



Committee Standards

**Governance Office
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1.0. Introduction to Committee Standards at Regent's University London

This document has been produced by the Governance Office with the aim of helping colleagues:

- To better understand how the Governance Structure works and the committees within this structure
- To better understand the processes involved with committees
- To identify their role, expectations and responsibilities within the committees
- To be more confident in their role and interactions with committees
- To maximise the communication flowing to and from the committees

A quick reference guide for Chairs and Secretaries can be found in the [Appendices](#).

1.1. What is the Governance Structure?

At Regent's, there are three principle decision making bodies; the Board of Trustees, Directorate and Senate. The Board sets the strategic agenda for the University, as well as fulfilling an audit and monitoring function; Directorate operationalises the strategic aims and objectives set by the board, and Senate is responsible for all academic decisions within the University. For further information on the individual bodies and committees, please see the [Governance Structure Document](#), available on the Governance pages of the intranet and the web site.

1.2. What is a Committee?

A committee is any formally constituted body, below the level of the board, that performs a function, such as investigating, considering, reporting or acting on a matter and making decisions.

1.3. Who does this document apply to?

Committee Standards will apply to anyone involved with the Governance Structure or individual committee meetings. This will include committee members, Chairs and Secretaries, and will include other colleagues who may present / propose items to Committees on an ad-hoc basis.

1.4. Expectations?

Colleagues are expected to uphold the Regent's University London [values](#); promote and support the committee's aims and objectives (not pursue his or her own agenda) and demonstrate high ethical and professional standards.

Colleagues are expected to:

- Demonstrate collective responsibility
- Maintain confidentiality, where applicable
- Attend meetings
- Prepare for meetings and provide information as required
- Attend induction and training as required
- Be collaborative and collegiate during and after meetings

- Consider if any key information, decisions or actions taken by a committee will impact on their team / constituency, and communicate this as appropriate.

And of course, colleagues will have expectations of the committee and others within it as well, such as from the Chair and Secretary – these will be further detailed later in this document (see [section 2](#)).

1.5. How to use the Committee Standards Document?

All colleagues should be aware of this document and familiarise themselves with its content. New staff should be given this document as part of their induction process, and any colleagues who are newly elected / appointed / nominated to a committee will also find it useful to revisit the information included here.

Colleagues may also find it useful to use the document as a 'go-to' guide, particularly for Chairs and Secretaries of Committees.

For further information, please contact the Governance Office who will be able to help.

1.6. Links to other documents

Colleagues may find it useful to read this document alongside the following:

- The [Academic Governance Structure](#) Document
- [Academic Policies](#)

Quick reference sheets for Chair's and Secretaries can also be found in the [Appendices](#).

2.0. Committee Roles

2.1. The Role of the Chair

Chairing a meeting effectively, efficiently, with purpose and respect for others, requires a careful approach to preparation, a particular set of skills in conducting meetings and a professional attitude to ensuring effective follow-through. Even for experienced colleagues, it can be helpful to revisit these skills from time to time.

I. Characteristics of a good Chair:

- Understands the purpose of the committee and the wider governance structure.
- Listens and communicates well and encourages all members to participate.
- Willing to listen to ways in which meetings can be improved.
- Impartial and flexible.
- Achieves the aims of the meeting.
- Manages time effectively during meetings.
- Summarises fairly and succinctly and identifies actions.
- Exerts authority and positive leadership when required.
- Gains consensus and avoids undue conflict.
- Ensures follow-through on actions identified.
- Allocates work fairly

II. Before the meeting the Chair is expected to:

- Collaborate with the committee Secretary to plan the committee meeting and agenda. This will include reviewing the terms of reference and agreeing at which meetings individual items should be discussed.
- Ensure that any policies or other documents that the Committee is responsible for are reviewed on a regular basis (standard duration for policies is every 3 years).
- Decide on the order of business, and how the meeting is to be paced so that appropriate time is given to agenda items.
- Discourage papers arriving after the deadline for receipt.
- Discourage 'tabled' papers except in exceptional circumstances.
- Discourage "any other business" that has not been notified to the Chair and Secretary before the meeting has commenced.
- Where, in exceptional circumstances, late or tabled papers are accepted, ensure that these do not contravene any previous decisions that the body has made.

- Read the papers carefully in advance of the meeting. Be aware of the issues and check queries, inconsistencies or potential controversy which may arise.
- Keep an ongoing awareness of committee work, actions and related matters between meetings.

III. At the meeting the Chair is expected to:

- Arrive early if possible - members often wish to speak to the Chair prior to the meeting and it is a good opportunity to 'network'.
- Start the meeting on time and state a likely finishing time.
- Try to make the meeting an enjoyable experience – business is likely to be conducted most efficiently and effectively when people feel relaxed and comfortable.
- Check with the secretary that the meeting is quorate.
- Make introductions - at the inaugural meeting the Chair should introduce him/herself and ask each member to introduce themselves with a brief comment on their role. If a new member or attendee is present, make introductions so that they are aware of who is who.
- Report to members on institutional and relevant wider developments and decisions that affect the work of the committee.
- Encourage members and attendees to simply highlight the key points from their reports on the basis that the committee members are expected to have read the papers in advance.
- Listen carefully to all contributions while keeping members focused.
- Remain impartial and try not to talk too much or dominate proceedings.
- Facilitate a balanced discussion; ensure everyone has an opportunity to contribute and encourage contribution from quieter members.
- Sum-up succinctly at the end of each item, so that members are clear about what has been decided. Make clear what actions are required, who will be responsible and agree the timescales.
- Strongly discourage the presentation of major items under 'Any Other Business'.
- Direct the committee to consider whether any discussions or decisions that have taken place during the course of the meeting have an impact on any existing strategic risks or raise any new ones.
- Direct the committee to consider whether any discussions or decisions that have taken place during the course of the meeting are to be considered 'confidential'.
- Finish on time or earlier than the given time, where possible.
- Clarify arrangements for the next meeting.
- Try and be generous with their time and be available for members immediately following the meeting if they have issues they want to discuss.

