



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

Senatus Academicus
Wednesday 11 October 2023 at 2-5 pm
G.03, 50 George Square

Confirmed Minute

Attendees: Peter Adkins, Gill Aitken, Marialuisa Aliotta, Ruth Andrew, Jake Ansell, Mohammad Amir Anwar, David Argyle, Sharan Atwal, Vansh Bali, Kasia Banas, Michael Barany, Clark Barwick, Matt Bell, Shereen Benjamin, Laura Bickerton, Clare Blackburn, Kelly Blacklock, Sophia Blum Richard Blythe, Lisa Boden, Tom Booth, Christina Boswell, Catherine Bovill, Julian Bradfield, Laura Bradley, Holly Branigan, Mary Brennan, Aidan Brown, Tom Bruce, Jane Calvert, Celine Caquineau, Jeremy Carrette, Leigh Chalmers, Neil Chue Hong, Sam Coombes, Martin Corley, Sharon Cowan, Brenda Cundy, Sumari Dancer, Jamie Davies, Ricardo De Oliveira Almeida, Luigi Del Debbio, Jonathan Dennis, Charlotte Desvages, Sameer Dhumale, Hannah Dong, Kevin Donovan, Claire Duncanson, Murray Earle, Constantinos Eleftheriou, Andrea English, Mark Evans, Anne-Maree Farrell, Tonks Fawcett, Valentina Felito, Emily Ford-Halliday, Chris French, Stuart Gilfillan, Manuel Fernandez-Gotz, Vashti Galpin, Patrick Hadoke, Ben Goddard, Justin Goodrich, Iain Gordon, Kim Graham, Liz Grant, Gillian Gray, Leo Hajducki, Karen Halliday, Katie Hardwick, Colm Harmon, Carl Harper, Tina Harrison, Helen Hastie, David Hay, Pia Helbing, Thorunn Helgason, Sarah Henderson, Melissa Highton, James Hopgood, Jenny Hoy, Andrew Hudson, Emma Hunter, Gbenga Ibikunle, Kirstin James, Jakov Jandric, Kirsten Jenkins, Aarnesh Kapoor, Itamar Kastner, Jim Kaufman, James Keeley, Toby Kelly, Catherine Kidner, George Kinnear, Andy Law, Tom Leinster, Patrick Lennard, Ashley Lloyd, Wendy Loretto, Jason Love, Ewa Luger, Sophia Lycouris, Lesley McAra, Alistair McCormick, Margaret MacDougall, Mike McGrew, Sam Marks, Rebecca Marsland, Avery Meiksin, Carmel Moran, Steven Morley, Susan Morrow Chris Mowat, Rachel Muers, Lyndsay Murray, Rupert Nash, Pau Navarro, Max Nyman, Richard Oosterhoff, Cheryl Patrick, Sarah Prescott, Jon Pridham, David Quinn, Alma Kalina Reißler, Ricardo Ribeiro Ferreira, Aryelly Rodriguez Carbonell, Ken Rice, Simon Riley, Hollie Rowlands, Max Ruffert, Eberhard Sauer, Ash Scholz, Bernd Schroers, Matthias Schwannauer, Pablo Schyfter Camacho, Jo Shaw, Sue Sierra, Hamish Simpson, David Smith, Sean Smith, Stewart Smith, Antonella Sorace, Tim Stratford, Gavin Sullivan, Emily Taylor, Alex Thomson, Tamara Trodd, Nadia Tuzi, Jeremy Upton, Jose Vazquez-Boland, Frank Venter, Dylan Walch, Patrick Walsh, Stephen Warrington, Mark Williams, Robyn Woof, Iain Wright, Qingchi Wu, Ben Wynne, Alper Yildirim

In attendance: Adam Bunni, Arlene Duffin, Lucy Evans, Rebecca Gaukroger, Olivia Hayes, Nichola Kett, Cristina Matthews, Dean Pateman, Ella Ritchie, Dominic Tate

Apologies: Arianna Andreangeli, Kate Ash-Irisarri, Chandan Bose, Lauren Byrne, Sarah Cunningham-Burley, John Cairns, Tony Carbery, Siddharthan Chandran, Kevin Collins, Jeremy Crang, Hilary Critchley, Juan Cruz, Lisa Dawson, Karen Dawson, Chris Dent, James Dunlop, Agata Dunsmore, Olivia Eadie, Darrick Evensen, Stuart Forbes, Richard Gratwick, Laura Jeffery, Zoeb Jiwaji, Meryl Kenny, Steff Lewis, Gavin McLachlan, Cait MacPhee, Catherine Martin, Peter Mathieson, Andrew Morris, Simon Mudd, Bryne Ngwenya, Diana Paton, Josephine Pemberton, Colin Pulham, Rebecca Reynolds, Ewelina Rydzewska-Fazekas, Tobias Schwarz, Geoff Simm, James Smith, Chris Speed, Melissa Terras, Uzma Tufail-Hanif, Pia Wahi-Singh, Michele Weiland, Christopher Weir, Ingrid Young, Ansgar Zoch

The Convener, Provost Professor Kim Graham, opened the meeting.

