



University Services

Court & Other Services: Senate Office

Strategic Plan to 2013/14 incorporating Annual Plan 2011-12

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Introduction and high level description of scope of service

In 1 paragraph, describe what service(s) you deliver and to whom

The Senate Office provides a range of academic services to students and staff across the University. The Senate Office is also at the interface between the academic side of the University and the external environment. As such, it also acts as chief liaison with a number of external bodies, notably, the Quality Assurance Agency for HE, the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman and, with respect to the University's quality assurance and enhancement responsibilities, the Scottish Funding Council. Accordingly, much Office activity is undertaken in compliance with statutory and/or Funding Council/ sector requirements. These are activities over which the Office and University have little or no control and we are required to carry them out. In consequence, it is not always possible to link activity straightforwardly to the Strategic Plan

Engagement with stakeholders and service users

*How do you engage with stakeholders/users? What mechanisms do you use to determine users needs and how do you gather feedback on the service you provide? **Include your engagement plan following the US Away Day held on 7 October.***

- Annual planning of activity, review and update of committee operations and remits in conjunction with memberships.
- Direct consultation – feedback, briefing and de-briefing meetings (notably with respect to quality and other processes – Periodic Subject Review , Annual Monitoring, the External Examiner system, Senate Assessors for the student Codes, et al).
- Working with College Business Development Managers on potential collaborations.
- Consultation with SRC, notably re Student-related Codes, quality and committee operations; range of partnership/joint work –eg, NSS and student representation.
- Annual reports to Court, Senate and committees on activities – eg, operation of Student Codes, Period Subject Review and External Examiner overview reports.
- Annual reporting to external stakeholders – notably, SFC and QAA.
- Publicising Senate-related initiatives on the Office website – notably, the 'Work in Progress' web pages, which include input from R&E colleagues.
- Monitoring of external HE and legislative developments to benchmark and identify good practice and ensure appropriate strategic development and practice within the University.
- Induction for student and staff groups.

Delivering Excellent Research

Context

(paragraph identifying how your service helps deliver the University's strategic priorities)

The Senate Office will continue to contribute to the support of the growing community of PhD and other PGR students. We provide regulatory structures and associated guidance to the staff and student communities for the PGR degrees themselves, and also the Codes which support these students – e.g. appeals and complaints. (Good complaints and appeals management contributes to the enhancement of the student experience and supports the stated University value of success in '*continually striving to be better than we are in everything we do*'). The Office also advises on the significant proportion of proposed collaborations with partner universities that relate to PGR students.

There has been a steady increase in the number of joint or dual PhD proposals, including a number of Framework agreements. There are currently 8 Joint/Double (dual) PhD arrangements, which include 2 Framework agreements with Macquarie University and the University of Malaya. There are also 2 Framework arrangements under discussion. The Senate Office will continue to work closely with the PGR Office to streamline procedures and support for staff. This includes the development of template agreements for Joint/Double (dual) PhDs, both individual and framework arrangements.

Objectives for improving the service provided and assisting the delivery of the University's Strategic Plan

- To continue to enhance the regulatory framework re research students, including a review of regulations for Masters degrees by Research
- To continue to enhance student related Codes as they bear on research students
- To continue to enhance processes and performance in facilitating academic collaborations concerning research students.
- To further develop PGR Representative structures to reflect those that are in place for taught students and to support SRC in developing supporting documentation and training that is relevant to PGR students whether by adapting existing material or by creating separate, specific documentation and training for PGR students.

Action	By when/performance indicator
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete the development of template agreements for Joint/Double PhD degrees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• December 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• With the PGR Office, look for further opportunities to streamline procedures for the establishment of joint or dual PhDs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finalise policy on PhD double degrees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• December 2011

Providing an Excellent Student Experience

Context

(paragraph identifying how your service helps deliver the University's strategic priorities)

The majority of the work of the Senate Office contributes to this strategic area, given the direct link with the student learning experience through the development, monitoring and review of academic strategies and policies and student codes, including quality assurance and enhancement of provision, and support for Senate's key academic policy committees.

