Committee Handbook 2021/2022

This Handbook describes regulations and procedures governing the operation and servicing of University committees. Its use is mandatory for staff in relation to Council, Senate and their standing committees.

The Handbook also serves as a guide to good practice for University staff responsible for servicing other committees, including those in Schools.

Quality and Enhancement Office
August 2021

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https://www.salford.ac.uk/governance-and-management/council

This version saved: August 2021

Contents

(Appendices

1. **Introduction**

1.1 This Handbook has been prepared both as an induction for new secretaries, Chairs and members of University committees and as an aide-memoire and reference tool for more experienced staff. The Handbook describes practice used by Professional Services staff to service institutional level committees and commends this practice to staff supporting School committees. In addition to the Handbook, separate training and guidance is available to those chairing or servicing Boards of Examiners and bespoke training is provided to Chairs of panels operating under student-facing procedures, i.e. Academic Appeals, Student Misconduct, Fitness to Practise (Health and Social Care only), Student Complaints and Student Disciplinary Procedure.

1.2 The Handbook provides an overview of how Freedom of Information and Data Protection legislation may impact upon committee-related tasks such as preparation of agendas and related papers, minute taking and the identification of individuals in minutes and papers. This is especially important given the wider availability of University papers and minutes in electronic format, including the publication on the Governance website of the confirmed minutes of many committees.

1.3 The Committee Handbook 2021/2022 incorporates the report template for Senate and its committees (*Appendix 2*). This template can be downloaded from the Committee Handbook webpage. https://www.salford.ac.uk/governance-and-management/council

1.4 If you have any comments or queries about the content of this Handbook, please contact Martin Toner, Corporate Governance Officer, on extension 57035 or m.toner@salford.ac.uk. Queries about a specific committee should be addressed to the Secretary of that committee.

2. **Committee Interrelationships**

2.1 There are three principal elements to the governance of the University: the Council, the Vice Chancellor (as chief executive/chief academic officer) and the Senate.

2.2 The University's Charter, Statutes and Ordinances set out the principal roles and responsibilities of governance and management, supporting the effectiveness of decision-making processes. The Charter, approved by the Privy Council, establishes Council as the University's supreme governing body. The Statutes and Ordinances provide the constitutional framework that allows the University to govern its affairs. The Charter also establishes Senate as the "academic authority" of the University, with responsibility for overseeing teaching, learning and research.

2.3 Responsibility for the day-to-day decision making (management) of the University lies with the Vice-Chancellor. The purpose of the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Team (VCET) is to provide advice to the Vice Chancellor in their capacity as Chief Executive. The powers of VCET are derived from the executive powers of the Vice Chancellor and are therefore separate from the authority of the Senate.

3. **Main University Committees**

3.1 Terms of Reference and Membership

    3.1.1   The University's Statutes, last amended in December 2018 by the Privy Council, require that the functions of Council should include including the adoption and publication of a statement of the primary responsibilities of the Council.

    3.1.2   Council has also approved a Scheme of Delegation.

    3.1.3   Council's Statement of Primary Responsibilities and its standing committees' terms of reference are set out in the Council web page.

    3.1.4.   The terms of reference of Senate and its standing committees are set out in the Scheme of Academic Governance.

    3.1.5   The membership and purpose of the Vice Chancellor's Executive Team (VCET), the University's senior management body, are outlined online at http://www.salford.ac.uk/about-us/corporate-information/leadership-and-management

3.2. Committee Codes and Secretaries

    University committees are coded so that their official documents can be referenced using a standard identifier. Coding of committees should follow the pattern in paragraph 6.4.7. The relevant Secretary identified should be contacted for further information relating to a particular committee.

3.3 Schedule of Council, Senate and Senate Standing Committees 2021/2022

    3.3.1   The dates of meetings of Council, Senate, their committees and other University committees are available collectively in several formats including a Microsoft Outlook Calendar available to all staff through their work PC/laptop (see Almanac).

    3.3.2   Meetings of Council are usually scheduled on a Friday at 1.30pm.

    3.3.3   Meetings of Senate and its standing committees are usually scheduled on a Wednesday at 2.00 pm.

4. **Roles and Characteristics of Committee Members**

4.1 Chair

    4.1.1   The principal responsibilities of the Chair are as follows:

- To understand the purpose and objectives of the committee and play the lead part in planning the committee's business to ensure coverage of the full range of its terms of reference in liaison with the Secretary and, where appropriate, Chairs of parent committees and sub-committees
- To promote and support the work of the committee
- To conduct committee meetings so that they are orderly, open and effective, particularly:
  - To determine who may speak and in what order
  - To remind committee members of the standing orders[1] and other committee protocols when necessary
  - To keep the business of the committee meeting running smoothly
  - To ensure that business is discharged in a timely fashion
- To make sure, in liaison with the Secretary, that the committee's decisions are reported and acted upon appropriately
- To remain impartial, respect confidentiality and handle sensitive issues with discretion

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[1] The Standing Orders approved by Council and Senate establish regulations for the operation of University committees and are provided in *Appendix 1.*

- To represent the committee as required
- To contribute to the evaluation of the committee's work and preparation of any annual report

4.1.2 To fulfil these responsibilities Chairs should aim to:

- Attend all meetings and maintain an understanding of committee work and related matters between meetings
- Be familiar with the committee's membership and terms of reference as well as general committee conventions, including standing orders and reporting protocols
- Develop a close and co-operative working relationship with the committee Secretary
- Build good working partnerships with University officers
- Develop the trust of committee members and value their contributions
- Make sure that they are well briefed on agenda items before meetings take place; and
- Manage the business of committee meetings effectively, fairly and impartially[2], both encouraging participation and limiting debate as necessary

4.1.3 The main duties and tasks that need to be undertaken by the Chair are:

- To participate in appropriate planning meetings at the start and end of each session, agreeing an annual schedule of business
- In liaison with the Secretary to agree an agenda for each meeting, approve agenda items, commission reports, identify business as appropriate
- To liaise with the Secretary to prepare for each meeting and receive briefings on agenda items
- To read the papers carefully in advance of the meeting, be aware of the issues and check out any queries, inconsistencies or potential controversy
- To determine whether to allow late or tabled papers
- To start the meeting on time and make introductions as appropriate
- To manage committee discussions so that clear decisions are reached which identify what action needs to be taken, who is responsible, the timescale for this action and the nature of report back to the committee
- To take account of the Secretary's advice but to have the final say on matters of procedure and members' conduct
- To agree draft minutes prepared by the Secretary after each meeting. Chairs should note that in approving the wording of minutes they are not only approving their accuracy but also approving their status as statements which may be made available within or outside the University (e.g. through publication on the internet). The Secretary should normally circulate the unconfirmed minutes to members within two weeks of the meeting.
- To advise the Secretary on an action list and arrangements for reporting and disseminating committee decisions
- To decide whether any urgent business arising between scheduled meetings requires the convening of a special meeting (see guidance on Chair's Action in Appendix 4)
- To take action on behalf of the committee to deal with business which requires action before the committee's next scheduled meeting but does not merit the convening of a special meeting
- To lead the committee in its annual self-evaluation exercise and prepare an annual report for submission to the relevant committee or parent body.