IV. After the meeting the Chair is expected to:

- Approve draft sets of committee meeting minutes in a timely manner before their distribution. Ideally, this should be within a week of the meeting taking place. With the committee Secretary, a decision should be made as to whether any items should be redacted before uploading the minutes to the intranet.
- Agree the meeting action sheet and proposed next steps.
- Note if there are any actions arising for individuals not at the meeting, for instance actions for another committee and communicate these accordingly.
- Seek positive confirmation that any strategic risks identified by the committee are being managed effectively, and report any exceptions / concerns to the risk owner (if applicable) or to the member of Directorate under whose remit the issue/subject matter falls. As the owner of the Risk Register, the Head of Governance should also be informed.
- From time to time, review the membership and terms of reference of the committee to ensure that they are up-to-date and if necessary propose amendments to the appropriate staff and bodies, as outlined in the committee's standing orders.
- Approve urgent and non-controversial matters by Chair's Action on the committee's behalf between meetings, and ensure that any such decisions are reported at the next meeting.

2.2. The role of the committee Secretary

The committee Secretary undertakes all administration relating to the committee and creates and maintains records. S/he assists the Chair in facilitating the effective operation of the committee's business.

I. Characteristics of a good committee secretary:

- Understands the purpose of the committee and the wider governance structure.
- Listens and communicates well.
- Methodical and reliable.
- Supports the Chair in achieving the aims of the meeting.
- Vigilant and has sustained concentration.
- Good written language skills and can produce accurate and concise text that readers will understand.
- Good analytical skills.
- Approachable.
- Diplomatic and assertive when necessary.
- Impartial.

II. General responsibilities and tasks for the committee Secretary:

- Know the terms of reference, remit and powers of the committee and its relationship to other committees.
- Know the standing orders of the committee and be able to advise on the application of these.
- Arrange for the election of members, where appropriate.
- Maintain up-to-date lists of members, including category of membership and length of tenure.
- Ensure that all committee meeting dates are published in the University calendar and that members are informed of committee meeting dates as far in advance as possible.
- Book appropriate rooms and if necessary arrange Audio Visual (AV) equipment for meetings.
- Draft and agree structured agendas in consultation with Chair and in line with Terms of Reference.
- Manage the receipt and distribution of papers.
- Attend meetings and take formal minutes of all proceedings.
- Maintain archive records of meetings including any Chair's actions taken on behalf of the committee.
- Maintain the intranet pages, and where applicable, the web site pages for committees. This includes membership, terms of reference, standing orders and the uploading of paperwork. Committee paperwork should be uploaded to the University intranet pages within one week of the meeting taking place.

III. Before the meeting the committee Secretary is expected to:

- Oversee meeting arrangements - send Outlook invitations for meetings, make room bookings, order catering and arrange any necessary AV equipment.
- Liaise with the Student Union to ensure that, where appropriate, student representatives have been appointed to attend the meeting.
- Consider actions from previous meetings to ensure they are reflected as agenda items where appropriate, or can be reported on during the review of the action list at the meeting.
- Draft an agenda and meet or consult with the Chair and others as necessary to approve it (this meeting should be early enough to allow papers to be with the Secretary by the agreed timescales outlined above).
- Encourage contributions from members and set realistic deadlines for the receipt of papers.
- Any items submitted after the agenda has been agreed should only be included or tabled with the express permission of the Chair. The Secretary should work with the Chair to ensure that additional items of business do not contravene any previous decisions that the body has made.
- Advise those preparing papers on the appropriate template, format and style for the committee and manage the receipt of papers.

- Ensure that cover sheets are produced by the authors. It is not the role of the Secretary to produce cover sheets unless accompanying a paper they themselves have drafted.
- Draft papers for the committee as appropriate.
- Check papers to ensure they meet expected standards and are in line with the committee's terms of reference.
- Consult with the Chair over the acceptance, in exceptional circumstances, of any papers submitted after the paper deadline for circulation and tabling.
- Circulate the agenda and papers to members at least two weeks before the meeting (unless the committee has a particular timetable outside of this rule).
- Receive and record any apologies from members, checking quoracy is maintained.
- Agree timings for agenda items with the Chair.
- Advise item presenters who are not committee members of the approximate time that their item will run, how long their presentations should be, and ensure they are aware of the meeting location.
- Read the papers circulated for the meeting and identify any potential issues that the Chair might need to be aware of.
- Prepare a briefing note and / or arrange a briefing meeting with the Chair.
- Arrive early for the meeting to check that the room layout is satisfactory, that any AV equipment requested has been set up and is functioning and that any refreshments ordered have arrived.

IV. The Committee Secretary should take to meetings:

- Sufficient copies of any tabled papers (where these have been agreed by the Chair).
- Any relevant correspondence, or other papers to which reference might be useful.
- A copy of the committee terms of reference, standing orders and membership.

V. At the meeting the Committee Secretary should:

- Sit next to the Chair in order to be able to brief or advise them and receive any instructions. For example, the Secretary may need to: guide and remind the Chair of the order / timings of agendas so that items are not inadvertently missed, alert the Chair if a member would like to engage with the discussion, or discreetly refer the Chair to their written brief as appropriate.
- Read the list of apologies received.
- Ensure that the committee is quorate at the beginning of the meeting and monitor quoracy throughout the meeting.
- Advise the Chair on regulatory, procedural, wider University / faculty / institute context or other matters that might arise from the consideration of a particular item.

- Guide the committee to its past decisions as relevant.
- Take notes of discussion and actions as appropriate.
- Where necessary, leave the meeting at the appropriate moment to invite 'external' presenters to join the meeting.
- Discreetly interrupt the meeting (through the Chair) to clarify a decision or point if not understood.

NB. In the event that the Secretary is required to present an item, and therefore has a dual role at the meeting, a Dictaphone may be used to record discussions to help write these up later on. Additionally the Secretary should discuss this with the Chair before and after the meeting, to ensure all points have been captured within the minutes.