The Convener indicated her wish that the meeting incorporate a diversity of views during discussions, with contributions from student members particularly welcome. Members were asked to state their name at the start of any contributions.

The Convener noted that attendees were joining the meeting both in-person and via Teams and that contributions to the discussion would alternate between each mode.

The Convener drew Senate's attention to Standing Order 19 regarding the conduct of the meeting. The Convener further added that efforts be made to conclude each item within the time allocated on the

agenda, asking that members be mindful of this when making their comments. The meeting would conclude at 5pm.

1. **Convener's Communications**

The Convener provided an update to Senate on a range of items.

People and Money

- People and Money continued to be a priority area for the Senior Leadership Team, with some ongoing disruption from the new finance processes. The University Executive and Senior Leadership Team continue to receive regular updates and the People and Money Enactment Group continues to meet on a fortnightly basis.
- A set of priorities for the 2023 calendar year have been agreed and communicated to the University community. Priorities include the core stabilisation of research finance processes, maintaining and preparing for critical business as usual activity including financial year end, audit, statutory returns, budgeting and forecasting for 2023/24, and ongoing maintenance of payments and supply of goods and services.
- Work was also being undertaken to implement recommendations from the Principal's external advisor, including improvements to purchase to pay processes, the finance helpdesk and the collection of outstanding debt.
- Further updates will be provided to colleagues by the end of the calendar year. This communication will include the next set of priorities, which are likely to include research awards, enhancements budget, and planning and forecasting activity.
- The Convener confirmed that a paper prepared by Senate members Dr Michael Barany and Dr Tom Booth, and submitted in time for inclusion on the 11 October agenda, had been forwarded to the Enactment Group. The paper outlined, to date, the University's response to motions agreed by Senate in March and contained responses from the University community on the ongoing impacts of People and Money. The Enactment Group was asked to review the paper, including considering any points that have not already been addressed. In the questions following the report, the Convener was asked when the paper would be circulated to members and the Convener stated that she felt the paper was more valuable considered in the context of the Enactment Group.

Clerk's note: Dr Barany and Dr Booth asked following the meeting that it be minuted that the paper was submitted in a timely manner for consideration of the full Senate and they strongly object to the convener denying Senate members the opportunity to consider the paper in full. This request was not made during the meeting in the interest of time.

- Additional assurance work has been undertaken by the University's external auditors, and the findings of this work is being considered by the Audit and Risk Committee as part of year-end assurance processes. In response to a question regarding the University's assurance in relation to a normal year, the Convener noted that work is ongoing and therefore she is unable to comment on this at this time.

University Estates

- The Convener provided an update on key actions taken since Senate last met on 24 May 2023 and in response to motions approved in paper [S22/23 51](#).
- Estates are undertaking a review of Project Board governance with the outcomes of this to be shared with Estates Committee by December. This will provide clear governance context and clarity on how Schools and Colleges can contribute to estates planning via these Boards.
- Estates have completed a deep dive exercise into Estates planning with 7 schools in CAHSS and 4 schools in CSE. These exercises involved gathering information to understand the current requirements, including staffing and student numbers, vision for the School, size and shape and current challenges and pressure points. Estates are working closely with Schools and Colleges in these exercises, which are via a series of workshops with representation from academic and professional services staff chosen by School leadership. The outcomes of these workshops are being presented to College Management Teams, and will inform the College strategies for use of space, in line with identified academic needs.
- A member noted that the Convener's update did not include an update on the actions taken in response to Motions 5.3 and 5.4 agreed by Senate at its 24 May 2023 meeting. The member asked whether a fuller report would be provided to Senate, with acknowledgement that

Senate has asked that open plan or hot desk arrangements not be used unless agreed by the relevant subject area.

In response the Convener noted that the review of the Project Boards would involve input from Schools and Colleges. This will consider disciplinary needs and feed into considerations at College level. The diversity of research needs across subject areas makes it difficult to have single university guidelines for the use of space, however Estates are engaging with specific areas to understand their needs.

Curriculum Transformation Programme

- An update was provided on the Curriculum Transformation Programme (CTP). A report on CTP had been expected to come to this meeting of Senate, in response to the actions agreed by Senate at its 29 March meeting ([Paper S 22/23 4B](#)), however this report has been delayed.
- Further work is being undertaken and coordinated by Colleges which involves in-depth engagement with specific disciplines and programmes to explore short and medium term responses to the framework. This work is providing important and useful insights into the impact on the flow of student numbers, key processes and system enablers, as well as the investment and resource required for CTP to be a success. Progress in this area has been slower than anticipated, partly due to the pressures on Schools as a result of the Marking and Assessment Boycott. Discussions and work towards this resumed at the beginning of the 2023/24 academic year.
- The preparation of the investment case is also taking longer than planned, partly due to pressures on capacity referred to previously and as experienced across the institution.
- The results of the review and key proposals relating to CTP will firstly go to the Senate Education Committee, before coming to Senate in early 2024.
- In response to a query regarding the impact of the delays on the CTP timeline and timing for this coming to Senate, the Vice-Principal Students confirmed that the intention is to bring an early draft of the framework to the November 2023 meeting of the Senate Education Committee, before coming to Senate in February 2024. The revised timelines will form part of the Senate consultation.

