

University of Glasgow

Council of Senate: 13 April 2017

Implementation of the HE Governance (Scotland) Act 2016:

Measures concerning the Senate at the University of Glasgow, 2017:

Working Group Proposals and final report

Cover Note

This is the final report of the HE Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 Working Group concerning the implementation of the Act at the University of Glasgow in respect of its implications for the University Senate.

The Working Group submitted a preliminary report for comment to the Council of Senate on 6 October 2016. That document set out options for the implementation of the Act, together with the Working Group's recommendations and their rationales¹. The Council was supportive of the recommendations and, specifically, endorsed the Working Group recommendation that the Council of Senate should form the basis of the new Senate. The Working Group has considered the comments made at the October Council meeting and **the Council of Senate is now requested to endorse the proposals in this paper**. (Legal advice has been obtained which confirms that the Council of Senate may do this on behalf of the current full Senate and that a meeting of the current Senate is not required for this purpose.)

The proposals are consistent with the working Group's October 2016 report and the resulting discussion at the Council of Senate, with one departure: It will be recollected that the proposed composition of the new Senate will require an Ordinance and the latter – requiring Privy Council approval – may take some time to achieve. However, it is no longer proposed that we move to act 'as if' the proposals have been fully approved from the start of 2017-18 regardless of Privy Council approval having been secured. The reason for this is that there is very little material difference between the arrangements for the Council of Senate and the new Senate. To introduce an interim body on a very temporary basis now seems an unnecessary complication².

The matter of producing a recommendation concerning the gender balance of the elected membership of the new Senate was also remitted to the Working Group and the Group had intended to propose the introduction of gender quotas³. However, legal advice is that such a measure would be open to challenge as potentially unlawful. Nonetheless, the Working Group is of the view that positive action should be taken by the Senate Office to help ensure a good gender balance is achieved and maintained and for itself supports the proportions of 40% male, 40% female and 20% of any gender suggested at the Council of Senate meeting in October 2016.

¹ Please see https://frontdoor.spa.gla.ac.uk/commdoc/senate/CS/Agenda/agenda_2016-10-06.htm

² It will also be recalled that provision for calling a meeting of the full current Senate remains in place.

³ Currently, the 124 member Council of Senate is only 36% female (compared to 29% for the full Senate). Within the Elected Membership, 40% are female.

The paper is in two main parts: the first is a formal statement of the proposals themselves; part 2 provides explanatory notes underlying the proposals – these should be read in conjunction with the proposals.

The proposals are grouped into three sections:

Part 1: Proposals

Section A: The composition of Senate

- Final approval of the associated measures will require revision of the present Ordinances concerning Senate's composition. *The procedure for this involves endorsement by the Privy Council as well as within the University.*

Section B: Method of election of members of Senate and Transitional Arrangements

- Under the provisions of the 2016 Act, *these measures require to be adopted by the University Court and will be recommended to Court on that basis.*

Section C: Arrangements for meetings of Senate and the appointment of officers and committees of Senate

- *These matters are approved by Senate, and can be approved at the meeting, subject to the approval by Court or the Privy Council of the remaining proposals.*

Part 2: Explanatory notes-

- to be read in conjunction with the statement of the proposals. The notes also include comment on some of the likely impacts of the changes on the academic governance of the University and on the remit and membership of the Working Group.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE COUNCIL OF SENATE

- 1. To endorse the proposals in Section A for onward transmission to the University Court for endorsement and the commencement of the procedure for a new Ordinance concerning the composition of Senate.**
- 2. To endorse the proposals in Section B for onward transmission to Court recommending that Court approves and adopts the measures concerned.**
- 3. To approve the proposals in Section C.**

University of Glasgow

Council of Senate

Implementation of the HE Governance (Scotland) Act 2016:

Measures concerning the Senate at the University of Glasgow, 2017

1. Proposals

A. Composition of the new Senate

The 2016 Act prescribes: 'Other members as are appointed by virtue of an enactment; in accordance with the governing document of the institution; and/or in accordance with a decision of the governing body of the institution.' The relevant 'governing document' here would be an Ordinance⁴.