VI. After the meeting the Secretary should:

- Request an (electronic) copy of any presentations for possible circulation to members and to aid with minute taking.
- Circulate any tabled papers to members who were unable to attend the meeting.
- If a member had spoken quickly from a prepared script, request a copy for reference.
- Draft meeting minutes and action sheets for approval by the Chair.
- Agree the draft unconfirmed minutes and action sheet with the Chair in accordance with the agreed timescale.
- Note any items of confidentiality and agree with the Chair if these should be redacted prior to circulate and / or publication of the minutes.
- Ensure that any potential new risks, or changes to existing strategic risks identified during the course of the meeting are escalated to the most appropriate Directorate member under whose remit the matter falls or the current risk owner, as appropriate.
- Circulate the Chair approved minutes and action sheet to members. This should ideally be completed and circulated within one week of the meeting.
- Send relevant sections of minutes to external contributors for their reference.
- Notify individuals required to take action informing them of what is required and by when.
- Unless otherwise specified in the committee's standing orders; upload the confirmed minutes (redacted if necessary to preserve confidentiality / data protection requirements) and all meeting documentation to the intranet no later than one week following the meeting date.
- Identify business to be brought forward to future committee meetings.
- Upload a copy of committee documentation, including the committee approved minutes, to the relevant committee pages on the intranet. Any confidential items will first need to be redacted.

2.3. The Role of Committee Members

There are 4 types of members at a meeting (aside from the Chair / Secretary)

- **Ex-Officio** – These members are present at the meeting, as their role is implicit in the committee business.
- **Elected / Appointed** – For Senate these members are voted in by an election process, or appointed by the PVC / Dean of Faculty / Institute Director, to represent the views of their constituency on a committee. Trustee members are appointed by the Board.
- **Student** – Members of the Student Executive are invited to Senate level committees. Student Council Presidents are invited to attend Programme Committee meetings and Faculty / Institute level meetings.
- **Co-opted / In attendance** – these members are invited to particular committee meetings, to present or discuss items relevant to their roles. They do not have voting rights. Members of staff who sit on Trustee Committees, are usually 'in attendance'.

I. Before the meeting members are expected to:

- Discuss upcoming meetings / agendas with their team / constituents to canvas views, ideas and suggestions.
- Send any items and / or papers to the Secretary at least 3 weeks before the meeting date.
- Read through all committee paperwork in preparation for the meeting.
- Review and complete any actions assigned to them in good time.
- Where a member cannot attend a meeting, inform the Secretary as soon as possible and arrange for an alternate to attend in their place (the alternate will need to be fully briefed before the meeting). Appointing an alternate is important to ensure the meeting is quorate.

II. At the meeting members are expected to:

- Be punctual, so the meeting can start on time.
- Be prepared to provide an update on assigned actions.
- When presenting papers, to simply highlight the key points from their reports on the basis that the committee members are expected to have read the papers in advance.
- Listen to the views of others and work constructively towards decision making.
- Contribute to discussions and offer views from their relevant areas and constituencies.
- Note any important items and information that may be relevant for their colleagues.
- Refrain from presenting major items under 'Any Other Business'.

III. After the meeting members are expected to:

- Report back decisions and key information to their relevant teams and constituencies.
- Follow up on actions assigned to them promptly.
- Amend, update and publish documents owned by their area / constituency, following discussions and agreement at the committee.
- Read the minutes of the meeting, and note any corrections to the Secretary.
- Note the date of the next meeting, and the deadlines for items and papers.

3.0. Governance Committee Calendar

3.1. How this is set / communicated

The Governance Committee Calendar is drafted by the Governance team, in consultation with colleagues across the University, prior to approval by Senate and the Board of Trustees. Following approval, this is communicated and published across the University.

For more information on how this calendar is set, please contact the Governance team.

3.2. Publishing the Committee Calendar

The Governance Committee Calendar will be published by the Governance team as follows:

- On the [University Intranet](#) as a news item
- Meetings will be entered in to the [University calendar](#) on the intranet and on Outlook.
- Meeting requests will be sent to individual members for all meetings, so that these show in their Outlook calendars.
- All senior staff and members will receive the Governance Committee calendar by email, who may then disseminate this to their colleagues.

3.3. Scheduling Sub-committees and other meetings

When setting other meetings across the University, colleagues may find it helpful to follow the general guidelines that are applied to the Governance calendar. These are as follows:

- Meetings should be scheduled in line with parent committee dates, to allow sufficient time for minutes and papers to be reported. It is advised that regular meetings are set in advance, and take place at least 4 weeks prior to the parent committee.
- Meetings should be scheduled between 10.00 -12.00 and 14.00 -16.00 to allow colleagues to take advantage of the flexible working policy and lunch breaks.
- Meetings should take in to consideration teaching times and other regular staff activities.

- Meetings should not clash with major University events, such as Induction, Exam periods, the Staff Conference and others relevant to the area. You may wish to liaise with colleagues in Registry and Learning and Development, to ensure no clashes, particularly when scheduling regular meetings.
- Ideally, meetings should not be held in a week with a bank holiday, to allow colleagues to take annual leave.

Colleagues are requested to publish their meeting dates as appropriate, considering the notes under item 3.2. above.

3.4. Changing Meeting Dates

Meetings are scheduled in advance to ensure member availability, and to allow them to plan work loads, and other events including their annual leave. Colleagues often have very busy diaries, and so it is therefore not advisable to cancel or re-schedule meetings unless unavoidable.

Where unavoidable, the Secretary will liaise with the Chair to determine a new date for the meeting. The Secretary will update the meeting invitation as soon as possible, and will also notify room bookings and conferences at the earliest opportunity.

Please note that if meetings are cancelled / re-scheduled with less than 7 days notice, catering costs will still apply.

4.0 Setting up a Committee Meeting

4.1. Setting the date

The Senate and Trustee committee meeting calendar is set some months in advance by the Governance team (see section 3 above). These should not be changed unless unavoidable, and with approval of the Chair and the Head of Governance.

For other committee meetings and extraordinary meetings, please follow the steps below:

- Review members' calendars to find 3 or 4 date options for the meeting. Check these against the Governance Committee Calendar, the academic calendar and the Learning and Development calendar to ensure that there are no major clashes. Also check that there will be sufficient time for minutes and any papers to be sent to the parent committee if required.
- Send the potential meeting dates to the Chair who will select the most appropriate date.
- Once agreed, send a meeting request in Outlook to all members of the meeting, specifying the date and time.

