that they have nominated a deputy for the specific meeting.
- 2.5 Twenty members of the Senate, including not fewer than eleven members of the senior academic staff (Professors and Heads of Department), shall form a quorum.
- 2.6 In these Regulations “Head of Department” means the Head or Chair of the relevant Department, and “Department” includes, where appropriate, Centre, Division, School or Unit where Senate intends them to have the related delegated powers and as such they are listed in 2.1.6 above.
- 2.7 The Senate shall, in addition to the members in 2.1 above, co-opt such members as may be necessary to ensure that:
- 2.7.1 the senior members of the academic staff (Heads of Department and Professors) shall constitute the majority of the Senate
 - 2.7.2. Chairs of Senate committees not otherwise in the membership of the Senate are ex-officio members.
- 2.8. The University Secretary attends as secretary to the Senate.