The Office is responsible for the management of the delivery of the Learning & Teaching Strategy (embracing the University's response to its institutional reviews). Monitoring and advising on progress, and with direct responsibility for delivery of substantial areas of the associated Action Plan.

In terms of the stated strategic priorities in this area our involvement is:

Visionary course development, delivery and review

Management and on-going enhancement of the University's QE and QA procedures: annual monitoring; external examining; programme and course approval; periodic subject review. Aiming to achieve an appropriate balance of efficiency and robustness in these systems and disseminating best academic practice identified through them for the benefit of programme quality. Management of University participation in external institutional reviews. Promotion of staff expertise through management of the Teaching Excellence Awards.

Effective student engagement and support

Ensuring student involvement in the above processes; active engagement and consultation with the SRC; enhancement of feedback mechanisms; enhancement of the student representation system to improve consistency. Support for the development of the new student advisory system, for the Chief Advisers' Sub Committee and for the Student Support & Development Committee. Management, with input from Planning Services, of University participation in NSS.

The Office manages the University's validation arrangements with its UK based partners. The Code of Practice for Validation will be updated to reflect and be consistent with the Framework for Academic Collaborations (see section on Extending Global Reach and Reputation). To improve the consistency of sharing information between the University and validated partners on good practice and on enhancements to the student learning experience, this topic has been included as a standing item on agendas of Joint Board meetings and as a heading within annual reports from validated partners

Excellent student learning environments

Supporting the development of excellent student learning environments through policy development which is also informed and supported by the QA and QE processes detailed above (notably, through Annual Monitoring).

Safe campus environment

Management of student-related codes covering conduct, acceptable behaviour and complaints. Ensuring that these procedures operate objectively and transparently to ensure that any student (or third party) conduct issues take into account the University's duty of care to all members of its community and ensure a safe environment in which to study and work.

Ceremony

It is notable that it is difficult to relate much of the ceremonial activity of the Office to Strategic Plan headings/objectives. There is involvement here with the SRC, and at normal graduations, where students can be inspired by the achievements of distinguished Hon Graduates.

Objectives for improving the service provided and assisting the delivery of the University's Strategic Plan

- To manage delivery of L&T Strategy Action Plan in support of the Vice-Principal (L&T)
- To deliver L&T Strategy objectives directly assigned
- To lead policy development in other areas contributing to the improvement of the student experience
- To continue to enhance University QE&A processes

Action	By when/performance indicator
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Management of progress against L&T Strategy targets –See Annex A for further detail.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Per L&T Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deliver 'Quality Process' actions in L&T Strategy & other areas assigned embracing range of policy and process developments – eg: Retention, 'Student Voice' initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Per L&T Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lead development of HEAR for UoG	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• HEAR to be issued (from MyCampus) to graduates (UG & PGT) in 2012.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support implementation of new student advisory system	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Successful implementation of Transitional Model of Advising for 2011-12 to support introduction of MyCampus• Intended full implementation of Undergraduate Advising Scheme in 2012-13 with development of training and support materials throughout 2011-12
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Planned enhancements of QE/A processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of Annual Monitoring processes and templates with Quality Officers Forum (QOF)• Inclusion of Graduate Attributes in Annual and Periodic Monitoring processes for implementation in 2012-13.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continued support for Teaching Infrastructure WG	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ongoing

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved dissemination of assessment policy and regulations • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timed messages to staff and students pointing to relevant assessment information.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update CofP for validation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January 2012

Extending Global Reach and Reputation

Context

(paragraph identifying how your service helps deliver the University's strategic priorities)

Strengthening international partnerships

Senate Office has restructured to ensure activity is closely integrated with that of the International Partnership Development Project Manager to ensure the timely provision of advice to academic colleagues in relation to potential partnerships, particularly the approval process and necessary quality assurance and enhancement processes. To facilitate this, the Office has overhauled the Code of Practice on Collaborations and replaced it with the [Framework for Academic Collaborations](#), which is a quality manual as well as a practical "How To" guide and toolkit for academic and support staff. Work is in progress to convert this to a web-resource. It should be noted that the Office is dependent on RIO resources to start this work as the Framework will be hosted on the Internationalisation webpages, which they maintain. There is currently a limitation on that resource.

