

REGULATION 30 THE WAY SENATE OPERATES

1. Senates do not operate in the same way as commercial boards. They act in a collaborative way as a group of experts advising Council on matters of academic quality & standards.
2. Senates are deliberately large and a diverse representation is encouraged to ensure that issues are debated by the representative body and buy-in/ownership is thus gained across the academic community. The sub-committee structure reinforces this by involving more staff and students especially through the Boards of Studies.
3. Senates tend to be bodies seeking assurance rather than making decisions and hence the number of decisions tends to be limited. They also operate as safety valves for the academic community allowing a healthy debate even when they have no decision-making powers. This means they are complex organisationally.
4. Senates do not hold the Executive to account but work with the Executive in monitoring the implementation of strategies to improve education, regulations and policies.
5. Ex-officio members have more than one role in Senate – one role deriving from their ‘office’, another being the role of ‘Senator’, e.g., a Dean may be the leader of the School, Chair of the Board of Studies and also a Senator. It is worth noting that ex-officio members presenting papers to Senate cannot exclude themselves from the need to fulfil their role as a Senator. When an ex-officio member presents a paper asking for advice, presenting information or asking for approval it is appropriate for Senators to question and raise concerns if they are within Senate’s remit.
6. Senate comprises a majority of student and elected staff members. It is worth noting that given the three-year term for elected staff members and the one or two year term for student members, Senate will always comprise experienced members and those with less experience of Senate. Many will have experience of their local School rather than wider institutional experience. If they have concerns in respect of academic quality or standards it is important that they feel able to raise these and they are treated respectfully. However, it is also important that the Senators bear in mind the Senator role profile in the Ordinances.
7. All Senators have a common duty to ensure academic quality and standards. Therefore, all Senators have a jointly held accountability to Council to maintain academic quality and standards, and this is the main purpose of Senate. All Senators should work collaboratively together in fulfilling this remit.