4.2. Booking a room and catering

- Email 'roombookings' with your requirements – number of people, set up of room and any AV equipment needed. They will allocate a room.
- Once received, add the room to the meeting request in Outlook.

- If any refreshments are needed, you will also need to email requests to 'internal events'. This must be done at least a week in advance to receive the internal preferential rate – you will need to specify the number of people at the meeting and the cost centre to be charged.

NB. Please note that only tea, coffee, water and biscuits should be booked for meetings of 2 hours or longer. Meetings should not be booked over lunch time (12-2pm) unless unavoidable. In these cases, a lunch may be booked for members.

4.3. Agendas and Action Follow up

Secretaries will draft an agenda approximately 5-6 weeks before the meeting, and meet with the Chair to discuss this. Items for the agenda will be drawn from:

- Actions from the last meeting
- Annual work scheduled for the committee
 - Check the committee's [terms of reference](#) for guidance
 - Check the committee's terms of reference mapping (see [section 10.2.1.](#))
- Standing Items – check previous agendas to see the regular items for the meeting
- Any items requested by members and / or the Chair

4.4. Committee Papers (templates and standards / coversheets)

There are standard templates for committee papers, including for the agenda and for the minutes. These are available in the [appendices](#).

All papers presented to a committee should:

- Use the correct template
- Have a coversheet completed with all the relevant details, summarising the paper and what is requested of the committee (approval / discussion etc.)
- Be accurate, succinct and clear (See section 5.4. [Report Writing Guidance](#)). It is advised that papers are keep short, with visual aids (such as tables / dashboard etc).
- Highlight any areas of risk and confidentiality.

4.5. A timeline for setting up a committee is set out below:

5-6 weeks before the meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check Committee annual work (against the terms of reference) to identify work that should go to the meeting at this point in the year. Review previous meeting minutes to identify items / papers to be brought forward to this meeting. Send a reminder to colleagues for items and papers to be sent before the deadline. Meet the Chair to discuss potential agenda items and the annual work schedule of the committee.
3 weeks before the meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deadline for papers: Receive all papers / items and build the final agenda. Agree the final agenda with the Chair (by email). Review papers received to ensure accuracy, format and that they include the relevant completed coversheet. Review papers for confidentiality - some papers may need to be redacted prior to distribution. Ensure all papers are in PDF format. Build the agenda on Diligent but do not yet open the meeting.
2 weeks before the meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add all papers to Diligent and open the meeting. Email committee papers to committee members informing them that this is also available on Diligent.
1 week before the meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check for any late papers and ensure that these are circulated at least 2 days before the meeting (with agreement from the Chair).
2 working days before the meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check the room booking and catering confirmations, in case any additional members should be added.
MEETING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrive early to check the room set up and catering has arrived. Update the Chair on any developments / reminders for the meeting. Distribute any tabled papers. Check attendance and ensure the meeting is quorate - advise the Chair. Read out any apologies received. Take the minutes and note down any actions. Advise the Chair of timings if agenda items are taking longer than expected. Advise the Chair of members who wish to contribute to discussions. Advise the Chair if Committee business strays outside its terms of reference. Collect any paperwork left on the table for confidential waste.
2 - 4 working days after the meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upload committee documentation to the committee pages on the University intranet (taking in to consideration confidential items which may need redacting). Send immediate and urgent actions to relevant members. Inform colleagues outside the meeting of decisions that might affect them. Where an action is passed on to another committee, to inform the committee Secretary. Draft the minutes and action table and email to the Chair. If the committee reports in to a parent committee, it is also useful to draft the Sub Committee Minutes Coversheet at this point for Chair approval.
1 week after the meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once approved by the Chair, circulate the committee minutes to all members present at the meeting, as well as those who sent apologies, and other relevant colleagues for information.
4 weeks after the meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send an email to members reminding them of their actions and the deadlines for the next meeting.

4.6. Diligent Board Software

Once papers are made ready for distribution they will need to be set up on Diligent. If you require guidance on this then please contact the Governance Office.

5.0. Documentation

5.1. Procedures for committee approval

This section aims to clarify where papers need to be presented for approval.

The following papers will need approval through Senate (academic related), Directorate and / or the Board of Trustees and its committees:

- Policy
- Strategy
- Changes to the governance structure including membership, terms of reference and standing orders.
- New Programme Proposals
- Programme Discontinuations and Suspensions
- Annual Monitoring Reports and the Institutional Overview Report

This list is not exhaustive, if you are not sure if a paper needs committee approval, please check with the Governance team.

5.1.1. Chair's Action

For urgent, non-contentious decisions that need to be taken between meetings, the Chair of the committee may take a decision by Chair's action. The Secretary will prepare this using the University template, and collate any supporting papers / evidence as required. Once approved by the Chair, this document should be saved and archived for inclusion in the paperwork of the next Committee meeting, where it will be presented for noting.

5.2. Ownership

The coversheet will detail the author and the presenter of the paper. As the person attending the committee, it is the responsibility of the **presenter** to ensure that:

- Amendments or corrections relating to a paper (as agreed by the Committee) are communicated to the author.
- Committee decisions relating to a paper are fed back to relevant stakeholders.
- Where approved, papers are published appropriately and in good time.
- Any processes, guidelines or other documentation affected by a newly approved paper, are updated accordingly, and the relevant colleagues are informed of any changes to these.

The Secretary will take notes in the meeting and distribute minutes, which will record the key points of discussion relating to papers presented to a committee.

5.3. Templates and Coversheets

Colleagues will use the standard templates for paperwork presented to committees. These are available in the [Appendices](#).

5.3.1. Coversheets

It is important to include a fully completed coversheet with the paper, to show the processes leading up to its presentation, and to summarise what the committee is being asked to do. There are also sections to be completed to show that risk, resources and strategy have been considered and how these can be managed / mitigated.

A Sub-Committee minutes coversheet should also be prepared with any committee minutes due for presentation to the parent committee (for example, FLTC presenting minutes to SLTC). This is a separate coversheet that summarises the key points raised during the meeting, and in particular, anything that needs discussion or approval from the parent committee. This should be prepared by the Secretary, and reviewed by the Chair of the committee, prior to sending this to the Secretary of the parent Committee. It should also be sent to the Secretary of any sub Committees, to feedback on any issues raised.