Staff in the Office delivered a very successful workshop, International Academic Collaborations: An Introduction, through the Staff Development Service's internationalisation programme. Further workshops will be provided as part of the implementation plan for the dissemination of the Collaborations Framework to staff across the University. It is hoped that as information on processes, timescales and responsibilities is cascaded out to Colleges and Schools, and as they build plans for international partnerships in to the planning and budgetary process, these should assist better forward planning and workload planning on the part of the Office.

SO has extensive role in managing established collaborative links. Expansion in this area is generating additional work and requires to be monitored closely.

Growing our international student community

The Senate Office will continue to respond supportively and positively to University plans for expansion of its provision for PGT. SO is responsible for the management of student codes in relation to appeals, conduct and complaints. In recent years there has been an increase in case work relating to international students. International students now make up a significant proportion of the student cases for appeals, conduct and complaints managed by the Senate Office. During 2010-11, almost two thirds of serious student cases handled by the Senate Office (appeals, complaints, referrals to the Senate Conduct Committee) involved international students. . The greatest increase in the international student community will be in relation to PGT. Deans of Graduate Schools are taking forward the implementation of the new advising system for PGT students with an overview from the Clerk of Senate and clerk of CASC. Consequently, this should benefit the experience for international students.

Expanding international learning opportunities for all students

The Office will coordinate implementation of the recommended principles for the treatment of marks received by students from international Partner Institutions to ensure they are treated equitably.

Developing collaborative degree programmes.

A consequence of strengthening international partnerships is an increase in the development of collaborative degree programmes According to the figures available within the Senate Office, since 2006, 38 agreements have been completed or are nearing completion. This consists of 16 Articulation agreements, 12 Record of Prior Learning

agreements, 5 double degree arrangements and 5 jointly awarded research programmes. In addition, since 2006, the Office has responded to a number of requests for assistance [in excess of 29 European proposals and 82 overseas]. Some of these are still live but others have not progressed any further. Nevertheless, they have all required significant input from the Office. The University is required to ensure that any new collaborative arrangements comply with QAA and SFC requirements. Collaborative activity is the subject of close scrutiny by the QAA; the Office ensures University procedures are kept up to date in this regard.

The establishment of the School of Engineering's new partnership with the Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT) and the School of Education's new partnership with Majan College represent new ventures for the University and there are plans to extend the relationship with SIT. These partnerships will need to be monitored to ensure we are providing an excellent student experience.

Objectives for improving the service provided and assisting the delivery of the University's Strategic Plan

- Increase awareness in Colleges, Schools and University Services of the procedures around the development, approval, implementation and management of collaborative arrangements
- Continue to develop the service for staff provided by the Collaborations Unit in the light of experience from new and established collaborations
- To continue to develop and enhance processes and procedures for the development, approval, implementation and management of academic collaborations that comply with QAA and SFC requirements

Action	By when/performance indicator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete conversion of Framework for Academic Collaborations to a web-based resource. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January-February 2012
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a plan for the dissemination of the Collaborations Framework to staff across the University to cascade information on processes, timescales and responsibilities out to Colleges, Schools and University Services with a view to facilitating forward planning and workload planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To implement the plan by Session 2012/13 with roll-out commencing December 2011.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead application of Assessment of Study Abroad principles during first year of operation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principles added to Assessment Policy, regulations added to Code of Assessment for 2011-12.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other procedural developments e.g. review the membership and reporting lines of the Collaborations Group and the development of a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • February 2012

termination procedure for MoAs and MoUs.	
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Staff

Context

(paragraph identifying how your service helps deliver the University's strategic priorities)

The Office seeks to promote and encourage a service culture that is accountable, responsive, progressive and efficient, consistent with the objectives of University Services. The University's shared values of Excellence, Innovation, Collegiality, Integrity, Inclusiveness and Responsiveness underlie our activities and how we present to our clients.

Because the work of the Office is strongly linked to the Strategic Plan and the Learning & Teaching Strategy in particular, our staff generally have a good awareness of strategic priorities. We continue to work with our staff to revisit and reinforce this awareness. Staff are highly committed and form a well integrated, flexible team.