The proposed composition of Senate is:

Ex officio members: The Principal (Convener)
The Clerk of Senate
The Vice-Principals
Heads of School
Directors of Research Institutes
The Chief Operating Officer⁵
Members co-opted onto Senate to permit their appointment as
Senate Assessors on Court

Student members: To comprise 10% (rounded to the nearest integer above) of the total membership of Senate, appointed by and from the students of the University, and drawn from across the University in proportions corresponding approximately to the composition of the overall student body, with respect to both the relative student numbers in the academic disciplines and to the relative numbers of undergraduates, taught postgraduates and research students. The number of student members shall be kept under review to ensure the number of student members (other than through a casual vacancy) continue to comprise at least 10% of the total membership. The foregoing notwithstanding, in no circumstances shall the number of student members exceed thirty⁶.

Elected staff members: Elected staff members shall be twice the number of ex-officio members, and they shall be elected by and from the academic staff of the University⁷. Ex-officio members of the Council of Senate are

⁴ In practice, this will involve amendment of University Ordinance 192 (as previously amended by Ordinances 195, 196 & 198). See notes also.

⁵ That is, the officer who was previously entitled Secretary of Court.

⁶ Section 15 (3) of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 refers.

⁷ That is, teaching and/or research staff.

not eligible to stand as elected members, but are permitted to participate in votes for elected members in the College corresponding to their own academic discipline. Academic staff who are not part of a College shall form part of the College constituency which most closely corresponds with their academic field. The number of ex officio members of Senate shall be kept under review to ensure the number of elected staff members (other than through a casual vacancy) remains twice the number of members ex officio.

With the endorsement of the Council of Senate and the University Court and subject to the statutory approval procedure for new Ordinances, the measures proposed in Part A shall be reflected in a new Ordinance concerning the composition of Senate.

B. Method of election of members of Senate and Transitional Arrangements for establishment of the new Senate

The 2016 Act specifies that ‘the election process is to be conducted in accordance with rules made by the governing body of the institution’ [S 11 (2)] and that these rules ‘may include (in particular)(a) provision specifying the number of appointments to be made’ and ‘(b) different provision for different vacancies.’ [S 11(3)] The governing body at the University of Glasgow is the University Court.

Proposed method of election of student members

It is proposed that the election of student members of Senate is carried out by the Students’ Representative Council (SRC), subject to the prescriptions set out above regarding the composition of the student members of Senate. The elected student members shall also be appointed as members of the SRC Council in accordance with the terms of appointment to the Council.

Proposed method of election of staff members

The proposed method of election of academic members of staff to Senate is:

The Colleges shall act as constituencies for the purposes of the election of members of academic staff to Senate. The number of elected staff members of Senate appointed by each College shall reflect, in equal measure, the College’s proportion of the total student and academic staff numbers in the University. Senate will review the numbers to be elected by the Colleges against current student and academic staff numbers every three years to ensure their currency.

A minimum of 20% of the elected members of Senate in each College shall be non-professorial members of academic staff.

Nominees must be proposed and seconded by members of academic staff in their College. Nominees must confirm their willingness to stand for election.

Elections to Senate shall be by means of the plurality-at-large method. Thus, each constituent will be given a number of votes that equates to the number of vacancies. The candidates receiving the most votes will be elected in rank order to fill the vacancies available, subject to the minimum number of non-professorial members being appointed. Where the group of candidates receiving most votes means that the minimum number of non-professorial candidates would not be achieved,

the highest-polling non-professorial candidate(s) from the group of remaining candidates shall be appointed ahead of the lowest polling professorial nominees within the group of candidates receiving the most votes until the threshold number of non-professorial appointments is reached. In the event of a tie, lots will be drawn.

Elections of academic staff members of Senate shall be managed by the Senate Office.

The period of appointment of elected staff members shall be three years. Elected staff members may stand for a second, but not a third, consecutive term. The period of appointment of an elected staff member will be extended for the duration of any substantial absence from the University, such as maternity leave or a sabbatical period away from the University. Substitutes will not be appointed during such absences.

Elected members of Senate who miss two or more meetings in any one academic session without providing apologies in advance of the Council meetings shall be deemed to have resigned from Senate, and a new member will be elected to commence his/her term of office in the subsequent academic session.