Industrial Action

- The Universities and Colleges Union (UCU) nationally called off the marking and assessment boycott on 6 September, and all staff have now returned to full duties. In agreement with the UCU Edinburgh branch and in exchange for ceasing deductions early, participating members committed to ensuring all outstanding marking would be completed for the October Boards, with a minority of exceptional cases. The Convener extended her thanks to colleagues for delivering outcomes to students as soon as possible.
- The UCU Edinburgh branch voted to participate in 5 days of strike action in September. Edinburgh was one of 52 branches across the UK to take part in the action.
- UCU and Educational Institute of Scotland are each balloting their members for a mandate on industrial action, both ballots close on 3 November. Unison and UNITE are not currently balloting members and do not have a mandate for action.
- The University is pleased that UCEA and the five sector trade unions have resumed discussions on seeking understanding of the sector finances and progressing the negotiated terms of reference, which were rejected by the UCU Higher Education Committee in March 2023. These relate to motions approved at Senate in March 2023, and the University has been vocal in its strong support to progress this work. This is alongside work taking place locally on the University's grade scale review and fixed term contract review, with the outcomes of these reviews being considered through the University's governance structures.

Pension Benefits

- Following employer and trade union consultations, UCU and UUK have prepared a joint proposal to restore pension benefits to pre-April 2022 levels and reduce contributions. The proposal is subject to trustee approval with changes to take effect from early 2024 if approved. Senate was reminded that an employee consultation is open until 24 November with an invitation to contribute to the consultation.

To note

- Two members made comments regarding an event being held on campus at 6pm and correspondence between groups of staff ahead of the event. In the context of these comments, the Convener reminded members of the importance of the Dignity and Respect Policy which members should remain mindful of throughout and when contributing to discussion.

Clerk's note: Two members expressed disagreement regarding an event taking place on campus, with one member stating that they had not received a timely response to personal safety concerns raised to University leadership and other relevant parties.

2. **Senate Minutes & e-Senate Reports – S 23/24 1A**

Minutes of Senate meeting held on 29 March 2023

The Convener noted that Dr Michael Barany submitted a series of amendments to the 29 March 2023 minute. The Senate Clerk has incorporated these where appropriate, however some amendments were not incorporated either due to inappropriate language or because amendments did not reflect a balanced record of the discussions which took place. A Clerk's note was added to the two sections within the minute where a member has raised objection to the record of the item. A Clerk's note was also added to Matters Arising: Senate Elections Update and Matters Arising: Legal Context of the Senate Motions.

Dr Tom Booth noted that he had raised an amendment to item 5: Senate Role in the Response to People and Money Crisis. Despite this being out with the deadline the Convener had agreed that an update on assurance work would be reflected under this discussion. In response, the Convener noted that this comment was not captured by the Senate Clerk or other colleagues supporting the meeting and therefore this amendment was not to be incorporated into the final minute, with the query addressed instead through the Convenor's communications earlier.

The Convener invited Senate to approve the 29 March minutes as presented. Three members, Dr Tom Booth, Dr George Kinnear and Dr Pau Navarro raised objection to approval of the minutes as presented, with Dr George Kinnear stating that he had seen some of the proposed corrections submitted by Dr Barany and did not recognise the characterisation provided by the Convener regarding their appropriateness. Dr Kinnear believed it to be belittling of Senate for not to have sight or discretion over amendments when being asked to accept minutes.

Senate voted on the Minutes of the 29 March 2023 meeting and 69% did not approve this item.

Report of E-Senate held from 26 April – 10 May 2023

The Convener noted that a member had requested that Reports of E-Senate include a summary of comments and proposed that this be undertaken moving forward. Senate agreed that a summary of comments should be provided in reports in future.

Additionally, it was noted by the Convenor that, if there was agreement to form a Senate External Review Task and Finish Group (under item 8), this Group will be asked to undertake a deeper review of e-Senate business and processes around e-Senate.

The Convener invited Senate to approve the 26 April – 10 May Report of E-Senate as presented. Dr George Kinnear raised objection to approval of the Report as presented and stated that a summary of comments should be provided in the 26 April – 10 May E-Senate Report. The Convener noted in response that a retrospective change had not been agreed, with comments applying to any future Reports of e-Senate presented to Senate for approval.

Senate voted on the 26 April – 10 May Report of E-Senate and 59% did not approve this item.

A student member, Max Nyman, requested that votes on Senate minutes and E-Senate reports include an abstain option for those members who were not on Senate at the time, or in attendance at the relevant meeting so their engagement with each vote is recorded. The Convener advised that

members can abstain from voting by not voting. Consideration would be given to including an abstain option for decision making on minutes at future meetings.

