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Academic Governance Benchmarking Survey Collaborative Project

Dan Tinkler – Governance Development Manager

Why we developed a new offer

- **Increasing focus on academic governance and assurance** from regulators and political interest in issues surrounding higher education

- Provide **assurance to governing body** that academic governance is effective governance is effective
  - In England it is now a regulatory requirement to ensure effective student outcomes as part of Ongoing Condition of Registration – B3, including student continuation and graduate employment metrics
  - In Scotland, it is now a requirement, from SFC, to undertake an external academic governance review (bicameral review)

- Support institutions in **undertaking further review work** – chance to understand own perception of performance anonymously

- Opportunity to understand **where institutions compare across the sector** – similar to Advance HE's Corporate Governance Effectiveness Benchmark Survey

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How the Project Will Work

Collaborative Project – Governance Review and Development

| Three steering group meetings

| Access to the Benchmarking Survey including administration and support

| Institution's personalised benchmarking report

| Overall project report across all six institutions

| One half-day online workshop on survey findings

Stage 1: Steering Group meeting 1 – 19 October Advance HE issues benchmarking survey – open for 2 weeks until 6 November
Stage 2: Individual analysis and benchmarking – w/c13 November
Stage 3:Steering Group meeting 2 - w/c 13 November
Stage 4: Overall project report issued - w/c 30 November
Stage 5: Steering Group Meeting 3 – w/c 30 November
Stage 6: Survey findings online workshop – December 2023 – date to be agreed by Steering Group

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Delivery team

Andrea Blanchflower, Associate, Governance, Advance HE
Andrea had a successful career progressing from administrator roles, through to Assistant registrar before becoming a University Executive as Director of Teaching and Learning and later Director of Governance and Assurance. She is a former member of the Academic Registrars Council and is also a governor in a mixed economy Further Education College

Kay Renfrew, Associate, Advance HE
Kay Renfrew is an experienced consultant and researcher who has delivered assignments for clients in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors. She has a Masters degree in information management. Kay has expertise in data analysis and reporting, to assess project impact and performance.

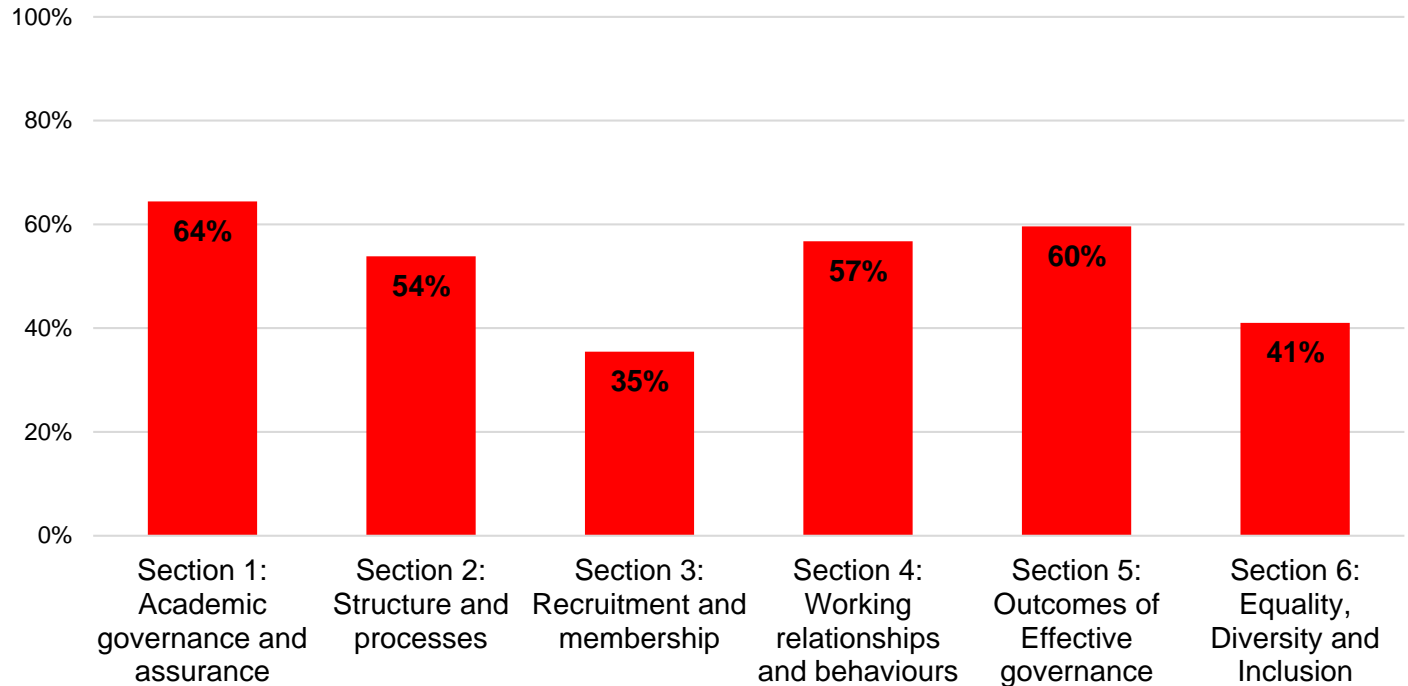**Dan Tinkler, Governance Development Manager, Advance HE**
Dan joined Advance HE in January 2020 and has been in the post of Governance Development Manager since October 2021. Dan works on developing our approach to supporting Advance HE's member needs across our governance portfolio of work. He has led the academic assurance project with Universities UK, GuildHE and the Committee of University Chairs