Elected members of Senate are individually and collectively responsible to Senate. Elected members are not appointed as College (or School, Research Institute or Subject) delegates.

Transitional arrangements

It is proposed that members of the Council of Senate are permitted to complete the terms of their appointments as members of the Council as members of the new Senate. (The same restrictions apply to periods of appointment to the Council as are proposed above for the new Senate – that is, elected members of the Council may not serve more than two consecutive terms.)

In accordance with the terms of the 2016 Act, subject to the endorsement of the Council of Senate, the proposals in Part B shall be recommended for adoption by the University Court.

C. Arrangements for meetings of Senate and appointment of officers and committees of Senate

Meetings of Senate

There shall be five ordinary meetings of Senate in each academic year. Meetings shall normally be held in October, December, February, April and June.

Arrangements for the convening of extraordinary meetings shall be specified in the Standing Orders of Senate.

Meetings shall be convened by the Principal. In the absence of the Principal, meetings shall be convened by the senior Vice-Principal present (excepting the Clerk of Senate).

Items may be proposed for the Senate agenda by any member of Senate. Proposed items will be considered by the Senate Business Committee⁸. In the event that the Business Committee decides

⁸ See notes for list of Senate Committees.

not to add proposed items to the agenda, it shall provide its reasons for its decision to the member submitting the proposal.

The agenda and papers for meetings of Senate will be prepared by the Senate Office two weeks ahead of meetings. Approximately one week before the Senate meeting, the Senate Business Committee shall meet to consider the agenda. It shall provide Senate with its comments in the form of an annotated agenda, sent to Senate members with the remaining papers one week before the meeting of Senate.

Appointment of officers of Senate

Clerk of Senate

The Clerk of Senate shall be elected by the members of Senate. Nominees for the position shall be members of the academic staff of the University and shall normally be past or, ideally, present members of Senate. (In the event that the person elected is not already a member of Senate, they would become so automatically by virtue of the Ordinance concerning the composition of Senate – see Section A, above.) In identifying candidates for appointment, Senate shall be advised by a Finding Committee, convened by the Principal, which will also advise Senate on the remit and appointment criteria. The term of office is four years, but may exceptionally be extended by a further period of up to two years.

Senate Assessors on Court

Senate Assessors on Court shall be members of the academic staff of the University and normally past or, ideally, present members of Senate. For the purposes of electing Senate Assessors, constituencies shall be established by the Colleges either individually or in combination⁹. When seeking nominations for appointment as Senate Assessors, consideration will be given to the gender balance in the contingent of Assessors.

It should be noted that Senate Assessors do not act as delegates on Court for Senate or their home College. All members of Court are responsible both individually and collectively to Court to fulfil the duties of Court.

Other Senate Assessors and appointments

In addition to the Senate Assessors on Court, there are Senate Assessors for Conduct, Complaints and Academic Appeals, together with Senate nominees to the governing bodies of a small number of schools and educational trusts. While it is hoped that it will always be possible to identify these office holders from the membership of Senate, the Senate Assessors for these areas may be selected from across the academic body of the University. It is proposed that those occupying these positions currently are permitted to complete their scheduled terms of office.

Committees of Senate

It is proposed that the committees of the Council of Senate¹⁰ are formally reappointed as committees of Senate at the first meeting of the new Senate. On appointment as committees of Senate, they shall retain their prior remits, compositions and memberships until revised by Senate

⁹ It is expected that the individual Colleges will normally form the constituencies, but this measure permits appointments to be made (as is presently the case) on a cross-University basis, where it is not possible to have parity in the number of College nominations.

¹⁰ See notes for list of current committees of the Council of Senate.

either directly or on the recommendation of the committees themselves. (Committees are required to consider on an annual basis whether their compositions and remits remain appropriate.)

The foregoing measures in Part C are submitted for approval by the Council of Senate, subject to the approval by the Privy Council of the measures in Part A and by the University Court of the measures in Part B.

2. Notes on the proposals

Section A: Composition of the new Senate

In accordance with the view of the Council of Senate on 6 October 2016, the proposed composition corresponds to that of the Council of Senate as established by Senate on 6 February 2014.

