



University Court  
Videoconference  
Monday, 28 September 2020

AGENDA

- |          |   |           |
|----------|---|-----------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Minute</b><br>To <u>approve</u> the minute of the meeting held on 15 June 2020   | <b>A1</b> |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Matters Arising &amp; Review of Action Log</b><br>To <u>raise</u> any matters arising and <u>review</u> the Action Log | <b>A2</b> |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Principal's Report</b><br>To <u>receive</u> an update from Peter Mathieson, Principal                                  | <b>B</b>  |

SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS

- |          |   |                        |
|----------|---|------------------------|
| <b>4</b> | <b>Student Survey Results 2020</b><br>To <u>consider</u> a paper presented by Colm Harmon, Vice-Principal Students  | <b>C</b>               |
| <b>5</b> | <b>EUSA President's Report</b><br>To <u>receive</u> an update from Ellen MacRae, EUSA President   | <b>D</b>               |
| <b>6</b> | <b>Adaptation &amp; Renewal Update</b><br>To <u>receive</u> an update from Barry Neilson, Director  | <b>E</b>               |
| <b>7</b> | <b>Finance</b><br>To <u>consider</u> the papers presented by Lee Hamill, Director of Finance <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Director of Finance's Report</b></li><li>• <b>Covid-19 Short Term Financial Funding Options</b></li></ul> | <b>F1</b><br><b>F2</b> |
| <b>8</b> | <b>Student Recruitment Update</b><br>To <u>consider</u> an update from Tracey Slaven, Deputy Secretary Strategic Planning   | <b>G</b>               |

ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL

- |           |  |          |
|-----------|--|----------|
| <b>9</b>  | <b>Review of Estates Capital Projects Deferrals</b><br>To <u>approve</u>             | <b>H</b> |
| <b>10</b> | <b>Rector Election 2021</b><br>To <u>approve</u>                                     | <b>I</b> |
| <b>11</b> | <b>Annual Scottish Funding Council Quality Assurance Report</b><br>To <u>approve</u> | <b>J</b> |
| <b>12</b> | <b>Enhancement-Led Institutional Review Reflective Analysis</b><br>To <u>approve</u> | <b>K</b> |

- 13 Committee Reports**
- Exception Committee L1
  - Court USS Sub-Group L2
  - Policy & Resources Committee L3
  - Nominations Committee L4
  - Audit & Risk Committee L5
  - Remuneration Committee L6
- 14 Donations and Legacies; Global Alumni Events** M  
To note
- 15 Any Other Business**  
To consider any other matters
- 16 Date of Next Meeting**  
Monday, 30 November 2020



UNIVERSITY COURT

15 June 2020 (Videoconference)

[DRAFT] 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**

On the recommendation of Nominations Committee, Court:

- i) approved updates to the Committee's Terms of Reference as set out in the paper; and,
- ii) 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.



**UNIVERSITY COURT**

**28 September 2020**

**Principal's Report**

**Description of paper**

1. The paper provides a summary of the Principal's main activities since the last meeting of the University Court.

**Action requested/Recommendation**

2. Court is asked to note the information presented.

3. No specific action is required of Court, although members' observations, or comment, on any of the items would be welcome.

**Background and context**

4. The report summarises key issues for the University and the Principal's engagement with regard to local, national, international and sector-wide developments and activity.

**Discussion**

5. After months of planning and sheer hard work by so many people Semester One is now under way. The reality of interacting with our students again face to face is becoming an everyday occurrence for many staff and we welcome that: it is what our students expect and the reason we exist.

6. As campus opens up to teaching and student support we continue to work very closely with Scottish Government and Public Health officials on all protocols including: understanding that we are in stage 3 of the roadmap where teaching and student support activities are planned on campus but many other activities remain to be undertaken from home; that our buildings are subject to strict Health and Safety assessments and sign off before opening; that strict public health measures including social distancing, face masks and handwashing are clearly signed and expected; outside "pinch point" spaces are also managed; enhanced cleaning regimes are in place; we continue to contribute to official discussions on a walk-in testing facility in the City and that case/suspect case handling protocols are in place and a tailored version is available to staff and students.

7. As I write our student halls are filling rapidly with 80% of undergraduates now with us and 64% of students overall. Postgraduates and overseas students are currently at c.28%, which represents just under 1000 overseas students.

8. There has been some difficulty in establishing and enforcing the need for social distancing particularly in Pollock Halls. Initially this did require a Police presence, firm guidance was issued and the position has improved. We have a yellow and red card approach: disciplinary procedures will follow after the first warning. It is a difficult balance as we recognise that our students will want to socialise and that the halls are their home, however we are very clear that they must adhere to the guidelines. We are also dealing with reports from students in accommodation across the City and where we can we will follow up reports and use the measures noted above. We have a "[Good Citizen](#)" guide which is being heavily promoted and will be updated as guidance changes.

9. There has been considerable effort to work with partners in the sector and the City to make sure that, as far as possible, messages to students, staff and the Edinburgh Community, as well as being welcoming and informative, are joined up.

10. It has been a huge amount of work and is hugely challenging, we anticipate that there will be issues raised and we will endeavour to continually improve our approach as the semester progresses.

11. The University cycle continued throughout the pandemic with largescale virtual graduations taking the place of our traditional McEwan Hall celebrations. Many parts of the University came together to make the virtual ceremonies as meaningful as they could be, we have recently taken the decision that November graduations will also be virtual.

12. Admissions this year have of course been particularly hard to manage due to the changing position on A-level and Higher exam results: we made huge efforts to support applicants and to be as flexible as possible in accommodating them. We will as a result have more students from Scotland and the Rest of UK joining us than originally planned. The pattern, in general, is more undergraduate than postgraduate and more domestic than overseas. Although overseas numbers remain reasonably buoyant we are waiting to see how this actually pans out as Semester progresses. Further information will be available at Court.

13. I'd like to convey a number of points next that come loosely under the heading of our People. We know that the pandemic has brought huge challenges to our staff and that their response has been superb. While some have been able to accommodate home working relatively easily, for others it has posed, and continues to pose, significant challenge. A survey of staff, perhaps not surprisingly, revealed a wide range of views and experiences and line managers continue to provide support and guidance to all staff. We plan to conduct a pulse survey before the end of the year. We seek to have an honest relationship with our staff about the challenges we face and that includes difficult issues such as necessary cost savings. Union colleagues are a key part of this process and we have established a Partnership Forum where key activities of adaptation and renewal are discussed. These include pausing, in financial year 2020/21, the academic promotions and contribution reward round; the proposed freeze of annual increments effective August 2021; the pan-University voluntary severance programme which was launched on 1 September; Universities and Colleges Employers' Association (UCEA) position of implementing a pay freeze for 2020/21 which, to note, is not accepted by the trade unions.

14. We have sought to acknowledge staff effort with other measures including agreeing that staff can carry 10 days of leave over to 2021, instead of the standard 5, due to the exceptional circumstances of 2020. Staff respite days at Easter, and also now 24 December, which are not from the annual leave allowance, have also been instigated. Development activity has continued with the launch of three new leadership and management programmes: The Aspiring Manager; The Edinburgh Manager; The Edinburgh Leader which are all now recruiting cohorts. Specific proposals to support Early Career Researchers (ECRs) during and after Covid-19 have also been adopted.

15. Three fixed-term Deputy Vice-Principal appointments have been made to support our research and enterprise portfolio now that Professor Jonathan Seckl is the Senior Vice-

Principal. All three will report Professor Seckl; the two year appointments are 0.5 FTE from 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2022:

- Deputy Vice-Principal Enterprise: Mr David Brown
- Deputy Vice-Principal Research: Professor Jane Hillston
- Deputy Vice-Principal Research (Artificial Intelligence focus): Professor Michael Rovatsos

16. I am aware that Court received information from Professor James Smith and Professor Rowena Arshad at our briefing session in July and later in August which explained the University's position with regard to tackling racism on campus. As part of this wide-reaching activity we took an interim decision to rename David Hume Tower as 40 George Square. Taking a position on this matter was brought forward as the building was about to be repurposed as the main site of additional study spaces for our students. As it is primarily current students who have expressed concerns about working in the building as it is currently named, it was felt to be provocative to ask even more students to use the building and it risked making the building a focus for protest which could have precluded its intended use as a study space.

17. A wide range of views are clearly in evidence on this matter, it has been a difficult decision and there may be more to come as we consider all aspects of the University's past in the open and consultative way that we have committed to.

18. A final point on Hume specifically: we continue to be committed to teaching, researching and understanding Hume in all his facets. Indeed, our Philosophy department has recently appointed three Hume experts, so that far from cutting our links with him we are actively expanding the study of his work. This blog written by our Professor of Political and Historical Sociology, Jonathan Hearn, recently is a thoughtful piece on the subject and may be of interest:

<https://uneasyessays.com/2020/09/13/remembering-hume/>

### **Selected meetings and events from mid-June to end-September**

#### **19. University**

- Academic Strategy Group, (core membership Heads of Schools), has been meeting weekly/fortnightly. This has proved a very useful forum for consultation and discussion on a wide range of matters including delivering hybrid teaching for semester one; kick-starting research; staff support; communications; safe campus issues; Equality, Diversity and Inclusion planning; the financial situation; and scenario planning.
- Leaders' Forum, comprising around 150 of the University's Senior staff, has been meeting every 4-5 weeks.
- Adaptation and Renewal Team has been meeting weekly.
- Senior Leadership Team weekly meeting and a virtual away day where discussions around reshaping were the focus.
- Held a successful all staff Town Hall session in August with over 2,000 staff registered. Advance and live questions were taken, around 200 in total, and staff "liked" the ones they wished to see answered during the session. The meeting was recorded and answers to the top questions that we had not had time to answer were made available. Staff were particularly concerned about issues relating to job security and home working.



- Participated in a Parents and supporters Town Hall session, an event to provide information to parents and supporters of new and returning students
- Opened the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Colleague Recognition Awards.
- Joined Gary Jebb, Director of Place, on 19 June on a site visit to the School of Chemistry – one of the Schools trialling building reopening.
- Enjoyed participating in various of 'The Edinburgh Race Lectures' series, including Angela Saini's (science journalist and author) lecture on "Science, Racism, and Academia"; Professor Tommy J. Curry, Distinguished Professor of Africana Philosophy & Black Male Studies, who spoke on 'Decolonizing the Intersection'; and Professor Nasar Meer's lecture titled 'After Utoya – Sifting the wreckage of white supremacy'.
- Participated in a Partnership Forum with the Unions, organised by Human Resources.
- In August I helped with Clearing on a couple of occasions, manning the phones and answering queries.
- Spoke about 'Adaptation and Renewal: Key Challenges for the University of Edinburgh' at the School of Philosophy, Psychology & Language Sciences Forum.
- Filmed my piece for the Virtual Welcome ceremony in an empty McEwan Hall in preparation for the start of semester 1.
- Welcomed everyone to the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine's virtual postgraduate graduation celebration.

#### 20. *Edinburgh and Scotland*

- Participated in a Skills Development Scotland meeting, organised by Universities Scotland, to learn more about how the university sector can contribute to the plans for the changing needs of the economy and society.
- Participated in Edinburgh World Heritage in conversation on Black History Matters.
- Participated in the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal Leaders and Joint Committee meetings.
- Spoke with Dr Chris Breward, Director of National Museums Scotland.
- Chaired the Data-Driven Innovation Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal Executive Governance Group.
- Participated in the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal Joint Committee.
- Participated in a roundtable discussion organised by CBI Scotland with Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer Anneliese Dodds (an Edinburgh alumna!), Scottish Labour Leader Richard Leonard, and Deputy Leader Jackie Baillie.

#### 21. *Sector and Public Affairs*

- Regular contact and discussions with Scottish Ministers including the First Minister in advance of the publication of the Guidance for Universities; the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education John Swinney and the Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science Richard Lochhead.
- Welcomed the Leader of the Opposition and Labour Party Sir Keir Starmer to Little France where he was meeting research leads, including Dr Mark Miller and Professor Rebecca Reynolds, on air pollution and cardiovascular health and Covid-19 and cardiovascular health.

- The Principals of Edinburgh's universities met monthly to update each other on activities.
- Participated in several Russell Group Board meetings.
- Participated in monthly Scottish Enterprise Life Sciences Scotland Industry Leadership Group meetings.
- Participated in a Confederation of British Industry virtual breakfast meeting on economic recovery.
- Participated in a Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI) webinar with Michelle Donelan MP, Minister for Universities, in conversation with Nick Hillman.
- Participated in meetings of the Scottish Funding Council's Scottish University Research Reference Group.
- Participated in the World Economic Forum University Leaders webinar on 'Promoting a common science agenda'.
- Participated in a meeting of the Board for Academic Dentistry as part of my Universities Scotland Lead Member for Health role.
- Participated in a Universities UK webinar on purpleworks Mental Health tool.
- Participated in a Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy-organised meeting on the Future of UK Research.
- Participated in the Jisc Learning and Teaching Reimagined Advisory Board meeting.
- Participated in a Russell Group meeting with Professor Adam Tickell, Chair of the Employers' Pension Forum and Vice-Chancellor, University of Sussex, and Stuart McLean, Head of Pensions, Universities UK.
- Participated in a Russell Group Board meeting with Professor Dame Ottoline Leyser, CEO, UK Research and Innovation.
- Chaired the quarterly meeting of the Higher Education – Further Education Strategy Group (feeds into the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal meetings).
- Participated in a Universities Scotland-organised meeting with Richard Lochhead MSP, Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science, regarding the Scottish Government's Results Policy.
- Participated in a number of Russell Group-organised meetings with Michelle Donelan MP, Minister for Universities.
- Participated in the Universities Scotland Main Committee meeting.

