

Election of Members to the Senatus Academicus (the Senate), May 2024 Casual Vacancy - Elected Member, Physical Sciences Constituency

1. Briefing Information

Senatus

Senate provides academic governance within the University and considers business associated with research, learning and teaching matters and the related student experience. It is also a forum for discussing the University's academic strategy and new academic initiatives that have importance for the University as a whole. Its membership consists of *ex officio* members (Principal's Office members, Deans of Faculty and Heads of School) and elected members (Senate Assessors on the University Court, student representatives and staff members elected directly from constituencies representing the academic schools). Senate is chaired by the Principal as President of Senate and meets four times a year (twice per semester).

Notice is hereby given of 10 scheduled vacancies for elected members of Senate in the following constituencies

Arts and Divinity Constituency (*Schools of Art History, Classics, Divinity, English, English Language Teaching, History, Modern Languages, and Philosophical, Anthropological & Film Studies*)

- Four vacancies- all present incumbents eligible to stand for a second term.

Life Sciences Constituency (*Schools of Biology, Medicine, and Psychology & Neuroscience*)

- Two vacancies- both present incumbents eligible to stand for a second term.

Physical Sciences Constituency (*Schools of Chemistry, Computer Science, Earth & Environmental Sciences, Geography & Sustainable Development, Mathematics & Statistics, and Physics & Astronomy*)

- Two vacancies -one incumbent eligible to stand again.

Social Sciences Constituency (*Business School (departments of Economics, Finance, and Management), and School of International Relations*).

- Two vacancies- both present incumbents eligible to stand for a second term.

Eligibility: Any academic staff member holding a permanent or fixed term salaried contract of employment in the relevant Constituency on the census date of 15 April 2024 may stand as a candidate and/or vote in the election.

Length of term: The term of appointment shall be until 31 July 2028, with the possibility of renewal for a further standard term of four years (subject to re-election).

Academic staff who are on research leave or otherwise absent from the University for more than one semester continuously should normally resign as a member of Senate. Please note, an appointment to the position of Senate elected member will terminate automatically if the holder ceases being an employee of the University.

Nomination process: Candidates must be proposed and seconded by eligible staff (see above) in the constituency. Staff may propose or second only one candidate. No candidate may self-nominate. Completed nomination forms must be submitted electronically by the deadline cited on the form and accompanied by a short candidate profile (of no more than 250 words) that will be used in the eventuality of an election. In the case of only one candidate being nominated for the given vacancy, no election shall take place and this candidate will be automatically appointed.

Method of voting: Should an election be required, voting will be conducted online and will be administered by Civica Election Services (CES) and Staff should be aware that, under schedule 2 of the Data Protection Act 1998, the University will transfer the following details to CES for the purposes of administering the election: staff ID number, name and email address.

Election timetable: Nominations for the positions open on Monday 29 April 2024 and will close at 12 noon on Wednesday 8 May 2024. If required, an online ballot for the vacancies will be held from 12 noon on Wednesday 22 May 2024 to 12 noon on Friday 24 May 2024. The election result will be announced on Monday 27 May 2024.

Nomination forms should be requested by emailing senate@st-andrews.ac.uk.

Senate Office
April 2024

2. Description of Role

The Role of Elected Members of Academic Senate

The Elected Members of the Senatus Academicus (the Senate) represent the interests and perspectives of the members of the constituencies of the University at Senate meetings. In this way, the Elected Members represent the interests of academic staff, rather than the various Schools to which they belong. The main duty of Elected Members is to represent the perspectives of constituency members during the Senate's decision-making processes, irrespective of the positions of the Heads of Schools who are also present in Senate.

This representation occurs in a number of fashions:

- (1) Each an Elected Member/s of Senate is selected by the academic staff of one of four constituencies: arts and divinity, life sciences, physical sciences, and the social sciences. The Elected Members have a responsibility to solicit the opinions, perspectives, and needs of the constituency from which they were selected.
- (2) Elected Members have an obligation to present the perspectives that they believe to be in the best interest of their constituency and of the University as a whole. This obligation includes scrutinizing and approving all documents and policies related

to academic matters that are brought to Senate, and raising any relevant issues, concerns or ideas at the Senate meetings.

- (3) The Elected Members as a collective body can create among themselves working groups, both of a more permanent, long-standing nature and as ad hoc informal working groups for specific concerns, tasks, or projects. The Elected Members then represent the interests and concerns of the working groups on which they serve at Senate meetings.
- (4) Finally, as the positions of the Elected Members are stipulated by the laws and regulations of Scottish Government as being in the interest of good governance of these public institutions, the Elected Members have an obligation to enhance the democratic nature of the good governance of the institution of the University. As such, each Elected Member has an obligation to be attentive to the interests and needs of the constituency they represent, the University as a whole, and to the wider community both of St Andrews and Scotland more generally, including the sector of higher education.

To be able to carry out their role, the Elected Members should regularly liaise with colleagues from their constituency, other members of their caucuses, and together as the body of the Elected Members, and finally as members of the Senate.

To allow the Elected Members to efficiently and effectively communicate the voices, concerns and needs of their constituents to the University, a report from the Elected Members will be a standing item on the Senate agenda.

Approved by Academic Council March 2020

Senate Office
April 2024