5.4. Report Writing Guidance

When writing reports, please consider the following:

- Does the paper align with the strategic goals of the University?
- Keep the introduction and narrative brief. Focus on the key information, what the committee is being asked to do and the rationale behind the proposal.
- Can data be presented visually, such as in tables / diagrams / graphs etc?
- Is the report easy to read? Ensure the font is big enough that it can be read on A4 paper, and that tables are clearly laid out. Use colour coding to help differentiate information.
- Check what the report looks like once it has been saved as a PDF, as the format can sometimes change.

Committees sometimes receive over 20 separate papers which can amount to hundreds of pages. Keeping your paper brief and focussed and ensuring a coversheet is included, allows members more time to digest key information and means the committee can make well-informed decisions.

5.5. Consultation, Research and Referencing

Papers will often need research, consultation and various sign off before presentation to a committee. The following can be used as a check list:

- Has any sector practice been investigated in relation to the paper?
- Has any industry guidance / documentation informed the paper?
- Has there been any consultation with colleagues and stakeholders?
- Has the paper been endorsed by a senior member of staff?
- Have any risks been considered and / or signed off?
- Have timeframes and implementation dates been considered?
- Has the paper been presented to a sub level committee and was it endorsed?
- Have any additional resources / costs (such as staffing) been discussed with HR / Finance?

If the above points have been completed, then a paper should be prepared for the relevant committee, ensuring that a detailed coversheet is included. This should explain how the above questions have been considered. It should then be sent to the Secretary of the relevant meeting

for inclusion on the agenda (subject to Chair approval).

5.6. Deadlines

In general, papers are to be sent to the committee Secretary 3 weeks before the meeting date. This allows the Secretary time to build the agenda, review the papers and alert the owner of any corrections / further information needed prior to distribution to members.

Committee documentation will generally be circulated to members 2 weeks before the meeting date, allowing members sufficient time to read and consider this, prior to decision making at the meeting.

There may be times when it is possible to send papers slightly later than this deadline. For example, where a committee receives a small number of papers, or meets very regularly, these deadlines can be revised. Colleagues should frequently communicate with the Secretary in these cases.

5.7. Printing Papers

Committee documentation is made available on Diligent for all Senate and Trustee Committees. For those members who have an Ipad or digital device, papers can be accessed here.

The Secretary will also send papers to members by email, so members have an electronic copy.

The University discourages members from printing documentation in line with the Digital First Policy. There may also be a risk of exposing confidential or sensitive information if papers are left at printing stations etc.

The Secretary may wish to have a hardcopy of papers at the meeting, for note taking.

6.0. Meeting Etiquette

Above all members must: uphold the Regent's University London values; promote and support the committee's aims and objectives (not pursue his or her own agenda) and demonstrate high ethical and professional standards.

6.1. Meeting attendance

- Members should endeavour to attend all committee meetings.
- If unable to attend, members should inform the committee Secretary and the Chair as soon as possible
- If unable to attend, a member should appoint an alternate. It is the member's responsibility to ensure that their alternate is fully briefed on Committee business and on any actions for which they may need to provide an update at the meeting.
Please note that alternates are not permitted at the Board of Trustee or the Board Committees.
- Where a member is unable to attend a series of meetings, they should speak to the Chair and Secretary to consider alternative options.
- Where an elected or appointed member of staff does not attend a sufficient number of committee meetings as determined by the Head of Governance, Chair of the committee

and / or person who appointed the member, they will be considered to have made a de facto resignation.

6.2. Preparation for meetings:

- Members should familiarise themselves with the standing orders and terms of reference of the committee.
- Members should discuss upcoming agenda items with their constituency.
- Members should adhere to the deadline for submission of papers / items to the Secretary – this is normally 3 weeks prior to the meeting date. Any papers should be concise, clear, provide sufficient information for decision making and be sent in a timely manner.
- Members should read all committee documentation, and where appropriate, discuss this with their constituency for feedback.
- Members should monitor any actions assigned to them, and follow these through, in order to provide updates at the following meeting.
- Members should thoroughly read the minutes of the meeting, and disseminate information from the committee to colleagues as appropriate.

6.3. Participation and behaviour

- Members should be reasonable and courteous to others, and work collaboratively in order to build a supportive decision-making environment.
- Members should take an active role in representing the views of their constituents during meetings.
- Members should present a brief summary of the key points in their reports on the basis that the rest of the committee will have read the detailed reports in advance of the meeting.
- Members should focus on and contribute to the business of the meeting and not undertake other work during the meeting.
- Members must accept the decision of the committee once it has been made and not try to reverse or undermine approved decisions.
- Members must take a collective responsibility for the business of the committee and any decisions taken.

6.4. Declarations of Interest

- If a member perceives a conflict of interest in any item, this should be brought to the attention of the Chair and / or committee Secretary who can decide whether it is advisable for the member to absent themselves or abstain from any discussion. Where possible, declarations of interest should be made in advance of the meeting.
- Trustee members and Senior members of staff are asked to make a declaration of interest on an annual basis, in line with the Committee of University Chairs (CUC).

6.5. Risk Register

- If a member is aware of a risk in any item, this should be brought to the committee's attention during discussions. If presenting the item, the risk should be added to the coversheet and sent to the Secretary by the deadline.
- Any new risks should be reported to the Head of Governance as owner of the risk register.

6.6. Confidentiality

- If a member is concerned about confidentiality for any item, this should be brought to the committee's attention during discussions. If presenting the item, this should be added to the coversheet and sent to the Secretary by the deadline.

7.0. Minutes

7.1. Quick Action sheet

After the meeting, the Secretary will prepare a quick action sheet, detailing all the actions agreed by the Committee. This will be sent to members within 1-2 days of the meeting.