Minutes of Senate meeting held on 24 May 2023

The Convener noted that the minutes of the 24 May meeting were circulated to Senate with an invitation to submit amendments during a time limited period. The Senate Clerk has incorporated amendments to the minute in response to these.

The Convener invited Senate to approve the 24 May minutes as presented. Three members, Dr Michael Barany, Dr Jonny Dennis and Dr Charlotte Desvages raised objection to approval of the minutes as presented.

Senate voted on the Minutes of the 24 May 2023 meeting and 67% did not approve this item.

Report of E-Senate held from 13 – 27 September 2023

The Convener restated the earlier commitment that future Reports of E-Senate would include a summary of comments moving forward.

The Convener invited Senate to approve the 13 – 27 September Report of E-Senate as presented. One member raised objection to approval of the Report as presented and raised a motion, which was seconded, that amendments to the minutes be considered electronically outside of Senate meetings.

Senate voted on the 13 – 27 September Report of E-Senate and 65% did not approve this item.

The Convener noted that Senate had not approved any minutes or Reports of E-Senate, including minutes that have been presented to Senate for approval on two previous occasions. The Convener noted that actions raised would be taken away for consideration.

Action: The Senate Clerk and Academic Services to look at the process and options for considering and incorporating amendments to minutes to allow unconfirmed minutes to be presented for approval at a future meeting.

Action: The Senate Clerk to include a summary of comments raised via e-Senate in Reports of E-Senate business in time for the next Ordinary meeting of Senate.

Action: The Convener and Senate Clerk consider the process for voting on minutes at future meetings of Senate.

ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

3. Conferral of awards delayed due to the Marking and Assessment Boycott - S 23/24 1B CLOSED

For approval

The Convener noted that Dr Michael Barany submitted amendments to the paper ahead of time. The amendments submitted were to change the contents of the paper authored by another individual. This is not the established practice for amendments, and therefore the member was invited to raise these as comments to be reflected in the minutes of the item accordingly.

The Deputy Secretary Students, Ms Lucy Evans introduced the item which Senate was invited to approve to allow the conferral of awards on students whose award was delayed due to the Marking and Assessment Boycott. Ms Evans noted that conferral of awards usually takes place ahead of a graduation meeting. She extended her thanks to the Schools who expedited approval of these awards to allow students to receive their degree outcomes as soon as possible.

Senate unanimously approved the conferral of awards on graduands listed in Annex A without requiring a vote.

4. Annual Report of the Senate Standing Committees - S 23/24 1C

For approval

The Convener noted that two sets of amendments had been received. One set of amendments were submitted via a paper from Dr Michael Barany and these amendments related to the Terms of Reference of the Senate Standing Committees and both papers have been referred to the VP Students to take forward as part of the review of Standing Committees as highlighted in the Senate External Review.

The second set of amendments were submitted by Dr George Kinnear.

Vice-Principal Students, Professor Colm Harmon introduced the item. He extended his thanks to Senate for engaging with the report, and for members' input into Standing Committee business over the previous year.

Members raised the following points in discussion:

- The provision of a timed agenda was welcomed, however the 15 minutes allocated to this item was insufficient given the scope of the item, so that Senate had adequate oversight of Standing Committee business and could hold Committees to account. The Convener invited members to highlight the key items they would like answered with an invitation to raise further comments with the paper authors outside the meeting.
- There was insufficient detail provided in the forward plans for the Senate Education Committee (SEC) and greater detail should be provided in future. The VP Students agreed that the detail could be reviewed in preparing future reports.
- The Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC) formed a task group to undertake a review of the Coursework Extensions and Special Circumstances Policies. APRC did not approve a new policy and Schools and Colleges implemented local arrangements. In some cases, teaching staff were informed of local arrangements on 30 August, which was very close to the beginning of Semester 1. It was requested that any future policy changes be agreed with sufficient time for teaching staff to prepare for the year following. The Convener of APRC, Professor Patrick Hadoke outlined the decision making surrounding a revised Exceptional Circumstances Policy. Professor Hadoke noted that the Committee did not approve the Policy as the Committee did not believe that it was ready for implementation. In reaching this decision, the Committee was aware that local practices may be introduced in the 2023/24 academic year.
- Student members noted the challenges that three-day extensions pose and highlighted that may disproportionately impact on certain groups of students, such as Student Parents. Student members noted that alternative ways of approaching the issues which lead to the review of coursework extensions may be necessary to address these challenges. Student members requested that coursework extensions be revisited by APRC as a priority to enable the local approaches to coursework extensions to be addressed. Professor Hadoke noted that there remains a willingness within APRC to review the Coursework Extensions and Special Circumstances Policies, however this needs to be done with a reflection on feedback raised in discussion of the item to date. The VP Students echoed this sentiment, noting that there is a strong desire to reach an improved position with a consistent and coherent approach to coursework extensions and special circumstances. It was acknowledged that due to a new policy not being approved, local approaches to coursework extensions have been introduced for this academic year.
- A member observed that Annual Report is challenging to draft given the volume of business. The Report provides a narrative description of business undertaken by Committees over the course of the year. It would be valuable if future reports could provide greater detail on where improvements are made, and where concerns are raised so that Senate can obtain a greater understanding of impact and concerns. The VP Students noted that the minutes of Committee meetings are available online, and that work is underway to improve the flow of communication between Senate and its Committees. Members were invited to highlight areas where they would like greater information so that this can be considered moving forward.
- A student member drew attention to the fact that there had been numerous comments made during the meeting regarding the detail provided in minutes and they asked if there were guidelines for the production of Committee minutes.
- A member highlighted that the SEC priorities include reference to Curriculum Transformation and that Senate has previously agreed that an update on CTP would be provided to the 11 October 2023 meeting of Senate. The VP Students noted that work is ongoing in response to the actions endorsed by Senate and that this would follow the appropriate governance pathways which includes returning to Senate in February 2024.

