



Identifiable Tasks of the Deans of Heriot-Watt University

This document sets out the identifiable tasks of the Deans of Heriot-Watt University and should be read in conjunction with *Ordinance 12. Deans of the University and Associate Deans*.

Role and Selection

The Deans represent the academic community of the University and provide an interface between that community, including the Senate, and the various academic management procedures. The Deans report to the Vice-Principal. The Senior Dean acts as a mentor and advisor to the Elected Deans and maintains continuity for the role of Dean.

There are currently three Deans of the University:

Two Elected Deans: Each is elected by the academic staff. One Dean has primary responsibility for issues in the Schools/Institutes of SML, SBE, TEX and EBS; the other for EPS, MACS, SLS and IPE. As such their areas of responsibility are defined in Ordinance 12 as Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, and Science and Engineering. The Elected Deans are elected by academic staff within the relevant Schools.

The Senior Dean is normally selected from the two Elected Deans in office or from staff who have previously served as an Elected Dean. The Senate approves the appointment of the Senior Dean.

Each Elected Dean identifies and recommends the appointment of up to two Associate Deans. The Associate Deans normally assist in staff appointments and exam board activities and deputise for the Dean during extended periods of absence. The Associate Deans are not substitutes for the Deans in any of his or her statutory duties nor will he or she represent a Dean on the Senate Business Committee.

Undergraduate Studies & Postgraduate Studies Committees

There are two University committees that formally are chaired by the Elected Deans. These are the Senate scrutiny committees: (i) Undergraduate Studies Committee (USC) and (ii) Postgraduate Studies Committee (PSC). It is left to the two Elected Deans to agree who should chair which committee.

The Committees currently meet 7-9 times per year, for around two hours (dependent on the Chair's style and the business to be transacted). Formal business includes the approval, on behalf of the Senate of academic programmes and Examiners, and for PSC approval of research degree awards. None of these approvals are automatic; papers are often passed back to the Schools/Institutes for resubmission or for minor changes, for which the Committee can give the respective Dean approval authority. The USC and PSC are clerked by staff from the Academic Registry, with whom the Deans are in regular contact, particularly prior to, and following, the meetings. The Deans also have the delegated authority to make some decisions on behalf of the Studies Committees (e.g. suspension or extension of studies, appointment of Examiners etc). The Senior Dean is 'in attendance' at meetings of the USC and PSC and acts as Chair in the absence of the Elected Dean.

The Deans have an important role in keeping under review the remits of the Studies Committees to ensure that they remain relevant. The Deans may identify strategic items for consideration. In the same way they also work with the Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) to ensure that these remits are relevant and complementary to that of the Quality and Standards Committee (QSC) and that the business of the three committees is co-ordinated.

The Deans should be familiar with (and know where to find) the various regulations, policies and guidelines associated with the Studies Committee remits, and are involved in reviewing and recommending modifications to them. Deans also discuss and give advice on issues regarding upcoming proposals; this can expedite the process of approval, although the extent of this activity depends on the amount of time a Dean is able to commit to it.

University Senate and Senate Business Committee

The Elected Deans and the Senior Dean are *ex officio* members of the Senate Business Committee and the Senate.

The Studies Committees report to the Senate. Reporting is primarily for information, but there are occasions where specific issues have been raised for which Senate approval is sought (e.g. introduction of the Postgraduate Research Student Code of Practice, or modifications to Regulations).

For the Senate Business Committee the Elected Deans have a separate role in scrutinising, considering and approving cases for various honorary positions (e.g. professors). The Deans may refer cases requiring further consideration to the full Committee for consideration.

Quality & Standards Committee (QSC) and Associated Activities

Elected Deans and the Senior Dean are members of QSC (a formal committee of the Senate). The Senior Dean chairs the Committee. Deans have a specific role regarding academic standards as relevant to the Studies Committees. Additionally the Elected Deans see and comment on all responses to taught programme External Examiner reports, along with the Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching). The Senior Dean is a member of the Validation Committee (International Study Group).

Examination Boards

A Dean (or a nominee) is required to attend the Progression and Examination Boards for all Taught Undergraduate and Postgraduate Degrees. This is a major task and both Elected Deans attend large numbers of boards. The Senior Dean attends meetings of Boards in the absence of the Elected Dean and in instances of high risk. The Deans, together with the Academic Registry, monitor the Minutes of Progression/Examination Boards. The Senior Dean will Chair the Board of Examiners for International Study Group. The Elected Deans are members of the Board of Examiners for the Degree Entry Programme (Dubai).

University Court

The Deans are "in attendance" at Court meetings, and are invited to the pre-Court lunches.

Learning & Teaching Board (LTB) and Research and Knowledge Exchange Board (RKEB)

All the Deans are *ex-officio* members of the LTB and the RKEB. They bring to those Boards experience and knowledge from their many other activities, and those activities are often informed by the Board discussions. The Deans are currently the only members serving on both Boards. Each Board sets-up working groups to make recommendations regarding specific short-term issues; the Deans have the opportunity to contribute to these groups.

Staff Appointments and Promotion Boards

The Deans officially sit on all academic appointment panels for the Schools in their remit, or for other Schools should they have the more relevant background, or for appointments in the subject area of the other Dean.

New members of the academic staff are given a local mentor and probation targets, following consultation between the Heads of School and the Deans. The Deans often need to initiate the target setting, and have the responsibility for ensuring that targets are adhered to by all parties - probationer, mentor and Head of School.

The Deans attend the Lecturer Advancement/Promotions Board, which reviews probationary staff and approves probation completion.