The new Senate would be larger (by a margin of two members) due to a slight increase in the number of ex officio members and a consequent increase in the number of student members. The overall total number conforms to the terms of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016. While the Act does not prescribe a ceiling for the size of senates/ academic boards, the first draft of the Act set a limit on 'academic boards' of 120, and while this is relaxed in the Act itself, the Scottish Government expressed concern that the academic board should be 'of a manageable size and efficiently run'¹¹ and the Council of Senate has taken due cognizance of this, while wishing to ensure that the new Senate should provide appropriate academic representation across the University.

The proportions of the categories of member also conform to the 2016 Act, which requires that:

- More than 50% of the members of the Academic Board members are elected by the academic staff of the institution; and
- At least 10% of the members of the Academic Board are elected from among the students of the institution by the students of the institution.

When the Council of Senate was established, extensive discussion took place concerning the ratio of elected staff members to members ex officio and it was agreed that the ratio should be 2:1. This ratio is retained in the proposals for the new Senate. Similarly, it is proposed that the present proportion of student members of the Council of Senate (10%) should be retained in the new Senate. It is also proposed that, for the purposes of ensuring appropriate breadth of representation across the University, the Colleges should form electoral constituencies, with the numbers of members elected by each College determined on the basis of the relative size of each College as measured by its student and academic staff¹² numbers (see below for further detail). Since the proposed ratios for elected staff and student members shall be features of the associated Ordinance, it will be necessary to ensure that these ratios are maintained in the event of any change in the number of members ex officio.

The proposed composition of the Senate includes categories not specified in the 2016 Act:

- The Clerk of Senate
- Directors of Research institutes (DRIs)
- Chief operating Officer (previously, the Secretary of Court)
- Members co-opted onto Senate to permit their appointment as Senate Assessors on Court

DRIs are included on the grounds that they have responsibilities equivalent to those of Heads of School.

The role of the Clerk of Senate has existed at the University since 1728 and the Clerk continues to play a key role in leading and managing the academic life of the University. When many of the University's

¹¹ Scottish Government Response to the Education and Culture Committee Stage 1 Report, January 2016

¹² That is, research and/or teaching staff.

traditions concerning Senate are annulled by the new Act, the Council of Senate is supportive of the continuation of this tradition. While recent incumbents have also been appointed as Vice-Principals (who are members of Senate ex officio), the Clerk of Senate position differs from the position of other Vice-Principals because he/she is elected to the position by Senate and is not a member by virtue of another position held. (See notes on Part C below regarding the arrangements for the election of the Clerk of Senate.)

The present Senate includes a number of non-academic staff. When establishing the Council of Senate, Senate wished to limit the overall size of the Council, whilst at the same time ensuring it was representative of the academic voice of the University. It was consequently decided to limit non-academic representation to the Secretary of Court as the representative of the interests of the non-academic staff, and the Council of Senate also takes this view and considers that his/her membership is beneficial to the relationship between Senate and Court. (The post of Secretary of Court has been renamed as Chief Operating Officer.)

Again, in the interest of ensuring the size of the new Senate is kept to the necessary minimum, it has been decided that the Director and Depute Director of The Glasgow School of Art, who are members ex officio of the present Senate, would no longer have membership but, in recognition of the relationship between the two institutions, would continue to receive papers and have standing invitations to attend meetings of the new Senate as observers. It is also noted that the holders of the equivalent positions at other validation partner institutions such as Scotland's Rural University College (SRUC) and Edinburgh Theological Seminary (ETS) do not have membership, and that to extend membership to these colleagues would further contribute to the size of the new Senate. (Note: the number of degrees awarded by GSA is not significantly greater than SRUC.) To provide parity, the Principals of SRUC and ETS shall receive Senate papers and a standing invitation to attend meetings of Senate as observers.

A number of provisions for additional elected members are also removed for the same reason and it is proposed that a number of posts no longer extant should be removed from the Ordinance.