## 22. *Covid-19 related*

- Participated in a meetings with key partners in Edinburgh, e.g. City of Edinburgh Council, Edinburgh universities, NHS Lothian and Police Scotland, to discuss Edinburgh-wide planning.
- Participated in a panel discussion on the topic of 'Too good to fail? What are the ramifications of the global pandemic on institutions' financial health, and how will it change the geopolitics of the knowledge economy?', at the Times Higher Education and Arizona State University - organised The Connected Faculty Summit.
- Participated in several Council for the Advancement and Support of Education pandemic taskforce meetings.
- Participated in a Universities Scotland-organised meeting with Iain Stewart, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State in the Scotland Office on the financial

impacts of Covid-19 and the road map, also Brexit and immigration in relation to higher education.

- Participated in an Universities Scotland-organised post-pandemic recovery discussion with Skills Development Scotland.
- Participated in several discussions on coronavirus with Universities UK.

### 23. *International (all delivered online from Edinburgh!)*

- Gave the keynote speech at the International Symposium of the Congrés Internacional de Docència Universitària i Innovació on hybrid teaching at the University of Edinburgh.
- Participated in a meeting with Caroline Wilson, incoming Her Majesty's Ambassador to the People's Republic of China, and a friend from my Hong Kong days where she was the UK Consul-General from 2012-2016.
- Participated as a panellist in a Fulbright Commission webinar on 'Fulbright Connects - A Future in Question: Higher Education and the Public Good'.
- Participated in a University Leaders Dialogue, organised by the World Economic Forum, on the challenges facing university leaders in the next 5 years.
- Participated as a panellist in a session on 'The Future of International Education' at a webinar co-hosted by the Institute of International Education and the University of California, Davis.
- Spoke at the Global Aspiring Medic Conference 2020, organised by ARCH Community Outreach, Hong Kong, on the comparison of universities in Hong Kong and the United Kingdom.
- Gave the keynote speech at the Global Aspiring Medic Conference 2020 on "How Artificial Intelligence and Data Analytics are Transforming the Medical Field", organised by ARCH Community Outreach, Hong Kong.
- Participated in Association of Commonwealth Universities VC/Presidents Roundtable on 'The Future Campus'.
- Participated in the Universities UK International Policy Network meeting.

### **Resource implications**

24. There are no specific resource implications associated with the paper.

### **Risk Management**

25. There are no specific risk implications associated with the paper although some reputational risk may be relevant to certain items.

### **Equality & Diversity**

26. No specific Equality and Diversity issues are identified.

### **Next steps/implications**

27. Any action required on the items noted will be taken forward by the appropriate member(s) of University staff.

### **Consultation**

28. As the paper represents a summary of recent news, no consultation has taken place.

### **Further information**

29. Peter will take questions on any item at Court or further information can be obtained from Ms Fiona Boyd, Principal's Office.

Author and Presenter

30 Principal and Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter Mathieson  
September 2020

**Freedom of Information**

31. Open Paper.



UNIVERSITY COURT

28 September 2020

Student Survey Results 2020

**Description of paper/Summary**

1. This paper reports the findings from the National Student Survey (NSS) and Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) in 2020. The paper provides an overview of the University of Edinburgh's performance in each survey giving long term trends for key metrics; highlighting any significant changes at a School level and, for the NSS, benchmarking the University of Edinburgh's results against the sector and Russell Group<sup>1</sup>.

2. While the main focus over the summer period has been on preparing for hybrid teaching delivery in September, the student survey results remain very disappointing and follow-up work will be undertaken this semester. A more detailed paper will be considered by the Senate Education Committee, including whether different levels of satisfaction exist between student groups, as well as findings from analysis of the free text comments supplied in the NSS and PTES. Once the further analysis is complete, an update and action plans will be brought to the University Executive later in this semester.

**Action requested/Recommendation**

3. Court is invited to consider and comment on the findings presented in this paper, and to note that further analysis and plans will be developed and reviewed by the Senate Education Committee and University Executive.

*Paragraphs 4-23 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.*

**Risk Management**

24. Inability to deliver a good/improved student experience is one of the most significant risks in the University's Strategic Risk Register. The Student Experience Action Plan is being developed and implemented in response.

**Equality & Diversity**

25. N/A

**Next steps/implications**

26. Further analysis will be undertaken and a more detailed paper submitted to Senate Education Committee. *The remainder of paragraph 26 has been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.*

**Consultation**

27. An earlier version of this paper was reviewed by the University Executive on 18 August.

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<sup>1</sup> Benchmark data for PTES has not been released by Advance HE as yet.

### **Further information**

28. Author

Paula Webster

Head of Student Analytics, Insights &  
Modelling

Presenters

Colm Harmon

Vice-Principal Students

Gavin Douglas

Deputy Secretary, Student Experience

### **Freedom of Information**

29. Closed paper



UNIVERSITY COURT

28 September 2020

**Edinburgh University Students' Association President's Report**

**Description of paper**

1. This paper is to note developments at Edinburgh University Students' Association since the last court meeting, and to provide an update on current work and initiatives. A report from Edinburgh University Sports Union is also included.
2. Appendix 1 includes an overview of the 2020-21 Students' Association Sabbatical Officer priorities.

**Action requested/Recommendation**

3. Court is asked to note this report. It is recommended that this information be considered to support other initiatives and projects designed to improve student satisfaction and enhance the student experience.

**Discussion**

4. September Court marks the 2020-21 Sabbatical Officers' seventeenth week in Office, a term which is shaping up to be unlike any other. Although written in a COVID19-free context, the team is confident that we will still be able to work towards the aims and values of our manifestos that we were elected on; an overview of these are included in Appendix 1. Across all five Sabbatical Officers, the key aims that we share are: **support, inclusivity and communication**.
5. To build our relationship with our members as they start or return this year, we have also recently produced a Welcome video as well as videos covering the latest COVID19 guidelines and our Venue Reopening:

**Welcome to the Students' Association:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VHjC3Hlguwk>

Shown as part of the Principal's Welcome Ceremony:

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/students/new-students/start-university/events/welcome-ceremony>

**Our video for students on COVID guidelines:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AnPbHq4X8x8>

**Ready to Go Venue reopening video:**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UyugBswE4\\_g](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UyugBswE4_g)

*Sabbatical Officer work and updates*

6. From our start in June, the Sabbatical Officers have been warmly welcomed into various committees and working groups within the University and Students' Association. In addition to these, we have also been involved in many of the University's 'Adaptation and Renewal' teams (ART), that have formed in response to COVID19. We have appreciated the opportunity to influence what the student experience will look like in the new semester and feel well placed amongst these ART

strands – a summary of our roles in ART is shown below following the individual officer updates.

*Ellen MacRae, President*

7. From the start of my term, my priority has been focusing on the University's and Students' Association's response to the impacts of COVID19. I have been involved in six of the new ART groups, including two of the four main streams: Students ART, led by Colm Harmon and Estates & Digital Infrastructure ART, led by Catherine Martin. Here, I have been able to discuss students' concerns, including those around access to specialist teaching spaces and transport requirements, especially for students at the Bio-Quarters, Easter Bush and King's Buildings. This ties into my aim to work towards ensuring that the University is *accessible* to all our students, both financially and physically. Amanda (Vice President Community) and I have also appreciated working with the University's Accommodation, Catering and Events (ACE) team and Residence Life in their preparation to welcome new students this September. The Association's relationship with ACE is already proving to be collaborative and with the student experience as its focus, I look forward to working with them more this year.

8. I have really enjoyed being able to talk with staff, students and students' parents and carers during live events; some of these include:

- Hosting a 'Students Ask' webinar with the Usher Institute in which students had their questions on the COVID19 pandemic and public health answered by Prof Devi Sridhar, Prof Linda Bauld and Prof Jonathan Seckl,
- Discussing the challenges facing our students, especially in light of COVID19, with the General Council Business Committee,
- Presenting in the Parents and Supporters August online session and
- Hosting 'How To' sessions for both postgraduate and undergraduate students on how to make friends and stay connected as an online student.

9. These have offered excellent opportunities to improve communication pathways from the Association and to our students, as well as increasing our *transparency*, which is another one of my aims this year. I am also hoping to improve student support during periods of *change*, including the start of semester, with a 'Working from my Bedroom' campaign with assistance from the Students' Association's Advice Place.

*Rachel Irwin, Vice President Activities & Services*

10. Rachel has been working closely with the Student Opportunities Team, and particularly the Societies Team, in preparation for Welcome Week, to deliver a programme that is not only exciting and engaging, but safe for students and in line with ever-changing Scottish Government guidelines. Moving all Students' Association, society, and student group activity online has been a significant change, and the Team has been working hard to ensure that student leaders are supported throughout this time. The likes of the online 'How-To' Sessions that Rachel hosted, as well as the Virtual Activities Fair, have proved great successes, and there has been some good feedback from a variety of students. One definite positive of the move to online-only activity reflected in this feedback is that online events are much more accessible and even less intimidating for students looking to get involved in extra- and co-curricular activity – something to be taken forward into the post-COVID era. Rachel has also sat on two Adaptation & Renewal groups, focusing on study spaces and social spaces, giving her perspective as a representative of both the Students' Association and the



student body. She has been working on several of her manifesto aims and reassessing her priorities in light of Covid-19 now that many activities and services will look rather differently this semester. Rachel's aims of achieving *connectivity*, *accessibility*, and *sustainability* across our activities and services still remain, though the ways in which these will be achieved have needed to adapt to suit the new world we find ourselves in.

*Amanda Scully, Vice President Community*

11. Amanda has been working to achieve her objectives this year which are: *engaging students with their local community; helping support students in their sustainability journeys; and building a University community and sense that Edinburgh is students' home*. She has been working to launch two websites within the Students' Association, one being a local business directory to encourage students to engage with local and small businesses around the city. The second; a Flat-Share website where students can connect with other students to find flats, rooms, and flatmate groups. She has hosted two 'How To' sessions for students on living sustainably and getting involved with the local community and has also been working with the Department of Social Responsibility & Sustainability's Student Engagement and Events team to help expand their student outreach and help their events. Amanda has further worked with Edinburgh Local to send out a letter to community councillors and groups on what the University of Edinburgh and Students' Association are doing to keep the community safe. Understanding that a sense of community and belonging to Edinburgh is important now, more than ever, she has been working on launching a 'Love your Community' campaign in which students highlight their favourite spaces in their local area and highlight why they love living within the city. Finally, Amanda has been working towards helping students engage in housing action and get more information around their rights as tenants and has had primary discussions with Shelter Scotland, Living Rent and has been working closely with The Advice Place on how to achieve this.

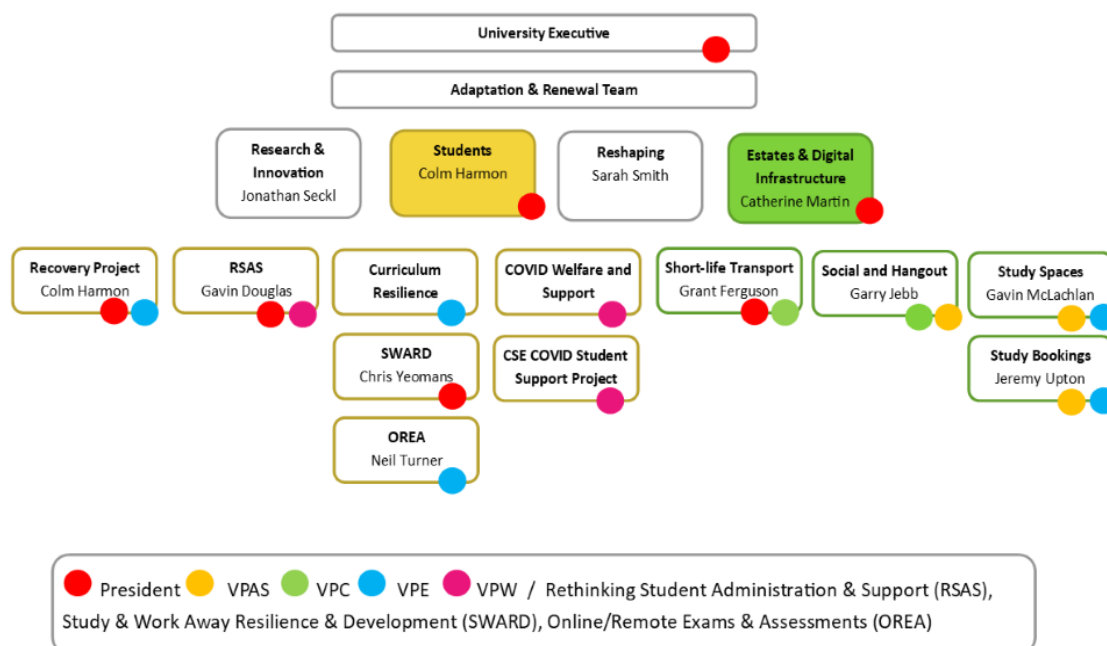
*Fizzy Abou Jawad, Vice President Education*

12. Fizzy has also been working on her priorities for the year. Those priorities are: *improving teaching and feedback, with emphasis on student to staff feedback and the awareness of student representatives within the student body; academic support, focussing on the importance of consistent and quality support for our underserved cohorts (PGR, joint-honours students, those on placement and studying abroad); fostering an inclusive and accessible learning experience for all students*. As part of her final priority Fizzy will be taking the lead on the Student's Association broader work on the BME attainment gap, as delegated to her by our Black and Minority Ethnic Liberation officer, Ayanda Ngobeni. Throughout the summer Fizzy has met with key contacts at the College of Science & Engineering and the College of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences to explain her priorities and will be meeting with key staff in the College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine later this month. Staff were able to identify areas in which they would be able to provide support and any areas of additional overlap. Discussions with the Edinburgh Futures Institute and the Doctoral College highlighted the representative system as a key area of interest and student representation in those departments will remain a key focus of Fizzy's throughout the year. Additionally, as part of her focus on fostering an inclusive and accessible teaching environment Fizzy has written student guidance for online and remote exams and assessment in the coming semester and has been involved in discussions regarding the complementary staff guidance.