The Deans are members of the relevant Senior Academic Promotions Board. At its first meeting the Board decides which of those School recommendations for Senior Lecturer, Readership and Professorships are *prima facie* promotion cases. Each Dean, along with the Vice-Principal and relevant Head of School, interviews those senior lecturer and reader candidates within their remit; the Vice-Principal provides a brief report and a joint recommendation on these candidates informs the Board at its second meeting.

For internal promotions to Professor and for new appointments at that level, the relevant Dean sits on the interview panel. The relevant Dean sits on panels for the transfer of staff to academic posts. The relevant Dean authorises Approved Teacher Status along with associated training needs, following discussions with the Head of School and Academic Enhancement.

The Senior Dean is involved in sounding-out the views of staff prior to the appointment or reappointment of Heads of Schools (including the Institute of Petroleum Engineering, but excluding Edinburgh Business School).

Graduation Ceremonies and Honorary Degrees

The Deans are invited to attend all graduation ceremonies, and associated receptions and lunches. It is expected that a Dean will attend at the least those ceremonies involving the Schools within their remit. The Deans are responsible for announcing the names of prize winners at ceremonies. The names of graduands are normally read out by their Head of School (Deans might be asked to substitute, where the Head of School is unavailable). Deans are occasionally asked to take part in the overseas graduation ceremonies held by the University.

Deans sit on the Honorary Degrees Working Group, chaired by the Principal.

Student Discipline Cases and Academic Appeals

Currently the Elected Deans consider and approve penalties imposed by Schools in cases of student academic misconduct considered as Category B cases. The Deans serve on the Discipline Committee for cases of academic misconduct referred up by Schools and Major offences of a non-academic nature. The Senior Dean acts as the Chair of the Discipline Committee when the Senior Deputy Principal is absent.

The Deans may also be asked to provide advice to a Head of School (or his or her nominee) on the classification of cases of academic misconduct where the Category is to be determined.

The Senior Dean is the Chair of the University Discipline Committee. The Elected Deans may act as Substitute Chairs of the Committee and share this function with the Vice-Principal who is Chair of the Committee. In the absence of the Vice-Principal they also consider urgent discipline cases requiring immediate attention.

On occasion a Dean will be asked to investigate and provide a written report on those discipline cases, or cases of appeal against awards, that have reached the Vice-Principal.

Dispute Arbitration

The Deans have a role of first arbiter regarding issues such as disputes between Schools, academics and/or other staff, and may be invited by the Vice-Principal to assist in investigating student complaints of an academic nature, in accordance with University Complaints Policy.

MacFarlane Prize Committee

The Deans attend the annual meeting of the MacFarlane Prize Committee at which the recipient of the MacFarlane Prize is selected.

Ad hoc meetings

One or more of the Deans are involved in a variety of short meetings with e.g. Academic Registry staff, the Vice-Principal, Heads of School and Directors of Learning & Teaching, regarding such issues as: modifications in procedures, feedback on individual cases from the junior promotions committee, programme proposals, research-degree re-submission cases.

External Activities

The only formal external activity is that of the Deans of Science and Engineering of the Scottish Universities, who now meet at least twice a year. Topics range from Curriculum Development to Research Pooling. There are various opportunities to attend short UK Conferences or Meetings on behalf of the University.

Social Events

The Deans receive invitations to occasional receptions, lunches or dinners from *inter alia*, the Principal, the Students Union, the Sports Union, and the Chaplain. They are also invited to represent the University at church services and to attend all University inaugural lectures, public talks, and other events.

Summary

The following table summarises the responsibilities of the Deans:

Responsibilities of Elected Deans	Division of Responsibilities of Elected Deans and Senior Dean	Alternative Arrangements for Duties
Chair of Undergraduate Studies Committee or Postgraduate Studies Committee	Elected Deans Chair Committees Senior Dean 'in attendance' at meetings of Committees but not be a member of Committees	Senior Dean to Chair in absence of Elected Dean
Senate/Senate Business Committee Member	All Deans are members of Senate/Senate Business Committee	n/a
Quality and Standards Committee (QSC) Members	The Senior Dean Chairs the Committee All the Deans are members of the Committee	Elected Deans to Chair in absence of Senior Dean
Scrutiny of Examiner reports	Elected Deans only	Senior Dean to scrutinise in absence of Elected Deans
Member of School Audit Panels	All Deans	No
Member of Validation Committee ISG	Senior Dean only	Elected Deans to represent Senior Dean in his/her absence
Attendance at Exam and Progression Boards	Elected Deans Senior Dean in instances of high risk	Senior Dean to attend in absence of Elected Deans
Attend LTB/RKEB	All Deans 'in attendance' at relevant Board meetings	n/a
Academic staff appointments, Chair Selection Committees, promotions	All Deans	n/a
Member of Discipline Committee	All Deans are members of the Committee	The Senior Dean Chairs in the absence of the Senior Deputy Principal
Ratify School decisions on Category B offences	Elected Deans only	Senior Dean to consider cases in absence of Elected Deans
Honorary Degrees Working Group	All Deans are members of the Working Group	n/a
Attendance at Court meetings	All Deans are 'in attendance' at meetings of the Court	n/a
Consultation on appointment of Heads of Schools	Senior Dean for all Schools	n/a
Selection Committee for Heads of Schools	Relevant Dean	n/a
Student Complaints: Assistance in Investigations	Senior Dean	Elected Dean
Graduations	Elected Deans: Presentation of prizes and medals	Senior Dean in absence of Elected Deans
With the approval of the Senate Business Committee other responsibilities of the Senior Dean may be undertaken by the Elected Deans and vice versa.		