We will continue to apply the Performance & Development Review process 'to nurture personal learning and development in our staff, enabling them to fulfil their potential and align their career aspirations with the needs of the University.'

As noted in the previous section the Office will increase staff awareness in Colleges, Schools and University Services of the procedures around the development, approval, implementation and management of collaborative arrangements.

Objectives for improving the service provided and assisting the delivery of the University's Strategic Plan

To continue, through the P&DR and on-going management of staff, to improve awareness of corporate values and link between individual, team and Office performance and strategic goals.

Action	By when/performance indicator
• No specific actions identified	

Processes and Systems

Context

(paragraph identifying how your service helps deliver the University's strategic priorities)

The Senate Office operates human and computer based systems to carry out its activities and these will interface with MyCampus as it comes on-stream. A number of human-based systems are dealt with above. By monitoring the operation of our systems and reviewing feedback from users we provide focussed, flexible and responsive services. For example, the Office has established positive relationships and interfaces well with the structures established in the University restructuring. Particular examples of this are the regular meetings with Heads of Academic & Student Administration and work with College colleagues on the processes associated with the student codes. In publicising the development work being carried out under the auspices of Senate, we liaise with R&E colleagues. Piloting of the use of Sharepoint in Periodic Subject Review has been successful and will be extended across other areas of activity.

The University is required to keep a database of all collaborative arrangements and the Office has been working with the Development and Alumni Office to have the Office database transferred to Raiser's Edge. This work is nearing completion.

Work will be taken forward with RIO to establish a mechanism for the review of Memoranda of Understanding.

Objectives for improving the service provided and assisting the delivery of the University's Strategic Plan

- The promotion of an improved tenor for discussions at Senate and for its relations with Court and other stakeholders; associated operational improvements; clarification of associated governance matters.
- Extended use of Sharepoint – e.g. for Discussion Forum for members of Senate.
- Building on introduction of on-line system for external examiner report submission, improved service for the University community and external examiners through fundamental process upgrade (Technical work being taken forward by IT Services).
- Improve management information around collaborative partnerships.

Action	By when/performance indicator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to the work of the Senate Communications Working Group; manage implementation of changes arising. (Including introduction of Sharepoint discussion forum). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Per Senate decisions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the process of appointing the next Clerk of Senate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring 2012
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extension of new electronic document management system for external examiner processes across the University. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer 2012 (subject to IT Services Support)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the development of the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November 2011

<p>Raiser's Edge collaborations database to provide accurate information to the public and the Schools/Colleges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update collaborations information on website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January 2012
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a system for the renewal or termination of MoAs to ensure that timely consideration is given to the future of the partnership by the Schools/Colleges in advance of expiry dates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • February 2012
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With RIO, establish a mechanism for the review of Memoranda of Understanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April 2012

Infrastructure

Context

(paragraph identifying how your service helps deliver the University's strategic priorities)

The Strategic Plan's reference this section to *Transparent, flexible and responsive human and computer based processes* overlaps with our commentary in the above section – Processes and Systems. Also relevant here is work referred to under providing an excellent student experience in support of the Teaching Infrastructure Working Group, and the use of quality assurance outputs to inform priorities for teaching space upgrades.

Objectives for improving the service provided and assisting the delivery of the University's Strategic Plan

Action	By when/performance indicator
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No specific actions identified.	

Analysis of key risks

Please identify the main risks to you achieving your plans, including business continuity, together with the required mitigating actions. Where there are dependencies on other Services you should agree that with the other Service(s).