7.2. Minutes Template

The Secretary will write the minutes, using the approved [minute template](#). This sets out the following information:

- Apologies
- Declarations of Interests
- Approval of previous minutes
- Chairs actions
- Other items
- Confidentiality
- Risk Register Update
- Any Other Business

7.3. Minute Writing Tips

- Keep minutes brief and concise. Summarise:
 - the key points of discussion.
 - The final outcomes of each discussion
 - The reasons for any decisions taken
- Do not transcribe 'verbatim' unless specifically required by the Chair (for example, there may be occasions where this is necessary for legal purposes; e.g. certain HR meetings).
- Use job titles, not names or initials. Unless specified, it is not necessary to identify who made each comment.
- Actions should be numbered using 'meeting abbreviation. Academic year. Meeting cycle. Action within that meeting'. For example, the following action is from the Senate meeting, in the 2018/19 academic year, it is the fourth meeting of the year, and the second action agreed within that meeting:

'Senate. 18/19 4.2.'
- Identify actions from discussions, so that these can be followed up at the next meeting. Actions should be allocated to committee members – even if someone outside the meeting will complete the task, a member should still be responsible for reporting on this task.

An example of the minutes template can be found in the [Appendices](#).

Programme Committee Meetings

Where a meeting is mainly focussed on student input, such as with Programme Committees, the style of the minutes may vary to focus on the issues raised. The Governance Office recommends the following:

- Student Members provide a list of student issues ahead of the meeting date, giving staff members sufficient time to investigate these.
- At the meeting, the Chair should follow the list of Student Issues provided. The issues raised can be embedded in to the Agenda / Minutes.
- Where other topics arise through discussions, these should be minuted under 'Other business arising'.
- Minutes should still be kept brief and concise, following the general advice as provided in section 7.3 above.

7.4. Approval of the minutes

Once the minutes have been drafted by the Secretary, these will need to be reviewed and approved by the Chair prior to circulation.

The minutes will remain as a Chair approved DRAFT, until the following committee meeting, where the committee will approve the minutes as accurate. Only then can the minutes be published (as required).

The Secretary will also need to draft a coversheet (see [template](#)), for presentation to the parent committee. This will give a brief overview of discussions and decisions taken at the subcommittee meeting, and will need to be sent to the Secretary of the parent committee by the deadline.

7.5. Circulation of the minutes

Once approved by the Chair, draft minutes should be circulated to committee members, and any other stakeholders identified within 1 week of the meeting (subject to Chair availability). This allows members to disseminate information and complete tasks quickly and efficiently.

Immediately following circulation of the draft minutes, members are asked to alert the Secretary of any corrections, including typographical errors.

8.0. Committee Communication

8.1. Transparency

In line with the University Transparency Policy, committee minutes and papers will be made available on the University intranet, once approved by the Chair and subject to Committee approval.

Additionally, minutes for the Board of Trustees and for Senate will also be made available on the University [web site](#).

Before circulating / publishing any minutes, papers or information, it is important to have approval of the Chair / Committee. If any sensitive or confidential information has been discussed, this may need to be redacted (see [section 8.5.1](#), below).

Committee Papers on the Intranet

Once a meeting has completed, the Secretary will upload all documentation to the relevant [University Committee](#) pages on the intranet. This will include the **committee approved** minutes. It is important for the Secretary to check with the Chair if any redactions are needed.

8.2. Committee Bulletins

A committee bulletin will be produced by the Secretary for each of the following meetings:

- Board of Trustees
- Directorate
- Senate
- Senior Management Group

These will detail the key information and news from each of the meetings and will be circulated internally to all staff via the News Bulletin on the University intranet.

8.3. Representatives

Staff groups are widely represented on committees through representative members. It is important that these members disseminate information, news and decisions back to their constituents to ensure effective and transparent communication.

Election / Appointment of Staff Representatives

Please note that 'Representatives' refers to colleagues *elected or appointed* to a committee, not those Ex-Officio members who are required to attend as part of their job description.

For staff representation on Senate, a full election will take place once a current representative reaches the end of their term or leaves the University. This process will be managed by the Governance Office.

For Academic Representatives on other Committees, these are normally appointed by the PVC / Faculty Dean / Institute Director. Secretaries should note the following:

- Each summer (between the end / start of the academic year), the Faculty Deans may wish to send out a 'call for interest' to all academic colleagues, noting the relevant committees.
- Colleagues should inform the Dean of the committees they are interested in for representation.
- The Dean / Director will review the list and appoint a colleague to act as representative on a particular committee. This will need to be communicated to the committee Secretary.

- The member will serve as representative on the committee for one academic year.

8.4. Intranet / Website

As mentioned in [section 8.1](#), key information from committees may be uploaded to the intranet following approval. Additionally, it may be useful to communicate key items of business on the intranet via a news item. For example, a new policy, strategy and process should be uploaded in a relevant location on the intranet, and with a news story so colleagues are aware of the addition. This is the responsibility of the policy / strategy owner, although the Secretary may be asked to advise on this.

Some documents will also need to be uploaded on to the University web site. For example, all academic policy is made available on the [Governance pages](#). This will need to be uploaded via the Communications team.

8.5. Confidentiality / Sensitivity

Before sharing any information, it is important to check if there are any confidential concerns. This is done as follows:

- At the committee – any confidential items will be raised under this section of the agenda.
- With the Chair, when following up on minutes and documentation to be circulated / published.
- With the owner of a document.

If information is deemed as confidential or sensitive, it may be that the document can be circulated / published, but first needs to be redacted.

8.5.1. Redacting information

- Save the document as a pdf.
- Open the pdf document and click on the 'Tools' panel (on the right hand side).
- Under 'Protection', click on 'mark for redaction'.
- Select all the text within the document that is confidential / sensitive.
- Under 'Protection', click on 'apply redactions'.
- Save the document with a new title (add 'redacted').
- Ensure that when circulating / publishing confidential or sensitive information, that the redacted document is selected.

9.0. Training

9.1. Student Representation

The Student Union will send a list of Student Executive members each year in September. Any new members will need to receive training for the Senate Committees. This is organized by the Governance Office and should take place twice a year; once in September and once in January (before the committee meetings start to take place).

A list of elected Student Council Representatives is held within the Student Services team. Election and training for these representatives will be provided by Student Services.