- Dr George Kinnear noted that they submitted two amendments to the Committee priorities ahead of the Senate meeting and he was not satisfied with the response provided to these amendments. He outlined the two amendments submitted and noted that these align with the remit of the Committees and it is within Senate's gift to determine whether these are appropriate priorities for the Standing Committees. Dr Kinnear requested that a vote be taken on the amendments, subject to an appropriate seconder being identified.
- Dr Kinnear also noted that he and four other colleagues submitted a paper regarding maintaining academic standards for the 11 October 2023 meeting and this paper was not included in the billet for the meeting. He noted his disappointment with the approach taken to the paper which was titled Maintaining Academic Standards and drafted following concerns with the approach taken by his School's Boards of Examiners.
- The Conveners of Standing Committees stated that the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) had recently undertaken a rigorous assessment and review of the temporary variations and the concluded that the mitigations posed no risk to academic standards and that standards had been maintained.

An amendment to 6.3, APRC Priorities was moved and seconded as follows:

Audit the extent to which exceptional variations to academic policies and regulations during 2022/23 have in fact maintained academic standards

Ahead of a vote on the proposed amendment the following points were raised by members:

- The amendment suggests that upholding academic standards should be a priority.
- A member reflected on their experience at their School's Board of Examiners commenting that, in their view, the temporary variations to the regulations undermined the commitment to maintaining standards.
- Some members reflected on there being a lack of clarity on what Senate were being asked to consider. They raised concern with the handling of amendments and reflected on the importance of adhering to the Standing Orders as stated prior to the commencement of the meeting. It was requested that amendments be handled in a consistent manner and in accordance with the Standing Orders. A request was made that amendments submitted in advance of the meeting to the Senate Clerk be shared with members ahead of the meeting. The Convener clarified the voting procedure and the meaning of voting for/against amendments, and agreed that the process for handling amendments would be reviewed with the Senate Clerk following the meeting.

Senate approved by a majority vote of 71% to amend 6.3: APRC Priorities to include:

Audit the extent to which exceptional variations to academic policies and regulations during 2022/23 have in fact maintained academic standards

Senate further undertook a separate vote on the amended Paper S 23/24 1C and 51% of members did not approve the paper.

Action: The Conveners of Standing Committees to take account of comments raised and provide greater detail in forward looking plans for future annual reports.

Action: Senate members to highlight to Standing Committee Conveners areas where greater information on Committee business is sought for future Annual Reports.

Action: The Convener and Senate Clerk to review the process for handling amendments.

5. **Recommendation to add EDI representation to Senate Standing Committees - S 23/24 1D**
For approval

Vice-Principal Students and Convener of the Senate Education Committee, Professor Colm Harmon introduced the item which was taken as read.

Members raised the following points in discussion:

- Student members expressed disagreement with the position outlined in the paper that students and the Students Association do not want greater involvement in Standing Committee business. They expressed disagreement with the phrasing of the student position,

and that the wider structural issues relating to student engagement with the business of Senate and its Committees are not adequately reflected in the paper.

- Student members highlighted that an increased student membership on Standing Committees is associated with intensive workload implications for those student members, which is not feasible for volunteer positions and where timelines for inputting into business are inflexible. Additionally, the absence of remuneration for students' time does not adequately recognise the student contribution to the betterment of the University. Student members were supportive of increasing opportunities for student engagement via other mechanisms and would value the opportunity to revisit avenues to achieve this.
- Student members expressed a concern with the governance implications of an EDI representative on each Standing Committee. They noted that the EDI member may be expected to fulfil a token role, and their expertise in EDI may not be appropriate to support the full spectrum of EDI concerns relating to Committee business. A proposal was raised that the EDI member be a split membership role, to be rotated among members and to allow for relevant expertise to be fed into Committee business as appropriate.
- A concern was raised that the proposed approach does not provide an adequate solution to ensuring individuals with other protected characteristics are represented in Committee business, for example, disabled members of the University community.
- A query was raised regarding the cited consultation with UCU. The paper authors were asked to clarify the contact and channels through which UCU was consulted.
- A student member highlighted the Advance HE recommendation regarding enhancing communication between Senate and its Committees and noted the value of this recommendation in the context of this item.

