

**PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE SENATE STANDING
ORDERS - APPROVED BY SENATE MARCH 2018**

THE UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX SENATE - WAYS OF WORKING

Introduction

1. This document sets out the ways of working adopted by Senate. They are designed to help all Senators understand their role and to make Senate as efficient and productive as possible in fulfilling its role. Appendix A to these ways of working gives the six Standing Orders of Senate. These cover aspects of the governance of Senate meetings designed to protect the integrity of Senate meetings and the decisions made at Senate. These are therefore set out as formal Standing Orders.

Conduct of Discussions

2. All Senators agree to abide by the Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour expected of Senators to ensure that the meetings are effective and efficient.
3. Senators should endeavour to keep their contributions short to ensure that Senate has time to consider all business on the agenda. The Chair may, at any time, ask Senators to draw their remarks to a close. If any Senator interrupts another while the latter is addressing the meeting, or uses abusive or profane language, or causes disturbance, and refuses to obey the Chair when called to order, they may then be required by the Chair to withdraw from the meeting.
4. If, in the opinion of the Chair, a Senator or Senators or observers are persistently and deliberately breaking the Code of Conduct or violating Standing Orders or in any way preventing the proper conduct of business, they may adjourn the meeting forthwith.

Confidentiality

5. Although the agenda, minutes and supplementary papers may be widely circulated for informational purposes, meetings of Senate are not public meetings and statements made by individuals during them are confidential. This is to protect freedom of expression. Should members of Senate wish to report discussion at Senate to third parties, they should do so in a way that respects these principles. If in doubt, guidance should be sought from the Secretary in this regard. Senators are also advised to seek guidance from the Secretary if they are unsure whether documents that have been made available to Senate can be shared with others.

Dates, Times and Locations of Meetings

6. The dates and times of the main committees are announced at the end of the previous academic year. The dates and times of meetings are determined in advance and the [Committee Timetable](#) is published on the Governance Office website (normally in late June). Senate meetings are normally held in the Conference Centre on the 3rd floor of Bramber House, but the location can change.
7. Formal Senate meetings are held once a term (additional meetings may be arranged). The meetings are generally scheduled in the first weeks of November, March and June

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to allow business to be put to Council meetings that are scheduled at the end of these months. The meetings are normally held on Wednesday afternoons from 13:00 to 17:00 but exact timings can change and the duration of the meeting will be determined by the volume of business.

Attendance at Meetings

8. With few exceptions, the role of Senator is an integral part of an officership or role within the University or is something that individuals have chosen to undertake through nomination for election. Therefore Senators are expected to attend **all** meetings of Senate unless absence is due to illness, urgent personal reasons or teaching commitments. The dates of Senate are set well in advance and therefore other events should be arranged to avoid Senate meetings.
9. Where a Senator cannot attend a meeting, it is important that they send their apologies as soon as they are aware that they cannot attend. This ensures that the Secretary can confirm that there will be a quorum at the meeting. Occasionally a conflicting event can arise that has an impact on a number of Senators. If this is an internal event, the Secretary can liaise with the organisers who may be able to prevent the clash if notified well in advance or, in extraordinary circumstances, move the Senate meeting. Deputies are not normally allowed to stand in for occasional meetings, although in the event of illness or absence for a significant period, deputies may be permitted by special arrangement with the Chair.

Meeting Agendas

10. The agenda is prepared by the Chair and Secretary. The Chair will decide under which section items should be placed. The agenda is circulated to all members of the Senate at least seven days before the meeting and supporting papers will be circulated with at least three working days' notice (e.g. no later than the previous Friday for a Wednesday meeting).
11. If Senators wish to raise items for inclusion on the Senate agenda they should approach the Secretary well in advance of the meeting but no less than 10 days before the meeting. Items for any other business can be raised 48 hours before the meeting. In all cases the Chair will decide if items can be added to the agenda.
12. Senators are strongly recommended to discuss any potential items with the Secretary. The Secretary can help identify the correct forum for issues, which may not be Senate. They can also direct Senators to the leads on particular initiatives who may be better placed to assist Senators seeking information and/or set out consultation plans so Senators know how and when they (and their constituents) can get involved.
13. The agenda is organised into four sections:
 - I. Procedural Matters
 - II. Matters for Discussion and Decision
 - III. Reports
 - IV. Matters for Information

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14. Items under sections III (unless containing items for decision or approval), IV and amendments to the minutes are not generally open for discussion and debate at the meeting as they are items provided for information.

