

Newcastle University
STANDING ORDERS OF SENATE

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Newcastle University

STANDING ORDERS OF SENATE

The University Statutes contain provisions regarding the conduct of University business in general and of the University Senate and other statutory bodies in particular. The Senate and other statutory bodies may appoint such committees and determine Standing Orders for the purpose of the exercise of their powers and duties provided that they do not conflict with University Statutes and regulations.

I. ROLE OF THE SENATOR

The primary duty of a Senator is to seek to ensure that, in conducting all its business, Senate acts in the best interests of the University as a whole. To that task a Senator brings a knowledge and experience of certain specific aspects of the work of the University; on occasion, in fulfilling that duty, there may be a need to represent the views of certain sections of the University - e.g. as a Chair reporting from a board or committee, or in transmitting to Senate strongly held views at the request of persons not on Senate.

Notwithstanding these obligations a Senator is not a representative and the primary duty of a Senator is as stated in the first sentence of this section.

In performing the duties of a Senator, colleagues must not be constrained by the normal line management structures from expressing an opinion or supporting or opposing a proposal.

[Senate Minutes 158, 26.1.1988 and 38, 11.1.2011 refer]

II. MEETINGS

1. Ordinary meetings of Senate shall be held on dates to be determined at the discretion of the Vice-Chancellor as Chair of Senate. Ordinary meetings may be cancelled or changed at the discretion of the Chair.
2. Special meetings shall be held at such time and such place as the Chair of Senate may determine.
3. Extraordinary meetings may, in case of urgency, be summoned by the Vice-Chancellor and shall in any case be summoned on written requisition signed by ten members.
4. At Extraordinary meetings, no business shall be taken which does not appear on the agenda paper.
5. The agenda for ordinary and Special Meetings shall be issued not less than five days before the meeting. The agenda for Extraordinary Meetings shall be issued not less than seven days before the meeting.

III. CATEGORIES AND CLASSIFICATION OF BUSINESS

- (a) Senate agenda items are presented in the following categories:
 1. Preliminary business:

Minutes
Matters arising
Vice-Chancellor's business

2. Strategic items
 3. Monitoring of academic performance
 4. Reserved business
 5. Other business
- (b) The category and classification of items of business for Senate meetings shall be determined by the Registrar. The Registrar shall, where appropriate, consult the Vice-Chancellor.
- (c) There shall be no discussion at Senate on any items in Section 5 of the agenda unless the Vice-Chancellor determines otherwise or unless a member of Senate notifies the Vice-Chancellor or the Registrar at least twenty four hours before the meeting of their wish to have such discussion. The Vice-Chancellor may waive the notification requirement.
- (d) Section 2 shall comprise items of business involving important matters of principle or University policy and major items of business requiring either a decision by Senate or informal feedback at a formative stage of an issue.
- (e) Reserved business applies to those areas of business affecting the appointment, promotion and personal affairs of individual members of staff and matters affecting the admission and academic assessment of students in a particular case. All other business is unreserved.

IV. SENATE BUSINESS AND MOTIONS

1. Members of Senate are invited to suggest items of business. It is helpful for such suggestions to be made well in advance to allow for the necessary information to be presented to Senate.
2. Members of Senate may require a motion to be placed on the agenda for a meeting of Senate by giving notice in writing so that it reaches the Registrar by not later than seven days before the meeting.
3. If not fewer than five members of Academic Board request that a motion be placed on the agenda for Senate, the Vice-Chancellor shall consider the motion and shall direct whether it shall be placed on the agenda for the next ordinary meeting or whether it shall be referred to another body such as a committee or Board of Faculty. If the Vice-Chancellor directs that the matter be referred to another body, the proposers of the motion shall be so informed and this action shall be reported to the next ordinary meeting of Senate.

4. No resolution may be rescinded or altered in the term in which it is passed or in the term immediately following; nor may any motion which has been rejected be moved again in the term in which it was rejected or in the term immediately following, unless the notice of the motion proposing to rescind or alter the resolution which has been passed, or to re-introduce a rejected motion, be signed by seven members of Senate.

V. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

1. The conduct of business shall be directed by the Chair of the meeting. The Chair's ruling upon a point of order shall be final.
2. All motions except those from the Chair must be seconded before being put to the meeting.
3. Reports of Boards and Committees shall be moved by their respective Chairs or their representatives. Any Chair of a Committee has the right to attend a meeting at which a report is being presented and to speak to the report.
4. The Chair of a Board or Committee, has a duty to present to Senate the official point of view of that Board or Committee, but also has a right to put their own point of view. In addition, a Chair may choose to present an individual or minority point of view on any matter, as the spokesperson of a member or group of colleagues.
5. Any member of Senate is free to represent the views of other colleagues. The Vice-Chancellor may make representations on behalf of anyone who so requests and, in suitable cases, may invite a colleague to attend and speak at a meeting of Senate.
6. Any person not being a member of Senate attending in connection with an item of business shall normally be invited to stay throughout the discussion on the item.
7. The motion 'That Senate proceed to the next business' shall be put to the vote immediately and without discussion.
8. Any member of Senate who has a pecuniary, family or other personal interest in any matter under discussion at any meeting of Senate shall, as soon as practicable, disclose that fact to the meeting. The Chair shall determine whether the member shall withdraw from the discussion. A member is not, however, considered to have a pecuniary or personal interest in matters under discussion merely by being a colleague, or a student of the University.
9. The contents of any papers circulated to members of Senate which are marked 'Strictly Confidential' or 'Commercial in Confidence' must, in no circumstances, be divulged to or discussed with any person who is not a member of Senate without the consent of Senate.

VI. VOTING

Voting shall be by show of hands except:

- (a) when Standing Orders require a ballot;
- (b) when any member of Senate requests a ballot.