*Niamh McCrossan, Vice President Welfare*

13. Niamh has been working with Shelagh Green to develop an Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) resource or guide for all incoming students, as well as collating resources for staff to engage with. This comes in two processes; a minimum viable product will go live on Week 1 of term, addressing overarching topics like privilege, intersectionality, and micro-aggressions. This will be revisited throughout the year to create something permanent for September 2021, with input from students at the University in order to increase engagement. Niamh is part of the newly formed Race Subcommittee under the University's EDI committee, and the Race Equality Committee within the Students' Association. She has recently secured funding to update and further develop our BME welcome guide for students. This was a student led piece, with tips and guides to the city, as well as writing and history on the BME community in Edinburgh University. Niamh has also organised and secured funding for a Women of Colour mural to be displayed within Potterrow, following a Student Council motion passed in 2018. Niamh led on two of the Students' Association's 'How To' sessions (on finances, finding support at university). She also participated in the Widening Participation departments sessions for estranged students, and their 'Moving On' events for incoming students. Niamh is also undertaking work on addressing the issues around sexual violence within the university. She has reached out to feminist societies in the Students' Association, and the creators of the Instagram page @Edi\_Anonymous, to encourage student engagement in evolving our joint #NoExcuse campaign. She is now in the process of collating existing policies in order to make the procedure of reporting more transparent and accessible. She hopes to expand this task for reporting other incidents of harassment or discrimination. Finally, she is working with Laura Smith, Liberation and Welfare Co-Ordinator, on the delivery of #LetsTalk: Mental Health and Wellbeing 2020. This will run from 9 November-27 November, during which we will host online events, discussions and training around our four main themes.

*Sabbatical officers and the ART strands:*



### *Covid-19 update*

14. Much of our work over the summer period has been focussed on recovery and re-opening plans. Navigating ever-changing government guidance, including the specialist Higher Education guidance, has been challenging, and whilst we have got to a reasonable place in terms of our buildings and spaces being open to students, delivery of in-person services remains challenging. Student groups are operating mainly digitally, noting the most recent rules around indoor and outdoor group meet-ups, in particular the two households element of the rule of six. We had a number of welcome events planned that would have been able to progress in the English rule of Six i.e. six households and six people.

15. Many of our student-facing services have transitioned to face to face provision via Microsoft Teams rather than previous physical drop-in services. We have worked hard to develop plans that can move to accommodate a wider range of events and activities in person as soon as we are able – and societies, peer support, student representation activity and advice is very much available and accessible online – to all students whether they have physically come to Edinburgh or not. Whilst the online development is positive, the discussion around lack of physical activity continues to be a live issue – students returning to a quiet campus are wondering how to meet, reflecting on a potentially very isolated student experience, student groups share their frustrations with us, but nevertheless the current government guidelines and developing local context with student cases at Napier are impressing the need for a cautious approach, although clearly continued restrictions will also create challenges (and have already) in terms of students' patience and willingness to stick to the rules in the long term. We are providing some key services in person by appointment, such as The Advice Place and other support areas.

16. Clearly the shift in service delivery presents other challenges for the semester – not least financial. We expect commercial turnover, even where we are open, to be significantly reduced, due to distancing/capacity issues. There are key large scale activities (events, club nights and theatre) that simply aren't allowed at present, and in some cases no feasible digital alternative that would generate income. In addition, costs are higher than usual due to the need for additional staff to manage spaces and services within the restrictions. We want to continue to be a home from home for our members, but are weighing up the costs and benefits of each outlet as we've finalised our opening plans. In addition, the clear desire of the university to have some spaces and activity on campus has encouraged us to continue to develop these plans – our team have been creative but the most recent Scottish Government decision further restricting numbers and households for in-person meetings meant a variety of planned activity was cancelled. We've supported our student groups to navigate these challenges at the same time – our role in supplying them with clear guidance and fast communication of the changes and any impact has been vital, in minimising risk of well-meaning but ultimately illicit activity.

17. As we return to semester activity, we also have a responsibility to manage our staff safely, and many of our staff will continue to work from home – the challenges of this becoming a longer term situation should not be underestimated and significant management time will continue to be spent on maintaining morale, staff community, and team effectiveness in this context.

### *Financial Impact of Covid-19*

18. The pandemic brings a significant financial impact on the Association with the base position being a profit & loss account bottom line impact, if unmitigated, of £3.2m over the next two years.

19. Clearly the overall financial position, as across the University, is bleak. Our aim is to establish an effective financial model that can lead us out of this direct impact position by April 2022, with a financial legacy that is sustainable in terms of loan repayments and our reserves position.

20. In devising this model we have two core aims:

- **To maintain our strategic objectives to deliver and enhance our performance in the provision of a quality student experience in order to both directly support students and the University's aspirations.**
- **To ensure we have the ability to recover financial performance in future years and, along with the University, be in a strong position in terms of delivery, reputation and opportunity for change.**

21. We have tried to balance these objectives, whilst maintaining strengths in our business model so that inevitable cuts to resource are proportionate and limit the impact on the student experience. The core makeup of our model is:

- Exhausting cash balances held – £1m
- Significant borrowing (mix of term loan and overdraft) – £1m
- Job Retention Scheme contribution to salary costs – £730k
- University support (requested) of £450k

22. This in turn is supported by:

- In-year immediate savings c. £100k (balanced with service provision, including Covid service plans)
- Longer term structural savings of c. £250k per annum (to repay loans and rebuild reserves)

23. Whilst these savings targets may seem conservative, they are applied on top of a recent restructuring which achieved savings of £350K – together that's £600k of the cost base removed, over 15%. This will certainly hamper the objectives above, but we believe it is a balanced approach to finding a funding model that works.

24. The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) has been a substantial element of our mitigation strategy, and we are forecasting c £730k of CJRS support from April – October. At an early stage we also explored a number of grant and loan opportunities, from government sources and banks. We did not successfully secure government support other than the CJRS.

25. Savings of at least £200k per annum will be required to allow debt repayment and the rebuilding of reserves. These efficiencies are likely to include reductions to our student-facing services as well as back office savings. Our Trustee Board have agreed a cost savings plan, which includes significant staff savings. We are maintaining our

commitment to progress towards Real Living Wage over 5 years and do not intend to withdraw from that position. Measures we are taking include a recruitment freeze, no cost of living increase applied to staff salaries, and targeted cost savings through a package of Voluntary measures launching later this month to include redundancy, reduction of hours, and an internal furlough option. This will have to be followed by a compulsory scheme should the voluntary schemes not generate the required financial impact. Having already achieved a reduction in staff costs of c. £350k via our organisational effectiveness review in 2019-20 which created strategic staffing changes, any reductions in staffing capacity this time around will be unstrategic and clearly impact services and support, including student-facing (which was largely protected in our organisational effectiveness work) although we won't know precisely where until we open the scheme to staff at the end of September. We will be working through these changes and anticipate that our voluntary schemes will generate savings from December onwards.

26. We also have a strand of work on our future re-shaping, in order to work towards a sustainable model of operations in a post Coronavirus impact world and address our Strategic Priorities to 2025. We anticipate that this will help to shape compulsory redundancy plans.

### Current Finance update

#### 27. High Level Summary to 1 August

£ 000's

	YTD			Current Month		
	Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual	Budget	Variance
Commercial	(598)	(426)	(172)	(139)	(314)	175
Block Grant	1,015	1,015	-	254	254	-
<b>Total net income</b>	<b>416</b>	<b>588</b>	<b>(172)</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>(60)</b>	<b>175</b>
Membership Engagement & People Development	(375)	(436)	61	(95)	(109)	14
Corporate Services	(414)	(491)	78	(96)	(95)	(1)
Marketing & Communications	(111)	(149)	38	(35)	(30)	(5)
Central Overheads	302	(214)	516	44	(53)	97
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>(597)</b>	<b>(1,291)</b>	<b>694</b>	<b>(182)</b>	<b>(288)</b>	<b>106</b>
<b>Surplus / (deficit)</b>	<b>(181)</b>	<b>(702)</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>(67)</b>	<b>(348)</b>	<b>281</b>

Numbers shown in red & brackets denote a net expense or an adverse variance

Central overheads includes income from CJRS government scheme

28. The figures above represent the following:

- i. Income, salaried staff costs and overheads are shown in each of the owning areas.
- ii. Hourly staff furlough costs and the income from the Job Retention Scheme for both hourly and salaried staff are shown in Central Overheads.

### Month & Year-To-Date results

29. The overall position is favourable to budget by £281k in July and £522k year to date. This favourable variance is larger than previous months mainly because the budget in July included a large increase in staffing (mainly hourly, but also some agency) to support the 2020 Festival and these costs have for obvious reasons not happened. The income from the Government's Job Retention Scheme also continues to offset our lack of trading activity and increases the favourable variance. Staff costs continue to be the largest expense and were £501k in July (£376k for

salaries incl. pension and National Insurance, £124k for hourly staff). This is offset by the income from the Job Retention Scheme of £247k in July (£125k for salaried staff, £122k for hourly staff).

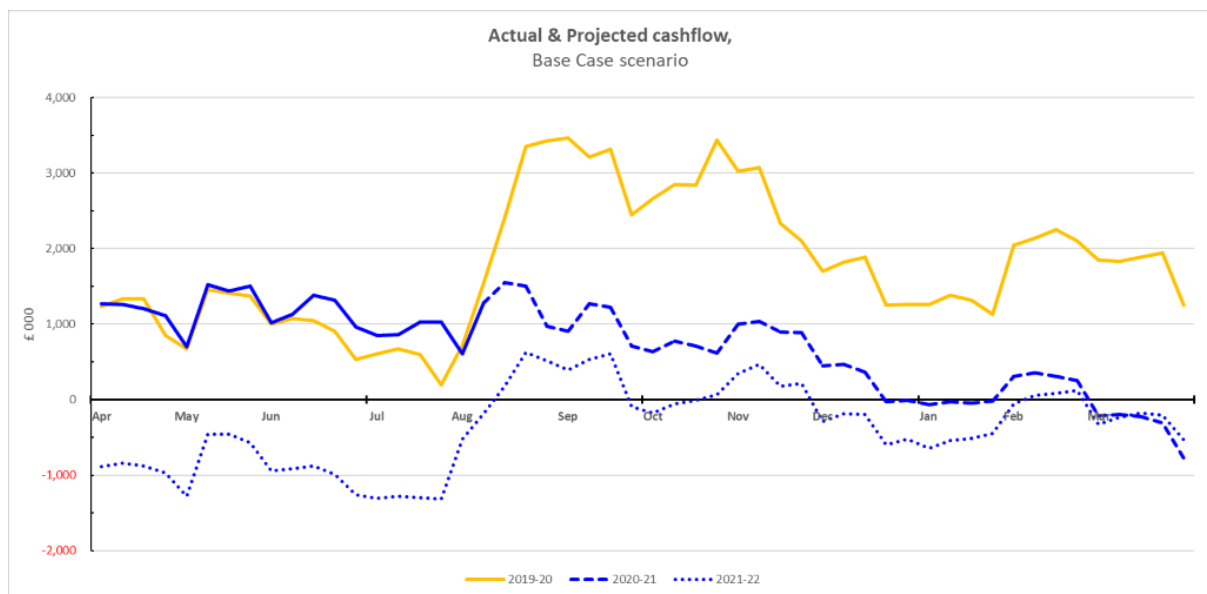
*Period 4 Cash position and forecast for 2020/21*

30. Cash balances for July continue to be higher than the same time last year mainly because of the income from the Job Retention Scheme. It is next month where we will see this trend reverse due to the impact of no Festival in 2020. The latest forecast is still broadly the same as previous months and indicates that the Association has sufficient cash reserves until the end of the calendar year at which point a cash injection will be required.