4.1.4 The characteristics of a good Chair are:

- Good listening and communication skills, including a willingness to listen to ways in which meetings can be improved
- Impartiality together with a clear focus upon achieving the aims of the meeting
- Ability to summarise discussion fairly and succinctly to ensure that all those present accept and are clear about what has been decided

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[2] Although an impartial facilitator, the Chair has the same voting rights as other members and, in the event of a tied vote, can cast a second, deciding vote if necessary (Standing Order 5.8).

- Ability to gain consensus and avoid unproductive dispute
- Willingness to exert authority when necessary but in an appropriate manner
- Tenacity in ensuring follow-through

4.2 Secretary

4.2.1 The principal responsibilities of the Secretary are as follows:

- To have a broad knowledge of governance processes in general, in the Salford context in particular and of the working of the committee, such as relevant statutes, ordinances, regulations, codes of practice, procedures and terms of reference, and to act as a source of advice on such matters
- To promote the business of the committee including facilitating and co-ordinating procedures which are the responsibility of the committee
- To maintain lists of membership and circulation lists and a full set of agendas, papers and minutes for previous meetings in electronic and, if appropriate, in hard copy.
- To build a close and co-operative working relationship with the Chair
- To remain impartial, respect confidentiality and handle sensitive issues with discretion
- To make sure, in liaison with the Chair, that the committee's decisions are acted upon appropriately
- To ensure the prompt and appropriate referral of business where active consideration from another University committee or officer is required
- To contribute to the evaluation of the committee's work

4.2.2 The main duties and tasks that need to be undertaken by the Secretary are:

- Before the start of the academic year, in consultation with the Chair, to prepare a draft plan of work for the coming year for approval at the first meeting of the session
- To develop and maintain briefing materials for new members of the committee
- To make arrangements for meetings including timing (in liaison with the Chair and, where applicable, the officer responsible for the University's almanac), venue and hospitality as appropriate
- To collate items of business (including actions taken by the Chair) between meetings
- To draft agendas, papers and reports in consultation with the Chair or other officers
- To review the papers and reports prepared for the committee and refer back as appropriate
- To be familiar with the content of papers for meetings
- To ensure the timely distribution of committee papers to members by electronic means (e.g. email attachments or hyperlinks to a shared drive folder or Blackboard module)
- To provide members with a hard copy set of papers where appropriate or where specifically requested by members
- To receive and record any apologies for absence from members
- To attend all meetings and keep an ongoing understanding and awareness of the committee's work and related matters between meetings
- To verify that a meeting is quorate both at the start and during the course of the meeting
- To produce minutes and reports of meetings for consideration by other committees
- To ensure that decisions and actions are followed up in a timely way and reported to the next meeting as and where required
- To brief the Chair prior to the meeting on any relevant issues, developments or matters arising from the previous meeting

4.2.3 The characteristics of a good Secretary

- Listens and communicates well
- Business-like, meticulous and reliable
- Excellent written language skills
- Excellent analytical skills

- Understanding of the respective roles of governance and management
- Diplomatic and assertive when necessary
- Tenacious to ensure follow-through
- Patient
- Pro-active and facilitating

4.3 Members of Committees

4.3.1 The general responsibilities of members are:

- to make a positive and effective contribution to the work of the committee
- to have a clear understanding of the functions of the committee
- to keep the committee informed of particular relevant local issues and factors
- to attend all meetings or give apologies to the Secretary if unable to attend
- as set out in the standing orders to declare any personal interest in an item being discussed
- to respect confidentiality and handle sensitive issues with discretion
- (for Senate and its committees) to have an understanding of the University's academic regulations and policies for academic quality and standards
- to contribute to the evaluation of the committee's work

4.3.2 The specific duties of Senate and its committees are set out in an Ordinance for the Senate. It is expected that members will:

- uphold the University's commitment to academic freedom and equity as set out in the Charter and assure the highest ethical standards of academic practice and governance
- act corporately in the best interests of the University serving its further development and advancement
- assure the University's corporate responsibilities and obligations under law, regulation and public and University policy and with reference to national expectations and guidance on qualifications frameworks and the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education
- act in good faith, honestly and properly, exercising appropriate care and diligence
- disclose and, wherever possible, avoid conflicts of interest

4.3.3 In more practical terms, these translate as:

- to respond in a timely fashion to requests for agenda items and any supporting papers
- to read the papers prior to the meeting and note points to raise
- where alternates are permitted to represent full members in their absence[3], fully to brief the alternate and provide all the necessary paperwork or electronic access prior to the meeting and to receive feedback after the meeting
- to ensure that there is familiarity with pertinent issues
- to undertake any action points within the requested timescale
- to declare potential conflicts of interest and to leave a meeting during consideration of an item in which there is a personal interest which conflicts with the purpose of the committee.
- to contribute to the effective operation of Committee business between meetings, e.g. through participation in relevant consultations from the Chair or Secretary.

4.3.4 The characteristics of a good committee member are that s/he:

- demonstrates high ethical and professional standards
- respects the authority of the Chair
- shows courtesy and respect to other members
- participates fully in the meetings

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[3] NB Standing Orders do not permit alternate members at Council, Senate or any of their standing committees.

- demonstrates an understanding of the business of the meeting
- is prepared to question accepted views and to defend independence of thought
- does not introduce irrelevant or tangential matters/business
- accepts corporate responsibility and abides by agreed decisions

5.
5.   Access to and Confidentiality of Committee Documents

5.1 Freedom of Information

5.1.1. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives individuals the right to ask to see any information that the University holds. Consequently, most committee papers and minutes would, unless a specific exemption applies, need to be released if requested. Even where an exemption applies, only the information covered by the exemption can be withheld rather than the whole document. As a result it is not possible to prevent disclosure of an entire set of minutes.

5.1.2. Under the Act, it is not only agenda, papers and minutes which must be released but also handwritten notes, e-mails and draft minutes are covered. It is therefore advisable, as standard practice, to shred all notes, drafts and briefing papers once there is a set of confirmed minutes.

5.1.3. Responses to all Freedom of Information (FoI) requests are administered by the Information Governance Team and so any request should be forwarded to them at foi@salford.ac.uk as soon as possible.

5.2. Data Protection

5.2.1. The Data Protection Act 2018 requires that appropriate technical and organisational measures shall be taken against unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data. Such unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data includes publication and disclosure to those who have no reason or purpose to have access to that information.

5.3. Openness of Committee Documents

5.3.1. To reduce the burden on University staff in dealing with FoI requests, the University publishes online as a matter of course as much information as possible.