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Survey

| **Issued anonymously** via institutional contact (governance professional)

| Open to all members of academic board or those who are in attendance

| **8 themes** which are benchmarked

  | Commitment to effective governance

  | Academic governance and assurance

  | Structure and processes

  | Recruitment and membership

  | EDI

  | Working relationships and behaviours

  | Outcomes of effective governance

  | The Committees

| **Optional extra sections per institution** – not-benchmarked

| **7 point scale** – "strongly agree-strongly disagree" with option for "don't know"

| Roughly 20 minutes to complete

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Benchmark Report Example
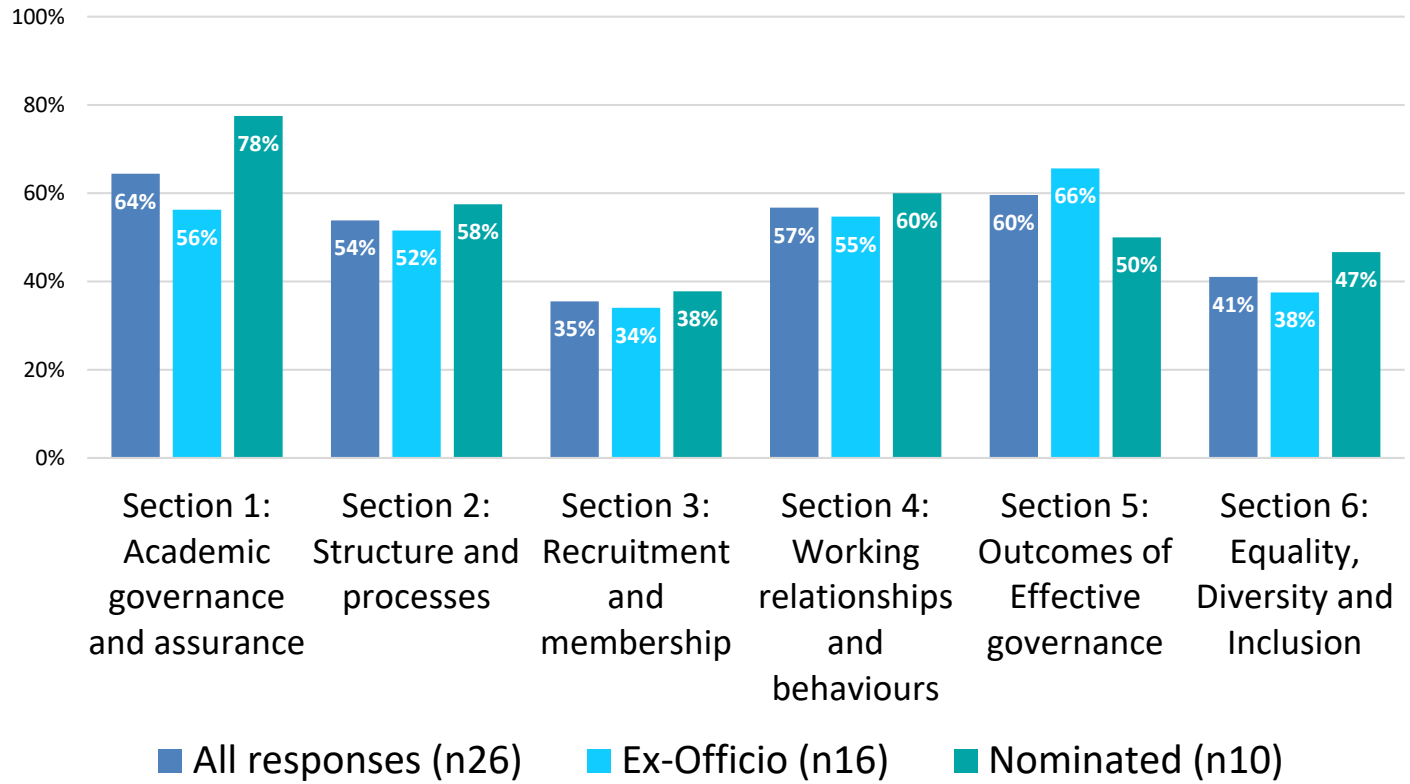
Comparison across sections
(All respondents)