31. The University have indicated that they may provide an additional £300k grant at the start of March 2021, with an additional £150k being up for discussion and review during February 2021, Whilst this comes with uncertainty and conditions, we are grateful for the support and recognise the financial challenges across the University.

*[Secretary’s note: the request for additional funding has been approved by Policy & Resources Committee subject to certain conditions. This is reported in more detail within the Director of Finance’s Report and within the Policy & Resources Committee report to Court]*

32. Our cash reserves are still forecast to run out during December 2020, so without confirmation of funding support we have now formally applied for a £1m Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) loan and 500k CBILS overdraft from Santander. We will be relying on this loan funding before University support is available and this is crucial to have in place to ensure we get sign off from the auditors that the Association remains a going concern until at least November 2021.



(as at 22/08/20)

### *Future Finances*

33. The Association is now re-budgeting to take account of the loss of income from March 2020 onwards from student trading, conferences and also Festivals and events. Trading challenges will obviously continue throughout 2021 – including anticipating slow recovery of external commercial income opportunities, and Festival income at a significant reduction to previous levels.

### *Welcome Week*

34. Despite the significant limitations in place this year, we've worked hard to ensure that we actively support students to settle in, make friends, and can meet like-minded people. We provided a programme of around 400 online events, many delivered by student societies. From online dance classes, quizzes, and a ceilidh, to make-up tutorials, baking masterclasses and magic shows, there have been many ways for students to have fun safely within current restrictions. We were also able to provide some small group city tours for single households by collaborating with Residence Life, to make sure our ever-popular See the City events could still be offered in some form when the most recent meeting guidelines were published 2 days before Welcome Week began.

35. We have provided an online Activities Fair by fast tracking elements of our ongoing strategic digital project which enabled our student societies to showcase their activity and chat live with new students online throughout the week and at a range of timeslots to ensure students living in different time zones could also engage – there were over 11,000 visitors to the fair during the week and 3,000 individual chats so far. In addition, over 3500 international students joined our International Buddies programme, forming friendship groups online supported by c 400 volunteers. We also ran 26 pre-arrival sessions on Collaborate, on topics such as How to live well cheaply, How to find Accommodation, How to find your community, and these were very well attended by both undergraduate and postgraduate new students. We are providing social spaces across all our buildings for students to be able to book spaces for small groups (tables of up to 4 people) to socialise with food and drink; we have invested in additional infrastructure utilising our Festival experience and assets to create outdoor spaces at Teviot and Pleasance for around 400.

### *A look ahead to semester 1*

36. Semester 1 sees a return to 'business as usual, but different' – with postgraduate elections, society activities, programme representation, peer assisted learning groups resuming, sabbatical campaigns, Black History Month, our #LetsTalk Mental Health and Wellbeing Campaign, and our No Excuse harassment campaign all in the works. Much of these would have included significant in person events and activity and so all require reshaping to ensure widespread engagement. We'll continue to update Court on these projects as they occur, with more focus on these student-facing activities in our next report.

37. We have also taken the decision to re-think both our Student Awards, recognising student contributions and achievements, and the Teaching Awards, recognising academic and support staff. These traditional 'flagship' events will be transformed into online activity, but we'll retain both schemes in some form recognising that perhaps this year more than ever, recognising the commitment and effort of our students and staff in various ways and on an ongoing basis is crucial to supporting community and morale.

### *Digital Development*

38. Our Digital Transformation project has taken on additional significance in the current context, and we are working with a new platform provider who have supported us to deliver, at speed, new interim solutions such as the online societies fair. In addition we escalated plans for a new table ordering app for food and drink, and an online booking system for our venues – service enhancements, that were also required to ensure we can operate in line with current requirements for hospitality. In addition our communications have focussed increasingly on developing engaging social content, an emphasis on video, and supporting and sharing student-led content from our student groups.

### *And finally*

39. The Students Association worked alongside the University towards the **Responsible Futures accreditation** – which seeks to ensure that social responsibility and sustainability are embedded across the curriculum and extra-curricular experiences across higher education. An online audit process with interviews was conducted early in the summer, and as a partnership we are delighted to have achieved this. The report also makes a number of recommendations for further development and strengthening of our partnership working and to extend the embedding of sustainability across and throughout the university. The Association had begun work, prior to lockdown, on a new organisational strategy for sustainability, and whilst this work had gone into hiatus, it has returned to the agenda as we work to support students to live sustainably and responsibly, revisit our food and drink provision, work with the University on Fair Trade accreditation for 2021, and work to develop solutions to key student concerns around single use plastics, and meat consumption.

40. The Students Association was also awarded Gold in this year's **Best Bar None** awards. Best Bar None is an industry accreditation for licensed premises focussed on improving safety, and delivering high standard services responsibly. We focus a lot of effort on ensuring our members can enjoy themselves in our venues whilst also managing safety and student wellbeing, so we were very pleased to achieve this award, and particularly to achieve the full 100% rating.

### **Resource implications**

41. There are no resource implications for this report because this report is retrospectively outlining existing projects.

### **Risk Management**

42. Not applicable.

### **Equality & Diversity**

43. Equality and Diversity considerations are implicitly included in this paper. EUSA represents the interests of a diversity of student groups and exists to maintain the equal representation of students and student groups.

### **Next steps/implications**

44. Some particular challenges and implications relating to funding are highlighted in the paper. There are no next steps to be taken as a result of this paper.



**Consultation**

45. All relevant EUSA Sabbatical Officers, staff members, student staff and members of our organisation. Any items relating to partnerships with other organisations or branches of the University include information provided by all participating stakeholders.

**Further information**46. Author and Presenter

Ellen MacRae

Edinburgh University Students' Association President

September 2020

**Freedom of Information**

47. This paper is open.

## UNIVERSITY COURT

28 September 2020

### Edinburgh University Sports Union President's Report

Edinburgh University Sports Union has successfully overcome many changes over the summer months. In March, a global pandemic meant our staff and students began working from home. In July, new President Katie Macdonald began her year in office. While, ahead of September, government restrictions and SportScotland guidance led to an intense summer of planning and preparation for our Sports Union team, working to create a positive student experience across the Welcome Week and Induction Period for 2020 and beyond.

Despite an extensive lockdown, our students have still been able to achieve some incredible sporting feats. We remain very proud of our team performances in the 2019-2020 season, with our Women's Basketball, Women's Fencing, Women's Squash, Ladies Rugby, and Men's Water polo top teams all reaching their respective British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) Championship finals. They will be awarded joint winners status given the COVID-19 pandemic cancelling these final fixtures. Individually, Howard Bell, a 4<sup>th</sup> Year Moray House student and GB athlete, won a Decathlon Bronze at a European Event in August, setting a new Personal Best. Meanwhile, on August 1 2020, Alexander (Sasha) Chepelin of the Edinburgh University Orienteering Club, with support from several University of Edinburgh student runners, broke the record for the most Munros summited in under 24 hours, summiting 32 Munros in 23 hours 10 minutes. Over lockdown, the University of Edinburgh was also able to support several Great British athletes based in Edinburgh by providing necessary training equipment and support, including to University alumni Polly Swann (Rowing Olympic medallist). This year, an exciting new cohort of Performance Scholars are joining us, including Seonaid McIntosh, a world number one shooter who has qualified for the Tokyo Olympics. Furthermore, a formal partnership has been solidified with Scottish Athletics, creating the National Endurance Running Academy. This will be based at the University of Edinburgh and will initially benefit 15 of our students beginning in academic year 2020-2021. A summer full of absolutely amazing achievements!

Although not able to meet in-person to train with their club members, students have taken advantage of online platforms to continue running activity, while adapting to the current climate. Zoom has been utilised to host virtual training, such as Gymnastics strength and conditioning or Athletics circuit sessions. In addition, the online fitness community Strava, has allowed clubs to establish communities online to share their runs, walks, cycles, swims, hikes and beyond (join us on Strava at UoE Running Community). This has helped to create a sense of community and belonging amidst an extremely difficult time, throughout which the #WeAreEdinburgh spirit has definitely prevailed.

Using Strava, each Edinburgh University Men's Hockey team attempted to complete the 1,163 mile distance between Peffermill Playing Fields and Lloret de Mar, Spain, raising £1076 to support the Action for Children Emergency Coronavirus Appeal, which provides the costs of basic essentials for families facing crisis. Additionally,

Edinburgh University Cricket Club completed P2HL, Peffermill Playing Fields to Harbour Lights, Barbados, in aid of Age Scotland and community cricket efforts in Edinburgh. The club covered a huge 7856 km and raised £3165 to support 'friendship calls', daily phone calls which aim to tackle loneliness in the elderly.

Another fantastic effort was put in by Edinburgh University Rugby Football Club (EURFC) who set up the EURFC outreach programme, delivering food, medications and other necessary supplies to those who were shielding. The club also launched the NHS1000 scheme, raising over £1,450 for the NHS and its associated charities by covering 1412km in a single week. In addition, the club President, Ruaidhri Power and Vice President, Max Aitken, collectively ran and cycled from London to Edinburgh (543km), raising £1,981 for Children's Hospice Across Scotland. Although the 'new normal' was far from what our students were used to, they have used this opportunity to go the extra mile with their charity fundraising, while staying active with their fellow club members.

Looking ahead to 2020-2021, the central aim of the Sports Union is to facilitate as much participation in physical activity as possible across the student body, expanding our Intramural Sport and recreational programme offering. This will be particularly relevant given the COVID-19 pandemic, as the hybrid teaching model may lead to increased feelings of isolation and anxiety amongst the student population. Given clear National Governing Body guidance, sport is in an incredibly fortunate position, where activity can now resume in some capacity. We want to take full advantage of this opportunity to showcase the benefits of sport to all and support student and staff wellbeing with the activity we have on offer.

Through structured educational programmes and qualification funding run by our Coaching and Volunteering Academy (CVA), we are always looking to improve student employability and skill development. In 2020-2021, utilising online delivery wherever possible to increase accessibility, we will place a huge focus on continuing to raise awareness around mental health, and creating a safe and welcoming environment where students can share with each other. We are also very fortunate to be continuing work with Dr Stephanie Adams, to support the second year of the Concussion Education programme for our sports clubs, highlighting the importance of taking concussions seriously and the damaging longer-term effects these can create. As part of the CVA, we also engage with the Wallace Group Volunteer Zambia project, which aims to empower young leaders and lead to sustainable positive change through the power of sport in Zambia. This was postponed from summer 2020 to summer 2021, with students being given the option to defer their place by one year.

Lastly, following the creation of our Inclusion Committee at the end of 2019-2020, we wish to develop a greater understanding of the barriers preventing students from joining sports clubs. Our focus will largely be on inclusion of international students and those from other previously underrepresented groups, and on educating our Sports Union to make activity truly accessible to all. This process has already begun, with an extensive policy and procedural review over the recent months, which culminated in a new EUSU Code of Conduct being published at the end of August.

Last year, our Sports Union enrolled 8000 active members. This year, with aims centred around participation, we want to create a community which is inclusive and prioritises students wellbeing in every instance. We truly believe the Sports Union can play a key role in creating a solid support system and positive environment for all students. It will no doubt be a very challenging year ahead, but our staff, students and coaches could not be more excited to continue offering a world-class sporting and student experience for all members within a safe and controlled environment.

#WeAreEdinburgh

**Katie MacDonald**  
**Edinburgh University Sports Union President**  
**September 2020**



# **Sabbatical Officers Objectives 2020/21**



## Ellen MacRae, President

*Final year Biomedical Sciences student*

**Objective one: Tackling the affordability of University to ensure that it is accessible to all our students**

- Lobbying for affordable and accessible housing and transport
- Ensuring the Students' Association is a supportive employer for students

**Objective two: A greater focus on student wellbeing all year round**

- 'Working from my bedroom' campaign
- Resources for students on supporting their friends' mental health without it impacting their wellbeing

**Objective three: Improving engagement with and the transparency of the Students' Association**

- Supporting students across all University campuses
- Utilising online platforms to communicate with our members and close the feedback loop





## Rachel Irwin, VP Activities and Services

### *Final year History student*

#### **Objective one: Building a greater sense of community through improved communication**

- Connecting student representatives, peer learning and support schemes, and academic societies within Schools
- Regular events for underrepresented and marginalised groups

#### **Objective two: Addressing physical and financial barriers to the student experience**

- Alternative study space map, with live occupancy updates
- Streamlined financial support and opportunities

#### **Objective three: A sustainable and socially responsible University**

- More locally-sources, sustainable, vegetarian and vegan food options
- Monthly sustainable club night in our venues





## Amanda Scully, VP Community

*Final year International Relations student*

**Objective one: Getting students engaged with their local community**

- Supporting local businesses through our vouchers and giveaways
- Creating a guide to community spaces and events

**Objective two: Supporting students on their sustainability journeys**

- Improving waste disposal points within our venues, and becoming a hub for hard-to-recycle items
- Run a campaign enabling students to make sustainable food choices in our venues

**Objective three: Building a University community, and a sense that Edinburgh is students' home**

- Educate students on their rights as tenants and employees
- More student created art on campus, including pieces celebrating marginalised and underrepresented groups





# Fizzy Abou Jawad, VP Education

## *Final year Biological Sciences student*

### **Objective one: Improving the quality and consistency of teaching and feedback**

- Lobby Schools to utilise online platforms to provide effective assessment feedback for all students
- Enhance communication between Programme and School Representatives

### **Objective two: Ensuring all students have access to high-quality academic support**

- Provide joint-honours students with more control over their academic support
- Enhance support for under-served cohorts including Postgraduate Research students, Undergraduate students completing research projects, and students studying abroad or on placement

### **Objective three: Create an inclusive and accessible learning environment**

- Encourage Schools to consider alternative forms of assessment
- Continue to investigate and address hidden course costs



# Niamh McCrossan, VP Welfare

## *Final year International Relations and Law student*

### **Objective one: Making Edinburgh free from sexual violence and hate crimes**

- Clearly articulate our zero-tolerance policy to harassment and discrimination
- Create pre-matriculation training for incoming students on issues including consent and racism, how to report incidents, and accessing support

### **Objective two: Supporting low income students and those experiencing financial hardship**

- Improve signposting of hardship and discretionary funding
- Identify students who are working 20+ hours a week and ensure they are aware of the financial support they're entitled to

### **Objective three: Empowering students to make healthy lifestyle choices**

- Introduce harm reduction campaigns around smoking and drug use
- Build on the success of the free yoga classes, working with the Centre for Sports and Exercise to offer monthly free gym classes



UNIVERSITY COURT

28 September 2020

**Adaptation & Renewal Report**

**Description of paper**

1. The paper provides Court with an update on the work of the Adaptation and Renewal Team. The paper covers the period from May to September 2020.