5.3.2. There will always be situations where the content of a document means it should not be made publicly available and should be protectively managed to prevent intentional or accidental disclosure to unauthorised persons. The University of Salford requires that committee papers should be designated and marked as *Open* or *Confidential* (where the content meets the corresponding categories as defined by the University's Information Security Policy).

5.3.3. For more information on this subject, please refer to the more detailed guidance on the Freedom of Information webpages: http://www.infogov.salford.ac.uk/freedom/ or alternatively, speak to a member of the University's Information Governance team

5.4. Closed business

5.4.1. Some business discussed by a committee requires that certain members are absent for that item, for example, a paper on the award of student bursaries which named students nominated for those bursaries would normally not be discussed in the presence of the student members of a committee.

5.4.2. In such cases those items are Closed and any papers should be labelled as such as should the agenda item and the relating minute.

5.4.3. While the many of Closed items will be permanently treated as closed, some may be closed only for a specified time (e.g. embargoed information or until certain conditions are met).

Where Closed status is time- or condition-limited it may be helpful to include this information in the document coversheet.

5.4.4. The Closed papers should not be circulated to the members of the committee (or to others who receive the papers) who would be required to leave the room when they are discussed.

6. Information for Secretaries

6.1 Getting to Know Your Committee

6.1.1 It is essential when taking over the role of committee Secretary that there is an understanding of:

- the general context within which the committee operates;
- the committee's terms of reference;
- the membership;
- the nature of the business conducted;
- decisions taken, as recorded in individual minutes, and the general background and ethos. It is often helpful to study past agendas and minutes in order to get the 'feel' of the committee and to meet with the Chair or immediate past Secretary.

6.1.2 The following checklist might be helpful:

- Where does the committee sit in the committee structure?
- How are its members appointed?
- Who are its current members?
- Who is the current Chair?
- Who at the meeting has voting and speaking rights?
- What are the terms of reference?
- What decisions can it make and what does it need to refer on?
- What kind of business does it do?
- What has it been doing lately?
- What is outstanding from the last meeting?
- What is the planned business for the year?
- What are its current tasks and objectives?
- Do I have an understanding of the University's standing orders?
- What did the annual report say last year?
- How does the committee evaluate its work?

6.2 Induction for new Committee Members

6.2.1 Newly appointed members may be invited by the Secretary to meet the Chair and/or Secretary before their first meeting and should be provided with induction materials. As a minimum these should include:

- How to access the Committee Handbook
- A list of committee members
- Contact details for the Chair and Secretary
- The current committee work schedule and planned business
- The minutes of the previous meeting
- Dates and venues (where appropriate) of the future committee meetings

6.2.2 The Secretary should check whether new members have any individual requirements and make provision as necessary to enable everyone to participate fully in meetings.

6.3 Timetable of Work

The timeline in *Figure 1* provides a guide to the deadlines in preparing for and following up a committee meeting, based on a committee which meets approximately every other month.

Figure 1: Committee timeline]

5 weeks before meeting	• Check annual work schedule to ensure that business is being dealt with at the appropriate point in the cycle
4 weeks before meeting	• Seek items from the Chair, regular contributors and other areas that feed into the committee
	• Check actions from previous meetings that are still outstanding and chase again if required
2 weeks before meeting	• Deadline for receipt of papers by Secretary
	• Agree final agenda with the Chair
5 working days before meeting	• Circulate papers electronically (and in hard copy if required)
3 working days before meeting	• Circulate papers marked "to follow" on agenda if exceptionally required
0-1 day before meeting	• Update the Chair on developments since the distribution of the agenda and papers, including the receipt of apologies from any key members
_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _	MEETING _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
No more than 1 week after meeting	• Email draft minutes to Chair for approval
	• Initiate any actions which do not need the Chair's approval
No more than 2 weeks after meeting	• Chair approves minutes
	• Email unconfirmed minutes (or hyperlink to where they are stored electronically) to all committee members (to be formally confirmed at the next meeting)
	• Send (extracts of) minutes to relevant members and other interested persons for information or action.
	• Initiate any actions required on behalf of the committee, including report to parent committee
No more than 4 weeks after meeting	• Follow up on any outstanding actions on behalf of the committee

6.4   Before the Meeting

Agendas

6.4.1   The purposes of the agenda are:

- To convene a meeting
- To provide the Chair with a framework within which to conduct the meeting
- To inform members of the time and place of the meeting in sufficient time for them to be able to prepare adequately for the meeting
- To identify easily the items which need to be discussed or acted upon and those which are for information only
- To identify open and closed business
- To indicate which items have supporting papers

6.4.2   The responsibility for drafting the agenda lies with the Secretary. A key point of reference for the agenda will be the minutes of the last meeting. It can sometimes be difficult to decide whether an item is a matter arising from the minutes or a new agenda item. In general if there is only a brief oral update then it would be a matter arising, whereas if there is a paper for discussion and/or a more substantial update then it would be a new agenda item. Ultimately it is for the Chair to decide, upon consideration of the Secretary's draft agenda, where on the agenda an item should be placed. If there is a pattern of regular business standard agendas or lists of items should be developed.

6.4.3   The agenda should be structured in a logical order and written so that the whole agenda is Open. The agenda should take account of the strategic plan for the year and what business needs to be brought forward at each meeting. The Secretary should monitor repeat agenda items in relation to the designated action not having been taken. Repetition of the same business item, unless a standing item, may reflect that the committee is not effectively seeing business through to a conclusion. The normal order of the agenda is set out below; items marked with an asterisk (*) should be included for the first meeting of an academic year and, where changes are being made or reported, may be included for other meetings:

- *Constitution and Membership[4]
- Apologies for absence
- *Terms of reference
- Confirmation of the minutes of the last meeting
- Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda
- Report of Chair's actions since the last meeting
- Chair's Statement (usually oral and can include discussion of the order in which agenda items are to be taken)
- Confirmation of starred items (see 6.4.6 below)
- *Annual Enhancement Report: Review of Committee Operation in the previous year
- *Annual Schedule of Business
- Business referred from parent committee (where appropriate)
- Business from sub-committees (where appropriate)
- Items generated by the committee itself for discussion and decision
- Items for information only
- Closed business (where appropriate)
- Any Other Business (AOB)
- Date of next meeting

6.4.4   The items down to and including Confirmation of starred items should be considered at the start of the meeting. All the items which follow should be grouped under three main headings: items for consideration and resolution; items for information; closed business. All of these may not be required at every meeting. Each item should be carefully and

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[4] When a new member attends a committee for their first meeting it is good practice for the Chair to ask all members and other attendees to introduce themselves.

accurately titled and given an objective to clarify what the Committee is expected to do under that item heading.

6.4.5   Members should give the Chair and/or Secretary prior notice of any item they wish to include under AOB. It is at the discretion of the Chair whether or not items will be considered, bearing in mind the urgency of the item and the preparedness of members to consider it.