VII. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Standing Orders shall be suspended only if three quarters of those present vote in favour.

VIII. CIRCULATION OF PAPERS

1. Senate agenda and unreserved business papers and minutes shall be made available on the University's website, both internally and externally.
2. Senate agenda and minutes shall be divided into items for general circulation and items for restricted circulation which will, in the official record, only be set out in full in the signed copy.

IX. HONORARY DEGREES

1. Once each year the Registrar shall draw the attention of all members of Academic Board, Court, Council and Convocation to the terms under which names for honorary degrees may be submitted. Nominations shall be submitted by a date to be determined by the Registrar.
2. A proposal for the award of an honorary degree may be made at any time but will, unless the Senate otherwise determines, be considered by the Honorary Degrees Committee during the Summer and Autumn.
3. Each nomination shall be made in writing and separately, and shall state the grounds on which the recommendation is made.
4. All nominations received since the previous meeting of the Honorary Degrees Committee shall be considered by a meeting of the Committee. At this meeting the Committee shall decide whether to obtain further information about any of the persons nominated.
5. The Committee shall hold a further meeting to consider the reports received as a result of enquiries made in accordance with the previous paragraph. At this meeting the Committee shall prepare a list of names (with appropriate degrees) for submission to Senate with a view to about four to six graduands, representing a wide and balanced range of interests, being presented at each Congregation. Senate shall consider the list sent forward by the Committee and shall, in the first instance, approve or disapprove the list as a whole. In order to secure approval the list shall require the support of two-thirds of the members present and voting. If the list is approved, the Vice-Chancellor shall issue invitations to the persons named on the

list. If the list is not approved, Senate shall, at the same meeting decide by ballot which of the names proposed by the Honorary Degrees Committee shall be included in the list of those who shall receive invitations. Senate may thereafter require the Honorary Degrees Committee to make further proposals for consideration at the next meeting of Senate with a view to achieving a list of appropriate balance and size. If a ballot is held, no name shall be included in the list unless two-thirds of the members of Senate present and voting vote in favour of it.

6. An honorary degree shall not normally be conferred 'in absentia'.

[Revised by Senate Minutes 164, 17.3.92, 36, 12.1.2010, 17, 5.10.2010]

X. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR, PRO-VICE-CHANCELLORS AND UNIVERSITY DEANS

1. The Vice-Chancellor may recommend to Senate and Council the appointment of a Deputy Vice-Chancellor and any establishment of, or appointment to, a Pro-Vice-Chancellor or University Dean post.
2. If Senate and Council approve the recommendation, a joint selection committee shall be established comprising:

The Vice-Chancellor (in the Chair)
An equal number of members appointed by Council and by Senate

3. On the occasion of the committee being established to appoint a Pro-Vice-Chancellor for a faculty, at least three of the members of the committee must be members of the relevant faculty.
4. The Committee shall consult widely amongst Senators, members of Council and, in the case of a Pro-Vice-Chancellor for a faculty, within the faculty, and shall invite those consulted to propose names for consideration and to make observations.
5. The committee shall make a recommendation concerning the appointment to Senate and Council.
6. The Vice-Chancellor may recommend to Senate and Council the re-appointment of an existing Deputy Vice-Chancellor or Pro-Vice-Chancellor or University Dean and the period of the re-appointment.

XI. PUBLIC ORATORS

The Public Orators shall be appointed by Senate after considering a report of a Committee. One of the Public Orators shall be designated as the Senior Public Orator who shall have responsibility for allocating the duties across the year. The Public Orators shall normally hold office for three years.

[Revised by Senate Minute 31, 17.11.2015]

XII. CHAIRING COMMITTEES

Chairs of Committees shall be appointed by Senate and Council on the recommendation of Executive Board or Council's Nominations Committee, as appropriate. If a Chair of a Committee retires mid-term, the Committee concerned shall appoint an Acting Chair to hold office until a successor is appointed in accordance with the procedure approved by Senate and Council. In the absence of the Chair or Acting Chair at a meeting, the Committee shall appoint a Chair for that meeting.

XIII. ACADEMIC SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTES

Academic Schools and Institutes shall be established or abolished on the recommendation of Senate to Council.

XIV. SENATE NON-PROFESSORIAL MEMBERS

Members of Senate currently serving in the non-professorial constituency shall not be required to resign their membership on promotion to a personal Professorship or appointment to an established Chair.

XV. ELECTION OF COLLEAGUES TO SERVE ON SENATE

All academic colleagues on full-time or part-time contracts, irrespective of contract length, shall be entitled both to stand for election to Senate and to vote in Senate elections, however only professors shall be eligible to be elected in the professorial constituency of Senate.

All professional service colleagues who are members of Academic Board (Grade E or above) shall be entitled both to stand for election to Senate and to vote in Senate elections in the professional services constituency.

Colleagues who are eligible to stand for election by a given deadline shall receive an email from the Registrar.

Candidacy for election is made either by self-application (without the need for a supporting nomination) or by nomination by another colleague. If there is a nomination it should be in writing and should not be made without the consent of the candidate. Each candidate shall prepare a statement of up to 250 words (not including name, job title, unit) for the information of the electorate. A further email, inviting eligible colleagues to vote, shall be sent by the Registrar.

The term of appointment as a member of Senate shall be three years.

The results of Senate elections shall be communicated to successful and unsuccessful candidates and reported on the Senate agenda. The full election results shall be published on the University's internal website.

An independent scrutineer shall be appointed by the Registrar to oversee the voting process.

Senate Minute 364, 18.3.80

Revised by Senate Minutes 57, 22.1.2002; 25, 19.11.2002; 76, 6.7.2004;
7, 14.11.2006; 53, 10.01.2012; 64, 6.3.2018

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2023, August 2024.