**GOVERNANCE REVIEWS OF COURT AND SENATE ACTION PLAN**

**Governance Review Phase 2 Recommendations to Court**

1. A redefinition of the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of the three key bodies – Court, SMT and Senate; including the number and purpose of the sub-committees of the Court and PaRC; and phasing out the joint Court/Senate committees
2. Building on Recommendation 1, a redefinition of the business of the Court, its sub-committees, SMT and Senate
3. The development and agreement of a set of expected governance behaviours, together with a continuing focus on mechanisms which build transparency and  
   + Trust between Court members, and between Court, SMT, and Senate  
   + Understanding of governance and management among the wider staff and student community.
4. Review and redevelopment of the programme of induction and ongoing development for Court members, which will also act as an aid to building a new culture of awareness and transparency.
5. In addressing the diversity of the Court membership, the University should take account of the results of the e-survey
6. In order to appropriately support the evolving governance arrangements, consideration should be given to investment in, and development of, the secretariat team

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| **Actions** |
| **Roles and Responsibilities**   1. Develop a Statement Defining Respective Roles and Responsibilities of Court, Senate and SMT 2. Development and Promotion of a Schedule of Delegation and Approval Authorities between Court, its sub-committees, SMT and Senior Officers 3. Revision of Financial Regulations 4. Formalise new Court and Senate Committee Structure to take effect in academic year 2022/23 (see related Senate Effectiveness Review actions for Senate committees) 5. **PaRC –** Review remits and compositions of ALL sub-committees of PARC to ensure that effective (consideration of research and education needs) in transitioning to be Executive committees. 6. Update and publish a volume containing all the Acts, Ordinances and Resolutions that define the authority and responsibilities of the Court and the other institutions of self-governance of the University of Aberdeen, including identification of any ordinance reform requirements 7. Linking to 1 and 3 above, develop a Use of University Seal document/guidance. |
| **Operation of Court and Sub-Committees**   1. Develop New Court Cycle of Five Meetings for 2022/23 with Options for Strategy Day, Joint Meeting with Senate and Align Court-sub committee cycle (with publication of cycle at least one year in advance going forward) 2. Develop new approach to annual Court stakeholder meeting; 3. Reform of Court Agenda Structure to reflect the Rector/Senior Governor Protocol, facilitate strategic ‘deep dives’ and enable greater prominence of sub-committee reporting; 4. Review and Modernise the Standing Orders of Court; 5. Develop standard operating procedures for sub-committees of Court in line with governance review findings and accepted good practice 6. Review the Court/Committee Paper Template 7. Review Procedure for Decisions Between Meetings and status of Court Emergency Powers Group 8. Replace the Meeting Squared Digital Board Pack System and Review Court Intranet Platform 9. Review policy on sharing of/access to Sub-Committee Agenda/Papers/Minutes with wider Court Members and with wider University community 10. Options and outline costings for modernised meeting facilities for Court 11. Revise the Skills and Experience Matrix for Court Membership 12. Court, Senate and sub-committee secretariat structure and resources   Further Areas for Policy Review to be undertaken within revised Governance Secretariat:   * Whistleblowing Policy * University Code of Practice on Conflicts of Interest * Procedures for Registering Gifts/Hospitality – Court and University Wide * Accessibility (Disability) of Court/Committee Documents * Information Governance Committee review of Court Member Information and Data Security Protocol * Library Archive Retention Policy and Procedures for Court/Key Committee Papers * Mapping of External Trusts/Arms Length Bodies COMPLETE * Supporting Court Members in their Ambassadorial Role |
| **Governance Culture and Behaviours**  ***Induction & Development***   1. Revised Programme of Induction for Court and External Audit Committee Members 2. Review Induction Pack and Digital Resources (including Code of Conduct for Members) 3. Refresher Induction Session and Annual Reminder of Core Responsibilities to be held 4. Induction Meeting for all new committee members with Chair/Clerk 5. Implement Court Buddy System 6. Implement Head of School/Directors of Professional Services Buddy System for all Court Members to support their understanding of the University’s activities 7. Review process for governor performance review 8. Regular promotion of sector training and development opportunities for members   ***Communication and Transparency***   1. Update of governance information webpages to reflect governance review 2. Develop a Communications plan to raise the profile/visibility of the Court, its role and membership within the University and that of the General Council; 3. Hold meetings of Court or visits to Schools etc across the campus 4. Introduce a monthly update for Court on any non-formal business, sector information, induction/development opportunities and events;   ***Other Areas***   1. Continue to monitor the diversity of the Court’s membership and identify where actions are required to better reflect the diversity of the University community and to operate as an inclusive board. 2. Identify opportunities for more formal and informal opportunities for Court to engage with each other and Senior Management 3. Implement publication of Court member expenses in line with current practice for Senior Management |

