



The Open
University

Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2016

Monitoring data

Governance

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Comments or queries about this report are welcomed and should be sent for the attention of the Head of Equality, Diversity and Information Rights.

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Contents

Governance	4
General	4
<i>About Council</i>	4
<i>Notes on the data</i>	8
Council	9
Age.....	9
<i>Membership composition</i>	9
Disability	11
<i>Membership composition</i>	11
Ethnicity	12
<i>Membership Composition</i>	12
Gender	14
<i>Membership Composition</i>	14
Religion or belief	16
<i>Membership Composition</i>	16
Sexual Orientation	18
<i>Membership Composition</i>	18
Senate	20
General	20
<i>About Senate</i>	20
<i>Notes on the data</i>	22
Age.....	23
<i>Membership Composition</i>	23
Disability	25
<i>Membership Composition</i>	25
Ethnicity	26
<i>Membership Composition</i>	26
Gender	28
<i>Membership Composition</i>	28
Religion or belief	29
<i>Membership Composition</i>	29
Sexual Orientation	31
<i>Membership Composition</i>	31

About University Governance

The Open University's government structure is a bi-cameral one, with both a Council and a Senate.

The Council has a membership of 25; it includes representatives of the academic and research staff, associate lecturer and non-academic staff, students, and a number of external co-opted members. These latter persons hold a majority of the membership places. They are appointed for their experience and expertise. Subject to the academic powers of the Senate, the Council exercises general control over conduct of the University's affairs, but is particularly concerned with its finances and property, and with staff matters. It is assisted by a number of specific sub-Committees, which deal with matters relating to audit, finance, staffing, estates and membership.

The Senate is the academic authority of the University which, subject to the powers of the Council, is responsible for promoting the academic work of the University, both in teaching and research. It oversees the University's academic management, including the curriculum and all aspects of quality and standards associated with the University as a degree-awarding body. Senate meetings concentrate on major issues of academic strategy, policy, priority and performance.

About Council

Purpose

The Council is established by Charter and is the executive governing body of the University. It is collectively responsible for overseeing the University's activities, determining its future direction and fostering an environment in which the University mission is achieved and the potential of all learners is maximised.

The Council ensures compliance with the statutes, ordinances and provisions regulating the institution and its framework of governance, and complies with the primary elements of governance outlined by the Higher Education (HE) Code of Governance, published by the Committee of University Chairs (CUC). Further details can be found in the Council Statement of Role and Primary Responsibilities.

Meetings and members

The Council holds four business meetings a year, with one of the meetings followed by a strategy workshop. A special meeting may be convened at any time on the written request of ten members of the Council (Statute 14) or by the decision of the Chair.

The Council comprises 25 members as follows:

1. Ex Officio members

- a) The Chair of the Council, the Pro-Chancellor
- b) The Vice-Chancellor
- c) The Treasurer
- d) The President of the Open University Students Association

Where constitutions designate particular ex-officio members, membership attaches to the office or role, not to the individual. Ex-Officio members of the Council hold office for as long as they continue to occupy the positions by virtue of which they became members. The Pro-Chancellor and the Treasurer are external members of the Council and the procedures for appointment and the terms of office for external members apply.

2. Appointed members

- a) Five members of the Senate appointed by the Senate under procedures determined by Ordinance
- b) One student member appointed by OUSA
- c) Two associate lecturer members, appointed under procedures determined by Ordinance
- d) One member of the non-academic staff of the University, appointed under procedures determined by Ordinance

Members are appointed where another body or a group or an office-holder has the right to fill places on the body concerned. "Appointed" is sometimes used more generally to refer to any member who is neither ex officio nor co-opted.

Appointed members of the Council normally serve for a period of four years. They are eligible for reappointment on the expiration of their term of

office, provided that they do not serve for a continuous period exceeding eight years. Elections are conducted in accordance with the Senate Standing Orders, Appendix 3: Code of Practice for Elections to University Governance Committees. All elections within the scope of this Code are conducted by means of a secret ballot. The University Secretary invites nominations from all members of the relevant constituencies, who are regarded as having an equal opportunity to contribute to the work of the Council. Elections are conducted using the single transferable vote system.

Casual vacancies, occurring by resignation, incapacity, or death, for Senate-elected members on the Council, are filled on the approval of the Chair of the Senate. The member appointed to fill a casual vacancy will hold office for the unexpired term of office of the member in whose place he or she is nominated or appointed (Statute 23 f). Associate Lecturer and Student casual vacancies, however, are filled by the original appointing bodies.

3. External Co-opted Members

The Council may co-opt up to twelve persons who are not members of the academic staff or salaried officers of the University. External co-opted members join the Council through the Council's approval of recommendations submitted by the Membership Committee. A procedure for selection is followed by the Membership Committee. External co-opted members of the Council normally hold office for a period of four years and are eligible for re-appointment, provided that they do not serve for a continuous period exceeding eight years. Interim vacancies for external co-opted members are not filled on a casual basis, but a new member is sought by the Membership Committee through the appropriate process.

The Membership Committee is responsible for recommending to the Council the appointment or reappointment of external co-opted members of the Council, and Council membership of Council Committees. It consults widely both within the University and externally to obtain suggestions and applications for Council Membership. The constitution, standing orders, statement of role and primary responsibilities, the diversity policy and the role of members of the Council and Council Committees are available on the University intranet. The Membership Committee advises the Council on the balance of membership (including committees of the Council) and on the experience and skills required to ensure that there are informed and wide-ranging points of view. A list of criteria for membership of the Council has been agreed, and diversity is amongst the factors considered. The Membership Committee monitors the effectiveness of Council membership and advises the Council on matters relating to the role of Council members. It also reviews and monitors the induction and training process for Council members.

Co-opted members on academic governance committees are chosen for their individual contribution in relation to the committee's Terms of Reference and or either internal members of staff or can external to the University, as for the Council. Co-option is used to secure specific expertise, or to achieve a better balance overall after other membership categories have been filled, or to replace a Chair elected from the membership.

Diversity Policy

The Council Diversity Policy approved by the Council at its meeting on 14 July 2015 sets out the approach to diversity on the Council of the OU, and seeks to ensure that equality and diversity in its broadest sense is a significant feature of the Council.

Part of the remit of the Membership Committee of the Council will be to conduct an annual review of the Council's Diversity Policy which will assess its effectiveness and the continuing relevance of the objectives, and recommend any revisions that may be required.

The University's new Equality Scheme 2016-2020 includes a new equality objective (2c) which seeks to build greater diversity on governance bodies over the next four years. The key performance indicators (KPIs) agreed for the objective are:

1. a minimum 30/70 sex (gender) balance on the Council and governance committees by 2020
2. at least one disabled and/or ethnic minority member on all committees of 10 or more members by 2020
3. an increase in the proportion of Council members aged 55 and under from 26% in 2014 to at least 32% by 2020

The Scheme has been approved by the Vice-Chancellor's Executive (VCE) and recommended to the Council by the Staff Strategy Committee which was approved on 8 March 2016.

Role

The role of the Council is summarised in the paragraph on "Purpose" above and is set out in full in the Statement of Role and Primary Responsibilities of the Council. The Council and its committees exercise their responsibilities in a corporate manner; that is to say, decisions are taken collectively by all of the members acting as a body. Members exercise their responsibilities in the interests of the institution as a whole, rather than as a representative of any constituency.

The role of individual members is to listen sensitively to the views of others, inside and outside the meetings of the Council, and to question intelligently, debate constructively, challenge rigorously and decide dispassionately.

All Council members must be available to sit on Council Committees if required and external members are expected to become a member of at least one of these committees.

Members are expected to have sufficient awareness to make appropriate decisions on Council and Council committee business. External members should seek information by engaging with the University, as well as by reading the Council papers and the national press, and through training. They are strongly encouraged to view the OU website, read its publications, visit the campus and foster links within the University, and attend award ceremonies and other University functions (open days, lectures, etc). However, they should not become involved in the day-to-day executive management of the institution.

Members should at all times conduct themselves in accordance with accepted standards of behaviour in public life, which embrace selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Members of the Council and its committees are expected to promote the interests of the University. They can work as ambassadors outside the University, especially in commercial, business and political/national spheres; within the University, by communicating with different groups of staff and students, explaining the work of the Council and gathering opinions; and on formal occasions and in other national University and Higher Education fora.

Notes on the data

The data on the Council was collected for the first time in 2009, at the request of the Equality Diversity and Information Rights Office (formerly the Equality & Diversity Office), by means of a Governance Equality Monitoring questionnaire. The same questionnaire was used to collect data in 2010 and 2011. The questionnaire was revised in 2012, to include further groupings to describe ethnic or cultural background and, for the first time, included questions on religion or belief and sexual orientation. The same questionnaire was used in 2014. In 2016, the 2014 questionnaire was revised to include additional requirements on gender.

The University has been successful in achieving a greater proportion of members declaring a disability on its governing body compared to declaration by members of OU's internal staff. The age profile of the Council is gradually shifting with a growth of 10.5% in the "45 years and under" age group and a parallel decline of those "over 56" years, now 60.0% compared to 71.5% in 2014. However, the number of members "over 56" years is still high – a ratio of 3 to 1 – and remains so due to the skills and time commitment required are more likely to be found in candidates who have been well established in their careers and are now retired.

In 2014 and 2015 the University used a recruitment agency to support the appointment of a new Pro-Chancellor and several new independent members of the Council. The agency is required to comply with all applicable laws and diversity is an integrated part of their methodology with a subtle approach taken to attracting the best candidates from under-represented groups. Three of the six (50%) Council members appointed using the agency were female.

The Council agreed to establish a group to review the effectiveness and performance of the Council and its substructure, and the composition of that group, at its meeting in November 2015. The Council Governance Review Group commenced its work in January 2016 and is aiming to make its recommendations to the Council in July 2016. The University's approach to the appointment of new Council members will be considered as part of the review.

Membership composition

Table 1 shows the Council composition by the percentage of members belonging to each age group. As in 2012 and 2014, the “56 to 65” age group remains the largest grouping at 47.8%. There has been a decrease in the number of members aged between “46 and 55”, falling from 30.0% in 2012 to 13.0% in 2016. There has been a considerable increase in the number of members aged between “36 and 45” years – from 10.0% in 2011 to 21.7% in 2016. It is encouraging to note that of the five members in the “36 to 45” age group four of them are externally appointed members, and of those four three have been appointed since 2014.

In 2016, the data is unknown for 8.0% of the Council membership. Although, this shows a decrease of 0.7% from 2014, the absolute number has remained constant at two members. This is also true for the council members in the “56 to 65” and “66 and over” age groups. The percentage decrease could be explained by the increase in the number of known data, up from 21 to 23 members, and compared with 2014 when there were two vacancies, the current Council has a full membership.

In 2016, 65.2% of members who responded were in the 56 and over age groups with only 34.7% “55 years and under”. This decrease on 2014 in the age profile reflects recent new appointments to the Council which has full membership in 2016 compared to two vacancies in 2014. The high age profile however is indicative of the level of skills and experience required of the Council members, which is more likely to be present in candidates who are well established in their careers or those who are retired or semi-retired so are able to give the required time and commitment to the governance role.

Table 1: The Council membership composition by age 2009 – 2016

	March 2009		March 2010		March 2011		March 2012 ³		March 2014		March 2016	
	No.	% ²	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Under 25	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
26-35	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
36-45	3	13.0	3	14.0	2	10.0	2	10.0	2	9.5	5	21.7
46-55	6	26.1	6	29.0	8	40.0	6	30.0	4	19.0	3	13.0
56 and over	14	60.9	12	57.0	10	50.0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
56-65	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	6	30.0	11	52.5	11	47.8
66 and over	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	6	30.0	4	19.0	4	17.4
Known Total	23	100.0	21	100.0	20	100.0	20	100.0	21	100.0	23	100.0
Unknown Total ¹	0	0.0	2	8.7	4	16.6	3	13.0	2	8.7	2	8.0
Grand Total	23	100.0	23	100.0	24	100.0	23	100.0	23	100.0	25	100.0

Note

- 1** Unknown refers to data that was not provided by the member, left blank. This applies to all the tables in this report.
- 2** Baseline for percentages are known/declared data, with unknown numbers shown alongside in all the tables. This is true for all percentages in each table in the report.

3 The data for March 2012 has been corrected as it had not been reported correctly in previous years.

As shown in Table 2, it is encouraging to note that the number of Council members “45 years and under” has increased from 9.5% in 2014 to 21.7% in 2016, and is only slightly lower than that for the Senate – 24.0%, however, it remains considerably lower than the 48.0% for all University staff.

Table 2: Membership composition of the Council, the Senate and internal staff by age

	Council March 2016		Senate March 2016		OU Internal Staff December 2014	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Under 25	0	0.0	0	0.0	117	2.2
26-35	0	0.0	5	5.2	970	18.4
36-45	5	21.7	18	18.8	1393	26.4
46-55	3	13.0	41	42.7	1605	30.4
56-65	11	47.8	29	30.2	1089	20.7
66 and over	4	17.4	3	3.1	98	1.9
Known Total	23	100.0	96	100.0	5272	100.0
Unknown total	2	8.0	1	1.0	0	0.0
Grand Total	25	100.0	97	100.0	5272	100.0

Membership composition

Table 3 shows the composition of the Council membership by disability from March 2009 to March 2016. The number of those responding who declared a disability in 2016 at 13.0% is an increase on 2014 by 8.2%. The number of Council members declaring a disability has increased from one in 2014 to three in 2016, exceeding KPI 2c (2) of the OU's Equality Scheme 2016-2020 that there be at least one disabled and/or ethnic minority member on committees of more than 10 people by 2020. The University will seek to maintain and strive to improve on these figures in the next four years.

In 2016, there is a greater percentage of Council members declaring a disability than declarations from Senate members at 7.9% and amongst OU staff, at only 5.1%, see Table 4.

Table 3: Membership composition of the Council by disability 2009 - 2016

	March 2009		March 2010		March 2011		March 2012		March 2014		March 2016	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Disabled	1	5.0	1	5.0	1	5.0	2	10.0	1	4.8	3	13.0
Non-disabled	21	95.0	19	95.0	19	95.0	18	90.0	20	95.2	20	87.0
Known Total	22	100.0	20	100.0	20	100.0	20	100.0	21	100.0	23	100.0
Unknown Total	1	4.0	3	13.0	4	17.0	3	13.0	2	8.7	2	8.0
Grand Total	23	100.0	23	100.0	24	100.0	23	100.0	23	100.0	25	100.0

Table 4: Membership composition of the Council, the Senate and internal staff by disability

	Council March 2016		Senate March 2016		OU Internal Staff December 2014	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Disabled	3	13.0	7	7.9	268	5.1
Non-disabled	20	87.0	82	92.1	4967	94.2
Known Total	23	100.0	89	100.0	5235	99.3
Unknown Total	2	8.0	8	8.3	37	0.7
Grand Total	25	100.0	97	100.0	5272	100.0

Membership Composition

Table 5 shows the Council membership composition by ethnicity from March 2009 through to March 2016. In 2016, white ethnic groups still account for the majority of known Council membership data. The data is unknown for 8.0% of the Council membership.

KPI 2c (2) of the OU's Equality Scheme 2016-2020 states that there will be at least one disabled and/or ethnic minority member on all committees of 10 or more members by 2020. There is currently no representation on the Council of ethnic groups, one of the protected characteristic groups defined under the Equality Act 2010. In the next four years the University will work to address advancing equality of opportunity and inclusivity on University committees for all protected characteristic groups.

Table 5: Membership composition of the Council by ethnicity 2009 - 2016

	March 2009		March 2010		March 2011		March 2012		March 2014		March 2016	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Asian** or Asian British***	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Black or Black British****	1	5.00	1	5.00	1	5.00	1	5.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
**Chinese & *Other	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mixed	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
*Other	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0.0	0	0.0
White	21	95.0	19	95.0	19	95.0	19	95.0	21	100.0	23	100.0
Known Total	22	100.0	20	100.0	20	100.0	20	100.0	21	100.0	23	100.0
Unknown Total	1	4.0	3	13.0	4	17	3	13	2	8.7	2	8.0
Grand Total	23	100.0	23	100.0	24	100.0	23	100.0	23	100.0	25	100.0

Changes to ethnicity groupings in 2014

* Other became a separate grouping and includes the 'Arab', 'Gypsy or Traveller', and 'Other Ethnic Group' categories.

** The Chinese category was included in the Asian grouping.

Changes to ethnicity groupings in 2016

*** The Asian grouping extended to specifically include Asian British.

**** The Black group extended to specifically include Black British.

Council

Ethnicity

The representation of ethnic minority groups does not compare well in percentage terms with that on the Senate (4.3%) or OU staff as a whole (9.0%). See Table 6. The small population size of the Council means that a single member coming to the end of their term of office can have a disproportionate effect on the data which is what happened in 2012 when one member (5.0%) of the Council membership was from a minority ethnic group.

Table 6: Membership composition of the Council, the Senate and internal staff by ethnicity

	Council March 2016		Senate March 2016		OU Internal Staff December 2014	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Asian or Asian British	0	0.0	1	1.1	232	4.5
Black or Black British	0	0.0	0	0.0	99	1.9
Mixed	0	0.0	1	1.1	91	1.8
Other	0	0.0	2	2.2	43	0.8
White	23	100.0	88	95.7	4682	91.0
Known Total	23	100.0	92	100.0	5147	97.6
Unknown Total	2	8.0	5	5.2	125	2.4
Grand Total	25	100.0	97	100.0	5272	100.0

Membership Composition

Table 7 shows the Council membership composition by gender at March 2009 through to March 2016. The percentage of female members has grown by 4.1% in the last two years, subsequently, the percentage of male Council members has declined from 65.0% in 2014 to 60.9% in 2016. As with the small population size of the Council a single member coming to the end of their term of office can have a disproportionate effect on the data.

The University made a public commitment when it became a member of *The 30% Club* in August 2015 to achieve a 30% female membership on all governance committees. The Council's diversity policy has gone one step further by setting an objective to aspire to a minimum of 40% of both men and women on the Council, with the remaining 20% being of either gender, in line with the commitment made by the Committee of Scottish Chairs in April 2015. The Higher Education Funding Council in England (HEFCE) has set aspirations for 40% female membership for all English universities by 2020. The commitment to 30% female membership on committees is reflected in the OU's new Equality Scheme 2016-2020. As well, the OU will only engage recruitment agencies who have signed up to the Voluntary Code of Conduct for Executive Search Firms on gender diversity and best practice. There is one additional female member on Council in 2016 compared to 2014. The small percentage increase reflecting there being a full membership of 25 compared to 23 in 2014.

Table 7: Membership composition of the Council by gender 2009 - 2016

	March 2009		March 2010		March 2011		March 2012		March 2014		March 2016	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	12	52.2	12	52.2	12	50.0	11	48.0	15	65.0	14	60.9
Female	11	47.8	11	47.8	12	50.0	12	52.0	8	35.0	9	39.1
Known Total	23	100.0	23	100.0	24	100.0	23	100.0	23	100.0	23	100.0
Unknown Total	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	8.0
Grand Total	23	100.0	23	100.0	24	100.0	23	100.0	23	100.0	25	100.0

Figures in Table 8 show that 43.3% of Senate members are male and for OU staff the figure is 35.5%. The percentage of female Council members remains low in comparison to those on the Senate and the University as a whole, a shortfall of approximately 15.6% and 15.4% respectively.

Table 8: Membership composition of the Council, the Senate and internal staff by gender

	Council March 2016		Senate March 2016		OU Internal Staff December 2014	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	14	60.9	42	43.3	1870	35.5
Female	9	39.1	55	56.7	3402	64.5
Known Total	23	100.0	97	100.0	5272	100.0
Unknown Total	2	8.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Grand Total	25	100.0	97	100.0	5272	100.0

For the first time data on transgender is available for Council members. Members were asked to answer yes or no to the following question – “Do you consider yourself as Trans or to have had a Trans history?”. Of the 23 members who responded to the questionnaire, nine Council members did not tick either yes or no to this particular question resulting in a high not known (total) figure of 44.0%, see Table 9.

Table 9: Membership composition of the Council by transgender 2016

	Council March 2016	
	No.	%
Yes	0	0.0
No	14	100.0
Known Total	14	100.0
No response	9	36.0
Unknown	2	8.0
Not known Total	11	44.0
Grand Total	25	100.0

Membership Composition

Table 10 shows the Council membership composition by religion or belief between March 2012 and March 2016.

A small majority of the Council members (50.0%) described their religion or belief as Christian, compared to 45.0% who stated that they had no religion and 5.0% declaring their religion or belief as Jewish.

Table 10: Membership composition of the Council by religion or belief 2012, 2014 and 2016

	March 2012		March 2014		March 2016	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
No religion	8	40.0	7	33.0	9	45.0
Buddhist	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0
Christian	9	45.0	12	57.0	10	50.0
Hindu	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0
Jewish	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	5.0
Muslim	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0
Sikh	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0
Spiritual	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0
Other religion or belief (pagan)	1	5.0	1	5.0	0	0
Known Total	18	100.0	20	100.0	20	100.0
Prefer not to say	2	40.0	1	33.3	3	12.0
Unknown	3	60.0	2	66.7	2	8.0
Not known Total	5	21.7	3	13.0	5	20.0
Grand Total	23	100.0	23	100.0	25	100.0

Table 11 shows that compared to Council members only 22.2% of Senate members and 35.0% of all University staff declared their religion or belief as Christian with a greater percentage – 66.7% and 45.0% respectively - citing no religion. It should be noted that the figures for internal OU staff are based on responses from a staff survey and do not reflect all staff, there are only 2878 responses compared to a total staff number of 5272. Although this is not a true comparison it gives an indication of the staff profile in terms of religion or belief.

Table 11: Membership composition of the Council, the Senate and internal staff by religion or belief

	Council March 2016		Senate March 2016		OU Internal Staff December 2014 ¹	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
No religion	9	45.0	36	66.7	1296	45.0
Buddhist	0	0	0	0	16	0.6
Christian	10	50.0	12	22.2	1005	35.0
Hindu	0	0	0	0	29	10.
Jewish	1	5.0	0	0	8	0.3
Muslim	0	0	1	1.9	22	0.8
Sikh	0	0	0	0	7	0.2
Spiritual	0	0	0	0	53	1.8
Other religion or belief	0	0	5	9.3	49	1.7
Known Total	20	80.0	54	100.0	2485	86.3
Prefer not to say	3	12.0	7	7.2	393	13.7
Unknown	2	8.0	36	37.1	N/A	N/A
Not known Total	5	20.0	43	44.3	N/A	N/A
Grand Total	25	100.0	97	100.0	2878	100.0

Note

- 1** The percentage figures are calculated on the total number of responses (2878) from a staff survey and might not have been undertaken at the same time as the other figures collated.

Membership Composition

Table 12 shows the Council membership composition by sexual orientation at March 2012 through to March 2016.

In 2016, the majority of the Council members (94.7%) described their sexual orientation as straight, a very small decline of 0.3% from 2014. The number of Council members who preferred not to declare sexual orientation increased from zero in 2014 to four in 2016.

Table 12: Membership composition of the Council by sexual orientation 2012, 2014 and 2016

	March 2012		March 2014		March 2016	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Towards people of a different sex (straight)	15	93.8	20	95.0	18	94.7
Towards people of the same sex (gay/lesbian)	1	6.3	1	5.0	1	5.3
Towards people of both sexes (bisexual)	0	0	0	0.0	0	0
Other (e.g. asexual)	0	0	0	0.0	0	0
Known Total	16	100.0	21	100.0	19	100.0
Prefer not to say	4	57.1	0	0.0	4	16.0
Unknown	3	42.9	2	100.0	2	8.0
Not known Total	7	30.4	2	8.7	6	24.0
Grand Total	23	100.0	23	100.0	25	100.0

As set out in Table 13 there was a higher percentage of unknown data, 54.6% for Senate members compared to 24.0% for Council members. The results for OU staff again was based on responses (2859) from a staff survey and not the total staff population. Of those staff that completed the staff survey nineteen who responded to the question on religion or belief did not respond to this question.

Table 13: Membership composition of the Council, the Senate and internal staff by sexual orientation

	Council March 2016		Senate March 2016		OU Internal Staff December 2014 ¹	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Towards people of a different sex (straight)	18	94.7	42	95.5	2263	79.2
Towards people of the same sex (gay/lesbian)	1	5.3	1	2.3	59	2.1
Towards people of both sexes (bisexual)	0	0	1	2.3	36	1.3
Other (e.g. asexual)	0	0	0	0	8	0.3
Known Total	19	100.0	44	100.0	2366	82.8
Prefer not to say	4	16.0	7	7.2	493	17.2
Unknown	2	8.0	46	47.4	N/A	N/A
Not known Total	6	24.0	53	54.6	N/A	N/A
Grand Total	25	100.0	97	100.0	2859	100.0

Note

- 1 The percentage figures are calculated on the total number of responses (2859) from a staff survey and might not have been undertaken at the same time as the other figures collated.

About Senate

Purpose

The Senate is the academic authority of the University which, subject to the powers of the Council, is responsible for promoting the academic work of the University both in teaching and research. It oversees the University's academic management, including the curriculum and all aspects of quality and standards associated with the University as a degree-awarding body. It has the power to make Regulations, including those which (subject to the approval of the Council) delegate any of its powers. Senate meetings concentrate on major issues of academic strategy, policy, priority and performance.

Meetings and members

The Senate meets at least three times each year. Four meetings are scheduled a year, in January/February, June and October with an optional meeting in April. A special meeting may be convened at any time on the written request of sufficient members of the Senate to form a quorum, or by the decision of the Chair.

The Senate comprises up to 108 members. The membership is currently as follows:

Ex officio members

- 1.0 The Vice-Chancellor, Chair, *ex officio*
 The Pro-Vice-Chancellors
 The Executive Deans of the Faculties
 The Deans of the Faculties
 The Director, Academic Services
 The Director of the Institute of Educational Technology
 The Director of Library Services
 The Director of Learning and Teaching Solutions

Appointed members

- 2.0 A total of fifty seven representatives of the academic and research staff (with the exception of ex officio members in Category 1.0), elected as follows (numbers in brackets refer to the minimum number of regional/national staff):

<i>Constituency</i>	<i>Numbers</i>
Arts	6 (2)
Social Sciences	7 (2)
FELS	7 (2)
FHSC	5 (1)
Science	7 (2)
MCT	12 (4)
FBL	5 (2)
IET	3 (0)
Other central units*	1 (0)
Regional/National Centres**	4 (4)
TOTAL	57 (19)

*Currently CICIP (Centre for Inclusion and Collaborative Partnerships), Human Resources, KMi (Knowledge Media Institute) and Office of the Vice-Chancellor

**Currently comprises national directors

- 3.0 Seven associate lecturers, one per faculty, appointed by and from the Associate Lecturers Executive.
- 4.0 Six Open University students appointed by The Open University Students' Association.
- 5.0 Fourteen members of the academic-related staff of the University elected from amongst their number by such staff (with the exception of those in Category 1.0 and those who have a professional role in serving the Senate and the Council) of whom four shall be members of CAU staff, six shall be members of Student Services staff (of whom three shall be based in a Regional/National Centre), and four shall be members of staff from other Units.

Co-opted members

- 6.0 Up to eight members, to include one graduate of the University, not undertaking studies in the University and not being in the regular employ of the University and not being elected through another category of the membership, following nomination by the OU Alumni Association, and (if not already included in the elected membership) one member drawn from the University's staff in each of Ireland, Scotland and Wales with specific expertise in HE policy matters.

In attendance

Staff 'in attendance' would include the Secretary, plus the Director of Open Media in the Open Media Unit and the National Directors, if they are not members.

Elections

Elections to the membership of the Senate are conducted in accordance with the *Senate and Other Committees in the Academic Governance Structure Standing Orders, Appendix 3: Code of Practice for Elections to University Governance Committees*. All elections within the scope of this Code are conducted by means of a secret ballot. The University Secretary invites nominations from all members of the relevant constituencies, who are regarded as having an equal opportunity to contribute to the work of the Senate. Elections are conducted using the single transferable vote system.

In the event of a casual vacancy arising on the Senate, the appointment is filled on the approval of the Chair of the Senate. The member appointed will hold office for the unexpired term of office of the member in whose place he or she is nominated or appointed (Statute 23 f).

Casual vacancies for Senate-elected members on any University committee (other than statutory bodies), and other relevant vacancies, are also filled by appointment on approval of the committee Chair for the period up to the next election. Associate lecturer and student vacancies are, however, filled by the original appointing bodies and will also serve to the end of the outstanding period of office.

Members of the Senate normally serve for a period of four years, subject to agreed provisions for rotation. They are eligible for reappointment on the expiration of their term of office.

Notes on the data

The 2016 reporting period is from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016. All staff data was provided by Human Resources. Student data was taken from VOICE, the University's student record system. Comparison data was collected in March 2009, March 2010, March 2011, March 2012, March 2014 and March 2016.

Note that a direct comparison with the University's internal staff data is not strictly accurate because the Senate is only composed of academic, research, academic related staff and students. There are no Senate members from the support staff categories.

Since monitoring the composition of the Senate started in 2008 various actions have been taken to address diversity issues. During the 2014 biennial elections to the Senate a call for nominations for staff to serve on Senate included the following statement agreed with the Equality, Diversity and Information Rights (EDIR) Team:

'All members of a constituency are regarded as having an equal opportunity to contribute to the work of the Senate. We promote diversity in its membership and welcome nominations from across the constituencies. Nominations in particular are encouraged from those groups currently under represented on the Senate which includes, academic, research and academic related staff:

- *who are aged 45 and below,*
- *who are black or minority ethnic (BME) staff.*

Throughout 2015, a number of calls for nominations for staff to fill casual vacancies on the Senate included the following statement agreed with the Equality, Diversity and Information Rights (EDIR) Team:

The Open University recognises the benefits of diversity in its committee membership and welcomes nominations from across the eligible constituent members. On 1 August 2015, the University became a member of [The 30% Club](#). This is an important step forward in the University's work on Gender Equality with a public commitment to an aspirational target of a minimum 30% of women on all governance committees.

In 2015, female members of staff in the relevant constituencies stood for appointment in eight of eleven ballots. Of the eleven ballots, four of those were appointments to the Senate with three female members of staff elected by their peers, subsequently one withdrew due to a change in constituency. In total, female members were appointed for six of the eleven.

Staff interested in standing for election to the Senate from the new committee year - September 2016 – will be invited to attend informal sessions where they can network with current Senate members and ask questions. The sessions also include presentations from current Senate members about their role and experiences.

Future calls for nomination will make reference to the KPIs set out in the new Equality Scheme 2016-2020. In addition a message will be sent to Heads of Units and relevant networks, for example Women at the OU, Aspire, the Disability Network Group and the OU LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) Club) asking them to encourage staff to stand for appointment. The Aspire leadership mentoring programme was established in response to OU monitoring information and research that showed that ethnic minority internal staff at the OU reported barriers to career progression and had a higher intention to leave the University. The overall objective of the programme is to improve the experience of minority staff, supporting career development and progression.

Membership Composition

Table 14 shows the Senate composition by the percentage of members belonging to each age group. The age groups covering “46 and over” remains the largest groupings accounting for an aggregate of 76.0% of the membership, however, this is a decline by 13.0% on the 2014 figure in similar age groupings. This could mainly be a result of the increase in the number of Senate members now aged between “35 and 45” which has increased by 10.8% from 2014 with the number of members “25 and under” going up by three to five.

Table 14: The Senate membership composition by age 2009 - 2016

	March 2009		March 2010		March 2011		March 2012		March 2014		March 2016	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Under 25	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.0	0	0.0
26-35	1	0.8	2	1.9	2	0.0	1	1.0	2	2.0	5	5.2
35-45	11	10.4	9	8.6	12	11.5	13	12.0	8	8.0	18	18.8
46-55	48	45.3	48	46.7	49	47.0	43	42.0	43	44.0	41	42.7
56 and over	45	42.5	45	43.3	43	41.5	46	45.0	44	45.0	N/A	N/A
56-65	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	29	30.2
66 and over	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	3.1
Known Total	106	100.0	104	100.0	104	100.0	103	100.0	98	100.0	96	100.0
Unknown Total	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.0
Grand Total	106	100.0	104	100.0	104	100.0	103	100.0	98	100.0	97	100.0

Table 15 shows the Senate membership profile by age in comparison to the profile of OU internal staff. However, it should be noted that a direct comparison is not strictly accurate because the Senate membership does not comprise all categories of staff (e.g. no support staff categories) whilst it does include students and a graduate.

Table 15: Membership composition of Senate compared to University Internal Staff by age

	Senate March 2016		OU Internal Staff December 2014	
	No.	%	No.	%
Under 25	0	0.0	117	2.2
26-35	5	5.2	970	18.4
36-45	18	18.8	1393	26.4
46-55	41	42.7	1605	30.4
56-65	29	30.2	1089	20.7
66 and over	3	3.1	98	1.9
Known Total	96	100.0	5272	100.0
Unknown total	1	1.0	0	0.0
Grand Total	97	100.0	5272	100.0

In 2016, in line with previous years, the proportion of the Senate members in the older age groups “46 and over” are higher than for internal staff (76.0% compared to 53.0%). The membership of the Senate includes 13 senior staff of the University as ex officio members (the Vice Chancellor, Pro-Vice-Chancellors, Interim Executive Deans, Deans and Directors and Heads of Service units) who are likely to be well established in their careers. The reputation, experience and general familiarity of more established staff putting themselves forward for membership of the Senate might also favourably influence the constituents when making their voting choices. However, previous initiatives to attract younger members of staff to stand for appointment has had some influence in the fact that the number of members aged between “36 and 45” years has risen from 8.0% in 2014 to 18.8% (2016).

Information on steps taken to encourage participation from underrepresented members of staff is given on page 22.

Membership Composition

Table 16 shows the composition of Senate membership by disability for the period March, 2014 to March 2016. Of the known data, disabled members of the Senate in 2016 account for 7.9% of the membership compared with 13.0% in 2014, 6.5% in 2012, 6.0% in 2011, 4.0% in 2010, and 3.0% in 2009. The percentage of unknown data has gone from 0.0% in 2014 to 8.2% in 2016.

As set out in the OU's Equality Scheme 2016-2020 - KPI (2 (c) 2) states that there will be at least one disabled and/or ethnic minority member on all committees of 10 or more members. Although, the number of Senate members declaring a disability has decreased from 12 in 2014 to 7 in 2016, this still far exceeds the KPI. The University will continue to improve on these figures in the next four years.

Table 16: Membership composition of Senate by disability 2009 - 2016

	March 2009		March 2010		March 2011		March 2012		March 2014		March 2016	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Disabled	3	3.0	4	4.0	7	6.0	6	6.5	12	13.0	7	7.9
Non-disabled	99	97.0	99	96.0	96	94.0	93	93.5	86	87.0	82	92.1
Known Total	102	100.0	103	100.0	103	100.0	99	100.0	98	100.0	89	100.0
Unknown Total	4	4.0	1	1.0	1	0.0	4	4.0	0	0.0	8	8.2
Grand Total	106	100.0	104	100.0	104	100.0	103	100.0	98	100.0	97	100.0

Table 17 shows the composition of Senate membership by disability in comparison with the all OU internal staff. This shows there is still a greater representation of disabled staff in the Senate membership. Whether this is a true representation is not possible to translate from the figures as it is unknown as to how many members of Senate or staff who declare themselves non-disabled – 92.1% and 94.2% respectively - are in fact disabled but do not consider themselves, or declare as such.

Table 17: Membership composition of Senate in comparison to University Internal Staff by disability

	Senate March 2016		OU Internal Staff December 2014	
	No.	%	No.	%
Disabled	7	7.9	268	5.1
Non-disabled	82	92.1	4967	94.2
Known Total	89	100.0	5235	99.3
Unknown Total	8	8.2	37	0.7
Grand Total	97	100.0	5272	100.0

Membership Composition

Table 18 shows the Senate membership composition by ethnicity for the periods March 2009 to March 2016. White ethnic groups continue to account for most of Senate's membership, 95.7 of the known total this is a decline of 1.3% since 2014. There has been an increase in the unknown data, from 2.0% in 2014 to 5.2% in 2016. The number of Senate members in the "other" group has risen from 1.0% to 2.2% with the numbers in the Asian and Asian British group falling from 2.0% to 1.1%.

As set out in the OU's Equality Scheme 2016-2020 - KPI (2 (c) 2) states that there will be at least one disabled and/or ethnic minority member on all committees of 10 or more members. There are a total of four representatives on the Senate from Asian or Asian British, Mixed and Arab, Gypsy or Traveller communities, all part of the protected characteristic race/ethnic group defined under the Equality Act 2010.

Table 18: Membership composition of Senate by ethnicity 2009 - 2016

	2009		2010		2011		2012		2014		2016	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Asian** and Asian British***	1	1.0	1	1.0	1	1.0	1	1.0	2	2.0	1	1.1
Black and Black British****	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
**Chinese & *Other	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mixed	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.0	1	1.0	0	0.0	1	1.1
*Other	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	1.0	2	2.2
White	103	99.0	103	99.0	100	98.0	99	98.0	95	97.0	88	95.7
Known Total	104	100.0	104	100.0	102	100.0	101	100.0	96	100.0	92	100.0
Unknown Total	2	2.0	1	1.0	2	0.0	2	2.0	2	2.0	5	5.2
Grand Total	106	100.0	104	100.0	104	100.0	103	100.0	98	100.0	97	100.0

Changes to ethnicity groupings in 2014

* Other became a separate grouping and includes the 'Arab', 'Gypsy or Traveller', and 'Other Ethnic Group' categories.

** The Chinese category was included in the Asian grouping.

Changes to ethnicity groupings in 2016

*** The Asian grouping extended to specifically include Asian British.

**** The Black group extended to specifically include Black British.

Senate

Ethnicity

Table 19 shows the membership composition of Senate by ethnicity compared to all OU internal staff. This shows that the ethnic diversity of OU internal staff is not entirely reflected in the composition of Senate membership, although the figures are favourable for those Senate members in the “Other” group compared to all University staff, 2.2% compared to 0.8%.

Table 19: Membership composition of Senate in comparison to All University Internal Staff by ethnicity

	Senate March 2016		OU Internal Staff December 2014	
	No.	%	No.	%
Asian or Asian British	1	1.1	232	4.5
Black or Black British	0	0.0	99	1.9
Mixed	1	1.1	91	1.8
Other	2	2.2	43	0.8
White	88	95.7	4682	91.0
Known Total	92	100.0	5147	97.6
Unknown Total	5	5.2	125	2.4
Grand Total	97	100.0	5272	100.0

Membership Composition

Table 20 shows the Senate membership composition by gender for the period March 2009 to March 2016. There was a steady reduction in the proportion of women on the Senate from 55.0% in 2009 to 46.0% in 2014, however, in 2016 the number of females on the Senate saw a growth of approximately 11.0% to 56.7%.

In August 2015, the University made a public commitment to achieve a 30% female membership on all governance committees ([The 30% Club](#)) and along with the new Equality Scheme 2016-2020 - KPI (2 (c) 1) that states that there will be a minimum of 30/70 gender balance on all University committees, the University will continue to maintain the current gender balance on the Senate of 57/43 (Female/Male).

Table 20 Membership composition of the Senate by gender 2009 - 2016

	March 2009		March 2010		March 2011		March 2012		March 2014		March 2016	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	48	45.0	52	50.0	52	50.0	53	51.0	53	54.0	42	43.3
Female	58	55.0	52	50.0	52	50.0	50	49.0	45	46.0	55	56.7
Known Total	106	100.0	104	100.0	104	100.0	103	100.0	98	100.0	97	100.0
Unknown Total	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Grand Total	106	100.0	104	100.0	104	100.0	103	100.0	98	100.0	97	100.0

Table 21 shows the membership composition of Senate by gender in comparison to OU internal staff. This indicates that in relation to the proportion of female internal staff, women are still underrepresented on the Senate and in relation to the proportion of male internal staff, men are overrepresented even though the number of males to females is lower by 13.4%.

Table 21: Membership composition of Senate in comparison to University Internal Staff by gender

	Senate March 2016		OU Internal Staff December 2014	
	No.	%	No.	%
Male	42	43.3	1870	35.7
Female	55	56.7	3374	64.3
Known Total	97	100.0	5244	100.0
Unknown Total	0	0.0	N/A	N/A
Grand Total	97	100.0	5244	100.0

Membership Composition

Table 22 shows the Senate membership composition by religion or belief for March 2016. This data is available for the first time. 66.7% of Senate members declared no religion compared with 22.2% describing their religion or belief as Christian and 7.2% preferring not to say. The unknown data was high at 37.1%.

Table 22 Membership composition of the Senate by religion or belief for March 2016

	Senate March 2016	
	No.	%
No religion	36	66.7
Buddhist	0	0
Christian	12	22.2
Hindu	0	0
Jewish	0	0
Muslim	1	1.9
Sikh	0	0
Spiritual	0	0
Other religion or belief	5	9.3
Known Total	54	100.0
Prefer not to say	7	7.2
Unknown	36	37.1
Not known Total	43	44.3
Grand Total	97	100.0

The figures in Table 23 for all OU staff are also based on responses from a staff survey and are not a true representation of all staff. However, comparing the results show that a lower percentage of OU staff described their religion or belief as Christian with 13.7%, a higher percentage preferring not to say.

Table 23: Membership composition of Senate in comparison to University Internal Staff by religion or belief

	Senate March 2016		OU Internal Staff December 2014 ¹	
	No.	%	No.	%
No religion	36	66.7	1296	45.0
Buddhist	0	0	16	0.6
Christian	12	22.2	1005	35.0
Hindu	0	0	29	10.
Jewish	0	0	8	0.3
Muslim	1	1.9	22	0.8
Sikh	0	0	7	0.2
Spiritual	0	0	53	1.8
Other religion or belief	5	9.3	49	1.7
Known Total	54	100.0	2485	86.3
Prefer not to say	7	7.2	393	13.7
Unknown	36	37.1	-	-
Not known Total	43	44.3	-	-
Grand Total	97	100.0	2878	100.0

Note

- 1 The percentage figures are calculated on the total number of responses (2878) from a staff survey and might not have been undertaken at the same time as the other figures collated.

Membership Composition

Table 24 shows the Senate membership composition by sexual orientation for March 2016. This was the first time Senate members' sexual orientation has been reported. The majority of the Senate members (54.6%) either preferred not to declare sexual orientation or the data was not available. However, 95.5% (of the known data) did declare their orientation as straight and this is compared to 79.2% of all OU staff based on responses (2859) from a staff survey and not the total staff population.

Table 24 Membership composition of the Senate by sexual orientation for March 2016

	Senate March 2016	
	No.	%
Towards people of a different sex (straight)	42	95.5
Towards people of the same sex (gay/lesbian)	1	2.3
Towards people of both sexes (bisexual)	1	2.3
Other (e.g. asexual)	0	0
Known Total	44	100.0
Prefer not to say	7	7.2
Unknown	46	47.4
Not known Total	53	54.6
Grand Total	97	100.0

Table 25: Membership composition of Senate in comparison to University Internal Staff by sexual orientation

	Senate March 2016		OU Internal Staff December 2014 ¹	
	No.	%	No.	%
Towards people of a different sex (straight)	42	95.5	2263	79.2
Towards people of the same sex (gay/lesbian)	1	2.3	59	2.1
Towards people of both sexes (bisexual)	1	2.3	36	1.3
Other (e.g. asexual)	0	0	8	0.3
Known Total	44	100.0	2366	82.8
Prefer not to say	7	7.2	493	17.2
Unknown	46	47.4	-	-
Not known Total	53	54.6	-	-
Grand Total	97	100.0	2859	100.0

Note

- 1** The percentage figures are calculated on the total number of responses (2859) from a staff survey and might not have been undertaken at the same time as the other figures collated.