9.2. Secretary, Administrators and other colleagues

Colleagues assuming the role of Secretary for a committee meeting should familiarize themselves with this guidance document, as well as the Governance Structure. Additionally, colleagues in these roles may wish to request a meeting with the Governance Advisors to talk through the structure, the committees and any questions they may have.

10.0 Review

10.1. External

From time to time the Head of Governance may request an external party to review the Academic Governance Structure, which may include the following reviews:

- Committee memberships
- Committee business and how terms of reference are fulfilled
- How committee business is conducted
- To what extent are committee standards upheld and monitored.

This will be communicate to colleagues as and when applicable.

10.2. Internal

Chair's and Secretaries should regularly review a Committee's membership, terms of reference and standing orders to ensure that these are fit for purpose, and business is progressing.

10.2.1. Mapping of the Terms of Reference

Prior to the start of the academic year, the Secretary should draft a 'mapping document' of how and when each of the Committee's terms of reference will be completed (see example table below). This should be discussed and agreed with the Chair before the first meeting, then reviewed throughout the year when discussing individual agendas. This will be a fluid document and tasks may move between meetings, but it will help the Secretary and Chair to build the agenda and ensure business is progressing.

Table 1: Senate Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee - Committee Plan Terms of Reference 2018/19

11th October 2018	28th November 2018	21st February 2019	23rd May 2019
SQAEC Annual Summary Report submitted to Senate	Receipt of AMC Annual Summary Report 2017/18	Chair's Report	Chair's Report
Chair's Report	SPSP Report of Overall Arrangements for the Quality Assurance of Taught Collaborative Provision	Programme Validation Reports for ratification	Programme Validation Reports for ratification
Extenuating Circumstances Board Report	Chair's Report	Validation Process Review	Finalist Board Reports
Programme Validation Reports for ratification	Programme Validation Reports for ratification	Finalist Board Reports	Institutional Overview Report 2017-18 (an extraordinary meeting may be required for this item)
Finalist Board Reports	Finalist Board Reports	Oversight of Annual Monitoring Process through the AMC minutes	Oversight of Annual Monitoring Process through the IOP / Faculty Overview minutes
SQAEC Minutes disseminated by all members, and submitted to Senate	SQAEC Minutes disseminated by all members, and submitted to Senate	Receipt of PPP minutes and change log	Receipt of PPP minutes and change log
QAA Quality Code Mapping Action Update papers	New QAA Quality Code Mapping Document	SQAEC Minutes disseminated by all members, and submitted to Senate	SQAEC Minutes disseminated by all members, and submitted to Senate
IOR Action Plan Updates	QAA Quality Code Mapping Action Update papers	QAA Quality Code Mapping Action Update papers	QAA Quality Code Mapping Action Update papers
Validation Schedule	IOR Action Plan Updates	IOR Action Plan Updates	IOR Action Plan Updates
External Examiner Appointment Update	Validation Schedule	Validation Schedule	Validation Schedule
OU Annual Monitoring 2016/17 - completion letter	External Examiner Appointment Update	External Examiner Appointment Update	External Examiner Appointment Update
Exam Board Monitoring 2017/18 - issues and recommendations	Analysis of Entry Requirements against Assessment Outcomes	Module Assessment Results and Comparisons	Academic Regulations
Sharing Marking Schemes and Exam Papers with External Examiners	Exam Board Process Review		Exam Board Monitoring 2017/18 - issues and recommendations
Monitoring of the Admissions, Appeals and Complaints Policy - Statement from Head of Admissions			Review of Placement Guidance Document
<u>Reports to be received / distributed</u>	<u>Policies "owned" by SQAEC</u>	<u>Oversight and minutes to be received / distributed</u>	<u>Update Papers</u>

10.2.2. Annual Summary Reports

Annual Summary Reports are required of each committee at the end of each academic year. These are presented to the parent committee at its first meeting of the **following** academic year and aim to:

- Confirm that the Committee has fulfilled its terms of reference.
- Highlight the key work and decisions the committee has taken during that year.
- Where tasks have not been completed, to provide the reasons for this, where this constitutes a risk and how it is being mitigated.
- To highlight any work / concerns for the parent committee's attention.
- To note the attendance of each member for the previous academic year.

This is a requirement of every committee and is embedded within the standing orders.

It is the responsibility of the Secretary to draft this report by checking the following:

- The committee's terms of reference
- The committee's mapping document against the terms of reference
- Minutes of the committee's meetings

Once drafted, this should be sent to the Chair for review and approval, prior to submission to the parent committee.

This activity will usually take place over the summer, once the committee cycle has finished, and prior to the start of the new academic year.

10.3. Changes to the Committee's Membership, Terms of Reference and Standing Orders

The Head of Governance and the Governance Office will review the membership, terms of reference and standing orders on an annual basis, in consultation with committee members, to ensure that these are fit for purpose. If colleagues would like to suggest any changes to these, please contact the Governance Office who will be able to offer advice.

Any changes to the above will require approval from the parent committee, Head of Governance and Senate or the Board of Trustees.

13.0 Appendix

13.1 Quick Reference Guide for Chairs

13.2 Quick Reference Guide for Secretaries

13.3 Template for Agenda

13.4 Template for Minutes

13.5 Template for Paper Coversheet

13.6 Template for Action / Matters Arising Paper

Appendix 13.1.

Quick Reference Guide for Committee Chairs

Role of the Chair

The role of the Chair is to ensure that the meeting runs effectively, efficiently and in line with its remit as set out by the terms of reference. A Chair maintains a professional attitude throughout proceedings, encourages and listens to contributions from members, and guides discussions towards constructive conclusions and decision making.

Preparation for a meeting

- Review the committee terms of reference and the terms of reference mapping, to ensure the committee is fulfilling its remit.
- Review and agree the meeting agenda with the Secretary.
- With the Secretary, identify where colleagues will need to be co-opted to the meeting.
- Discourage items of 'Any Other Business', or tabled papers.
- Read committee documentation carefully in advance of the meeting.