**Action requested/recommendation**

2. Court is invited to consider and comment on the report.

*Paragraphs 3-53 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.*

**Risk Management**

54. A focussed risk register is being maintained covering the co-ordination activity of Adaptation and Renewal.

**Equality & Diversity**

55. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion will be considered by members of all groups and there is formal representation via a named individual on each work-stream and at the Adaptation and Renewal Team by Sarah Cunningham- Burley.

56. The University needs to ensure each work-stream engaged in Covid-19 mitigation/renewal is equipped to carry out Equality Impact Assessments.

**Further Information**

57. Author and Presenter

Barry Neilson

Director

September 2020

**Freedom of Information**

58. Closed paper. Our approach to adaptation and renewal planning is commercially sensitive.



UNIVERSITY COURT

28 September 2020

Director of Finance's Report

**Description of paper**

1. The paper provides updates on the draft University Group financial results for 2019-20, the timeline for the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) Technical Provisions consultation as part of the 2020 valuation and an Edinburgh University Students' Association (EUSA) request for additional University support.

**Action requested/Recommendation**

2. Court is asked to review and comment on the latest update.

*Paragraphs 3-16 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.*

**Equality & Diversity**

17. Specific issues of equality and diversity are not relevant to this paper as the content focusses primarily on financial strategy and/or financial project considerations.

**Next steps/implications**

18. We would welcome feedback as outlined in the discussion above.

**Consultation**

19. The paper has been reviewed by Lee Hamill, Director of Finance.

**Further information**

20. Authors

Rachael Robertson  
Deputy Director of Finance

Stuart Graham  
Head of FIRST (Financial Information,  
Reporting & Strategy Team)

14 September 2020

Presenter

Lee Hamill  
Director of Finance

**Freedom of Information**

21. This paper should not be included in open business as its disclosure could substantially prejudice the commercial interests of the University.



UNIVERSITY COURT

28 September 2020

**Student Recruitment Cycle – 2020/21 Entry**

**Description of paper**

1. The paper gives an overview of performance during this recruitment cycle against a backdrop of the challenges and uncertainties of Covid-19 and multiple policy changes.

*Paragraphs 2-20 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.*

**Equality & Diversity**

21. In our approach to admissions we have maintained our contextualised admissions policy to ensure that Widening Participation applicants are supported. The priority given to unplaced applicants post revised results is also likely to have benefited those from disadvantaged backgrounds given the influence of prior school performance in the initial moderation of grades by SQA and Ofqual.

22. The introduction of alternative English tests and alternative routes to confirm qualifications will have specifically benefited international applicants.

**Further information**

23. Author & Presenter

Tracey Slaven

Deputy Secretary, Strategic Planning

**Freedom of Information**

24. Closed paper. Release of recruitment information prior to completion of the cycle has the potential to impact on competitor and applicant behaviour. Our approach to Brexit and Covid mitigation as well as any other market consideration is commercially sensitive.





UNIVERSITY COURT

28 September 2020

**Review of Estates Capital Project Deferrals**

**Description of paper**

1. This paper updates Court on the strategic implications of COVID-19 on the Capital Plan. It sets out the rationale for deferring previously paused capital projects by a further 12 months and seeks approval for this. This is part of our actions to ensure the Capital Plan continues to deliver an affordable and responsive estate best placed to meet future challenges.

**Action requested/Recommendation**

2. Court is asked to:

- note the approach to evaluate the suitability of the Capital Plan to meet the challenges of the COVID-19 landscape in a financially sustainable way; and
- approve a further 12 months deferral of the projects listed bringing the total deferral period to 24 months.

*Paragraphs 3-19 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.*

**Equality & Diversity**

20. There are no equality or diversity implications identified as stemming from the recommendation contained within this paper.

**Next steps/implications**

21. The Capital Plan will be updated to reflect revised project cashflows as sites reopen and early-stage projects are reviewed.

22. The process of re-imagining the Capital plan will be commenced to support the requirements emerging from the University's strategic objectives.

**Consultation**

23. This paper has been reviewed by the Director of Place and the Director of Finance. On 18 August 2020, University Executive noted that the issue was being considered and the decision process. Estates Committee and Policy & Resources Committee (by correspondence between 7 and 18 August and on 10 September respectively) have considered the paper and agreed to recommend it to Court for approval.

**Further information**

24. Further information can be provided by the Director of Estate Development.

25. Authors

Jane Johnston, Director of Estate Development  
Gavin Forrest, Estates PMO Manager  
Gary Jebb, Director of Place  
September 2020

Presenter

Jonathan Seckl, Senior Vice-Principal  
and Convener of Estates Committee

**Freedom of Information**

26. This paper is closed as it contains commercially sensitive financial information, disclosure of which would substantially prejudice the interests of the University.



**UNIVERSITY COURT**

**28 September 2020**

**Rector Election 2021**

**Description of paper**

1. This paper reports on the outcome of an independent review of the previous Rector election regulations and proposes new regulations for the election of the Rector, to be held in February/early March 2021.

**Action requested/Recommendation**

2. Court is invited to note the independent review of the 2018 Rector election regulations undertaken by Civica Election Services, attached as Appendix 1 and approve:

- The date for the Rector election, with voting proposed to take place during week commencing 22 February 2020;
- The appointment of the Chancellor's Assessor, Sheriff Principal Alastair Dunlop QC, as the Returning Officer and Tracey Slaven, Deputy Secretary Strategic Planning, as the Deputy Returning Officer;
- The Rector Election Regulations 2021, attached as Appendix 2 (with the previous election regulations also included with changes marked up). The most significant change proposed from previous years is the inclusion of Re-Open Nominations should only one candidate be nominated.

**Background and context**

3. The Rector is elected by all students and all staff every three years. During the consultation on the previous draft election regulations in 2017, the then-Students' Association President requested the option of Re-Open Nominations (RON) be added as an option on ballot papers, as is common in many student elections. This option was then consulted upon with staff union representatives, who were not supportive on the grounds that it is not common in staff elections or more widely. Court decided to proceed without the option of RON on the ballot paper in the 2018 election given the differing views of student and staff representatives but agreed to commission an independent review of the election regulations by the Electoral Reform Society to feed into the next election in 2021. During the summer, the current Students' Association President was consulted to ascertain if the option of RON on ballot papers remained a preference of the Students' Association and this was confirmed. The Convener of the Joint Union Liaison Committee was also approached and indicated that RON could be accepted if it was on the ballot paper if only one candidate was nominated.

4. The Electoral Reform Society were then contacted but having changed in recent years to focus on campaigning, with electoral activities spun-off into Civica Election Services, directed us to Civica Election Services. Civica agreed to undertake a review of the 2018 election regulations, with a specific consideration of: the implications of providing the option on the ballot paper to re-open nominations (RON); the length of the voting period (as this had also been mentioned during the previous election); and, any implications should the opportunity for postal voting be removed (anticipating that an election could take place with staff who would normally



verify any postal votes working from home and the very low level of postal votes submitted in recent years).

## **Discussion**

5. The outcome of the independent review by Civica Election Services is attached as Appendix 1 and the proposed 2021 Election Regulations are attached as Appendix 2, with the key points from both summarised below:

### *Date of Election*

6. The overarching framework setting out when and how the election can be run is contained within in Ordinance 197: Rectorial Election. This provides a six week window for the election to take place in February or early March, not later than the second Saturday in March. The date is to be fixed by the Court after consultation with the Senate. Within that window we propose to avoid an overlap for the voting period with:

- Flexible Learning Week, week commencing 15 February; and,
- the Students' Association election campaigning period from Wednesday 3 March and voting period from Monday 8 to Thursday 11 March.

7. This leaves possible dates of:

- Week commencing 25 January for campaigning and the week commencing 1 February for voting; or,
- Week commencing 1 February for campaigning and the week commencing 8 February for voting; or,
- Week commencing 15 February for campaigning and week commencing 22 February for voting (and to reduce the overlap between the campaigning period and Flexible Learning Week, the campaigning period could run from Tuesday 16 February to Monday 22 February with voting from Tuesday 23 February to Friday 26 February).

8. As we would prefer to hold the preceding call for nominations period over as much of the regular teaching weeks as possible to help with student and staff engagement in putting forward candidates, this points towards a recommendation of **week commencing 22 February** for the voting period. Senate has been consulted on the potential dates with one comment received: that the preference for week commencing 22 February is reasonable but the extent to which public health developments may require disruptive adjustments should be considered and any option adopted should have one or viable fallback arrangements. In response, we would give reassurance that the election is being planned with any potential public health disruptions in mind and that the Senior Lay Member election took place successfully in late March/early April this year during the 'lockdown' period and learning from this will be applied in the planning of the Rector election. Should a fallback be required, voting could move into the following week but we do not anticipate a public health disruption necessitating this given the successful experience of the Senior Lay Member election.

### *Re-Open Nominations (RON)*

9. The Civica review makes the following points:

- The inclusion of RON is extremely rare in the many elections they administer – although it should be noted that it is included in the St Andrews and

Aberdeen (if only one candidate) Rector elections but not in the Glasgow or Dundee Rector elections. The Edinburgh Rector election is unique however, in that staff are included in the franchise, whereas the franchise is limited to students only at the other universities – and when it is included it typically attracts very limited support (3% and 7% in the last two Scottish Rector elections with RON);

- The rationale for including RON: to ensure that if there is only one candidate they will still be subject to an election and need to win a majority of votes rather than being elected unopposed; and, to allow voters to register their disquiet with all candidates without abstaining (we would also add that including RON in an election where only a single candidate is nominated would mean that if the sole candidate was not felt by the majority of the student and staff electorate as someone suitable to represent them and the rest of the University community then can vote for RON to ensure that the candidate is not elected); and,
- The rationale for not including RON: it can come with significant logistical implications if RON is successful as it would normally mean the restarting of the whole election process (and given the narrow six week window we are subject to, would mean that any new election would be in one year's time), may lead to previously declared candidates withdrawing and will have cost implications (we would also add that leaving an elected post unfilled for potentially a long period of time such as one year has democratic implications also, although this is mitigated by the elected position of Senior Lay Member, who would preside at Court in the absence of a Rector).

10. Given the above, including the comments of the Convener of Joint Union Liaison Committee on including RON if there is only one candidate, a compromise position is proposed that:

- the election regulations include a period when the call for nominations can be re-opened for new candidates should only one (or no) candidates be nominated by the original deadline; and,
- if, following the re-opening of nominations, there is only one candidate, the election will then be run with the option to vote for a further re-opening of nominations (i.e. RON will feature on the ballot paper) but if there two or more candidates the option of RON will not feature as the extended call for nominations has been successful in attracting one or more new candidates; and,
- if there are two more candidates by the original deadline the election will proceed without the option of RON.

11. This would be a change to the previous election regulations, where a single candidate would be declared elected unopposed. In the six elections held from the year 2000 onwards, a single candidate has been elected unopposed on two occasions (Robin Harper, 2000; Peter McColl 2012) so there is a realistic prospect that RON may feature on the ballot if agreed to.

#### *Length of voting period*

12. In 2018, the online voting period took place over 2 days, commencing at 9am and finishing at 7pm the following day. The Civica review notes 'The challenge for the University may be to balance having an historically short and concentrated

period when voting is open against ensuring as many electors as possible are able to take part in the election. Extending the voting period to a week may go some way to meeting this challenge.’ It is proposed to extend the online voting period to take place over four days, from Tuesday 23 February to Friday 26 February. The rationale for four rather than five days is to allow for a final campaigning day on Monday 22 February, which is a normal teaching day (rather than the previous week, which is Flexible Learning Week), to facilitate candidate engagement with voters immediately prior to the election.