Summary of changes to the composition of Senate

In practice, approval of the composition of Senate will involve amendment of University Ordinance 192 (as previously amended by Ordinances 195, 196 & 198). The effect of the amendment will be to add to the membership of Senate:

- Heads of School;
- Directors of Research Institutes; and
- the Chief Operating Officer (previously titled the Secretary of Court)

and to remove from the membership:

- the Director of Adult and Continuing Education*;
- the Deans of the several Faculties*;
- the Convener and Joint Vice-Conveners of each of the Joint Councils or Joint Boards of Studies (i) for Architecture; (ii) for Degrees in Music and Drama; for Agriculture and related subjects; (iv) with St Andrew's College of Education*;
- the Librarian;
- the Director of the Hunterian Museum and Art Gallery;
- the Director and Depute Director of Glasgow School of Art;

- Three members of research staff, to be elected for a period of two years from and by a constituency composed of research staff who will at least in the first year of their membership of the Senatus be members of a Faculty; one shall be a member of one of the Faculties of Arts, Divinity, Law and Financial Studies or Social Sciences; each of the other two shall be a member of one of the Faculties of Medicine, Science, Engineering or Veterinary Medicine;
- Two members to be elected for a period of two years from and by the academic-related staff of the University library; and
- Two members to be elected for a period of two years from and by those members of staff on academic-related pay scales who are neither administrative staff, Library staff, nor research and analogous staff.

* These positions are no longer extant.

Number of members of the new Senate

The proposals would provide for the following numbers on the new Senate:

Ex officio:	38
Elected membership	76
Student membership	13
TOTAL:	127

(Not including any member co-opted onto Senate for the purposes of enabling them to be appointed as a Senate Assessor on Court, or any increase in the number of elected staff or student members appointed as a consequence of such co-options.)

Composition of the current Senate

For information, the composition of the present Senate is:

- The Principal (also President of the Senate)
- The University professoriate
- A number of members (n = one-third of the professoriate) elected for a three-year period by and from the academic staff of the University
- Additional members, as specified in University Ordinance 192 (as amended by Ordinances 195, 196 & 198)¹³.

(The membership of the full current Senate is 650+.)

Subject to the endorsement of the Council of Senate and the University Court and the statutory approval procedure for the Ordinances of the University, the measures proposed in Part A shall be reflected in a new Ordinance concerning the composition of Senate.

¹³ See above.

Section B: Method of election of members of Senate

Staff members

The terms of the proposals here are the same as those in place for the Council of Senate.

Traditionally, elections of staff to Senate have been conducted on a territorial basis. The main academic units – previously, the Faculties, now the Colleges – have been regarded as constituencies for the purpose of electing members of Senate. The number of elected members in each Faculty/College was/is determined by the number of professors in the same unit. Elections to Senate have been conducted by Faculty/College offices. Elections to the Council are arranged by the Senate Office and this arrangement is also proposed for the new Senate.

For the Council of Senate, the number of elected members per College is determined by (in equal measure) each College's proportion of the total student numbers and teaching and research staff numbers in the University (reviewed every three years). A minimum of 20% of the elected members of Council in each College are required to be non-professorial members of Senate. While the 2016 Act does not distinguish between professorial/non-professorial membership, it is proposed that these arrangements are maintained for the new Senate.

The Council of Senate has discussed its concerns about other aspects of the composition of the elected membership of the current Senate and the Council of Senate – specifically, the gender balance. Currently, in academic year 2016-17 the 124 member Council of Senate is only 36% female (compared to 29% for the full Senate). Within the Elected Membership, 40% are female and 42% female among the Student Membership (in 2015-16). While the new Senate will be able to do little directly about the gender composition of the Ex-Officio membership, it had been hoped that it would be possible to specify within the rules concerning the election of staff and student members of Senate minima for gender representation, on the basis of a 40% male, 40% female and 20% any gender split. However, legal advice is that such stipulations would be open to challenge and likely to be unlawful. It is very strongly hoped, though, that in practice these thresholds will be met and the Senate Office is requested to take positive action in support of this.

The Council of Senate considered whether a more granular, School and Research Institute-level, rather than College-level, approach to elections would be desirable. However, it was felt that the current system worked well and that to move to a more granular model would make it more complicated. It was also to recognise that it would not be in line with the ethos of the College structure and that academic matters for consideration at Senate frequently have implications that extend beyond individual Colleges, Schools, RIs or Subjects.