I. Procedural Matters

This section will include the approval of minutes, matters arising not dealt with elsewhere in the agenda, and the Chair's Report. Any matters in which the Senate is called upon to make a decision shall, as far as possible, be written and circulated with the agenda.

Provided that they have been duly circulated before the meeting, the minutes of the previous meeting(s) shall be taken as read. If Senators wish to amend the minutes on the basis of accuracy of they should contact the Secretary when the draft minutes are circulated rather than raise the request at the meeting.

II. Matters for Discussion and Decision

This section will consist of substantive items for decision or agreement of further action. Items will be presented with relevant information and proposals by means of a supporting paper or presentation. Where an item consists of a report in a series, or a return to a previous subject, there should usually be a summary outline of the relevant background information (e.g. terms of reference, composition of the group in question, numbers of previous reports or papers, decisions taken in previous discussion). Presentations may be included in this section; provided that the organization of the agenda allows proper time for discussion of substantive items.

Members should seek to address any queries relating to the content of papers in this section with the author of the paper prior to Senate. This will allow for clarifications to be provided, either in advance of meetings, or via a prepared response at the meeting. Points of detail should not be raised for the first time in the meeting so it is important that all Senators read papers in advance of the meeting to allow time for them to seek clarifications if required.

III. Reports

This section will include report items from subordinate committees, for information and approval. Matters requiring Senate's decision/approval will be clearly flagged.

IV. Matters for Information

This section will include items for noting.

V. Any Other Business

See paragraph 11.

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Meeting Papers

15. All papers for the meeting should have a reference number and a cover sheet. The cover sheet summarises the paper and makes clear if there are any related documents that should be read in conjunction with the current paper, eg previous papers. The cover sheet will also give clear recommendation on what Senate is being asked to do especially in relation to any decisions or approvals. The cover sheet also provides contact details for the author who can be contacted for points of clarification.
16. The agenda will be issued at least seven days before the meeting and the remaining papers will be issued at least three working days before the meeting. Normally the agenda and papers are issued together. Senate papers are published on Sussex Direct. Senate papers (except any that are confidential or contain reserved business) are openly accessible to all members of staff and students, not just Senators.

Minutes of the Meetings

17. Minutes record the key points of a discussion, decisions taken and reference to any background information necessary to understanding. Although the minutes may be widely circulated for informational purposes, the actual proceedings of meetings themselves are private, and statements made by individuals during those meetings are confidential.
18. Provided that they have been duly circulated before the meeting, the minutes of the previous meeting(s) shall be taken as read, unless a motion to amend the minutes (the motion may concern only the accuracy of the minutes)

Other Meetings

19. In addition to the formal Senate meetings, other meetings of Senate may be arranged. Each year there is a strategy meeting. Unless there is an urgent need, normal business is not conducted at these meetings and they are an opportunity to get more detailed briefings and discussions on strategic projects and initiatives. Other meetings may be called if an urgent issue or decision arises or that it is felt that Senate needs to be consulted. Some meetings can be called jointly with a key sub-committee or potentially with other University groups.

THE UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX
STANDING ORDERS OF THE
SENATE

1. Regulatory status and Quorum

The functions, powers, composition/membership, quoracy and election rules of Senate are set out in Regulation 4, and these Standing Orders are subordinate to those provisions.

These rules include provision that one-third of the total actual membership of the Senate shall constitute a quorum, and in the absence of a quorum no business shall be transacted other than the adjournment of the meeting.