#### *Postal voting*

13. The previous regulations permitted a postal vote to be granted to staff members if any of the following criteria were met:

- (i) no access to a networked University computer;
- (ii) away from Edinburgh during the period of the election and either unable to, or may have difficulty in, accessing the on-line voting system; or
- (iii) another valid reason.

Given the small number of postal votes received in the 2018 election (8 postal votes from an electorate of 50,454), the move away from offering postal voting in other universities (e.g. St Andrews has removed this option for their Rector elections given limited uptake) and potential administrative difficulties in processing postal votes if the Court Services Office are fully or partly working remotely in February 2021 depending on public health advice this topic was included within the Civica review. Noting the concerns raised by Civica on the importance of ensuring that no elector is disenfranchised because they are either away during the voting period or they do not have the means to vote online, the draft regulations maintain the opportunity to request a postal vote in certain circumstances.

#### *Other Changes*

14. Given the uncertain duration of the pandemic, the draft regulations have been revised to enable as much of the call for nominations, nominations and voting process to be conducted by electronic means as possible.

15. The previous election regulations included a Scrutinising Committee with a remit to meet and formally confirm the validity of a nomination. For the recent academic and professional staff member elections, this was streamlined so that the Returning Officer confirmed the validity of nominations but candidates were given the right of appeal to a Scrutinising Committee against disqualification. This approach is also proposed for the Rector Election, with the Returning Officer to confirm the validity of nominations and the Scrutinising Committee retained to hear any appeals.

16. The previous regulations included in-person oversight by the Electoral Reform Service. Given the ERS’ move away from electoral activities in favour of campaigning, references to this have been removed. The Senior Lay Member election was run using an external voting platform provided by Civica Election Services and this could be considered for the operation of the election (see Resource Implications) or voting could be undertaken using an in-house service.

#### *Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer*

17. In previous elections the Chancellor’s Assessor has acted as the Returning Officer and the Deputy Secretary Strategic Planning has acted as the Deputy

Returning Officer and it is proposed that the same arrangements apply in this election.

#### Timetable

17. The Regulations set out most of the election events, detailed below:

Date	Event
<b>2020</b>	
Monday 9 November	Call for Nominations of candidates opens Staff requests for postal votes opens
<b>2021</b>	
Friday 22 January	Nominations of candidates close 12 noon Postal vote requests close 12 noon
Monday 25 January - Friday 5 February	Re-open Nominations if only one valid candidate
By Monday 8 February	Candidates confirmed ( <i>on Monday 25 January if more than one valid candidate</i> )
By Tuesday 9 February	Postal ballot papers sent out ( <i>on Tuesday 26 January if more than one valid candidate</i> )
Monday 22 February	All postal votes to be returned by 12 noon Verification of postal votes
<b>Tuesday 23 - Friday 26 February</b>	<b>Election: On line voting commences at 9.00am On-line voting ceases 1.00pm</b>
Friday 26 February	Winning candidate announced
Monday 1 March	Rector term of office commences
Monday 26 April	Rector presides at Court meeting

#### Resource implications

18. The voting platform could be provided in-house, with the cost met from existing resources or an external voting platform could be used. For the Senior Lay Member election an external voting platform was used at a cost of £7,590, provided by Civica Election Services.

#### Risk Management

19. The main risks associated with the Rector election are that suitable candidates are not nominated by the electorate (note: it is incumbent upon the electorate to identify potential candidates and nominate them rather than candidates self-nominating) and around the administration of the election itself, e.g. that online voting runs smoothly. These risks are managed through regular review and oversight by the Deputy Returning Officer with assistance from the Court Services Office, colleagues in Communications & Marketing in publicising the election and colleagues in Information Services Group with online voting.

#### Equality & Diversity

20. The election will be carried out with due regard to equality and diversity, with nomination to the post of Rector open to virtually all non-members of the electorate.

#### Next steps/implications

21. If approved, the Deputy Returning Officer and Court Services Office will take forward the arrangements for the election.

### **Consultation**

22. The option of Re-Open Nominations follows consultation with the Students' Association and Joint Union Liaison Committee and the key proposals in the paper have been informed by an independent review by Civica Election Services.

### **Further information**

23. Authors

Kirstie Graham and Lewis Allan  
Court Services

Presenter

Sarah Smith, Vice-Principal Strategic Change  
and Governance; and University Secretary

### **Freedom of Information**

24. Open paper.

**UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH  
ELECTION OF RECTOR**

Thank you for inviting Civica Election Services (formerly Electoral Reform Services) to provide guidance on specific matters pertaining to the election arrangements for the election of Rector.

We have had sight of, and have considered, the provisions of the Ordinance and the Election Regulation as they relate to the questions posed.

We are asked to consider the following matters in relation to the election:

- The implications of providing the option on the ballot paper to re-open nominations (RON).
- The length of the voting period.
- The implications for removing the opportunity for postal voting, due to Covid, to ensure all eligible voters are able to vote.

**The implications of providing the option on the ballot paper to re-open nominations (RON).**

The inclusion of Reopen Nominations (RON) as a voting option is extremely rare in the electoral projects we administer. It is practically unknown amongst institutes and professional associations and indeed the wide range of membership organisations for whom we administer electoral projects. With the exception of a very small number of corporate clients it is primarily student organisations who have, in some cases, incorporated the option in their internal ballots. The thinking amongst most organisations seems to be that, having had a nomination process where any interested prospective candidates have had the opportunity to put themselves forward to stand in an election, voters should be invited to make a positive selection from the list available. It is always open to an elector to opt not to vote in an election if they are not attracted to any of the candidates.

The rationale for including the RON option would appear to be twofold –

- to ensure there is a vote even if only one nominee and to demonstrate that the elected candidate has achieved necessary mandate. (We would point out that it is far more common for organisations to use AV (the “Alternative Vote” system (as already used by the University of Edinburgh) to ensure at least a 50% mandate is reached. If only one candidate stands then it is always possible to have a ratification ballot to determine whether the candidate can command the support of at least 50% of participating electors).
- to provide an outlet or opportunity for electors to make it known that, in their view, there is no candidate from the selection available that they consider as suitable for the position. Rather than select a candidate they are not particularly attracted by their preferred course of action is to effectively call a halt the process pending a candidate coming forward when additional nominations are sought for the role. This prevents a situation where voters feel forced into either casting a vote for a candidate, they do not feel suitable or abstaining from the vote all together.

In the event that the RON candidate is ‘elected’ the expectation is that be that the election process is rerun from the start of the nominations stage. Our records identify that, where the option is available it has attracted very limited support indeed (in the last 5 years the option was available to electors in two Rector elections we administered at Scottish Universities – the percentage of votes cast in favour of RON in each case was 3% and 7%)

In our experience it is the logistical implications on the electoral process that in large part explain why organisations are reluctant to include the option. Should a RON option be successful, it will inevitably push the conclusion of the election process back weeks or months as the process is restarted, as well as the impact on the schedule which is fixed in the election regulations governing the process. It may also result in already declared candidates deciding to withdraw their nomination. Additionally, there are clearly cost implications for the body re-running that part of the election process.

- **The length of the voting period.**

The ordinance stipulates that the election take place on “such a day as may be fixed by the University Court” and the 2018 regulations details a voting period over 2 days. Whilst we note that it is not uncommon for elections of this nature to have a narrow voting window, effectively allowing less than 48 hours for electors to participate in an election is highly unusual when considering the election schedules followed by the vast majority of membership organisations. Often a voting period may in the past have been restricted as voting may traditionally have taken place in person and during term time when staff and students would be available to cast their votes on a specified date. The average voting period in officer elections for most of the organisations we work with is 2-3 weeks, even where voting is exclusively online. This ensures that electors are afforded ample opportunity to participate in the election, notwithstanding other commitments that might prevent them from voting. The electorate for this election consists of staff and students whose commitments and routines are likely to vary significantly. It might be argued that extending the voting period even by a few days will make it easier for voters, and lead to increased participation in the election and higher turnout.

Key to maximising turnout in elections is, of course, publicising the election, and specifically the timetable to be followed, in advance – given the prestigious nature of the election the process itself will clearly attract significant interest from all participants but ensuring that electors are aware of the date and time when voting begins and the deadline for receipt of votes clearly of significant importance. The challenge for the University may be to balance having an historically short and concentrated period when voting is open against ensuring as many electors as possible are able to take part in the election. Extending the voting period to a week may go some way to meeting this challenge.

- **The implications for removing the opportunity for postal voting, due to Covid, to ensure all eligible voters are able to vote.**

We note that the regulations allow for postal voting to be issued to voters who can demonstrate the need for a postal vote, on cause shown. Most of the organisations we work, particularly those with large memberships, have retained an element of postal voting. This tends to happen as the organisation may not hold email addresses for every elector or that members may not have access to a device to register their vote.

However the vast majority of the ballots we administer actually involve CES issuing the election communication – whether it be by e-communication or a postal pack – in the Rector election it is assumed that electors access the online voting system devised for the project via other means – perhaps by logging in to the voting site using personal credentials. We consider it extremely important to ensure that no elector is disenfranchised because they are either away during the voting period or they do not have the means to vote online. Ideally it would be preferable that the same opportunity is available to everyone and ideally this would be restricting participation to voting online but we find that inevitably there remains a desire to ensure that steps are taken to accommodate those who can demonstrate they are not available to vote online during the voting period. It may be that extending the voting period may ensure that fewer electors require to rely in a postal pack. We would point out that, as a general trend, the take up of postal voting is reducing noticeably amongst all elections we administer year on year.

One relevant consideration worth noting is that if the University is aiming to move voting wholly online there will be no way for someone to participate in the election and be counted in turnout without actively voting for a candidate – the ability to write in RON or spoil the ballot that existed when they had a postal option will be gone, as it is not possible to spoil a vote in an online election.

**University of Edinburgh**

**Regulations for the Conduct of the Rector Election to be held on 23 to 26 February 2021, governed by Ordinance of the University Court No. 197 (Rectorial Election)**

- 1 The Rector Election shall be held from 9.00 am on Tuesday, 23 February 2021 until 1.00 pm on Friday, 26 February 2021.

*Role of the Returning and Deputy Returning Officers*

- 2 The Chancellor's Assessor shall be the Returning Officer. The Deputy Secretary, Strategic Planning has been designated Deputy Returning Officer and shall be responsible for the management of the election and the declaration of the result of the election.
- 3 The Deputy Returning Officer shall publicise the election and voting procedure to students and staff and make arrangements as appropriate to secure the good conduct of the election.
- 4 The Deputy Returning Officer shall provide nomination forms and packs, the call for nominations and draw attention to the correct form of procedure for making nominations. The call for nominations shall be published by the Deputy Returning Officer via staff and student email, on the University website and the University's social networking sites not less than fifty days before the date of the election.
- 5 The Deputy Returning Officer shall also provide information and alert staff through various appropriate means on how to request a postal vote.

*Electoral Roll*

- 6 The compilation of the electoral roll for the Rector Election shall be 5.00 pm on 31 January 2021.
- 7 For staff holding contracts of employment issued by the University's Human Resources Department, the electoral roll shall be the University's payroll as at 31 January 2021, individual extracts from which shall be available for inspection upon request. Any person whose name does not appear on the roll but who holds a contract of employment confirming commencement of employment with the University before or at 31 January 2021 may apply to be included in the electoral roll on production of the contract of employment.
- 8 In the case of students, the electoral roll shall consist of all those students who are fully matriculated as at 31 January 2021.
- 9 Students registered for the purpose of examination or graduation only, and postgraduate students who have completed their prescribed period of study, are not fully matriculated students and are not entitled to nominate candidates or to vote.



- 10 Individuals who hold contracts of employment with the University's Human Resources Department and are also fully matriculated students shall have only one vote and shall be deemed to be students for the purposes of the on-line and postal voting processes unless the Deputy Returning Officer has otherwise determined.

#### *Nominations and Validation of Candidates*

- 11 The call for nominations shall commence at 9.00 am on Monday 9 November 2021. No nominations shall be accepted before this date and time.
- 12 All nominations must be submitted on the approved form and lodged with the Deputy Returning Officer by 12 noon on Friday 22 January 2021.
- 13 Nominations may be made only by members of the electorate, as defined in paragraphs 7, 8 and 9 above.
- 14 Members of the electorate, as defined in paragraphs 7, 8 and 9 above and individuals matriculated for examination or graduation purposes only are not eligible to be nominated for election as Rector.
- 15 Each nomination must be subscribed by no fewer than 40 members of the electorate.
- 16 Nominations must be accompanied by a written acceptance of nomination from the nominee. Nominations may be received by electronic means.
- 17 The duties of Rector include being a member of the University Court. Members of the Court are "Charity Trustees" under the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005. Candidates must not be disqualified from being Charity Trustees and nominees must confirm in writing that they are not so disqualified. Nominees must also confirm in writing that there is no impediment to them being able to preside in person at University Court meetings, which will normally be held in Edinburgh, Scotland.
- 18 If the Deputy Returning Officer believes there is any cause for concern regarding the validity of a nomination, this matter shall be drawn to the attention of the nominee/candidate, who shall be given the opportunity to address the cause for concern.
- 19 A contact person, resident in the City of Edinburgh, must be identified for each nominee with whom the Deputy Returning Officer may communicate on any matter in respect of the election. A nominee resident in the City of Edinburgh may act as his or her own contact person. The name, address, telephone/mobile number (if available) and email address (if available) of the contact person, shall be lodged with the Deputy Returning Officer at the same time as the nomination is submitted.

