



# THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

## Electronic Senate

E-Senate took place from Wednesday 24 April to 12pm,  
Wednesday 8 May 2024

### Confirmed e-Senate Report

A full summary of comments raised via e-Senate can be accessed at [e-Senate comments](#) (EASE login required).

#### ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL

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| <b>1.</b> | <b>Conferment of the title of Professor Emeritus / Emerita (e-S 23/24 3 A)</b><br>To approve<br><br>Senate agreed to confer the title of Professor Emeritus / Emerita on those professors listed in the paper. One member provided comment on this item.<br><br>The member congratulated the new emeriti and expressed disappointment that Senate does not have the chance to recognise these colleagues during in-person meetings. They emphasised the significance of such practice in positively contributing to Senate's culture and reinforcing Senate's role within the university. Additionally, stated that the practice of counting non-participation towards e-Senate quorum was inappropriate. |
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#### ITEMS FOR COMMENT

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| <b>2.</b> | <b>Court Resolutions (e-S 23/24 3 B)</b><br>To comment<br><br>Five members submitted comments on this item.<br><br>A member expressed their appreciation for the summary table and level of detail provided in the paper.<br>Positive implications for risk management and equality and diversity were also highlighted for some changes, suggesting they should be reported as such.<br><br>A minor change in Undergraduate Degree Regulation 72 was highlighted with a suggestion this be flagged as a key change.<br><br>Postgraduate Degree Regulation 24 was highlighted as a concern to one member, who suggested it is a poor approach set academic parameters based on immigration rules. Another member recommended that the changes outlined in Regulation 24 be carefully communicated to specific cohorts, including visa-holding students.<br><br>Postgraduate Degree Regulation 33 and 34 were identified as positive changes to the regulations.<br><br>Postgraduate Degree Regulation 43 was highlighted as having a link reference that was still to be completed. Additionally, concerns were raised about linking to external documents in degree regulations, with a suggestion that it is preferable to refer to named policies and the department responsible for maintaining them. |
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	<p>Postgraduate Degree Regulations 88 was identified as being no longer applicable due to a change in assessment format approved for the 2021/22 academic year onward.</p> <p>The comments were passed to the author of the paper.</p>
<p><b>ITEMS FOR INFORMATION OR NOTING</b></p>	
<p><b>3.</b></p>	<p><b>Report from Knowledge Strategy Committee (e-S 23/24 3 C)</b> To note</p> <p>Senate noted the report of the Knowledge Strategy Committee. Comments were received from four members.</p> <p>Item 1: Presentation – Main Library Design Team Two members commented on the advantages of the University’s current Library space and expressed the value of print collections which they hope is adequately considered and consulted on during any decisions regarding space or availability of print materials.</p> <p>Item 3: Chief Information Officer Update Two members commented on the problems experienced with Safe Links and expressed the view that this is indicative of ongoing challenges regarding change management at the University. An error was identified regarding the recommendations of Artificial Intelligence being returned in May 2024, not May 2023 as indicated in the report. Another member expressed a view on the risks and reliability of AI systems expressing that greater caution be taken in the increase of the internal use of AI.</p> <p>Item 4: Information Services Group Planning 2024/25 to 2028/29 A member queried the connection between the budget pressures reported under this item with People and Money cost overruns.</p> <p>Item 5: Identity and Access Management (IDAM) – Draft Business Case Update A member cautioned that IDAM changes take account of the lessons learned regarding change management and that adequate precautionary measures and contingency measures are established.</p>
<p><b>4.</b></p>	<p><b>Report from the Research Strategy Group (e-S 23/24 3D)</b> To note</p> <p>Senate noted the report of the Research Strategy Committee. Comments were received from four members.</p> <p>Two members expressed appreciation for the report, highlighting the consideration of the REF strategy and the action towards the reduction of fixed term contracts as two positive measures. One of the members expressed a hope that Senate be less passively involved in research matters moving forward.</p> <p>One member also highlighted the focus on the reduction of fixed term contracts and highlighted the importance of addressing the employment status of researchers, often employed on fixed-term contracts. They highlighted the nuance of researchers who do not fit into traditional academic roles, and suggested that the University take a proactive</p>

	<p>approach to providing employment stability rather than leaving this to individual Principal Investigators to resolve.</p> <p>One member highlighted minor errors in the document.</p> <p>The comments were passed to the author of the paper.</p>
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b>Report from the Senate Exception Committee CLOSED (e-S 23/24 3E)</b> To note</p> <p>Senate noted the report of the Senate Exception Committee and no comments were raised.</p>
<p><b>6.</b></p>	<p><b>Report of Motions and Items not included on Senate Billet from 2022 to April 2024 (e-S 23/24 3F)</b> To note</p> <p>Senate noted the report of Motions and Items not included on the Senate Billet from 2022 to April 2024. Comments were received from seven members.</p> <p>Six members expressed concern regarding the completeness of the report with some commenting that the paper did not meet the expectations outlined in Paper S 23/24 2J. One member elaborated that the motion does not provide an exception for items not included on a meeting's agenda, even if a successor paper or motion was later considered. They emphasised the need for a full and transparent account of all items, including those not listed in the paper. Additionally, they highlighted their awareness of omitted papers and motions and expressed concern that the paper was published despite its incompleteness being highlighted to relevant staff.</p> <p>The member identified inaccuracies in paragraph 10, and indicated that the items were not included on agendas in the format they were originally submitted and that revisions were required ahead of items being included on agendas. They indicated these items should also be included in the paper in the interests of transparent accounting.</p> <p>Two member expressed disappointment that the items not included were not also provided in full with the report.</p> <p>Six members expressed concern regarding the process for redirecting items. One member stated that the Senate Standing Orders do not make provision for the redirection of items, and there is no established procedure for items being redirected. They indicated that paper authors nor Senate had a say in redirection decisions, and that this information was not included in the draft paper which authors received for corrections.</p> <p>One member suggested that guidelines approved by Senate for redirecting items would be helpful. Another member questioned on what regulatory grounds items were redirected.</p> <p>Another member indicated that, where items are listed as redirected, a clear and transparent trail of action should also be provided.</p> <p>One member expressed serious concern regarding the university executive's conduct of Senate business. They suggested that the non-inclusion of items submitted for the agenda did not withstand serious scrutiny and undermines Senate's ability to conduct business in a democratic and transparent matter. The commenter expressed the view that a completed report should receive the serious attention of the University Court.</p> <p>The comments were passed to the author of the paper.</p>

