



UNIVERSITY COURT

15 June 2020 (Videoconference)

Web Version

Minute

Members Present:	Ann Henderson, Rector (in chair) Anne Richards, Vice-Convener Peter Mathieson, Principal & Vice-Chancellor Alastair Dunlop, Chancellor's Assessor Doreen Davidson, General Council Assessor Jock Millican, General Council Assessor Sarah Wolffe, General Council Assessor Elizabeth Bomberg, Senate Assessor Sarah Cooper, Senate Assessor Claire Phillips, Senate Assessor Alexander Tudhope, Senate Assessor Jo Craiglee, Non-Teaching Staff Assessor Frank Armstrong, Co-opted Member Perdita Fraser, Co-opted Member Caroline Gardner, Co-opted Member Alan Johnston, Co-opted Member David Law, Co-opted Member Clare Reid, Co-opted Member Susan Rice, Co-opted Member Frank Ross, Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh Ellen MacRae, President, Students' Association Rachel Irwin, Vice-President Activities & Services, Students' Association
Apologies:	None
In attendance:	Angi Lamb, Rector's Assessor Sarah Smith, Vice-Principal Strategic Change and Governance; and University Secretary
Presenters & Observers:	Lewis Allan, Head of Court Services Leigh Chalmers, Director of Legal Services Gavin Douglas, Deputy Secretary Student Experience Lee Hamill, Director of Finance Colm Harmon, Vice-Principal Students Gary Jebb, Director of Estates Catherine Martin, Vice-Principal (Interim) Corporate Services Gavin McLachlan, Vice-Principal, Chief Information Officer & Librarian to the University Theresa Merrick, Director of Communications & Marketing Dorothy Miell, Vice-Principal & Head of College Dave Robertson, Vice-Principal & Head of College Jonathan Seckl, Senior Vice-Principal Tracey Slaven, Deputy Secretary Strategic Planning Janet Legrand, Senior Lay Member-elect Fiona Mackay, Academic Staff Member & Senate Assessor-elect

Sarah McAllister, Professional Services Staff Member-elect
Joyce Anderson, Trade Union Professional Services Staff Member-elect
Kathryn Nash, Trade Union Academic Staff Member-elect
Sarah Cunningham-Burley, University Lead for Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (for Item 8)

1 Minute

Paper A1

The Rector welcomed members and attendees to the meeting, held by videoconference. New members Ellen MacRae (Students' Association President) and Rachel Irwin (Students' Association Vice-President Activities & Services) and attendee Catherine Martin (Vice-Principal (Interim) Corporate Services) were welcomed to their first meeting. Janet Legrand (Senior Lay Member-elect), Fiona Mackay (Academic Staff Member & Senate Assessor-elect), Sarah McAllister (Professional Services Staff Member-elect), Joyce Anderson (Trade Union Professional Services Staff Member-elect) and Kathryn Nash (Trade Union Academic Staff Member-elect) were welcomed as observers before taking office on 1 August 2020. Court's gratitude was recorded to Anne Richards (Vice-Convener), Elizabeth Bomberg (Senate Assessor), Jo Craiglee (Non-Teaching Staff Assessor), Alexander 'Sandy' Tudhope (Senate Assessor), Susan Rice (Co-opted Member) for their service and contribution as Court members at their last formal meeting before demitting office on 31 July 2020.

The Minute of the meeting held on 27 April 2020 was approved.

2 Matters Arising & Review of Action Log

Paper A2

There were no matters arising and the action log was reviewed. The following actions were discussed:

- Institute of Genetics & Molecular Medicine 4D Cellular Medicine proposal – written confirmation from the Medical Research Council is awaited. If a matched funding award is made fundraising for the remaining sum will commence;
- Staff Survey – work in response to the first survey is continuing within the Adaptation & Renewal workstream and follow-up surveys are being considered in modified form;
- Transport Strategy – Covid-19 has led to a pause with the City Council considering its own transport strategy given the changed environment. More pedestrianised and cycling spaces are expected in the Old Town around the University's Central Area campus.

3 Principal's Report

Paper B

Court noted the contents of the report and additional information on:

- Student and staff wellbeing: the rapid move to remote learning has been successful but as the pandemic has continued the challenges of continued remote working for some staff have inevitably grown. Good Friday and Easter Monday were granted as additional leave days for all staff in recognition of the efforts made to date and managers are encouraging staff to take annual leave

as normal where appropriate and to show flexibility in cases where a normal workload is not possible, e.g. health concerns or caring responsibilities. Targeted ‘pulse’ surveys of staff are being considered to seek quick feedback on certain areas, such as experiences of remote working. Student feedback has centred on seeking as much clarity as possible on what the learning environment and wider student experience will be in the coming academic year. Messaging has highlighted that the value of a University of Edinburgh degree will remain unchanged and that the city and University will be a safe and welcoming place for all students;

- UK Government: the announcement of a cap on the number of English domiciled students at Scottish universities is not expected to impact on planned recruitment. A Research Sustainability Forum has been established with devolved nation representation and it is hoped that this will lead to a genuinely sustainable research funding model;
- Scottish Government: the Scottish Funding Council has been asked to initiate a review of the coherence and sustainability of provision in further and higher education. The first phase of the review is expected to conclude by the end of August 2020. Separately, £75 million of additional funding to support research has been announced and will be allocated in proportion to the current distribution of the core research grant, with the University expected to receive around £23.2 million. The funding is to support early career researchers and coronavirus research in particular;
- Black Lives Matter: the University has issued a public statement, with added urgency given to work already underway led by Professor Sarah Cunningham-Burley (University Lead on Equality, Diversity & Inclusion) and Professor Rowena Arshad (Chair in Multicultural and Anti-Racist Education).

Members discussed the current position for student admissions and the Black Lives Matter campaign. On student admissions, application figures are encouraging for both undergraduate and postgraduate admissions but significant uncertainty exists on the likely conversion rate of offers into acceptances and subsequent enrolment figures. On Black Lives Matter, the Principal and colleagues have met with student representatives to discuss matters raised in a petition. An open letter from members of staff on institutional racism at the University has been received and will be shared with Court members. Developing an integrated response is key, with Professor Rowena Arshad convening a sub-group of the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee on racial inequalities.

SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS

4 Director of Finance’s Report

Paper C

The Director of Finance provided an update on: the third quarter forecast operating surplus for the current academic year; modelling work on operational savings for the 2020/21 academic year and beyond; the Universities Superannuation Scheme; and, the financial performance of University subsidiary companies in the six months to January 2020. The forecast operating surplus for the year, while likely significantly below target given Covid-19, is improved on the previous estimate submitted to Court. This is principally owing to increased philanthropic income, although it was noted that this is restricted income and does not bolster freely deployable cash

reserves. Achieving significant operational savings in future years is critical and a number of proposed initial measures will be considered by the University Executive on the following day and will be reported to Court. The subsidiary companies financial report was reviewed and interest expressed in learning more about areas where additional income could be generated such as industry engagement and commercialisation, to be considered as a topic for a future Court seminar or paper.

5 Planning Round: 2020-21 Proposals

Paper D

The proposed approach to the planning round for 2020-21 was reviewed. It was noted that the approach consists of an initial one year expenditure budget equivalent to Year 2 of the 2019-20 year Court approved plan for each budget area with the expectation that initial budgets will be actively managed to reduce net revenue costs by at least £50m. An existing monthly budget review will contribute to the active management process to reduce net revenue costs. The following points were raised in discussion:

- The extent to which teaching and learning plans will require wholesale review as a result of the pandemic – given the short period of time before the new academic year Colleges have focused on amendments to course offerings to improve prospects for a successful delivery of hybrid teaching. This will result in a streamlined offering rather than wholesale review but will feed into longer term plans for curriculum reform;
- Considering the complex equality, diversity and inclusion impacts of the pandemic on staff and students – the Adaptation and Renewal Team includes the University Lead on Equality, Diversity & Inclusion for this reason, with Equality Impact Assessments to be undertaken where appropriate as part of a broader framework to assess differential impacts;
- Preparing for student accommodation challenges next semester – many students remain in University residences at present and have been supported throughout the lock-down period. This has developed the accommodation team's expertise of working in the current circumstances and in preparing for the new semester.

The proposed approach to the planning round for 2020-21 was approved as set out in the paper.

6 Student Experience Update

Paper E

An update on student experience developments and future planning since the move to remote learning in mid-March was reviewed. The following points were raised in discussion:

- Government decisions on physical distancing requirements for students and staff in University buildings will have a major impact on how teaching, learning and student services and facilities operate in the new academic year (e.g. a 2 metre distancing rule can reduce the capacity of a large lecture theatre from 500 to 20 people). Extending the teaching hours in a day would provide some mitigation – this and other options are under consideration before timetabling decisions are taken in the summer;
- Curriculum reform was a priority before the pandemic and remains a priority but with learning from the current circumstances, such as building resilience

against future shocks with expanded hybrid teaching models. A recent Senate discussion on the topic attracted a record number of attendees and could be discussed at Court in future;

- The importance of protecting key student experience projects and considering students most adversely affected by the present situation – a paper will be considered by the University Executive tomorrow that proposes prioritising the following student experience projects: student mental health and wellbeing; enhanced peer support; subtitling of recorded lectures; and student support hubs; and,
- Involving the Sports Union in forming a sense of community and maintaining a sports offering, particularly outdoor sports, where possible.

7 EUSA President's Report

Paper F

The Students' Association President reported on recent developments, including: the full year financial report to March 2020, where financial performance was ahead of budget until the final month of the year, when greatly reduced activity in March led to a small deficit for the year as a whole; work to reduce costs in the current year given the significant reduction in income expected; and, supporting student activism to eliminate racism in the University and community. Members discussed the practical measures intended to decolonise the curriculum, such as broadening course reading lists and reiterated their support for the Students' Association and Sports Union in managing the impact of the pandemic.

8 Equality, Diversity Monitoring and Research Committee (EDMARC) Reports

- **EDMARC Staff and Student Reports 2019**
- **EDMARC Ethnicity Report – preliminary findings**

Paper G1
Paper G2

The annual report on staff and student data from the Equality, Diversity Monitoring and Research Committee and preliminary findings from an ethnicity report covering the undergraduate student journey from application to degree and graduate outcomes were reviewed. Sarah Cunningham-Burley, University Lead on Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, noted that the University adds to the racial and ethnic diversity of the City of Edinburgh, although the proportion of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) staff is lower than in the City as a whole, particularly in professional service categories and there is an opportunity to seek to improve this with local recruitment. Considering the student data, while the proportion of UK students from BAME backgrounds has increased to 13%, an attainment gap persists in the award of first class and upper second class honours degrees, a pattern seen in the sector as a whole, with this to be a priority for follow-up work along with better understanding of intersectional issues (e.g. socio-economic factors, gender, age) and improving offer and acceptance rates. Court welcomed the reports and approved the annual staff and student reports for publication. The following points were raised in discussion:

- Ensuring that the variation across Colleges and Schools is considered in follow-up work and School level work incentivised – the EDMARC committee will become a sub-group of the new Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee (EDIC) which is linked into Schools through its membership to help with more close working and sharing of best practice;

- The likely scope of follow-up analysis – targeted qualitative research is being considered to identify what would best meet the needs of staff and students. EDIC and its sub-groups will develop action plans, with the anti-racism sub-group intending to finalise its own action plan over the summer. High levels of engagement from the staff and student community are helping drive this forward;
- The regularity of reporting – the annual EDMARC reports will continue with additional ‘deep dives’ when sufficient trend data is available. Highlighted areas such as attainment, offer and acceptances will be monitored on an annual basis; and,
- Being conscious of the importance of individual decisions at every level and being open to taking bold actions as well as incremental improvements.

ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL

9 Strategy 2030 Strategic Performance Framework Update Paper H

An update on work to develop a Strategic Performance Framework to assess performance against Strategy 2030 objectives was reviewed ahead of an anticipated first report in November. Work to align reporting on outcomes for the Social and Civic Responsibility Plan and Strategy 2030 was welcomed, as was developing an additional tier of more granular measures at an operational level.

10 Benefactors Award Paper I

On the recommendation of the Principal, Court approved the bestowal of the distinction of University Benefactor upon an organisation as set out in the paper.

11 Prevent Duty Implementation Update Paper J

An annual report on the University’s implementation of the Prevent duty under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015) was noted. The Students’ Association President reiterated that the Students’ Association remains opposed to the Prevent duty, while recognising that the University’s implementation is in compliance with legal obligations. It was agreed to circulate further detail on the Students’ Association position for information.

12 Education Act 1994 Compliance Paper K

A Certificate of Assurance from the Students’ Association to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the Education Act 1994 was noted.

13 Committee Reports Paper L1

- **Exception Committee**

The following matter approved on behalf of Court by Exception Committee was noted: subsequent to initial discussion at Court on 27 April and on the recommendation of Nominations Committee, Exception Committee approved contingency arrangements in the event of the Principal being temporarily or permanently unable to continue in role.

- **Policy & Resources Committee**

Paper L2

The report was noted and updates to the Committee's Terms of Reference were approved as set out in the paper.

- **Nominations Committee**

Paper L3

The Principal and all attendees, presenters and observers aside from the University Secretary absented the meeting for this item.

On the recommendation of Nominations Committee, Court:

- i) endorsed the offer of an extension of five years to the Principal's contract of employment;
- ii) approved updates to the Committee's Terms of Reference as set out in the paper; and,
- iii) approved the following appointments:

Audit & Risk Committee

- Perdita Fraser to be reappointed for a three year term of office to 31 July 2023
- Bindesh Savjani's term of office as an external member to be extended until 31 December 2020

Knowledge Strategy Committee

- Doreen Davidson to be reappointed as Convener for a one year term of office to 31 July 2021
- Sarah McAllister to be appointed for a three year term of office to 31 July 2023

Nominations Committee

- Alan Johnston to be appointed as Convener for a one year term of office to 31 July 2021
- Doreen Davidson to be reappointed for a one year term of office to 31 July 2021
- Caroline Gardner to be appointed for a one year term of office to 31 July 2021
- Claire Phillips to be appointed for a two year term of office to 31 July 2022

Policy & Resources Committee

- Frank Armstrong to be reappointed for a three year term of office to 31 July 2023

Remuneration Committee

- Doreen Davidson to be reappointed for a one year term of office to 31 July 2021
- Claire Phillips to be appointed for a two year term of office to 31 July 2022

Estates Committee

- Frank Armstrong to be reappointed for a three year term of office to 31 July 2023

Investment Committee

- Richard Davidson to be reappointed as Convener for a final two year term of office to 31 July 2022
- Mark Connolly to be reappointed for a final three year term of office to 31 July 2023
- Carolyn Aitchison to be reappointed for a final three year term of office to 31 July 2023
- Doreen Davidson to be reappointed for a one year term to 31 July 2021
- Frank Armstrong to be reappointed for a one year term of office to 31 July 2021

Curators of Patronage

- Dorothy Miell to be reappointed for a term of office to 30 April 2022
- Alan Johnston to be appointed for a one year term of office to 31 July 2021

Development Trust Board

- Perdita Fraser to be reappointed to the position reserved for a lay member of Court for a three year term of office to 31 July 2023

- **Audit and Risk Committee**

Paper L4

The report was noted and Court approved the following as set out in the paper:

- Internal Audit Plan 2020-21;
- External Audit Annual Plan 2019-20;
- External Audit Fee for the 2019-20 audit; and,
- Updated Terms of Reference for the Committee.

- **Court USS Sub-Group**

Paper L5

The report was noted.

- **Knowledge Strategy Committee**

Paper L6

The report was noted, with minor updates to the University Computing Regulations and updates to the Committee's Terms of Reference approved as set out in the paper. Progress on the People & Money System Programme (the programme delivering core IT systems for HR, Finance, Payroll and Procurement) was discussed, with timelines in some areas having been adversely affected by staffing difficulties given the pandemic. Regular progress updates will be provided to Knowledge Strategy Committee over the summer period. Information Services Group staff were thanked for their assistance in transitioning the University to remote learning and working and in supporting preparations for the coming academic year.

- **Senate**

Paper L7

The report and the annual report from the Senate Committees was noted and, on the recommendation of the Senate, Court resolved that Ordinance No. 212 (Composition of the Senatus Academicus) shall come into force on 1 August 2020 to ensure that

the new Governance Act-compliant composition of Senate will be established for the new academic year.

14 Annual Recognition of Alumni Clubs

Paper M

Court approved formal recognition of the University of Edinburgh Alumni Association of Shenzhen and renewed recognition of the eight University of Edinburgh alumni clubs currently recognised.

15 Donations and Legacies; Global Alumni Events

Paper N

Donations and legacies received were noted along with information regarding the postponement of planned global alumni events given the Covid-19 outbreak.

16 Ordinances

Paper O

Court:

- noted the responses received during the statutory consultation;
- approved Ordinances No. 215 (Amendment of Ordinance 208 (Employment of Academic Staff)) and No. 216 (Removal of Members of the University Court) and their submission to the Privy Council Office; and,
- delegated authority to the University Secretary to agree any further non-material changes to the Ordinances if requested by the Scottish Government or Privy Council.

17 Resolutions

Paper P

The following draft resolution was referred to the General Council and to Senate for observations:

Draft Resolution No.74/2020: Removal of Members of the University Court

The following resolutions were approved:

Resolution No. 5/2020: Foundation of a Charles and Ethel Barr Chair of Cancer Research

Resolution No. 6/2020: Foundation of a Chair of Digital Manufacture

Resolution No. 7/2020: Alteration of the title of the Chair of Chemical Engineering Technology

Resolution No. 8/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Future Construction

Resolution No. 9/2020: Undergraduate Degree Programme Regulations

Resolution No. 10/2020: Postgraduate Degree Programme Regulations

Resolution No. 11/2020: Alteration of the title of the Chair of Physics

Resolution No. 12/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Pure Mathematics

Resolution No. 13/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Exoplanet Characterisation

Resolution No. 14/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Palaeontology and Evolution

Resolution No. 15/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Volcanology

Resolution No. 16/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Applied Physics

Resolution No. 17/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Microbial Evolution

Resolution No. 18/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Industrial Mathematics

Resolution No. 19/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Harmonic Analysis and Partial Differential Equations

Resolution No. 20/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Membrane Separations

Resolution No. 21/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Software Transformation

Resolution No. 22/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Sustainable Biotechnology

Resolution No. 23/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Artificial Intelligence

Resolution No. 24/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Earth Dynamics

Resolution No. 25/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Category Theory

Resolution No. 26/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Experimental Particle Physics

Resolution No. 27/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Stem Cell Biology and Early Development

Resolution No. 28/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Geometry

Resolution No. 29/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Hydrogeology and Coupled Process Modelling

Resolution No. 30/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Digital Design

Resolution No. 31/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Robotics

Resolution No. 32/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Global Change Mapping

Resolution No. 33/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Machine Learning and Inference

Resolution No. 34/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Biophysics

Resolution No. 35/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Robot Learning and Autonomy

Resolution No. 36/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Urban Geography

Resolution No. 37/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Signalling and Proteostasis

Resolution No. 38/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Fluid Dynamics

Resolution No. 39/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Energy, Environment and Society

Resolution No. 40/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Modern and Contemporary Art History

Resolution No. 41/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Scots Private Law

Resolution No. 42/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Architectural History

Resolution No. 43/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Modern British History

Resolution No. 44/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Social and Economic Anthropology

Resolution No. 45/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Literature and the Environment

Resolution No. 46/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Multilingualism

Resolution No. 47/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Global Urbanism and Resilience

Resolution No. 48/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of European and Global Education Governance

Resolution No. 49/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Finance

Resolution No. 50/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Craft History and Theory

Resolution No. 51/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Cinema and Iran

Resolution No. 52/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of South Asian and Comparative Politics

Resolution No. 53/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of American Literature

Resolution No. 54/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Germline Biology
Resolution No. 55/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Population Medicine & Veterinary Public Health Policy
Resolution No. 56/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Small Animal Orthopaedics
Resolution No. 57/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Developmental Psychology
Resolution No. 58/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Cardiovascular Pharmacology
Resolution No. 59/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Arterial Remodelling
Resolution No. 60/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Integrative Fish Genomics
Resolution No. 61/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Molecular Neural Development
Resolution No. 62/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Veterinary Parasitology
Resolution No. 63/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Conservation Science
Resolution No. 64/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Sociology of Science and Medicine
Resolution No. 65/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Experiential Student Learning
Resolution No. 66/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Medical Imaging and Physics
Resolution No. 67/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Translational Chemistry and Biomedical Imaging
Resolution No. 68/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Neurology & Clinical Epidemiology
Resolution No. 69/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Clinical Pharmacology
Resolution No. 70/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Clinical Cardiology
Resolution No. 71/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Developmental Endocrinology
Resolution No. 72/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Property Law
Resolution No. 73/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Dermatology

18 Court Standing Orders & Exception Committee Terms of Reference Updates **Paper Q**

Updates to Court's Standing Orders and to the Terms of Reference for Exception Committee to reflect planned changes in the composition of Court and to make explicit their ability to meet virtually by videoconference and teleconference were approved as set out in the paper.

19 Any Other Business

There was no other business.

20 Date of Next Meeting

Monday, 28 September 2020.