- 20 The Deputy Returning Officer shall acknowledge receipt of the nomination to the identified contact person for each nominee indicating the date and time the nomination for which they are responsible was received.
- 21 Nomination forms must contain no reference to any matter other than the Rector Election and, in particular, no reference should be made to any mode of selection of the nominee, whether by so called primary elections or otherwise.
- 22 The following Committee, to be known as the Scrutinising Committee, shall be appointed by the University Court on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee to hear any appeal against disqualification by the Returning Officer:

A representative of the University Court  
A representative of the Trade Unions  
The President of the Students' Association

The decision of the Scrutinising Committee is final.

- 23 As soon as practicable, each nominee and their identified contact shall be notified of the outcome, subject always to the terms of Regulations 24 to 25 and the list of candidates for the election shall then be confirmed and published.
- 24 If at the close of nominations for an election, 2 or more candidates are confirmed as validly nominated, an election will be held as specified in sections 26 – 47 of these Regulations.
- 25 If at the close of nominations for an election only one candidate is confirmed as validly nominated, the Deputy Returning Officer will re-open nominations for an additional period from Monday 25 January 2021 to Friday 5 February 2021.

#### *Conduct of election process*

- 26 The contact person for each candidate shall receive from the Deputy Returning Officer a copy of these Regulations. In order to assist in the interpretation of these Regulations a meeting with candidates and/or their identified contact persons shall be held. This may be held by telephone or electronic means.
- 27 Candidates together with their supporters shall be limited to spending £450 in total, in connection with either promoting their own campaign to be elected Rector or opposing the election of another candidate. This includes expenditure on items such as posters, leaflets, advertisements, web sites and any other electronic means of communication including social networking sites. This also includes payment for use of facilities within or outwith the University and the cost of hospitality offered at events. Candidates are required by 5.00 pm on Friday 13 March 2021 to present an account of expenditure, with receipts, to the Deputy Returning Officer. The University shall not refund any expenses incurred by a candidate or their supporters in connection with the Rector Election.

- 28 The services provided by an individual in their own time do not require to be included in the information lodged with the Deputy Returning Officer in respect of paragraph 27 above. However, sponsorship and donations in any form including money, goods or services which would otherwise required to have been purchased do require to be declared and taken into account when computing the total spend permissible as set out in paragraph 27 above. If candidates or their identified contacts/supporters are in any doubt of the rules under this regulation they should seek the advice of the Deputy Returning Officer.
- 29 If the Deputy Returning Officer has reason to believe that a breach of these Regulations may have occurred the Deputy Returning Officer shall request a written explanation or clarification from the candidate or the identified contact person. If the Deputy Returning Officer concludes that a material breach has occurred the Deputy Returning Officer shall inform the Returning Officer. The Returning Officer has the authority to disqualify a candidate subject to the right of appeal by the candidate or their contact person to the Scrutinising Committee within 48 hours of receiving written notification of the disqualification. The decision of the Scrutinising Committee shall be final.
- 30 The validity of the election shall not be affected in the event that a candidate is unavailable to continue for any reason prior to the results of the election being announced and where there are more than two candidates remaining the election shall proceed as planned. In the event of there being only one candidate the election shall proceed with the option to re-open nominations listed on the ballot.
- 31 After the declaration of the elected candidate, arrangements to hold a new election shall be undertaken only in the event of that declared elected candidate being unable for whatever reason to continue to hold the position of Rector or if the option to re-open nominations gains a majority of votes cast.
- 32 The University shall arrange for one 'all staff' and one 'all student' email, each with a maximum of 300 words, to be distributed on behalf of each candidate. The emails shall require to comply with the University's computing regulations and the Deputy Returning Officer shall reserve the right to require amendments to be made to the content particularly if the text contains inappropriate comments about other candidates.
- 33 Candidates or their identified contact may ask for information on aspects of the University with the intention or otherwise of using this information during the campaign. Any information provided in response to such requests shall be shared with all candidates. Requests for information should be addressed to the Deputy Returning Officer.
- 34 Candidates or their identified contact may ask the Deputy Returning Officer for assistance in visiting areas of the University. Should the Deputy Returning Officer deem it appropriate to provide such assistance then all the candidates shall be notified of the proposed visit and given the opportunity to be present or represented.

### *Voting arrangements*

- 35 The election shall be conducted by means of the alternative vote.
- 36 Voting shall be conducted totally on-line for fully matriculated students using a secure portal.
- 37 Voting shall be conducted by staff on-line using a secure portal or, dependent on circumstances, by means of a postal vote. A postal vote may be granted by the Deputy Returning Officer if any of the following criteria are met: (i) no access to a device with internet access; (ii) away from Edinburgh during the period of the election and either unable to, or may have difficulty in, accessing the on-line voting system; or (iii) another valid reason. If a member of staff casts both an electronic and a postal vote only the postal vote shall be considered valid.
- 38 Requests for postal votes must be made on the appropriate form and require to be with the Deputy Returning Officer by 12 noon on Friday 22 January 2021. Postal ballot papers shall be issued on Tuesday 9 February 2021 to those staff granted a postal vote.
- 39 All those on the electoral roll for the Rector Election, except those staff who have requested and been granted a postal vote, shall be permitted access and shall be able to vote on the on-line voting system from 9.00 am on Tuesday 23 February 2021 until 1.00 pm on Friday 26 February 2021.
- 40 Staff granted a postal vote shall be required to send their vote to the Deputy Returning Officer to arrive no later than 12 noon on Monday 22 February 2021. It shall be for the Deputy Returning Officer to determine whether, in exceptional circumstances, any late postal vote shall be accepted but no late postal vote shall be accepted if it arrives after 1.00 pm on Friday 26 February 2021.
- 41 Postal votes shall be opened and verified with each candidate permitted to have a representative view the opening and the verification of postal votes.

### *Counting*

- 42 All votes cast either on-line or postal shall be counted together using an electronic counting system. Postal votes shall not be opened and recorded until after the close of the on-line poll. Each candidate shall be permitted to attend or view proceedings and have a representative present.
- 43 Each member of the electorate shall be entitled to have only one vote included at each stage of the electronic counting process.
- 44 In the event of a draw, the successful candidate shall be determined by the toss of a coin. As the Deputy Returning Officer tosses the coin into the air the candidates or their representatives shall be invited to choose either 'heads' or

'tails', the candidate or their representative choosing the upper side when the coin lands shall be declared the winner.

*Declaration*

- 45 The Deputy Returning Officer shall ensure that a notice of the result of the election is posted on the University website and on the University's social networking sites as soon as is practicable after the result has been declared.
- 46 The successful candidate shall be required to re-confirm in writing that they are not disqualified under the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 from acting as a Trustee of a charity.

*Exceptional circumstances*

- 47 In the event of exceptional circumstances, the Returning Officer in consultation with the Deputy Returning Officer may alter the timing of the election and associated dates. Any changes must be made as far in advance as reasonably possible and be accompanied by updated communications to candidates and the electorate.

## University of Edinburgh

### Regulations for the Conduct of the Rectorial Election to be held on ~~26-23~~ and ~~to 27-26~~ February ~~2018~~2021, governed by Ordinance of the University Court No. 197 (Rectorial Election)

- 1 The Rectorial Election shall be held from 9.00 am on ~~Monday~~Tuesday, ~~26-23~~ February ~~2018-2021~~ until ~~7~~1.00 pm on ~~Tuesday~~Friday, ~~27-26~~ February ~~20~~21~~18~~.

#### *Role of the Returning and Deputy Returning Officers*

- 2 The Chancellor's Assessor shall be the Returning Officer. The Deputy Secretary, Strategic Planning has been designated Deputy Returning Officer and shall be responsible for the management of the election and the declaration of the result of the election.
- 3 The Deputy Returning Officer shall publicise the election and voting procedure to students and staff and make arrangements as appropriate to secure the good conduct of the election.
- 4 The Deputy Returning Officer shall provide nomination forms and packs, ~~the call and publish posters calling~~ for nominations and draw attention to the correct form of procedure for making nominations. The ~~posters calling~~ call for nominations shall be published by the Deputy Returning Officer ~~on notice boards throughout the University via staff and student email~~, on the University website and the University's social networking sites not less than fifty days before the date of the election.
- 5 The Deputy Returning Officer shall also provide information, ~~publish posters~~, and alert staff through various appropriate means on how to request a postal vote.

#### *Electoral Roll*

- 6 The compilation of the electoral roll for the Rectorial Election shall be 5.00 pm on 31 January ~~2018~~2021.
- 7 For staff holding contracts of employment issued by the University's Human Resources Department, the electoral roll shall be the University's payroll as at 31 January ~~2018~~2021, ~~individual extracts from~~ which shall be available for inspection ~~upon request in the Deputy Returning Officer's office, Old College~~. Any person whose name does not appear on the roll but who holds a contract of employment confirming commencement of employment with the University before or at 31 January ~~2018-2021~~ may apply to be included in the electoral roll on production of the contract of employment.
- 8 In the case of students, the electoral roll shall consist of all those students who are fully matriculated as at 31 January ~~2018~~2021.

- 9 Students registered for the purpose of examination or graduation only, and postgraduate students who have completed their prescribed period of study, are not fully matriculated students and are not entitled to nominate candidates or to vote.
- 10 Individuals who hold contracts of employment with the University's Human Resources Department and are also fully matriculated students shall have only one vote and shall be deemed to be students for the purposes of the on-line and postal voting processes unless the Deputy Returning Officer has otherwise determined.

#### *Nominations and Validation of Candidates*

- 11 The call for nominations shall commence at 9.00 am on Monday ~~20-9~~ November ~~2017~~2021. No nominations shall be accepted before this date and time.
- 12 All nominations must be submitted on the approved form and lodged with the Deputy Returning Officer, ~~Old College~~ by 12 noon on ~~26~~ Friday 22 January ~~2018~~2021.
- 13 Nominations may be made only by members of the electorate, as defined in paragraphs 7, 8 and 9 above.
- 14 Members of the electorate, as defined in paragraphs 7, 8 and 9 above and individuals matriculated for examination or graduation purposes only are not eligible to be nominated for election as Rector.
- 15 Each nomination must be subscribed by no fewer than 40 members of the electorate.
- 16 Nominations must be accompanied by a written acceptance of nomination ~~signed by~~from the nominee ~~and by one witness of their signature~~. Nominations ~~may be received by electronic means. received by any other means including electronic mail, telegram, cable, by proxy, or orally shall be not be valid. In exceptional circumstance and with the prior consent of the Deputy Returning Officer, an emailed nomination form shall be accepted but only if an original written document is presented within a reasonable timescale as agreed by the Deputy Returning Officer.~~
- 17 The duties of Rector include being a member of the University Court. Members of the Court are "Charity Trustees" under the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005. Candidates must not be disqualified from being Charity Trustees and nominees must confirm in writing that they are not so disqualified. Nominees must also confirm in writing that there is no impediment to them being able to preside in person at University Court meetings, which will normally be held in Edinburgh, Scotland.
- 18 If the Deputy Returning Officer believes there is any cause for concern regarding the validity of a nomination, this matter shall be drawn to the attention

of the nominee/candidate, who shall be given the opportunity to address the cause for concern, ~~if practicable, prior to the meeting of the Scrutinising Committee.~~

- 19 A contact person, resident in the City of Edinburgh, must be identified for each nominee with whom the Deputy Returning Officer may communicate on any matter in respect of the election. A nominee resident in the City of Edinburgh may act as his or her own contact person. The name, address, telephone/mobile number (if available) and email address (if available) of the contact person, shall be lodged with the Deputy Returning Officer at the same time as the nomination is submitted.
- 20 The Deputy Returning Officer shall acknowledge receipt of the nomination to the identified contact person for each nominee indicating the date and time the nomination for which they are responsible was received.
- 21 Nomination forms must contain no reference to any matter other than the Rectorial Election and, in particular, no reference should be made to any mode of selection of the nominee, whether by so called primary elections or otherwise.
- 22 The following Committee, to be known as the Scrutinising Committee, shall be appointed by the University Court on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee to ~~scrutinise nominations and confirm the validation of the nominations and~~ hear any appeal against disqualification by the Returning Officer:

A representative of the University Court  
A representative of the Trade Unions  
The President of the Students' Association

The decision of the Scrutinising Committee is final.