This chart shows how each Section has scored (by averaging the Agree scores (Strongly Agree to Partially agree) for all questions in each section). Using a RAG system, Sections scoring above 80% are in green, Sections scoring 70% to 79% are in amber and Sections scoring 69% and under are in red. The same RAG system is used in the following tables for the individual questions (measures).

Section	Score
Section 1: Academic governance and assurance	64%
Section 2: Structure and processes	54%
Section 3: Recruitment and membership	35%
Section 4: Working relationships and behaviours	57%
Section 5: Outcomes of Effective governance	60%
Section 6: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	41%

Comparison across sections by MEMBER TYPE

Benchmark Report Example

Section	All responses (n26)	Ex-Officio (n16)	Nominated (n10)
Section 1: Academic governance and assurance	64%	56%	78%
Section 2: Structure and processes	54%	52%	58%
Section 3: Recruitment and membership	35%	34%	38%
Section 4: Working relationships and behaviours	57%	55%	60%
Section 5: Outcomes of Effective governance	60%	66%	50%
Section 6: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	41%	38%	47%

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Benchmark Report Example

Comparison across sections by DURATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Section	All responses (n26)	Newer members (n18)	Longer-standing members (n7)
Section 1: Academic governance and assurance	64%	64%	64%
Section 2: Structure and processes	54%	53%	61%
Section 3: Recruitment and membership	35%	36%	35%
Section 4: Working relationships and behaviours	57%	56%	61%
Section 5: Outcomes of Effective governance	60%	53%	86%
Section 6: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	41%	44%	33%
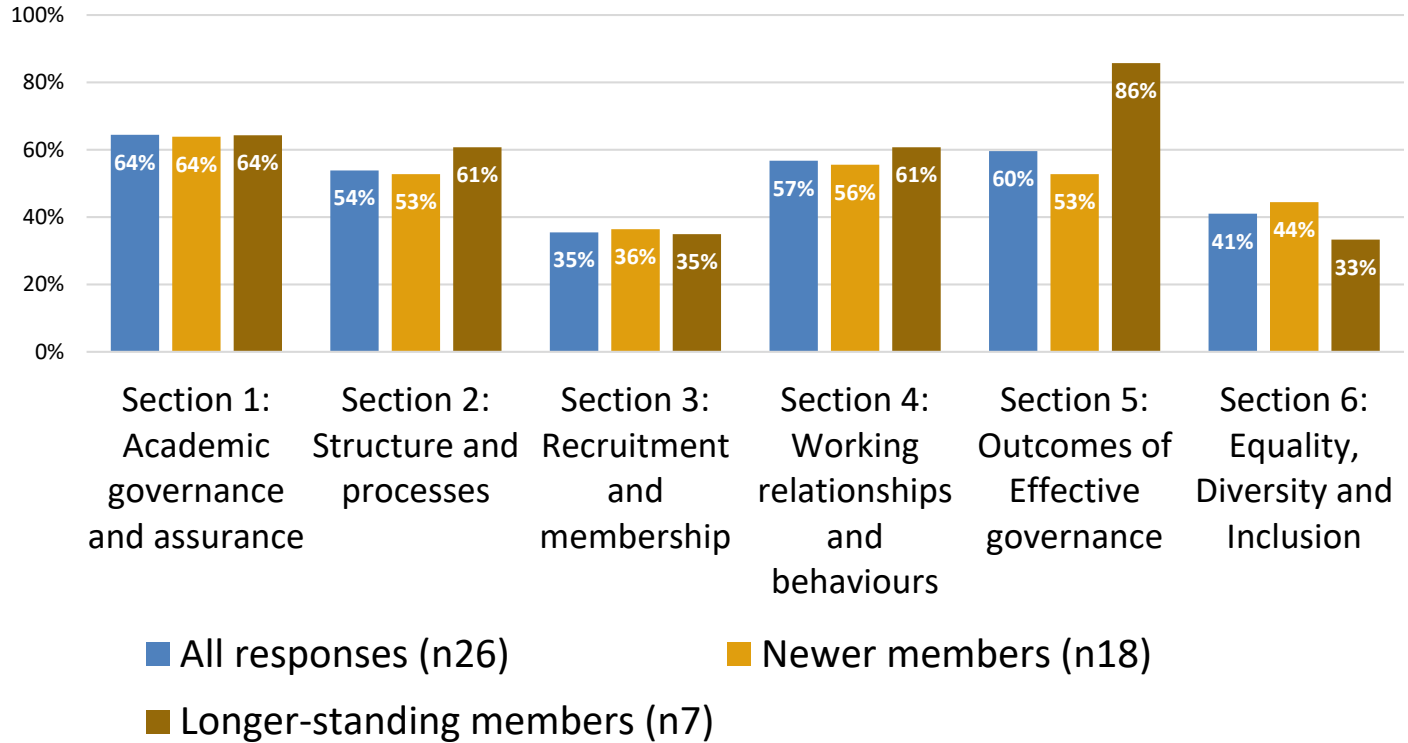
Newer members = "Less than a year" and "1-2 years"
Longer-standing members = "3-4 years" and "5 years and over"

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Benchmark Report Example

Q #	Measure	% Agree Score	% Disagree	% Don't know
17.1	The composition of the Senate membership is about right	85	15%	0%