The Conveners of Standing Committees thanked members for their engagement and made the following points in response to comments from members:

- The position outlined in the paper was reflective of the view of Sabbatical Officers from the 2022/23 academic year. The Conveners noted the student members unease with the position outlined and agreed to engage with the current sabbatical officers to take forward discussions on increasing student involvement in and engagement with Standing Committee business, as well as the phrasing around student involvement.
- The EDI representation on Committees is proposed as an interim measure, and it is expected this will continue to be reviewed in the context of wider changes to Senate and its Committees arising from the External Review.
- There is a strong desire to avoid the view that the EDI member position is a token position. The original motion approved by Senate had a specific focus on BAME representation, which is why this protected characteristic is specifically mentioned. Consideration will be given to widening the representation to include other protected characteristics.
- Standing Committee members can request that a substitute member attend meetings where necessary.
- It is the responsibility of all members to be mindful of EDI issues in fulfilling their responsibilities as Committee members.
- Consultation with UCU on the motions took place via the Director of HR and the Joint Committee channels. The UCU Executive were unaware of the motions and did not express an interest in pursuing this at the time. The Conveners noted that they remain open to discussing with the current UCU Executive if this is desired.

Ahead of a vote on this item, the Students' Association VP Education reinforced the student members unease with the wording relating to student engagement included in the paper.

Senate undertook a vote on the item and 68% of members did not approve the paper as presented.

Action: Standing Committee Conveners to liaise with 2023/24 Sabbatical Officers regarding opportunities for increasing student involvement in and engagement with Committee business and the phrasing around student involvement included in future proposals relating to student representation.

Action: The Convener agreed to adopt the practice of announcing when voting opens.

6. **Senate Committee Administration**
For approval

Senate Standing Committee Composition: 2023-24 - S 23/24 1E

The Convener noted that a motion relating to this item had been received from Dr Michael Barany. and that it would be taken forward by the proposed Senate External Review Task and Finish Group once formed to allow detailed consideration of the points raised in the motion.

Clerk's note: Dr Barany requested following the meeting that it be minuted that the motion was submitted in a timely manner for consideration of the full Senate and he strongly objects to the convener denying Senate members a proper opportunity to consider a relevant and time-sensitive motion by suppressing it from the Billet. This request was not made during the meeting in the interest of time.

Members raised the following points in discussion:

- There are individuals who appear in the membership across multiple committees. It was queried whether this is appropriate and whether it is desirable that a range of views feed into Committee business. There are effective ways of seeking consistency without restricting input to a few individuals.
The VP Students noted that majority of Standing Committee positions are ex-officio and are filled according to the relevant expertise. It is often valuable to have continuity of input from members, particularly where items move between Committees across the University. This will be picked up by the External Review Task and Finish Group.
- Members requested that the motions submitted be shared with the wider Senate.
The Convener committed to the motions being shared with the External Review Task and Finish Group once formed.
- An objection to the item was raised on behalf of an absent member on the grounds that the Standing Orders state that members shall be invited annually to submit suggestions for membership of the Committees and that this had not taken place. The Convener agreed that the membership of Standing Committees should be formed in accordance with the Senate Standing Orders.
- A member expressed their view that the challenges experienced at Senate arise from a lack of engagement with Senate members from the Senior Leadership Team. The member noted that there is a lack of papers submitted by Senate members on the agenda, adding to the concerns raised regarding a lack of transparency facilitated by papers and amendments not being circulated to Senate.

Senate approved by majority vote of 52% the Senate Standing Committee Composition for 2023-24.

Action: Senate Clerk to share the motions submitted with the proposed Senate External Review Task and Finish Group once formed.

Action: The membership of Standing Committees be formed in accordance with the Senate Standing Orders.

Senate Exception Committee Terms of Reference and Membership 2023-24 - S 23/24 1F

The Convener noted the updates to the ex-officio membership to reflect current role holders. The Convener also noted an amendment was submitted by Dr Michael Barany prior to the meeting. The amendment is to remove the Principal from the Exception Committee, whilst enabling the Provost to join. The Standing Orders include a reference to membership, including quoracy, where it is clear that the Principal should be a member of the Exception Committee. Therefore, the Principal is required as a member of the Senate Exception Committee and the paper is requesting the addition of the Provost to the membership in her role as Chief Academic Officer.

Dr Barany objected to the representation of his pre-submitted amendment, stating it unambiguously complies with the letter of the Standing Orders and the Convener's implication that the President of Senate must chair every committee is clearly not a practice we follow. He urged that Senate be provided with accurate reasons for the suppression of duly raised motions.

Senate approved by majority vote of 63% the Senate Exception Committee Membership.

Action: Senate Clerk to update the membership of the Senate Exception Committee.

Membership of the Knowledge Strategy Committee - S 23/24 1G

The Convener stated that the membership of the Knowledge Strategy Committee cannot be changed by Senate and Senate are invited to either approve or not approve the appointment. Members were invited to comment on the paper and no comments were raised.