6.4.6   For Council meetings, starred items (denoted by a star symbol ✫ at the start of the agenda item title) are items deemed straightforward and non-controversial by the Chair and are for noting without discussion. Once the agenda is issued to members any member of the relevant committee who wishes to discuss a starred item should notify the Secretary, before the meeting, that they wish the item to be unstarred. Before items of business are considered for approval/consideration at each meeting, the Chair will confirm which items are starred.

6.4.7   All papers should be clearly and consecutively numbered and it should be made clear what action the committee is expected to take. The numbering should follow the notation: [committee code]/[last two digits of the calendar year]/[reference number of paper], e.g. ASQAC/22/6. The first paper at the first meeting of the committee in a *calendar* year is number 1, so ASQAC/22/6 is the sixth paper presented to ASQAC in 2022. All papers should have a single set of numbers referencing them to the committee receiving them; where the same paper is presented to more than one committee it will have a different, reference number for each occurrence of its consideration. Where a committee considers a paper and returns at a later meeting to the same paper to extend or conclude its consideration, the original reference number should be retained (unless the paper has been modified in the interim).

6.4.8   The agenda, once drafted, should be approved by the Chair. The agenda should state which papers are being despatched or made available simultaneously with the agenda and which papers will follow at a later date. Substantial "for information" papers should be made available electronically only (e.g. through a website or Blackboard module accessible to all members), even where hard copies of papers are normally circulated so that individual members can judge the merits of printing the paper or reading an electronic copy. An example agenda can be found as *Appendix 1*.

6.4.9   Except for committees which meet fortnightly or more frequently, all papers should be submitted electronically to the Secretary at least ten days before the meeting to allow for checking, (re)formatting, referencing and, where applicable, copying and collating prior to their availability/distribution at least 5 working days prior to the meeting. In exceptional circumstances a second electronic circulation of late papers may be made no later than three working days before the meeting. Where papers relating to an item of business notified on the agenda are necessarily unavailable until very shortly before a meeting e.g. less than two days, hard copies should be made available to members at the meeting, even when the paper has been distributed electronically. In other circumstances the tabling of papers is not normally acceptable. Any paper received by the Secretary on the day of a meeting or brought to a meeting by a member or officer for tabling shall not be considered except at the sole discretion of the Chair. Where a paper is made available to the committee subsequent to the circulation of the agenda (i.e. it was not coded at that point) it should be given the next available number and referenced as such in the minutes.

Reports

6.4.10 The Secretary is responsible for receiving, reviewing and preparing reports for the committee's consideration. The Secretary should ensure that report writers are aware of the requirements for reports to conform to the guidelines provided in this Handbook. In cases where reports do not conform, a Secretary can refer the item back after consultation with the Chair, if appropriate.

6.4.11 All documents will be sourced and made available electronically where possible. The naming of electronic committee files will indicate clearly the committee code, the document reference number and the title of the document. All documents for the same committee

meeting will be stored in the same shared Teams folder accessible to members as well as officers in attendance at meetings.

6.4.12 For strategic or policy papers requiring a decision the report author (or possibly the Secretary in the case of an externally published report) should also incorporate within the standard report cover sheet an executive summary of the report's key issues and the committee action being sought. A single coversheet is now used for the senior management meetings (VCET), Council (and its committees) and Senate (and its committees). The report template (with amendable Senate heading) is provided as *Appendix 2[link required]*.

Preparation for the Meeting

6.4.13 The Secretary is responsible for booking a suitable, accessible meeting room and arranging hospitality, if appropriate. For on-campus, face to face meetings, they should arrive at the meeting in time to make sure that the seating, catering and other arrangements have been carried out properly. The Secretary should make sure they are familiar with the agenda items and anticipate, where possible, any problems that may arise at the meeting and bring them to the attention of the Chair. For virtual meetings the considerations required will be different (e.g protocols around "raising hands" to as questions and muting microphones when not speaking).

6.4.14 A briefing meeting with the Chair prior to the meeting is good practice. This would allow the Secretary to remind the Chair of the background to particular items or brief on developments or matters arising from the previous meeting.

6.5 At the Meeting

6.5.1 The Secretary is responsible for advising on procedural matters and for making sure that the committee acts only within its terms of reference. The Secretary should have a thorough understanding of the terms of reference and ensure that all necessary information is to hand to provide effective advice. Such information might include the standing orders, terms of reference, Academic Regulations or other relevant policies and procedures for reference. A spare copy of the agenda and papers may be required and should be brought to the meeting.

6.5.2 The Secretary should verify that the meeting is, and continues to be, quorate if a quorum is prescribed[5] and, if the appointed Chair is not present, arrange for the Deputy Chair, where identified, to Chair the meeting. If there is no Deputy Chair identified, the quorate meeting should be asked to nominate a person to Chair the meeting.

6.5.3 The Secretary should record the names of those present, normally by means of an attendance sheet, take notes of proceedings and record committee decisions. If the outcome of a discussion is unclear the Secretary should ask the Chair to clarify before moving on to the next item.

6.5.4 Occasionally the Chair may be absent temporarily during a meeting, e.g. to attend to an urgent business matter. If the meeting needs to continue in the absence of the Chair, another member may be nominated to chair the meeting during the Chair's absence. A note recording who took the chair in these circumstances should appear at the appropriate point in the minutes and a further note recording the Chair's resumption of his/her role added subsequently where applicable.

6.5.6 The Standing Orders require that, unless varied by resolution of the committee, the order of business to be transacted at a committee meeting shall be as set out in the agenda. Where it is appropriate to vary the order of business, e.g. to consider an item before the presenter of that item has to leave the meeting, this can be proposed by the Chair and accommodated, provided members agree.

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[5] see Standing Orders (*Appendix 1, Section 3*)

6.6   After the Meeting

6.6.1   The most important and urgent task after the meeting is likely to be the drafting of minutes, although there may be some immediate follow-up action which requires attention before the drafting of the minutes. The purpose of the minutes is:

- to be a permanent record of the meeting
- to inform members and others of decisions made and the reasons for them
- to assist in ensuring that action arising is taken
- to provide a formal record of the substantive discussion where this raises matters not already set out in the report being discussed

6.6.2   Minutes need to be accurate, brief and clear. They also need to be objective, showing no personal, political or other bias. The minutes must be unambiguous, with enough detail to make it clear to the reader what the item was, what the issues were and what was decided. The language should be clear, concise and free of jargon. Unexplained acronyms should never be used. Minutes must be intelligible not only to Committee members but also to other stakeholders not present at the meeting, e.g. members of a parent committee, officers actioning decisions, external auditors.

6.6.3   The minutes are not a verbatim record nor a catalogue of every issue raised. The Secretary should aim to note each new point raised at the meeting, although some of these may not actually make it to the minutes. With experience a Secretary will know what is important to note separately.

6.6.4   The past and conditional tenses and a passive voice should be used. The latter gives a more objective and impartial flavour to the minutes and eliminates the need to identify the speaker, e.g.