Description of risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigating actions
Failure to fulfil statutory obligations, especially re the student experience	High Legal costs; reputational damage for Office and Univ	Low Impossible to anticipate – reliance on staff outwith SO	Regular case discussions internally and consultation of senior external colleagues as required; insurers advised of potential legal action; monitoring of external sector and legal developments.
Failure to adhere to compliance requirements of SFC and QAA and sector expectations through compromised delivery of QA for standards and quality enhancement	High In extreme case, finding of limited or even no confidence in UoG. Reputational damage potentially affecting recruitment	Low Limited or no confidence judgement unlikely, but slippage in progress could affect peer respect.	Monitoring of the effectiveness of processes; checking UoG procedures meet sector expectations; monitoring of sector developments.
Failure to resolve governance issues re Senate	High Difficult relations with academic community (with loss of good will); reputational damage	Medium/High This year will be v important	Strong support and guidance to Senate, Principal and Clerk of S; work with Senate Comms Working Gp
Lack of capacity to meet Univ expectations re development work	Medium Failure to achieve strategic goals; Univ falls behind sector; reputational damage; Office morale hit	Low Not presently anticipated	Communications with Deputy Secretary; close work in support of VP L&T and CofS.
Lack of capacity to meet SRC expectations of support	High Damage to reputation of Office and Univ; Office morale hit	Low Not presently anticipated	Influencing and negotiating with SRC colleagues.
Mistakes due to staff inexperience or being overstretched	Medium Depends on context, but reputational damage likely (Office &/or UoG)	Low Difficult to predict	Application of good staff management practices, esp re communication
Lack of capacity to support the expansion of	Medium Failure to achieve	Medium/ High Impact of growth	Increase awareness of responsibilities of Schools/RIs and Colleges; ensure

international, collaborative partnerships	strategic goals; UoG falls behind sector; reputational damage; Office morale hit	on workloads will be monitored Depends on Colleges plans for internationalisation	Schools/RIs and Colleges are taking ownership of functions/processes; continue to look for ways to increase efficiency and streamline procedures
Failure to adhere to compliance requirements of SFC and QAA for collaborative arrangements	High In extreme case, finding of limited or even no confidence in UoG. Reputational damage potentially affecting recruitment	Low Limited or no confidence judgement unlikely, but slippage in progress could affect peer respect.	Increase awareness of responsibilities of Schools/RIs and Colleges. Monitoring of the effectiveness of processes; checking UoG procedures meet sector expectations; monitoring of sector developments.

Senate Office Annual Plan 2011-12
Providing an Excellent Student Experience

A major way the Senate Office contributes to University strategy and to providing an excellent student experience is through its support for the Learning & Teaching Strategy Action Plan.

The Learning & Teaching Strategy Action Plan is divided into nine different projects and fifty separate initiatives. Senate Office has responsibility for management of the delivery of the Plan in its totality. This is overseen by the Vice-Principal (L&T) and EDPSC, with detailed monitoring carried out by the L&T Committee. The Office has singly or in partnership with others responsibility for taking forward a number of the individual actions. The Director of the SO is the Project Lead for the Process Improvement Project.

The Action Plan was updated in August 2011. The next main update is scheduled for late Semester 2 in 2012.

The Senate Office has involvement in the following individual developments (numbered per the Action Plan):

Project 1 – Assessment & Feedback		
No.	Short Description	Status
1	Student Voice Website	In progress
2	Student feedback (evaluation)	In progress
3	Feedback on assessment	Ongoing
8	NSS Action Plans	In progress
Project 2 – Graduate Attributes		
8	GAs, employability & validated provision	In progress
Project 6 – Equality & Diversity		
1	Equality & Diversity agenda	Ongoing
Project 7 – Innovation in our Provision		
2	Engagement with Enhancement Themes	Ongoing
3	Approach to quality enhancement	Ongoing
4	Integration of approaches to QE	Ongoing
5	Dissemination of Good Practice	In progress
Project 9 – Process Improvement		
1	School & College Quality Officers' role	Ongoing
2	Collaborative provision	Ongoing
4	Collab & validation Codes	In progress
5	Mechanism to track good practice	Ongoing
7	Management Info from CS	In progress
8	External examiners	In progress
9	Collab Code & Year 1 plans for partnerships	In progress
10	Programme design & approval	In progress
11	PSR reflectiveness	In progress
12	Programme scrutiny consistency	In progress
13	External input to programme scrutiny	Completed
14	Continuing Validity of programmes in PSR process	Completed
15	External members on validation panels	Completed
16	Formal review of validation agreements	In progress
17	Partner use of UoG logo	Completed
20	Annual monitoring of PGT	Ongoing
22	Exam Board discretion	In progress

23	Collab provision: student experience	In progress
24	Academic Standards	In progress

Full details of the individual actions may be found at:-

<http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/senateoffice/qea/actionplan/>