Senate approved this item without requiring a vote.

Action: Senate Clerk to relay Senate's approval of the Membership of the Knowledge Strategy Committee.

ITEMS TO COMMENT

7. University of Edinburgh Students' Association Vice President Education Priorities 2023/24 - S 23/24 1H

To note and comment

The Students' Association Vice President Education Carl Harper introduced the item. They outlined their priorities for the year and expanded on each priority. They invited members of Senate to contact them if they wish to offer support in achieving the priorities.

Members raised the following points in discussion:

- Members expressed their support for the priorities presented.
- A member reflected on their experience as School Coordinator of Adjustments. They noted they found the training and awareness on creating an inclusive and accessible learning environment inadequate. It would be valuable if training was made a compulsory part of induction for new staff.
- Schools aim to provide students with opportunities to build community via social events, however this is challenging in the context of budget cuts and Schools operating under reduced budgets.
The Convener noted in response that budgets were increased, and offered to discuss with the member further outside the meeting.
- Members welcome opportunities to extend the priorities to include Postgraduate Taught and Postgraduate Research students.
- A member outlined areas which the Students' Association VP Education may find valuable to consider as part of their work, such as mechanisms in place to ensure students are enrolled on courses in time for the start of semester, as well as consideration on how the new Student Support Model is working and reflected on anecdotal evidence about student engagement with community building events.

The Students Association VP Education thanked members for their engagement and made the following points in response to comments from members:

- They have been undertaking work with management to expand the suite of learning technologies available to students in a bid to achieve the first of their priority. They invited members to contact them directly if they wish to support this work.
- Consideration is being given to how to ensuring Postgraduate Taught and Postgraduate Research Students are represented within these priorities.
- There has been challenges in relation to course enrolments with some factors making this especially challenging in concentrated areas within the University. The impact of late enrolments on specific students groups was noted.
- The feedback regarding the Student Support Model was noted and would be passed on to School Representatives for feedback.

The Convener extended her thanks on behalf of Senate to the Students Association VP Education and noted Senate's support for their priorities.

8. **Senate External Review – Presentation of findings & proposed actions in response - S 23/24 11**

To note and comment

Professor Ella Ritchie of Advance HE gave a brief overview of the review. Professor Ritchie reflected on the complexity of the review and extended her thanks to members for their honesty, time and valuable insight and willingness to share. The review was challenging to complete in the available timeframe and to fully understand all the nuances of the institution. However, it is hoped that the recommendations and suggestions arising from the review are useful in moving forward. Professor Ritchie urged Senate and the proposed Task and Finish Group to maintain the momentum as it moves beyond the conclusion of the review. Professor Ritchie extended her thanks to the Senate Clerk, Olivia Hayes for her support throughout the review.

The Convener extended thanks on behalf of Senate to Professor Ritchie and her team at Advance HE for undertaking the review.

The Convener noted that Senate is asked to provide feedback on the proposed actions contained within Appendix 1 and support the formation of a proposed Senate External Review Task and Finish Group critical in taking forward some of the recommendations of the review.

The Convener noted that two papers had been submitted by Dr Michael Barany which relate to this item. The Convener shared her view that the papers pre-empted some of the actions contained within Appendix 1 and committed to the papers being shared with the proposed Senate External Review Task and Finish Group, once formed, to ensure detailed consideration of the points raised, alongside other recommendations arising from the review or in response to feedback from members.

Members raised the following points in discussion:

- Members were pleased to see representation of staff from different career stages. The Group is being asked to take forward controversial and contentious items and the impartiality of the proposed Chair of the Group was raised as a potential issue.
- The time commitment required for members of the Task and Finish Group appears to be significant. The feasibility of members having capacity to serve on the Group is likely to be very challenging and unlikely to be achieved without compensation for student members and ensuring that staff members are released from work allocated to them. This was raised as a particular concern for Early Career Fellows who generally have heavier teaching loads. The EDI implications of a heavy workload were noted.
- The term of office for members of the Task and Finish Group was raised. The paper indicates that the Group is expected to provide proposals for the February and May 2024 meetings of Senate, however the term of office run until the 31 July 2024. The feasibility of the Group completing the work in the timelines given was raised, given the volume of work required from the Group and the likelihood of this continuing into next academic year. Student members highlighted that members elected to Senate for one year are unlikely to see the outcome of actions taken by the Group.
- The agenda setting process was highlighted as an area that continues to be a concern for members with the Sustainable Travel Policy and People and Money highlighted as specific examples. The agenda setting process requires consideration and Senate members would value having greater input into agenda setting in the future. Members reflected on one of the Report's review themes being a lack of trust between the Senior Leadership Team and the membership of Senate and noted this in the context of papers not shared with members and redirected to other Committees or Groups at the discretion of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Dr Barany expressed his strong discontent with the rationale provided to Senate for not circulating the papers to Senate referred to in introduction of the item. He stated that the Convener's summary of the reasons for non-circulation mischaracterised the contents of the papers, and reflected a lack of respect and trust both for the author and for the wider Senate membership. He stated the papers served two purposes, one providing corrections to the AdvanceHE report, and the second summarising long-running discussions among Senate members, which many felt had not been reflected in the review report. He shared that the papers reflected the collective effort of a large number of members who have been keen to engage with Senate reform in good faith. The papers were originally submitted as a single item in a timely manner for the latest e-Senate and also suppressed there. Additionally, he shared he had been informed in a non-negotiable way how papers would be handled, and it