Noted: the suggestion that an audit be undertaken of the effectiveness of the procedures for improving retention; such an audit would ideally be completed before November.

rather than:

Dr Smith suggested undertaking an audit of…

6.6.5   It is usually good practice not to identify contributors in minutes but where it may be necessary to identify a named person in relation to specific action points, this should be recorded by office held if possible, e.g. the Chair, or the Associate Dean (Academic) rather than by name. All minutes should be written so that they can be open even if the matter discussed was confidential, e.g. "Resolved: that the recommendations set out in Document SEN/22/10 be approved" rather than listing the recommendations themselves (as would normally be the case for open business) if these are confidential. Any minutes which are not open should be clearly marked Closed.

6.6.6   It is good practice to draft minutes as soon as possible after the meeting while it is fresh in the memory of both the minute writer and the Chair who is checking the minutes and draft minutes should be forwarded by the Secretary of the committee to the Chair within 1 week of the meeting with a request for comment/approval. *Appendix 3* gives an example of a set of minutes. Drafts of minutes and notes taken during the meeting should be destroyed as soon as the confirmed version of the minutes is available.

6.6.7   The minutes should be formatted as follows:

- the title of the committee and its parent committee and date should be on the top left hand side of the first page in capitals and bold
- the Chair should be listed first in the list of those present (with 'Chair' after their name) followed by other members in alphabetical order. Names should be listed with their first name and surname, preceded, where applicable, by their academic or other relevant title, e.g. Martina Hughes or Dr Mike Bowen. Where a substitute has attended this should be indicated by 'on behalf of xx' after their name

- those who have sent apologies should be listed after the list of those present
- those who are not members are listed as 'in attendance', for example the Secretary or those who have been invited to present a paper. For the former their role should be indicated with 'Secretary' after their name; for the latter their attendance for a particular item should be indicated by 'for minute xx' after their name.
- each minute should be numbered, incorporating the committee code, the calendar year and the sequential minute number for that year, e.g. ASQAC.22.3 = Academic Standards and Quality Assurance Committee, calendar year 2022 third minute of the year
- written in the third person and past and conditional tenses, mixing use of the passive and active voice
- font should be Arial, point size at least 10, single line spacing
- number and title should be in bold for each minute
- only decisions resulting in actions should be in bold (see 6.6.8 below and *Appendix 3* for more examples of this)
- left and right hand margins should be at least 2cm
- text should be left aligned
- the status of the minutes should be shown on the top right of the first page, i.e. draft/unconfirmed/confirmed, in capitals and bold

6.6.8   The following words are recommended for use in the minutes, with key decisions highlighted in bold:

Considered: used to invite discussion of a report, proposal or recommendation

Noted: used to summarise significant points arising from discussion which led to a particular conclusion

Reported: used to provide facts or information on the agenda

Received: used to record the formal receipt of a document

Approved: used to indicate a decision to endorse a document or course of action

Confirmed: used to indicate that the minutes of previous meetings are accurate

Resolved: used to show decisions or actions made by a Committee wholly within its remit

Recommended used where a decision is not within the remit of the committee but lies with a parent committee

6.6.9   The minutes should clearly record which committee members or University officers have been actioned preferably within the wording of the decision or in an adjacent note. Minutes of Council and its standing committees now include an appended Table of Actions which records all actions agreed at the meeting and any incomplete actions from previous meetings. Each action is assigned an owner (who is responsible for the completion of the action) and given a deadline.

6.6.10 In liaison with the Chair, the Secretary is responsible for preparing reports and report coversheets for submission to parent committees on the committee's behalf.

6.6.11 Once the draft minutes have been approved by the Chair their status becomes "unconfirmed" and these should be circulated to all members of the committee and associated recipients by email and/or through such file repository system as has been set up for the retention of committee documents. Minutes of the University's academic governance committees are not expected to be confidential and may therefore be published to give wide access to staff and/or students. Where students are given ready access to minutes (e.g. Staff/Student Committee minutes posted on Blackboard) staff teaching on the students' programmes should have at least equal and simultaneous rights of access to the minutes. Where published minutes are unconfirmed this must be clearly indicated.

6.6.12   Committee members identifying any inaccuracies should notify the Secretary of any corrections as soon as possible. Any substantive comments/changes must be cleared with the Chair whereas minor corrections/amendments can be made at the discretion of the Secretary prior to presentation of the minutes to the next meeting.

6.6.13   The Secretary should circulate a copy of the "unconfirmed" minutes (incorporating any corrections accepted since the initial distribution) with the agenda for the next meeting where they will be confirmed, subject, where necessary, to any correction. The "confirmed" minutes of Council, Senate and their sub-committees are normally made published on the University website.

6.6.14   If recommendations were made by a committee for consideration by its parent committee, then a report comprising the relevant extract(s) from the minutes should be prepared[6]. If a document considered by the committee is essential to the parent committee's understanding or consideration of the item (e.g. the committee is forwarding a policy for approval), then it should be attached to the extract of the minutes as an appendix. The minutes extract (or a Secretary's note added thereto) should make clear whether the appendix is the same version of a document that the committee received or has been modified by or on behalf of the committee.

6.6.15   Occasionally a committee will need to report an item to a parent committee for information only. Such "for information" items should be kept to a minimum to reduce the duplication of committee documentation and effort. A committee's report to a parent committee should use headings to distinguish between "Items for Consideration" (which should be grouped at the front of the report and "Items for Information" (grouped at the end of the report). The order of items within a committee's report is determined by the Secretary in consultation with the Chair.

6.6.16   Reports submitted to the parent committee will be assigned their own reference number according to the protocol for the parent committee and committee documents accompanying the reports will normally be designated as appendices to the report.

6.6.17   The Secretary is responsible for ensuring that designated committee members and University officers are duly notified, whether collectively or individually, of action to be taken in response to decisions taken by the committee as soon as the minutes have been approved by the Chair.

6.6.18   The Secretary should ensure that sets of all committee records are maintained electronically. The electronic record should include copies of all agendas, papers considered and confirmed minutes. A separate electronic folder should be kept for each meeting, containing the final version of each paper which the meeting received. Electronic folders and files should be structured and named clearly. Any closed papers or minutes should be kept in a separate electronic folder with appropriate security restrictions. Access to material which is not confidential or closed may be made available via Teams, although wider electronic access to definitive committee material should normally be on a Read-Only basis to safeguard documents from accidental or deliberate amendment or deletion.

6.7   Between Meetings

6.7.1   Where any significant new items of business arise between scheduled meetings which require urgent attention, i.e. before the next meeting, the Chair may decide to convene a special meeting to give consideration to the specific business. If the Chair deems that a special meeting to consider business between meetings is unnecessary, s/he may take action on behalf of the committee to deal with the business if it requires attention before the next scheduled meeting. In such cases the action taken must be reported for information to the committee at the earliest opportunity. A guidance note to assist Chairs and secretaries on the use of Chair's action is attached as *Appendix 4*.