**SENATE EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW AND ACTION PLAN**

**Senate Effectiveness Review Recommendations**

1. It is recommended that the Vice-Principal Research sets up a small group to look into how Senate can more effectively discuss and profile Research and PGR issues. This group should report back to the Senate Business Committee for action.
2. It is recommended that both the Education Committee and Research Policy Committee become Committees of Senate.
3. The effectiveness of the new Education Committee and its sub-committees should be reviewed at end of 2022. The purpose of the review should be to test how effective the new structure is in representing both undergraduate and postgraduate issues across the university and to evaluate the extent to which the new structure has increased the level of Senate’s trust in its Education sub-committees.
4. It is recommended that the Senate Business Committee develops a proposal to introduce a presentation on an external issue of strategic importance for debate at each Senate.
5. It is recommended that the location of PGT is revisited after a year of operation to ensure that the governance arrangements within the UEC are working well for both Undergraduate and Masters students.
6. It is recommended that the Student Experience Committee is disestablished and any relevant areas of the student experience not currently covered are absorbed into the new UEC or its sub-committees.
7. It is recommended that the membership of DSC is reviewed and further consideration is given to ensuring that the work of the committee includes appropriate focus on research and education.
8. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC) should be asked to review the current approach with regard to ensuring that Senate membership is diverse and inclusive, including ensuring that protected characteristics in addition to gender are being taken into account in Senate and its sub-committees, including the Senate Business Committee.
9. The University is invited to consider revising its information about governance arrangements on the web.
10. It is recommended that the University Staff Development team considers how Senate Membership can be promoted as part of career development.
11. It is recommended that Senate should explore opportunities to draw strategically on the input of Directors as appropriate to inform its discussions on education and research.
12. Senate should discuss and agree a policy on the representation of students from Partner Institutions on Senate.
13. It is recommended that consideration should be given to clarifying the role of ex-officio

Members of Senate.

1. It is recommended that the University organises a review of induction for all categories of Senators (including sub-committee members).
2. The University is asked to consider making a joint meeting between Senate and Court an annual event. If this recommendation is adopted the frequency of meetings of Senate could be reviewed.
3. The Senate Business Committee is invited to consider the structure of the agenda. In addition to having a short discussion about an external issue (see recommendation 4) it should clarify how strategic items are given more visibility and how issues of concern from Senators are both raised and discussed in a timely fashion.
4. It is recommended that once current reforms to the organisation of Senate and its subcommittees have been fully implemented the Senate Business Committee is reformed and slimmed down from its current 15 members. It needs to ensure that it adds value to the agenda setting process and is more in line with practice elsewhere. Thought should be given to whether some of the tasks of the Senate Business Committee could be passed to the secretariat.
5. It is recommended that Senate considers splitting the agenda and having short virtual Senate meetings to agree routine business and minor policy changes to free up time for Senate discussion.
6. It is recommended that a small review of the secretariat and its relationship to the governance team is carried out and that additional resource is made available if necessary.
7. It is recommended that AUSA reviews the induction process for School convenors.
8. The Senate Assessor system is working well and should be supported. The University is invited to consider how the Senate Assessors can support induction and orientation of new Senate or Committee members.

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| **Actions** |
| **Systematising Operation of Senate**   1. Calendar of 5 meeting cycle in line with standing orders to be confirmed. 2. Calendar of SBC meetings to be confirmed 3. Update to Senate Standing Orders 4. Reform of Senate Agenda structure – e-Senate, identification of business, visibility of strategic issues and issues of concern. 5. Forward business/presentations (external issues) including integration of Professional Services expertise 6. Review of SBC remit and composition |
| **Senate Sub-Committee Structure**   1. Formalise new sub-committee structure – with UEC and RPC moving to be solely Committees of Senate |
| **Honorary Degree Committee**   1. Review of process and strategic objectives of honorary degree awards to align with A2040, improving due diligence & inclusiveness. |
| **Education Committee**   1. Student Support Committee remit revised to address disestablishment of Student Experience Committee – identifying those elements to become part of an Executive AUSA Forum 2. EC terms of reference, delegated authority, sub-committee structure and delegated authority to be reviewed to reflect change from joint committee. 3. QAC to be established as a direct Senate Sub-committee 4. Self-evaluation/assessment of EC and sub-committee structure effectiveness; including the approach to PGT. |
| **Research Committee**   1. RC terms of reference, sub-committee structure and delegated authority to be reviewed to reflect change from joint committee. |
| **Membership of Senate**   1. Review of approach for supporting inclusive membership of Senate and in appointment to sub-committees. 2. Consideration of Senate membership as a development opportunity or citizenship role (Workload planning link) 3. Development of induction pack for elected senators and for ex-officio senators – covering roles/responsibilities 4. Development of induction pack/process for student senators – covering roles/responsibilities. 5. Review of approach to representation of UoA activity & students on partner campuses. |
| **Remitted to Governance Review**   1. Senate and sub-committee secretariat structure and resources 2. Membership of DSC – Remits and compositions of ALL sub-committees of PARC will be reviewed to ensure that effective (consideration of research and education needs) in transitioning to be Executive committees. 3. Update to governance information on website 4. Development of options for an annual event for Senate Members and Court Members |