

UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER

STANDING ORDERS OF THE SENATE

1. Meetings

There shall be at least four ordinary and one special meetings of the Senate in the academic year.

A special meeting of the Senate may be held at the instance of the Chairperson or the Deputy to the Vice-Chancellor if the Chairperson is unavailable. A special meeting shall be convened when requested in writing to the Head of Quality Management and Audit Unit by one-quarter of the members of the Senate. A special meeting shall be convened within 21 days of the Head of Quality Management and Audit Unit receiving such a written request.

In cases of urgency, an emergency meeting may be called on such notice as the Chairperson considers appropriate.

At a special or an emergency meeting only business included in the circulated agenda shall be transacted unless all the members present unanimously decide otherwise.

2 Notice and Agenda for Meetings

Meetings shall be called by the Head of Quality Management and Audit Unit. The notice of the meeting, the agenda and all available supporting papers shall be dispatched not fewer than seven days before an ordinary or special meeting.

The non-receipt of notice of any meeting of the Senate or the agenda thereof or any supporting papers shall not invalidate the proceedings of any such meeting.

Members wishing to place items on the agenda must submit them to the Head of Quality Management and Audit Unit, with a supporting statement, not fewer than fourteen days before the meeting. The Chairperson shall determine which items shall be placed on the agenda but shall report to the Senate if any item submitted by a member has been excluded and the Senate may decide to include that item on the agenda.

At an ordinary meeting of the Senate, the Chairperson, with the agreement of the Senate, may table business of which notice has not been given on the agenda but which he/she considers to be urgent business which it was not practicable to include on the agenda.

“Any Other Business” shall not be included as a formal item on the agenda of the Senate or its committees.

The unreserved agenda and papers will be available on the Quality Management and Audit Unit website concurrently with their issue to members of the Senate.

3. Reserved Business

Matters affecting named individual employees (not including reporting of rewards, promotions, achievements or external recognition), named external appointments or matters affecting the admission, progression and assessment of named individual students shall be deemed reserved business. Reserved business shall be dealt with under separate agenda. Student Union members and staff in attendance, with the exception of the Secretariat, shall not receive reserved papers or be present for consideration of reserved business.

5. Chairperson

The Chairperson shall preside over all meetings of the Senate at which he/she is present, subject to Article 9 of the Charter.

In the absence of the Chairperson, or during a vacancy in the office, Vice-Chancellor shall identify a Deputy to preside over the meetings of the Senate.

In the absence of both the Chairperson and the Deputy to the Vice-Chancellor from any meeting of the Senate, one of the remaining Pro-Vice-Chancellors shall preside over that meeting.

6. Quorum

The quorum for an ordinary meeting of the Senate shall be one third of the total membership.

If a quorum has not been achieved within 15 minutes of the stated time of the meeting, the meeting shall be adjourned to a future date.

If, after the business has begun, there ceases to be a quorum present, the Chairperson shall, if the matter is formally raised by a member, adjourn the meeting to a future date unless a quorum can be formed within 10 minutes.

There is no requirement for a quorum for committees of Senate.

7. Order of Business

The order of business shall be determined by the Chairperson in consultation with the Head of Quality Management and Audit Unit. The order of the business appearing on the agenda may be altered by the Chairperson with the consent of the Senate.

8 Minutes

The approval of the minutes of the previous meeting shall normally be the first item of business at ordinary meetings. Proposed amendments to minutes of the Senate and its committees should be submitted in writing to the relevant Chairperson or Secretary within seven days of the unconfirmed minutes being circulated to members. If objections are received the minutes will be brought forward to the next meeting of the Senate or the appropriate committee for confirmation. Otherwise the minutes will be taken as confirmed.

The minutes marked “unconfirmed” shall be dispatched to members electronically within 10 working days of the meeting. The confirmed minutes shall be made available on the Quality Management and Audit Unit website for consultation by members of staff.

9 Disclosure of Interest

Any member who may have an interest in any matter to be discussed shall state that interest and shall neither speak nor vote nor be counted in the quorum for that item of business.

A Register of Interests giving details of members’ pecuniary, family or personal interests which may affect Senate business, will be available for inspection at all meetings of the Senate.

10 Voting

Except where otherwise provided, decisions of the Senate shall be taken by consensus unless a vote is requested. Votes shall be taken by a show of hands.

11 Dissent

Any member present shall be entitled to be recorded as dissenting from any decision of the Senate.

12. Interpretation

Reference to “days” in these standing orders are to calendar days unless otherwise stated.

Any questions of interpretation or procedure shall be determined by the Chairperson of the meeting.

13. Adjournment

The Chairperson may, with the consent of the majority of those members present at any meeting of the Senate, adjourn the meeting from time to time. The consideration of any business not transacted shall be adjourned to a time fixed by the Chairperson at the time the meeting is adjourned or, if he/she

does not fix a time, to the next ordinary meeting of the Senate, unless a special meeting for the purpose is first held.

14. Attendance at Meetings of Committees of the Senate

Officers and staff of the University may be invited by the Vice-Chancellor to attend meetings of the Senate and its committees to assist in deliberations and to facilitate the business of the University.

A member of the Senate who is unable to attend any ordinary meeting of the Senate may provide an explanation giving a reason for non-attendance. Such explanation should, where possible, be sent in advance of the meeting to the Head of Quality Management and Audit Unit, who will bring it to the attention of the Senate at that meeting.

Where a member has failed to attend two successive ordinary meeting without providing an explanation satisfactory to the Senate, the Head of Quality Management and Audit Unit shall write to that member to give warning that their membership of the Senate will automatically cease if they fail to attend three successive ordinary meetings without providing an explanation for their non-attendance satisfactory to the Senate. That person having ceased to be a member of the Senate cannot be reinstated by the Senate on subsequent provision of an explanation.

15. Mobile Telephones

In order to ensure the smooth running of meetings of the Senate and its committees, members must ensure mobile telephones are turned off or on silent and must not be used during the meeting. A telephone contact number will be given to members on which they may be contacted in an emergency.

16. Suspension of Standing Orders

Any one or more of the Standing Orders except Standing Order 6 may be suspended at any meeting so far as regards any business at that meeting provided that two-thirds of the members present and voting shall so decide.

17. Amendment of Standing Orders

Minor amendments to the Standing Orders may be made at any ordinary meeting by a simple majority of the Senate. For significant proposed amendments, notice of the proposed amendment shall be given at the previous ordinary meeting in accordance with Standing Order 2.

NOTES:

Standing Orders of the Senate are permanent and have a life span independent of the duration of individual Senates.