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[6] Council has agreed to receive the full sets of minutes of Senate and chairs' summary reports of its standing committees

6.7.2   It is the Secretary's job to ensure that committee members are kept up to date with relevant topical news items; examples might include the publication of a QAA report on a partner college for ASQAC[update required].

7.   Handing Over a Committee to a New Secretary

7.1   The information handed over to a new Secretary will be quite variable, depending on how much relevant experience the Secretary has, the nature of the business and exactly how the records are managed in detail. However, as a minimum, the following should be made available:

- A complete set of the final versions of circulated papers, agendas and minutes for the last two years
- A summary of where the committee files are located
- A list of contact details for members of the committee
- A file of pending business for the next meeting, together with any necessary explanatory notes

7.2   Members of the committee should be informed of the handover date and how the new person can be contacted.

7.3   If someone with no previous, or limited, committee servicing experience has been assigned a committee, an experienced Secretary should act as a mentor. As some aspects of committee servicing, in particular minute writing, are extremely difficult to teach without presence at the meeting of both parties, the mentor should attend the first and at least one other early meeting with the new Secretary. The mentor should check the minutes written to ensure that they meet the University standard and advise on improvements if required.

7.4   Induction, training and staff development are also available at University level. Sessions on academic governance and committee servicing may also be offered occasionally.

8.   Committee Self-evaluation

8.1   An evaluation exercise for each committee should be undertaken at the end of each academic year to judge their effectiveness against their responsibilities and objectives As part of this exercise committee members should be given the opportunity to evaluate their own contributions with a view to improving their effectiveness. Consideration should be given to the optimal method and timing for eliciting feedback from committee members, e.g. whether to table an evaluation questionnaire at the last scheduled meeting of the year or to circulate one electronically for completion after the last meeting or whether this should be co-ordinated by a parent committee.

8.2   Where a self-evaluation exercise is undertaken by a standing committee, any recommendations for improvement should be reported to its parent committee.

9.   Further Reading: Publications Used in the Compilation of the Handbook

Field, T (2002) Data Day Issues – A Guide to Data Protection, AUA Good Practice Guide, Manchester: Shanleys.
Grier, J (2001) Just a Minute? – A Guide to Committee Servicing, AUA Good Practice Guide, Manchester: Shanleys.
Grier, J (2007) A Sense of Freedom, Committee Servicing and the Freedom of Information Acts, AUA Good Practice Guide, Manchester: Shanleys.

UNIVERSITY OF SALFORD

S E N A T E

STUDENT EXPERIENCE, LEARNING, TEACHING AND ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

There will be a meeting of the Student Experience, Learning, Teaching and Enhancement Committee **at 2.00pm on Wednesday 13 May 3009** in the Council Chamber, Room G05, the Old Fire Station.

Please direct all communications, including apologies for absence, to the Secretary, Ann Uther on 59999 or email a.n.uther@salford.ac.uk.

Starred items (denoted by a star symbol ☆ at the start of the agenda item title) are items deemed straightforward and non-controversial by the Chair and are for noting without discussion. Any member who wishes to discuss a starred item should notify the Secretary, before the meeting, that they wish the item to be unstarred.

I look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

Ann Uther
Quality & Enhancement Office

A G E N D A

1.   **Apologies**

        To receive apologies for for absence

2.   **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

        To confirm the minutes of the meeting Held on 25 February 3009 (SELTEC/09/19).

3.   **Matters Arising from the Minutes**

        To consider or note matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on
        the agenda

    3.1   **Annual Programme Monitoring and Enhancement (APME)**

            To report:

            i)   Senate, at its meeting on 11 March 3009, received the PVC (Academic)'s
                   Overview Report as an assurance that the APME process for 3007/3008
                   had contributed to the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the
                   student experience.

            ii)   Senate approved the modified APME timetable for next year's exercise
                   (SELTEC/09/20) with particular regard to the addressing of NSS results in
                   the APME Postscript and the timely uploading of reports to the central
                   repository.

    3.2   **Adoption of New Qualification Levels**

            To report, further to minute SELTEC.09.11, that Senate, at its meeting on 11
            March 3009, approved the Committee's recommendation that, with effect from
            the 3009/3010 academic year, University level indicators 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 be
            replaced by levels consistent with new national qualification levels, i.e. a, b, c,

4. **Chair's Action: Assessment for Taught Awards Polic**y

To note action taken by the Chair to approve minor amendments to the Assessment for Taught Awards policy (SELTEC/09/21).

5. **Chair's Statemen**t

To note updates from the Chair on matters of interest to the Committee

5. **Confirmation of Starred Items**

To confirm that items 13 and 14 will be approved or noted without discussion

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION AND RESOLUTION

7. **Attendance Monitoring**

To consider a report from the Director of Student Information on the monitoring of student attendance (SELTEC/09/22).

8. **Consultation on Changes to Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes 2009/2010**

To consider a paper on the consultative process undergone regarding changes to the Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes for implementation in 3009/3010 (SELTEC/09/23).

9. **Structure of the Academic Year: Semester Dates 3010/3011 and 3011/3012**

To consider provisional academic year dates for 3010/3011 and 3011/3012 (SELTEC/09/24).

10. **Retention and Progression**

To consider:
i) the Retention and Progression Policy (SELTEC/09/25);
ii) a report on the establishment of a Student Retention and Progression Forum (SELTEC/09/26).

11. **Policy on Examination Deadlines**

To consider a proposal to amend the Code of Practice on Assessment (SELTEC/09/27).

12. **Use of the Virtual Learning Environment**

To consider a discussion paper from the Head of Learning Development responding to the QAA Institutional Audit recommendation regarding continuing improvements in the consistency of use of the VLE (SELTEC/09/28).

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

13 ✫. **QAA Publications: Outcomes from Institutional Audit (Series 2)**

To note the following publications from QAA:

i   Student representation and feedback (February 3009)
         http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews/institutionalAudit/outcomes/series2/students09.pdf
ii   The self-evaluation document in institutional audit (February 3009)
         http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews/institutionalAudit/outcomes/series2/SED09.pdf

14☆. **Dates of Meetings 3009/3010**

To note that Senate has agreed the following schedule of meetings for SELTEC in the 3009/3010 academic year.
- 25 November 3009
- 17 March 3010
- 2 June 3010

15. **Any Other Business**

To consider any other items of urgent business

16. **Date of Next Meeting**

To report that the next Committee meeting would take place on Wednesday 1 July 3009.

University of Salford
Council / Senate / Vice-Chancellor's Executive Team
[Standing Committee title if applicable]
DATE

Report Title

	ITEM xxx/22/?? (1 - ?)