2	The Senate operates effective processes for maintaining and overseeing the quality and standards of teaching and learning	77%	8%	5%
4	The Senate exercises effective oversight of its sub-committees, receiving sufficient information on their discussions and decisions in the form of, for example, reports from sub-committee chairs and/or minutes of sub-committee meetings	65%	4%	4%
20	Senate meetings and business are conducted and chaired in a way which encourages the active involvement of all members in discussion and decision making	65%	23%	0%

Where totals are less that 100% the difference will be those responding "neither agree nor disagree"

Please note percentages are rounded so scores may not add exactly to 100%

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Outputs

| Three steering group meetings

| Access to the Benchmarking Survey including administration and support

| Institution's personalised benchmarking report

| Overall project report across all six institutions

| One* half-day online workshop on survey findings
+ Workshop subject to be agreed by steering group
+ 3 places per instituion

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Benefits

By participating in the collaborative project, institutions will:

| have an evidence base to provide governors with assurances over academic governance in line with regulatory requirements (B3 England, bicameral review in Scotland and Wales)

| have an evidence base to lay the foundations for further development work to be undertaken by in-house governance effectiveness teams

| join a network of institutions with a joint aim of improving academic governance

| benefit from a cost-effective approach to benchmarking the institution's academic governance and assurance.

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Next Steps

Key Information

| Up to **6 places** on the project

| **£2750** Advance HE Member

| Deadline to join: **13 October**

| Arrange a discussion with Advance HE to find out more or to join

+ solutions@advance-he.ac.uk

+ daniel.tinkler@advance-he.ac.uk

+ Advance HE Head of Membership

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