2. Calling and Adjourning of Meetings

Meetings shall be called by the Secretary of Senate ('the Secretary'), either on the instruction of the Chair or at the request of not less than one-third of the members of Senate.

If thirty minutes after the time appointed for the meeting to commence, a quorum is not present, no business shall be transacted other than the adjournment of the meeting. If, during a meeting, the number of members present falls below the quorum, the Secretary shall inform the meeting and business shall be suspended immediately. In such an event, the meeting shall normally be either adjourned or terminated. However, when exceptionally important business remains and where the possibility of regaining a quorum exists, the Chair may maintain suspension of the session for a reasonable period of time to allow members not present at the meeting to be summoned.

When urgent matters remain for decision, the Chair may, in consultation with the Secretary of Senate, determine the date and time for an adjourned meeting. Notification thereof shall be given, where possible in writing, to members normally at least three days before the adjourned meeting is to take place. An adjourned meeting may consider the business for which the original meeting was called, but may not consider business additional to that for which the original meeting was called. The adjourned meeting, if inquorate, may complete the business for which the original meeting was called, but may not complete any business additional to that for which the original meeting was called.

3. Student Membership

A section of certain agenda papers may contain items on reserved areas of business during which, if discussed, the student members shall be required to leave. Provided such an item is not the subject of discussion, the student members may remain present for, but shall not be entitled to participate in, any formal decision on the item. The reserved areas of business comprise matters relating to any named individual staff member or student, in particular concerning:

- The appointment, confirmation, promotion or dismissal of any member of staff (or any other matter relating to the terms and conditions of employment of an individual).
- The admission or withdrawal of individual students.
- The academic progress, assessment and examination of individual students.

Subject to any overriding powers of the Council, exceptions to the above may be made only with the prior agreement of Senate.

The student members shall, however, be entitled to participate in and vote on any general discussions of the principles and procedures relating to the above areas of business but not to named individuals.

4. Chair

The Vice-Chancellor is Chair of the Senate ex-officio and cannot be removed from the Chair. The Vice-Chancellor may choose to relinquish it to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for the whole or part of a meeting.

5. Chair's Ruling

The conduct of the meeting is in the hands of the Chair. The ruling of the Chair on any question under the Standing Orders, or on any points of order or explanation, shall be final, although they shall have the right to reconsider any such ruling. The Chair, having consulted Senate, may amend the order in which agenda items are taken.

The Chair will not normally allow time in Senate for questions of a factual character which could clearly have been addressed to officers beforehand.

6. Motions

A request for a motion to be considered in relation to an item already on the agenda must be made 48 hours before the meeting. One member should be identified as proposer of the motion and another member as seconder. A paper with the wording of the motion will be tabled at the meeting, which will also identify the proposer and seconder. Appendix A (i) covers the rules for motions.

Appendix to Senate Standing Orders: Motions and Voting

1. Motions and Amendments

In the discussion of formal motions, no member shall be allowed to speak more than once upon any one motion, unless on a point of order or information, other than the mover of the Original Motion and the mover of a substantial amendment, each of whom has the right of reply immediately before the motion or amendment is put. But on an amendment being moved, any member, even though they have spoken on the Original Motion, may speak again on the amendment. Members wishing to raise points of order or information (see item 6 below) must first obtain the permission of the Chair. Points of information must relate to the matter immediately under discussion. Any member may formally second any motion or amendment and reserve their speech until a later period in the debate.

The first proposition on any particular subject shall be known as the Original Motion, and all succeeding propositions on that subject shall be called amendments. A recommendation on a subject from a subordinate committee shall normally be regarded as the Original Motion on that subject. Every motion or amendment must be moved and seconded by members actually present at the meeting before it can be discussed and, whenever possible, should be set out in writing. Amending propositions must be germane to, and such as to modify and not negate, the original motion. It is permissible for a member to make their speech first and conclude with a motion for amendment. When an amendment is moved to an Original Motion, no further amendment (other than those which constitute minor improvements of wording) shall be discussed until the first amendment is disposed of. Notice of the content of any further amendment may be given before the first amendment is put to the vote.