Report From	
Action Required	For consideration / discussion / information
Previous Consideration of the Report ⓘ	
Context/Purpose of the Report ⓘ	
Executive Summary and Analysis ⓘ	
Options ⓘ	
Equality and Diversity Please indicate whether the EIA template has been completed – for further information refer to: https://www.salford.ac.uk/hr/equality,-diversity-and-athena-swan	Yes/ No Please provide reason for any non-completion. * delete as appropriate
Recommendations/Proposed Action ⓘ	

EXEMPLAR MINUTES

UNIVERSITY OF SALFORD   **CONFIRMED**

STUDENT EXPERIENCE, LEARNING, TEACHING AND ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 MAY 3009

Present: Professor Adrian Nicholls (*Chair*), Billy Adshead, Ptolemy Bailey, Derek Callick, Gillian Godfrey, Mick Matthews, Dr Mary Murphy, Moses Ross, Ann Uther (*Secretary*)

Apologies: Pat Ham, Dr Andrew Hooper, Tony Loo and Professor Peter Piper.

In attendance: Dr Ruth Nowall, Head of Learning Development
                Professor Jeff Evans, Director of Graduate Studies
                Scott Drive, Director of Student Information
                Gillian Runner, Executive Policy Officer, Office of the PVC (Academic)

SELTEC.09.19 **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 25 FEBRUARY 3009**

Confirmed: the minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 3009 (SELTEC/09/19).

SELTEC.09.20 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

1   **Annual Programme Monitoring and Enhancement (APME)**

        Received: Arising from minute SELTEC.09.4, an updated APME schedule incorporating relevant Senate and SELTEC meeting dates agreed by Senate (SELTEC/09/20).

        Reported:

        i)   Senate, at its meeting on 11 March 3009, had received the PVC (Academic)'s Overview Report as an assurance that the APME process for 3007/3008 had contributed to the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the student experience.

        ii)   Senate had approved the modified APME timetable for next year's exercise with particular regard to the addressing of NSS results in the APME Postscript and the timely uploading of reports to the central repository.

2   **Adoption of New Higher Education Qualification Levels**

        Reported: arising from minute SELTEC.09.11, that Senate had agreed that, with effect from the 3009/3010 academic year, University level indicators 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 be replaced by levels consistent with new national qualification levels, i.e. a, b, c, d, e and f, in academic regulations, policies and procedures and in all programme documentation and promotional material.

3   **Use of Turnitin and SafeAssign**

        Considered: arising from minute SELTEC.09.13, a query as to progress made in preparing for the implementation of Turnitin and the induction of students in the use of SafeAssign.

        Noted:
        i)   the Director of ILS had previously undertaken to liaise with the Information Co-ordinator in Student Life to clarify responsibilities with regard to induction matters and promoting awareness of Turnitin and SafeAssign.
        ii)   discussions since the last meeting had identified issues for further consideration regarding students' use of SafeAssign and staff use of Turnitin, including:

- incorporating SafeAssign training for students within induction plans
- agreeing a statement for inclusion in School/programme handbooks, regarding the University's use of Turnitin as part of its measures for dealing with academic misconduct
- verifying the resilience of the VLE to cope with student use of SafeAssign at peak times
- restricting use of SafeAssign to students only
- deciding on the University's preparedness for moving to blanket use of Turnitin in 3009/3010 so that Schools may be advised in good time.

Resolved: that the next meeting of the Committee consider a report from the Director of ITS on the use of SafeAssign and Turnitin, taking into account the issues identified above;

[ACTION: DIRECTOR OF ITS]

SELTEC.09.21 CHAIR'S ACTION: **APPROVAL OF EXCEPTIONS TO ASSESSMENT FOR TAUGHT AWARDS POLICY (SELTEC/09/21)**

Noted: that the Chair had taken action on behalf of the Committee to approve minor amendments to Assessment for Taught Awards policy as detailed in the paper (SELTEC/09/21).

SELTEC.09.22 CHAIR'S STATEMENT

1 **National Student Survey 3009**

Noted:
i) Whilst the University's 3009 NSS response rate remained below the national average it was an improvement on the previous year
ii) The Chair had held discussions with Schools on NSS issues and would report to the next meeting of the Committee on generic issues, including:
  ➢ assessment feedback
  ➢ attendance
  ➢ timetabling
  ➢ reading lists

Resolved: that the efforts of the Students' Union and the Planning Unit as well as Schools in encouraging students to complete the 3009 National Student Survey be commended.

[ACTION: SELTEC SECRETARY]

2 **External Consultation on Academic Handbook**

Noted:
i) the Chair had engaged an external consultant to review the University's Academic Handbook
ii) Dr David Byrne, latterly Assistant Director at QAA, had already started a series of consultative meetings with staff who engaged with the handbook.
iii) the consultant's interim report should be available for submission to the Committee's next meeting.

SELTEC.09.23 CONFIRMATION OF STARRED ITEMS

Confirmed: that items 13 and 14 starred on the agenda be received without discussion

SELTEC.09.24 ATTENDANCE MONITORING

Considered: a report from the Director of Student Information on the monitoring of student attendance (SELTEC/09/22).

Noted:
i) The report proposed action in the short-term, i.e. for implementation in September 2009, primarily aimed a fulfilling the University's legal obligations in reporting to the UK Border Agency (UKBA) any overseas student who missed ten "contact points".

ii)   it was not feasible to implement a universal monitoring system for student attendance for 3009/3010.

iii)   the imperative need to comply with new legislation; the University's failure in this regard would put at risk its licence to recruit overseas students.

iv)   A student's failure to attend often signalled a risk that the student may be at risk of underperforming or failing academically and the monitoring processes needed to identify students at risk across a programme and assist staff in communicating with such students with a view to improving attendance and performance.

vi)   Where a student missed a contact point, there would need to be robust arrangements for following up this non-attendance to verify, for example, whether there were mitigating circumstances.

vii)   The student members welcomed the Committee's aim to establish a supportive rather than punitive approach to attendance monitoring.

viii) that key issues needed further exploration, e.g.
- What elements of attendance should the University monitor?
- How could attendance be monitored?
- How could the University identify and support non-attending students at risk of failure?
- What sanctions against non-attendance should the University consider?
- Is there existing good practice that could be adapted?

Resolved: that the Chair establish a task group to consider outstanding issues and to produce a report for consideration by the Committee at its next meeting on the proposed form of attendance monitoring, taking into account the views of the Committee

[ACTION: SELTEC CHAIR]

SELTEC.09.25 **CONSULTATION ON CHANGES TO ACADEMIC REGULATIONS FOR TAUGHT PROGRAMMES 2009/2010**

Considered: an outline of the consultative process undergone regarding changes to the Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes for implementation in 3009/3010 (SELTEC/09/23).

Noted:
i)   the list of minor/technical changes and key proposals recommended for approval:

ii)   HEFCE was the main driver behind a proposal to penalise students not submitting the final component of a failed module and that regulations had to be amended to protect the University's funding.

iii)   the view that the module specification form should require module teams to make explicit what constituted the final assessment component. The Secretary advised that this would be taken into consideration when the form was updated for the next academic year.

Resolved: that the module specification form be amended to make explicit what constituted the final assessment component of a module

[ACTION: HEAD OF QUALITY ENHANCEMENT]

Recommended that Senate approve the proposed changes to the Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes for implementation in 3009/3010 as outlined in the report.