Student members

In practice, the student members of the Council of Senate comprise the SRC sabbatical officers and other members of the SRC Council from across the University and include both undergraduates and postgraduates. However, legal advice obtained suggests that this will not be likely to meet the requirement of the 2016 Act as it would restrict student eligibility to stand for election to Senate to those already appointed to SRC positions. The Act requires that all students have the opportunity to stand for election to Senate: student members of Senate are to be 'elected from among the students of the institution by the students of the institution'. To conform to the new Act, it has been

agreed with the SRC that sabbatical and a number of SRC Council positions will be advertised as also conveying membership of Senate.

Transitional arrangements

Continuity of business is seen as essential when the new Senate is established. It is proposed that elected staff members of the Council complete the terms of their appointments as members of the Council as members of the new Senate, and that they may stand for re-election for a second consecutive term if they have not already been so re-elected. This will also facilitate measured turnover in membership of Senate, as the initial periods of appointment to the Council were staggered and it would be helpful to preserve this in the transition to the new body.

Under the terms of the 2016 Act, the rules concerning the election of members to the new Senate in Part B are set by the University Court and will be recommended to Court for adoption.

Section C: Meetings of Senate and the appointment of officers and committees of Senate

Meetings of Senate

The proposed schedule of meetings and arrangements for issuing papers has been in place for c. 10 years. Provisions for convening extraordinary meetings are specified in the Standing Orders of Senate.

The Senate quorum

The 2016 Act is silent on the size of the quorum of the Academic Board and, without an explicit modification of legislation in the replacement Act, existing legislation remains unchanged. This means that the quorum of Senate is one-third of the membership of Senate as established in the 1858 Universities (Scotland) Act¹⁴. (See note below on cultural consequences of the establishment of the new Senate.)

Outwith meetings

Under the terms of Senate's Standing Orders, the Principal and Clerk of Senate may act on Senate's behalf on any urgent matter between ordinary meetings of Senate. A record of action taken is provided to the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

Standing Orders of Senate

Standing Orders for the new Senate will be submitted for approval at the first meeting of the new body.

Appointment of Officers of Senate

Clerk of Senate

¹⁴ In Part 3 of the 2016 Act, where the Consequential Modifications to the Universities (Scotland) Acts of 1858, 1889 and 1966 are set out, there is again no mention of the modification of the quorum of the Academic Board as it replaces Senate.

The proposed procedure for appointment has been in place largely unchanged since 2001. It is recognised that, if it is expected that the nominees for appointment as Clerk of Senate are members of the new Senate, the pool from which the Clerk is appointed will be small relative to that of the much larger present Senate. While it is not proposed that present/past membership is a condition of appointment, it is hoped that nominees will have been members and expected that (as is already the case) the criteria for appointment will include evidence of past engagement with academic affairs in the university beyond nominees' immediate subject area.

Senate Assessors on Court

There are presently six Senate Assessors on Court. However, the composition of the University Court is also affected by the new legislation and Court is also currently considering its future composition in light of the changes. This has informed the wording of the section of the proposal concerning the election of Senate Assessors. Assessors have in the past mostly been appointed from a constituency formed by one of the Colleges (previously, from a constituency formed by one or more of the then faculties). However, the number of Assessors on Court does not equate to the number of Colleges and so the present approach is to appoint some Assessors from the Colleges and some on a cross-University basis. It is proposed that this practice continues.

The essential stipulation is that Senate Assessors on Court are appointed from the membership of Senate. (At present, they are elected from the constituency of the full Senate, not the Council of Senate.) In the past, it has been at times difficult to identify members of Senate to stand for election as Senate Assessors. With a significantly smaller body, it may be expected that this difficulty will increase, and that there will be a commensurately increased requirement for members to take on Senate-related responsibilities. As a result, it is proposed to allow any member of academic staff to stand for election as an Assessor, and, in the event that they are not already a member of the new Senate, to include provision in the composition of the new Senate for their co-option as Senate members (see above). (There is already provision in University Ordinances for anyone appointed as an Assessor to retain membership of Senate for the duration of their appointment as an Assessor.)

There is concern with respect to the cohort of Senate Assessors to secure a good gender balance as well as territorial representation. Consideration has been given to the possibility of requiring gender-based appointments, but it has been agreed that the selection process should be mindful of the gender balance, but that this should not be prioritised above academic discipline. When seeking nominations for appointment as Senate Assessors, consideration will be given to the gender balance in the contingent of Assessors.

Other Senate Assessors and appointments

In addition to the Senate Assessors on Court, there are Senate Assessors for Conduct, Complaints and Academic Appeals, together with Senate nominees to the governing bodies of a small number of schools and educational trusts. It has been practice for Senate Assessors and nominees for these areas to be selected from the membership of Senate. As in the case of the Senate Assessors on Court, even with 650 members, the process of identifying such office holders has not always been easy. With the dissolution of the current Senate and the establishment of a much smaller body, it is anticipated the selection of suitable people to fulfil these vitally important roles will be even more difficult. While it is hoped that it will be possible to appoint from the membership of Senate, it is proposed that the Senate Assessors for these areas should be selected from across the academic body of the University. It is also proposed that staff holding these offices currently should be permitted to complete their periods of appointment.

Appointment of Committees of Senate

Legislation permits Senate to establish any committee it wishes and to appoint members to these committees from wherever it wishes. Already, many Senate committees contain members who are not members of Senate. Again, with the much smaller new Senate, there is need to appoint correspondingly more non-Senate members to Senate committees. The Council of Senate has a number of committees and other bodies to assist it in carrying out its business. These are:

- Research Planning & Strategy Committee
- Education Policy & Strategy Committee
- Student Support and Development Committee
- University Ethics Committee for Non-clinical Research
- Council of Senate Business Committee
- Honorary Degrees Committee
- Senate Appeals Committee
- Senate Conduct Committee
- Senate Conduct Appeals Committee
- Academic Standards Committee
- Academic Dress Committee
- Gifford Committee
- Military Education Committee
- Degree Ceremonies Committee

Formally, the Council of Senate is a committee of Senate. At the appropriate point, the Council of Senate will be dissolved and the other committees listed above reappointed as committees of the new Senate, with the Council of Senate Business Committee becoming the Senate Business Committee.

Joint Senate/Court Working Group

Occasionally the Principal - either on his/her own initiative, or having received advice from Senate or Court - may decide that an issue is of sufficient importance to the academic work of the University that a formal Joint Senate/Court Working Group should be established. The Group would have a remit to consider the matter and to formulate recommendations to Senate and Court, and its establishment would require the approval of both bodies¹⁵.

Likely cultural effects of the changes

The University of Glasgow Senate has existed as currently constituted since the 1850s. The main change since then has been the accelerating expansion of Senate's membership - it currently numbers 650+. In addition to a small number of members ex officio, Senate currently comprises all professors of the University, together with a number of elected members (n = one-third of the size of the professoriate).

¹⁵ Provision for such groups was made several years ago – please see http://www.gla.ac.uk/media/media_239124_en.pdf

While the 2016 Act will have little impact on the role of Senate, the reduction in numbers will affect functioning. Senate will no longer comprise all senior academic staff, and it is consequently hoped that colleagues whom it will not be possible to include within the ex officio membership, such as the Deans for Research, Learning & Teaching, Graduate Studies and for Transnational Education, will seek election to the new body. It will also be necessary for elected members to be active in ensuring they are informed of colleagues' views on matters coming before Senate to help ensure decision-making is well-informed. The reduction in size also means that, in appointing officers of Senate, it will be necessary in future to permit the appointment of post-holders who are not Senate members. However, it is very much hoped that colleagues with interest in such roles will also have evidenced their interest partly through having sought membership of Senate also.

Working Group Remit

To formulate recommendations on the implementation of the HE Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 for the Council of Senate to consider. This to include recommendations on any transitional arrangements.

Working Group Membership

Professor John Briggs (Convener)
Dr Jack Aitken
Professor Marc Alexander
Professor Muffy Calder
Professor Frank Coton
Dr Jan Culik
Professor Dame Anna Dominiczak
Liam King (succeeded by Ameer Ibrahim)
Professor Colin Selman
Clare Barnes (Clerk)