was wrong for the Convener to characterise this as 'discussion'; and also commented that the approach of relegating this large collective input to a task and finish group rather than allowing it to be shared with colleagues is problematic. Dr Barany expressed concern that the External Review and proposed actions took a narrow view of Senate's effectiveness, and that the approach to Senate reforms should be one which is respectful and uplifting of contributions from all members.

The Convener restated her commitment that both papers would be provided to the proposed Task and Finish Group for consideration.

- The progress towards decisions taken by Senate and improving the relationship and flow of actions between the University Court and Senate was noted as being absent from the report. The minutes of previous Senate meetings do not include a clearly defined action. It would be useful if Senate minutes include an action where appropriate for inclusion in the Action log.
- The methodology of the External and Internal Reviews relied heavily on members completing surveys. Consideration should be given to the alternative ways that Senate's effectiveness can be measured, including expanding surveys to the wider University population and/or measuring Senate's effectiveness via the actions taken in response to decisions taken at Senate.
- A query was raised regarding the interaction between actions arising from the External Review and actions arising from the Internal Review.
- The Senate Induction was highlighted as an area that requires greater work. The Induction process is inadequate to preparing members for Senate meetings. A student member suggested the development of a shadow system as a potential improvement.
- The actions contained within the paper were queried, with a member noting that Senate should be asked to approve the proposals.
- A long-standing member of Senate noted that one of the principal roles of Senate is to act as scrutinising body. Historically Senate has received items of University business brought to Senate for a decision, however as member engagement has shifted and this has moved to include papers submitted by members there has been a lack of clarity on how decisions taken have translated into action, which contributes to the recent focus on procedural amendments. The Task and Finish Group should also consider the scrutinising function of Senate.

Members were invited to submit any further comments on the item to the Senate Clerk.

An amendment to Appendix 2: Senate External Review Task and Finish Group was moved and seconded. Ahead of a vote on the proposed amendment the following points were raised:

- The amendment will slightly widen the members who are able to put themselves forward for membership of the group
- The principle was included to reflect Senate's previous agreement that this should apply to the elected Senate membership of Senate Standing Committees.
- This is contradictory to the overlap of membership on Senate Standing Committees, where there is repetition of ex-officio members.

Senate approved by a majority vote of 78% to amend Appendix 2: Senate External Review Task and Finish Group and strike:

members who are already serve on a Senate Standing Committee cannot seek membership of the task group;

The Convener invited Senate to form the Task and Finish Group.

A member objected to a decision on this item being taken, noting that they had been advised by the Senate Clerk before the meeting that that there would not be a vote taken on this item. The member stated that formal amendments had not been prepared based on this understanding.

The University Secretary Leigh Chalmers proposed that some items be taken forward as a priority and sooner than the next meeting of Senate. There was not consensus regarding the formation of the Task and Finish Group, and those actions which can be progressed without requiring Senate's agreement will be taken forward. Those items which are contentious, including the formation of the Task and Finish Group will be given further consideration accordingly.

	One member, Dr Michael Barany noted his support for the University Secretary's proposed approach to take forward what she could. In the absence of Senate consent there was no objection raised from Senate.
9.	<p>Research and Innovation Strategy – S 23/24 1J CLOSED To comment</p> <p>Senate did not reach this item ahead of the conclusion of the meeting. The Convener extended her apologies to the presenter.</p>

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

The following items were provided to Senate for information:

10. Senate Standing Committees – upcoming business - S 23/24 1K

ITEMS FOR NOTING

The following items were provided to Senate for noting:

- 11. Update to the Senate Ex-officio Membership – inclusion of the Convener of APRC - S 23/24 1L**
- 12. Review of Timetabling Processes – Progress Update - S 23/24 1M**
- 13. Feedback and actions arising from the Internal Effectiveness Review of Senate and its Standing Committees - S 23/24 1N**
- 14. Report of recent business undertaken by the Senate Exception Committee - S 23/24 1O CLOSED**
- 15. Research Strategy Group update - S 23/24 1P**

Clerk's note: Following publication of the agenda and papers for the 12 October 2023 meeting of Senate, an error was identified in paragraph 19 of the Research Strategy Group update. The correct paragraph is provided as an excerpt for noting:

19. At the close of academic year 2022/23 the University has maintained strong application activity, with the number (2,470) of applications being comparable to the three-year average and the value (£1,377M) trending slightly higher than the historic average. £460.78M in research awards have been recorded by the University in academic year 2022/23. This represents a 44% increase relative to the three year average figure, particularly driven by major awards in CMVM.