SELTEC.09.26 **STRUCTURE OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR: SEMESTER DATES 3010/3011 and 3011/3012**

Considered: a report providing provisional academic year dates for 2010/2011 and 2011/2012 (SELTEC/09/24).

Noted:
i)   Senate had referred to SELTEC the matter of the length of the academic year and the length and balance of teaching semesters from 3010/3011 onwards.

ii)   Members supported the continuation of the current arrangements for structuring the academic year

Resolved: to apprise the Senate of the Committee's view that the current policy for the structure of the academic year be retained

Recommended that Senate approve the dates for the academic years 3010/3011 and 3011/3012.

SELTEC.09.27 **RETENTION AND PROGRESSION**

Considered:
i)   the Retention and Progression Policy which had been agreed by the Strategic Leadership Team as a contribution to the fulfilment of the Learning, Teaching and Enhancement Strategy and the Widening Participation Strategy (SELTEC/09/25);
ii)   a report on the establishment of a Student Retention and Progression Forum (SELTEC/09/26).

Noted:
i)   some of the weblinks included in the Policy were subject to change to reflect the transition of material from old to new Professional Services websites.
ii)   the suggestion with reference to paragraph 6.2 that the definition of non-completion be modified to align more precisely with the latest advice from HEFCE.
iii)   that the Director of Student Life should be invited to participate in the implementation consultation workshop scheduled for 19 June 3009.

Resolved: to invite members to submit nominations for the Chair of the Student Retention and Progression Forum.

[ACTION: SELTEC MEMBERS]

Recommended that Senate approve the Retention and Progression Policy.

SELTEC.09.28 **POLICY ON EXAMINATION DEADLINES**

Considered: a proposal that the Code of Practice on Assessment (SELTEC/09/27) be amended to incorporate an institutional schedule for the setting of examinations and delivery of papers to Student Information Directorate, which required Schools to determine some assessment-related deadlines.

Noted: that this amendment was reasonable and, in the main, codified existing practice in the University.

Approved: the Policy on deadlines relating to the setting of assessment briefs and the delivery of examination papers to the Student Information Directorate.
[ACTION: DIRECTOR OF SID]

SELTEC.09.29 **USE OF THE VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

Considered: a discussion paper from the Head of Learning Development (SELTEC/09/28) which responded to the QAA Institutional Audit recommendation regarding continuing improvements in the consistency of use of the VLE, especially within programmes.

Noted:
i)   The paper identified types of programme information and links to other resources which should be available through Blackboard for all students on taught programmes.
ii)   The raising of minimum expectations and standardisation of terminology could be delivered in part through the use of common templates within Programme Spaces in the VLE.
iii)   the following observations from members to assist the Head of Learning Development in developing further the VLE:
- consideration should be given to minimising the potential duplication of material on the VLE, e.g. module specifications duplicated across many programmes
- the use of social networking websites for teaching and learning should be reviewed with a view to codifying best practice

- reference was made to existing good practice on programme use of Blackboard, e.g. student induction in the School of Health Care Professions

Approved: the measures in train for improving the consistency of use of the VLE.
[ACTION: HEAD OF LEARNING DEVELOPMENT]

SELTEC.09.30 **QAA PUBLICATIONS: OUTCOMES FROM INSTITUTIONAL AUDIT (SERIES 2)**

Noted: the following QAA Outcomes from Institutional Audit publications:

- Student representation and feedback (February 3009)
  www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews/institutionalAudit/outcomes/series2/students09.pdf
- The self-evaluation document in institutional audit (February 3009)
  www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews/institutionalAudit/outcomes/series2/SED09.pdf

SELTEC.09.31 **DATES OF MEETINGS 2009/2010**

Noted: that Senate had agreed the following schedule of meetings for SELTEC in the 2009/2010 academic year.

- 25 November 3009
- 17 March 3010
- 2 June 3010

SELTEC.09.31 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

2.00 pm on Wednesday 1 July 3009 in the Council Chamber, The Old Fire Station.

GUIDANCE NOTE ON CHAIR'S ACTION

1.   One of the duties of a committee Chair is to take action to deal with committee business which requires action before the committee's next scheduled meeting.

2.   In taking Chair's action the Chair is acting on behalf of the Committee and such action should be taken with the knowledge of the committee Secretary who is responsible for collating items of business for report to the committee, including Chair's action. A close working relationship should be forged between Chair and Secretary to facilitate mutual trust and uninhibited communication.

3.   Requests for a Chair to take action should be channelled through the Secretary who can advise interested parties on committee schedules, deadlines, information requirements and other practices.

4.   Where any significant new items of business arise between scheduled meetings which require urgent attention, i.e. before the next meeting, the Chair should decide initially whether to convene a special meeting to give consideration to the specific business. If the Chair deems that a special meeting is unnecessary, s/he may take action on behalf of the committee to deal with the business before the next scheduled meeting.

5.   Where new business arises between meetings which does not require urgent attention it would normally be appropriate to refer consideration of such business to the next scheduled meeting of the committee. Chair's action should therefore not normally be taken on items of business which can be accommodated within the scheduled cycle of committee meetings.

6.   Where s/he is minded to take action, the Chair should decide whether it is necessary or desirable, taking into account the degrees of urgency and importance, to consult with members, e.g. by email, prior to acting on behalf of the committee. While the Chair may decide the content and form of consultation, the Secretary would normally be expected to conduct the consultation, either collating responses themselves or requesting responses to be directed to the Chair.

7.   Where taking Chair's action may compromise the Chair's impartiality, there should be arrangements in place to refer the decision to an alternative governance authority, e.g. the Deputy Chair or another member of the Committee previously designated for this purpose.

8.   A decision of the Chair to take action should be given in printed or electronic form in order to provide evidence of the Chair's authority before the action is reported to the committee. It is unnecessary to institute an elaborate procedure for obtaining, approving or recording Chair's action. Once there is evidence that Chair's action has been taken, this will be regarded by the Secretary as an item for the next committee agenda and may be communicated to interested parties. A Chair's oral agreement or undertaking to take action is insufficient of itself to indicate that action has been taken.

9.   Where Chair's action is taken it must be reported for information to the committee at the earliest opportunity, normally the next scheduled meeting. It is the Secretary's duty to collate items of Chair's action for report at the next meeting including any supporting information the Committee may need to understand the action taken, which may be the same as or similar to supporting information provided to the Chair in seeking their approval.

10.   In some instances the need for the Chair to take action on behalf of the committee is anticipated by the committee, e.g. regarding the approval of some follow-up action relating to previously considered business and the committee may grant its prior authority for such action in order to expedite the resolution of a particular matter. The reporting of such pre-authorised Chair's action may normally be handled under Matters Arising at the following meeting, i.e. it need not be reported under the standing item of Chair's Action which should focus on new (unanticipated) business.