2. Substantive Motions

If an amendment is carried, the amended motion displaces the Original Motion and itself becomes the Substantive Motion, whereupon any further amendment relating to any portion of the Substantive Motion may be moved, provide it is consistent with the business and has not been covered by an amendment or motion which has been rejected previously. After the vote on each succeeding amendment has been taken, the surviving proposition (i.e. the Substantive Motion as it then stands) shall be put to the vote as the main question and, if carried, shall then become a resolution of the meeting.

3. Right of Reply

The mover of the Original Motion shall, if no amendment has been moved, have the right of reply at the close of the debate upon such motion. When an amendment is moved, he or she shall be entitled to speak on it in accordance with item 1 above and at the close of the debate on such amendment shall reply to the discussion, but shall introduce no new matter. The question shall then be put to the vote immediately and no further discussion shall be allowed once the question has been put from the Chair.

4. Withdrawals or Additions

No motion or amendment which has been accepted by the Chair shall be withdrawn without the consent of the Chair. Nor shall any addendum or rider be added to a motion which has been accepted by the Chair without such consent. Should any member dissent, the addendum must be proposed and seconded and treated as an ordinary amendment.

5. Closing Debate

The procedural motions that: (a) the meeting move to further business, (b) the question be now put, (c) the question be not put, or (d) that the debate be closed, may be moved and seconded only by members who have not previously spoken at any time during the debate. No speeches shall be allowed on such motions. In the event of motion (b) or (d) being carried, the mover of the Original Motion shall have the right to reply in accordance with item 3 above before the question is put. Should any of the motions mentioned in this Standing Order be defeated, fifteen minutes shall elapse before that particular motion can be accepted again by the Chair, unless they are of the opinion that the circumstances have materially altered in the meantime.

6. Points of Information and of Order

Points of information may be raised at any time if the speaker holding the floor will accept them. They shall be raised only to question or correct a speaker on a matter of fact. Points of order may be raised at any time to question the conduct or procedure of the meeting. If, in the opinion of the Chair, points of order or of information are being raised in order to obstruct business, they may refuse to hear any further such points until the particular business has been completed.

7. Motion for Adjournment

Any member who has not already spoken during the debate may move the adjournment of the item under discussion, or of the meeting, but must confine their remarks to that issue and must not discuss any other matter. The mover of the motion upon which the adjournment has been moved, shall be allowed the right to reply on the question of the adjournment, but such reply shall not prejudice their right of reply on the motion. In the event of such motion being lost, it shall not be moved again except in accordance with item 5 above.

8. Voting

Except as provided for elsewhere in these Standing Orders or where a different majority has been previously and specifically stated to be required, all decisions shall be taken by a simple majority of those present and voting. Voting shall be by show of hands, except that: (a) where the Committee wishes to conduct a vote of the total membership, a postal vote may be employed, and (b) where appropriate, voting lobbies may be employed. Numbers of abstentions from voting shall not normally be requested or recorded. The tellers for any vote shall be appointed by the Secretary of the Senate. The voting membership shall be as specified in the list of members at the foot of the agenda for the meeting. The Chair shall be entitled to vote on any question and shall have a second and casting vote in the event of an equal number of votes being cast for and against. After any vote, the Chair may order a recount of the votes cast. In the event of equal numbers of votes, the Chair may order a fresh vote without further discussion. No point of order or information shall be raised during the voting unless it concerns the actual conduct of the voting.

9. Rescinding a Resolution

No resolution shall be rescinded or amended at the same meeting at which it is passed except by a two-thirds majority of the meeting. The Chair shall have the right to refuse to accept any separate motion which would, if carried, have the effect of amending or rescinding a motion previously carried at the same meeting.