At the meeting

- Arrive early if possible.
- Check with the Secretary that the meeting is Quorate.
- Start and finish the meeting on time.
- Where new members are present, make introductions.
- Encourage members to present papers *en bref* with the assumption that members have read these prior to the meeting.
- Encourage discussion, listen to contribution and remain impartial.
- Give all members an opportunity to talk, whilst guiding discussion towards decision making.
- Summarise discussions, and clearly state the agreed outcome and action for the minutes.
- Discourage items of AOB
- Ensure that items that will impact the risk register are highlighted for the minutes.
Ensure that items considered as confidential are highlighted for the minutes.
- State the arrangements for the next meeting.

After the meeting

- Complete any assigned actions.
- Review the draft minutes prior to circulation to members. (Within 1 week of the meeting).
- Ensure any updates to the risk register are communicated to Directorate.
- Approve any urgent matters by Chair's Action.

Appendix 13.2.

Quick Reference Guide for Committee Secretaries

Role of Secretary

The role of Secretary is important and can have a considerable effect on the running of a committee. Responsibilities are set out in the Committee Standards. This guide complements the full document, and is intended to be a handy quick reference sheet.

Preparation for meetings

- Agree a date with the Chair and send an invitation to members at least 4 weeks ahead of the meeting
- Book a room, catering and audio-visual equipment
- Agree agenda with Chair (at least 4 weeks before)
- Deadline for receipt of papers (3 weeks before the meeting)
- Circulate papers to members electronically (2 weeks before the meeting)

Agenda

- Meet early on to discuss with Chair
- Include standing items
- Review previous minutes and actions for upcoming business
- Review the terms of reference mapping for upcoming business
- Use the Regent's University London template
- Number agenda items according to the template, and ensure paper titles and numbers correspond to this

Servicing the meetings

- Arrive early to check room set up / catering
- Check attendance and ensure the meeting is quorate (check standing orders or the committee's terms of reference)
- Record notes, decisions and actions as the meeting proceeds
- If decision is unclear, ask the Chair for clarification
- Collect any papers left on the tables at the end of the meeting

Minutes

- Use the Regent's University London template
- Number the minutes according to the template and ensure that this corresponds with the agenda numbering
- Ensure attendee list is accurate
- Do not use names / initials – identify individual contributors, where this is relevant, by their job titles
- The following words may be useful to use when writing the minutes:
 - Considered
 - Noted
 - Reported
 - Discussed
 - Received
 - Approved
 - Confirmed
 - Recommended
- Review the draft minutes with the Chair
- Once agreed, circulate the 'Chair approved' minutes (within 1 week of the meeting)

After the meeting

- Make a list of any actions and send these to the relevant colleagues / committees (secretaries)
- Upload the committee documentation to the relevant committee page on the University intranet (having checked for any confidential / sensitive data and redacted as necessary)
- Record member attendance
- Write the minutes for approval of the Chair

For further information and guidance, please contact the Governance Advisors.

Committee Name		
Agenda		
Date		
Time		
Room		
<u>Members</u> Ex-Officio		(Chair)
<u>In Attendance</u>		
<u>Opening Items</u>		
1.	Welcome from the Chair	Chair
2.	Apologies for absence	Secretary
3.	Declarations of Interests	Chair
4.	Minutes of the previous meeting (date) <i>The Committee is asked to...</i>	Chair
5.	Actions and Matters arising from the previous meeting (date)	Chair
<u>Part A: Items for Discussion and / or Approval</u>		
6.	Student Matters	Student Reps
7.	<i>The Committee is asked to...</i>	
8.	<i>The Committee is asked to...</i>	
9.	<i>The Committee is asked to...</i>	
10.	<i>The Committee is asked to...</i>	
11.	<i>The Committee is asked to...</i>	

Appendix 13.3.

Part B: Items for Noting		
12.	Chair's Actions	Chair
13.	Sub Committee Meeting Minutes	
14.		
15.		
16.		
17.		
Closing Items		
18.	Confidentiality	Chair
19.	Communication from the committee	Chair
20.	Risk Management Update	Chair
21.	Any Other Business	Chair
22.	Next meeting (all scheduled meeting dates / times / deadlines)	Secretary

Committee Name	
Minutes	
Date	
Time	
Room	
<u>Present Members</u> Ex-Officio	(Chair)
<u>Apologies for Absence</u>	
<u>In Attendance</u>	
<u>Opening Items</u>	
1.	Welcome from the Chair
2.	Apologies for absence
3.	Declarations of Interests
4.	Minutes of the previous meeting (date)
5.	Actions and Matters arising from the previous meeting (date)
<u>Part A: Items for Discussion and / or Approval</u>	
6.	Student Matters
7.	
8.	
9.	

Appendix 13.4.

10.	
11.	
<u>Part B: Items for Noting</u>	
12.	Chair's Actions
13.	Sub Committee Meeting Minutes
14.	
15.	
16.	
17.	
<u>Closing Items</u>	
18.	Confidentiality
19.	Communication from the committee
20.	Risk Management Update
21.	Any Other Business
22.	Next meeting (all scheduled meeting dates / times / deadlines)

Appendix 13.4.

Item	Action Required	Staff responsible	Due Date
New Actions:			
<<Committee. academic year- Action Number >> e.g. SLTC.18/19 - 2.1			
On-going Actions:			
Closed Actions since the last meeting:			

Please ensure all fields are considered and completed prior to submission to the Committee Secretary

<p>Committee Name</p> <p>Title of Paper</p> <p>Date</p> <p>Time</p> <p>Agenda Number</p>	
Author (Name / Job Title)	
Presenter (Name / Job Title)	
Date Produced	
Synopsis	
Requested Outcome	The Committee is asked to
Financial Implications	
Link to Strategy	How does this paper link to University Strategy?
Risk Analysis	Does this paper impact on existing risk, or potentially raise a new one?
HR Implications	
Communication after Committee Decision	
Proposed Place(s) of Publication	
Proposed Date of Implementation	
Sources and References	

Appendix 13.6.



Committee Name

Date

Item number

Actions Arising

Item	Action Required	Staff responsible	Due Date	Update	Status
New Actions:					
<<Committee. academic year- Action Number >> e.g. SLTC.18/19 - 2.1					Action ongoing / completed:
On-going Actions:					
<<Committee. academic year- Action Number >> e.g. SLTC.18/19 - 2.1					Action ongoing / completed: