

The following information has been adapted as part of a Committee Reflection Toolkit for wider use by committees not necessarily in scope of the Committee Effectiveness Review process.

Committee Effectiveness Review – Guidance for Secretariat

This document contains guidance for Secretariat on the completion of the Committee Effectiveness Review process and includes a one-page checklist of activity (appendix 1).

1) Introduction

A recommendation to introduce annual committee effectiveness reviews for Senate and its committees was approved by Senate as part of the [Academic Governance Review Final Report](#) in June 2024. The scope and process for review were signed off by the AGR Senate Working Group in May 2025.

As Secretariat to a committee undertaking effectiveness review, you will lead the review process with your Chair and members. You should brief your Chair on the process and activity outlined below and work with them to complete the review exercise.

The following tools and approaches should be utilised for the review:

- A survey of committee members exploring perceptions of committee matters and effective operation.
- Review of schedule of business, alongside mapping of business against the committee terms of reference, including consideration of business flow in and out of the committee.
- Preparation of a summary report and action plan considering the findings of the above, and reflection on progress against previous years' action plans.
- Assurance reporting to parent committees, including action plans to address identified enhancement needs.

2) Review Activity

Member Survey

A survey of members (including Chairs and Secretariat) should be distributed by Secretariat via committee resource accounts using a survey tool of choice. A template email is included below (appendix 2). Suggested distribution process:

- Distribute survey using template email **immediately following the final meeting** of your committee in term 3, setting an appropriate deadline for completion (e.g. 2 weeks from the date of distribution).
- Follow-up with a reminder to complete the survey **1 week prior to your deadline**.
- Following closure of the survey, responses should be collated and used to inform reporting.

The survey questions used in the Committee Effectiveness Review process can be downloaded as a pdf from the [Committee Effectiveness Review](#) webpage.

Terms of Reference Mapping Exercise

Secretariat should map committee business for the most recent academic year against the current approved Terms of Reference, to identify whether the committee has considered a good spread of business, appropriate to its remit, throughout the review period. The Terms of Reference (ToR) mapping template can be downloaded from the [Committee Effectiveness Review](#) webpage.

Reporting

Secretariat should complete the Annual Committee Effectiveness Review report for their committee in collaboration with their committee Chair. A report template including notes on completion is available on the [Committee Effectiveness Review](#) webpage. The report should be completed in time to include as a paper to support a discussion item at the term 1 meeting of your committee in the following academic year.

Once your committee has discussed the report and agreed the associated action plan, you should include a summary of outcomes and the full action plan for assurance, in your Key Issues and Status Report (KISR) to the next meeting of your parent committee.

3) Timeline

Term 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Members surveyed following the final meeting of the committee each year.
Summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Desk based review tasks and preparation of summary reports and draft action plans.
Term 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Summary reports and actions plans are discussed at the first meeting of the year, and action plans are agreed.• Outcomes including action plans are reported to parent committees at first opportunity for assurance.

4) Review Process – Secretariat Responsibilities

PHASE 1 – Preparation (Before Final Term 3 Meeting)

1. Brief the Chair

- Provide a briefing before the final Term 3 meeting covering:
 - Purpose of the review and annual cycle
 - Survey process and timelines
 - ToR mapping requirements
 - Reporting and action planning expectations
 - Confirm how the Chair wishes to receive drafts (email, meeting, joint review session, etc.).
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PHASE 2 – Member Survey Stage (Immediately After Final Term 3 Meeting)

2. Issue survey email

- Send using the committee resource account.
- Customise template email to include:
 - Committee name
 - Submission deadline (**2 weeks after sending**)
- Email should be sent **immediately after** the committee's final Term 3 meeting.

3. Send reminder

- Issue a reminder email one week before your chosen deadline.

4. Collate Responses

- Survey responses should be collated and used to inform reporting.
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PHASE 3 – Desk-Based Review (Summer Period: July - August)

5. Complete ToR Mapping Exercise

- Map all agenda items from the committee year (1 September – 31 August).
- Assess:
 - Coverage against each ToR element
 - Missing or under-served areas
 - Duplication or irrelevant items
 - Business flowing into and out of the committee
 - Appropriateness of timing and sequencing

6. Review schedule and business flow

- Examine whether:
 - Meetings were appropriately spaced
 - Business arrived at committee at the right stage
 - Decision making was supported by timely upstream and downstream reporting

7. Analyse member survey feedback

- Review survey themes within collated responses.
- Extract insights relating to:
 - Remit, purpose, scope and responsibilities
 - Constitution and membership
 - Meeting management, accessibility, support
 - Meeting packs and information flow
 - Inclusion and engagement

8. Draft the Annual Effectiveness Review Report

- Use the Annual Effectiveness Review – Committee Report template.
 - Include:
 - ToR mapping findings
 - Member survey outcomes
 - Schedule/business flow observations
 - Reflection on previous action plan
 - New proposed actions (using embedded action plan table)
 - Work with Chair to revise and approve the draft.
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PHASE 4 – Term 1 Meeting Preparation

9. Submit report as Term 1 paper

- Add the report to the paper circulation for the first meeting of your committee in the new cycle.
- Ensure agenda includes a dedicated item, e.g.,
“Annual Committee Effectiveness Review – Discussion and Approval of Action Plan”.

10. Prepare the Chair

- Provide:
 - Report + action plan
 - Key findings and talking points
 - Any issues that may prompt discussion or decisions
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PHASE 5 – Reporting Upward (After Term 1 Meeting)

11. Finalise the action plan

- Update the draft based on committee discussion.

12. Report to parent committee via KISR

- In the next KISR, include:
 - Summary of effectiveness review outcomes
 - Full agreed action plan
- Ensure this is submitted ahead of the next parent committee meeting.

PHASE 6 – Ongoing (Throughout Year)

13. Monitor progress

- Track progress on action plan items across the year.
- Support action owners and alert Chair to delays or risks.

Appendix 1. Committee Effectiveness Review – Secretariat Checklist

Please refer to the ‘Review Process – Secretariat Responsibilities’ full guidance, alongside use of this one-page checklist.

Before Final Term 3 Meeting

- Brief Chair on full review process
 - Confirm Chair access to necessary documents
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Immediately After Final Term 3 Meeting

- Send customised survey email (deadline = 2 weeks)
 - Send reminder 1 week before the deadline
 - Collate responses following survey deadline
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Summer (July - August)

- Complete ToR mapping (full year: 1 Sept - 31 Aug)
 - Review Schedule of Business (alignment to ToR, flow and timing)
 - Analyse survey results
 - Draft Annual Committee Effectiveness Review Report
 - Agree draft with Chair
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Term 1 Preparation

- Circulate report as Term 1 meeting paper
 - Ensure agenda includes Review item
 - Brief Chair on key findings
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After Term 1 Meeting

- Update and finalise action plan
 - Include outcomes + action plan in next KISR to parent committee
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Ongoing

- Monitor progress on agreed actions
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Appendix 2. Committee Effectiveness Review – Survey Distribution Email

Committee Secretaries - disseminate from your committee resource account to all Committee members.

To: All Members (including Chair and Secretariat)

Subject: Annual Committee Effectiveness Review - Member Survey

Dear Colleagues,

We are now inviting feedback as part of the Annual Committee Effectiveness Review on your perceptions of committee matters and effective operation of the **[Insert Committee Name]**.

We will make use of anonymised survey responses and reflections on our existing terms of reference and business covered during the review period to inform a discussion at our term 1 meeting next academic year.

Your answers should be based around your perception of how any matters raised in each question are dealt with presently, and with respect to the guidance and information contained on the [University Governance](#) webpages. You may receive a similar request for other committees of which you are a member.

The survey should take between 10-15 minutes to complete. The deadline for completion is **[ENTER DEADLINE]**.

To access the survey, please click on the link: **[Committee Effectiveness Survey]**

(URL: **enter URL here**)

We look forward to hearing from you and are grateful for any time you can take to share your feedback to continue to shape the future of the **[Insert Committee Name]** and Governance at Warwick.

With best wishes,

[Insert Name of Committee Chair and/or Secretariat]