- 23 As soon as practicable, each nominee and their identified contact shall be notified of the outcome ~~of the Scrutinising Committee's deliberations~~, subject always to the terms of Regulations 24 to 25 and the list of candidates for the election shall then be confirmed and published.
- 24 If at the close of nominations for an election ~~and following the meeting of the Scrutinising Committee~~, 2 or more candidates are confirmed as validly nominated, an election will be held as specified in sections 26 – 48 of these Regulations.
- 25 If at the close of nominations for an election ~~and following the meeting of the Scrutinising Committee~~, only one candidate is confirmed as validly nominated, the Deputy Returning Officer will re-open nominations for an additional period from Monday 25 January 2021 to Friday 5 February 2021, as soon as practicable and no later than 48 hours after the meeting of the committee through a public notice:



~~declare that the election is uncontested;~~  
~~declare the candidate elected.~~

### *Conduct of election process*

- 26 The contact person for each candidate shall receive from the Deputy Returning Officer a copy of these Regulations. In order to assist in the interpretation of these Regulations a meeting with candidates and/or their identified contact persons shall be held. This may be held by telephone or electronic means.
- 27 Candidates together with their supporters shall be limited to spending £450 in total, in connection with either promoting their own campaign to be elected Rector or opposing the election of another candidate. This includes expenditure on items such as posters, leaflets, advertisements, web sites and any other electronic means of communication including social networking sites. This also includes payment for use of facilities within or outwith the University and the cost of hospitality offered at events. Candidates are required by 5.00 pm on 9 Friday 13 March 2018-2021 to present an account of expenditure, with receipts, to the Deputy Returning Officer. The University shall not refund any expenses incurred by a candidate or their supporters in connection with the Rectorial Election.
- 28 The services provided by an individual in their own time do not require to be included in the information lodged with the Deputy Returning Officer in respect of paragraph 27 above. However, sponsorship and donations in any form including money, goods or services which would otherwise required to have been purchased do require to be declared and taken into account when computing the total spend permissible as set out in paragraph 27 above. If candidates or their identified contacts/supporters are in any doubt of the rules under this regulation they should seek the advice of the Deputy Returning Officer.
- 29 If the Deputy Returning Officer has reason to believe that a breach of these Regulations may have occurred the Deputy Returning Officer shall request a written explanation or clarification from the candidate or the identified contact person. If the Deputy Returning Officer concludes that a material breach has occurred the Deputy Returning Officer shall inform the Returning Officer. The Returning Officer has the authority to disqualify a candidate subject to the right of appeal by the candidate or their contact person to the Scrutinising Committee within 48 hours of receiving written notification of the disqualification. The decision of the Scrutinising Committee shall be final.
- 30 The validity of the election shall not be affected in the event that a candidate is unavailable to continue for any reason prior to the results of the election being announced and where there are more than two candidates remaining the election shall proceed as planned. In the event of there being only one remaining candidate ~~and therefore an uncontested election, the Deputy Returning Officer shall declare and publicise as soon as practicable and no later than 48 hours after confirmation of the uncontested election status the name of~~

~~the valid candidate elected~~the election shall proceed with the option to re-open nominations listed on the ballot.

- 31 After the declaration of the elected candidate, arrangements to hold a new election shall be undertaken only in the event of that declared elected candidate being unable for whatever reason to continue to hold the position of Rector or if the option to re-open nominations gains a majority of votes cast.
- 32 The University shall arrange for one 'all staff' and one 'all student' email, each with a maximum of 300 words, to be distributed on behalf of each candidate. The emails shall require to comply with the University's computing regulations and the Deputy Returning Officer shall reserve the right to require amendments to be made to the content particularly if the text contains inappropriate comments about other candidates.
- 33 Candidates or their identified contact may ask for information on aspects of the University with the intention or otherwise of using this information during the campaign. Any information provided in response to such requests shall be shared with all candidates. Requests for information should be addressed to the Deputy Returning Officer.
- 34 Candidates or their identified contact may ask the Deputy Returning Officer for assistance in visiting areas of the University. Should the Deputy Returning Officer deem it appropriate to provide such assistance then all the candidates shall be notified of the proposed visit and given the opportunity to be present or represented.

#### *Voting arrangements*

- 35 ~~Voting arrangements shall be under the supervision of the Electoral Reform Society.~~
- 36 The election shall be conducted by means of the alternative vote.
- 37 Voting shall be conducted totally on-line for fully matriculated students using a secure ~~University~~ portal.
- 38 Voting shall be conducted by staff on-line using a secure ~~University~~ portal or, dependent on circumstances, by means of a postal vote. A postal vote may be granted by the Deputy Returning Officer if any of the following criteria are met: (i) no access to a ~~networked University computer device with internet access~~; (ii) away from Edinburgh during the period of the election and either unable to, or may have difficulty in, accessing the on-line voting system; or (iii) another valid reason. If a member of staff casts both an electronic and a postal vote only the postal vote shall be considered valid.
- 39 Requests for postal votes must be made on the appropriate form and require to be with the Deputy Returning Officer by 12 noon on ~~26 January 2018~~Friday 22 January 2021. Postal ballot papers shall be issued on ~~5 February 2018~~Tuesday 9 February 2021 to those staff granted a postal vote.

- 40 All those on the electoral roll for the Rectorial Election, except those staff who have requested and been granted a postal vote, shall be permitted access and shall be able to vote on the on-line voting system from 9.00 am on ~~26-Tuesday 23 February 2018-2021~~ until 7.00 pm on ~~Friday 27-26 February 2021~~18.
- 41 Staff granted a postal vote shall be required to send their vote to the Deputy Returning Officer to arrive no later than 12 noon on ~~19 February 2018~~Monday 22 February 2021. It shall be for the Deputy Returning Officer to determine whether, in exceptional circumstances, any late postal vote shall be accepted but no late postal vote shall be accepted if it arrives after 7.00 pm on ~~27-Friday 26 February 2018~~2021.
- 42 Postal votes shall be opened and verified ~~under the supervision of the Electoral Reform Society~~ with each candidate permitted to have a representative ~~attending-view~~ the opening and the verification of postal votes.

### *Counting*

- 43 All votes cast either on-line or postal shall be counted together using an electronic counting system. Postal votes shall not be opened and recorded until after the close of the on-line poll. ~~The counting shall be under the supervision of the Electoral Reform Society with each~~ Each candidate ~~shall be~~ permitted to attend ~~or view proceedings~~ and have a representative present.
- 44 Each member of the electorate shall be entitled to have only one vote included at each stage of the electronic counting process.
- 45 In the event of a draw, the successful candidate shall be determined by the toss of a coin. As the Deputy Returning Officer tosses the coin into the air the candidates or their representatives shall be invited to choose either 'heads' or 'tails', the candidate or their representative choosing the upper side when the coin lands shall be declared the winner.

### *Declaration*

- 46 The Deputy Returning Officer shall ensure that a notice of the result of the election is posted on ~~the Old College Notice Board, on~~ the University website and on the University's social networking sites as soon as is practicable after the result has been declared.
- 47 The successful candidate shall be required to re-confirm in writing that they are not disqualified under the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 from acting as a Trustee of a charity.

### *Exceptional circumstances*

- 48 In the event of exceptional circumstances, the Returning Officer in consultation with the Deputy Returning Officer may alter the timing of the election and associated dates. Any changes must be made as far in advance as reasonably

possible and be accompanied by updated communications to candidates and the electorate.



UNIVERSITY COURT

28 September 2020

**Annual Report to the Scottish Funding Council on Institution-led Review and Enhancement Activity 2019/20**

**Description of paper**

1. The University is required on an annual basis to provide the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) with a report on its activities to effectively manage quality assurance and deliver on enhancement. This annual report requires approval by Court.

**Action requested/Recommendation**

2. Court is invited to consider and approve the annual report, confirming that it provides Court with the required assurances on the effectiveness of the arrangements put in place by Senate in respect of quality and enhancement of education provision prior to the annual report being submitted to the SFC.

3. The content of the annual report was approved by the Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) on 9 September. The report is transmitted simultaneously to eSenate (15-23 September 2020) for comment and noting. Any comments from eSenate will be provided to Court members.

4. Court is asked to approve the annual report and authorise the Senior Lay Member to sign the following statement:

'On behalf of the governing body of the University of Edinburgh, I confirm that we have considered the institution's arrangements for the management of academic standards and the quality of the learning experience for academic year 2019/20, including the scope and impact of these. I further confirm that we are satisfied that the institution has effective arrangements to maintain standards and to assure and enhance the quality of its provision. We can therefore provide assurance to the Council that the academic standards and the quality of the learning provision at this institution continue to meet the requirements set by the Council.'

**Background and context**

5. In terms of the University's statutory framework, roles and responsibilities for quality assurance and enhancement are detailed on the [quality website](#).

6. The University's annual report to the SFC on its institutional-led review and enhancement activity is produced in accordance with guidance prepared by the SFC. The exact format is at the discretion of the institution.

7. In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, Court is asked to note:

- This year's annual report does not include the outcomes of the annual monitoring, review and reporting process as the timescale for reporting has been extended.

- SFC have specifically requested that annual reports include information on the impact on the internal periodic review schedule.

## **Discussion**

8. The annual report draws on the outputs of institutional-led review and enhancement activity: internal periodic review; student support thematic review; and student support services annual review. The report also contains a narrative on consideration of student data. The report includes a list of provision reviewed in 2019/20 and gives an indication of the forward schedule of reviews for the next cycle. The report also includes a list of the programmes which were reviewed by professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRB) during 2019/20.

9. The full report is available as a background paper on the Court wiki site (<https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/UCC/University+Court>) and is summarised below.

10. The contents of the annual report are prescribed by the SFC and cover:

- Summary of the institutional-led review outcomes from the preceding academic year including main themes, recommendations and/or commendations
- Ways in which support services were reviewed
- Role and nature of student engagement in institution-led review
- Contextual information and key messages from analysis of data
- Summary

*Summary of the institution-led review outcomes from the preceding academic year including main themes, recommendations and/or commendations*

### 11. *Institution-led Review*

#### *Areas of Good practice*

- The dedicated support provided to students by both academic and professional staff, including as part of the Personal Tutor system and during students' transitions.
- Commitment to teaching and curriculum development.
- Developing employability and graduate attributes through involvement of the Careers Service.
- Supporting and developing staff, including support for tutors and demonstrators, continuing professional development, and roles to support tutors and demonstrators.
- Community building through initiatives including peer support, societies and social activities.
- Accessibility, inclusivity and Widening Participation

#### *Areas for further development*

- Tutors and demonstrators. Recommendations covered training (including continuing professional development), allocation of work and remuneration, the creation of roles to provide support, and recruitment processes.
- Space. Recommendations related to the impact that pressures on and challenges with the estate are having on the student and staff experience,

including on the ability to build community. The lack of space for tutors and demonstrators to carry out marking and meet with students was also noted.

- Community building. Recommendations focused on developing and implementing approaches to improve community building. The impact of pressures on and challenges with the estate on efforts to build community was also noted.
- Curriculum. Recommendations relating to curriculum development and course provision, and embedding and assessing skills and employability within the core curriculum.
- Student support. Recommendations related to the importance of clearly communicating support available to students and also encouraged the preservation of good practice within the current Personal Tutor system in future models of support.

## 12. *Contextual information and key messages from analysis of data*

The report confirms that the 2020 institutional level results of the National Student Survey and the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey are being considered. The report then outlines the outcomes of discussion at Senate Quality Assurance Committee on trends in undergraduate degree classification outcomes. A summary of analysis on retention and themes from external examiner reports are also outlined in the report alongside a commentary on widening participation.

## 13. *Summary*

Actions undertaken and planned are outlined in the report under the headings of: strategy and strategic projects; equality and diversity; student voice; teaching and academic careers; careers and employability; and Enhancement-led Institutional Review.

14. Senate Quality Assurance Committee will remit issues requiring further development to relevant committees and roles for action.

### **Resource implications**

15. There are no specific resource implications associated with the report. Actions are expected to be taken forward within current budgets or, if additional resources are identified, to be proposed via the planning round.

### **Risk Management**

16. The provision of a high quality student experience is a high level risk on the University's Strategic Risk Register, and is overseen by the Risk Management Committee reporting to Audit & Risk Committee and Court. Additionally, failure in effectiveness of the quality assurance framework, including aligning review activity with external expectations and taking action on findings, constitutes an institutional risk.

### **Equality & Diversity**

17. Equality impact assessments are carried out on University quality assurance policies and processes.

### **Next steps/implications**

18. Following approval of the report by Court the document will be submitted to the SFC.

### **Consultation**

19. The report is simultaneously being noted and commented on by e-Senate (15-23 September 2020) and the content was approved by the Senate Quality Assurance Committee on 9 September 2020.

### **Further information**

20. Assistant Principal Professor Tina Harrison, Academic Standards and Quality Assurance and Nichola Kett, Academic Services can supply further information

21. Author

Professor Tina Harrison  
(Assistant Principal Academic  
Standards and Quality Assurance)  
Nichola Kett, Academic Services  
14 September 2020

Presenter

Professor Colm Harmon  
Vice-Principal Students

### **Freedom of Information**

22. Open paper.





UNIVERSITY COURT

28 September 2020

**Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) Reflective Analysis**

**Description of paper**

1. This paper presents the Reflective Analysis (RA), a key piece of evidence to support the University's ELIR, for approval.

**Action requested/Recommendation**

2. Court is invited to approve the RA, noting that on 9 September 2020 Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) recommended the content for approval by eSenate which runs from 15 to 23 September 2020. The decision of eSenate will be provided to Court members at the meeting.

**Background and context**

3. ELIR is the method used by the Quality Assurance Agency Scotland (QAAS) to review and assess the effectiveness of higher education institutions' approaches to securing academic standards and the quality of the student experience.

4. Reviews are conducted every five years. The University's next ELIR was scheduled to take place in semester 1 2020/21. Due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic the ELIR has been rescheduled to semester 2 2020/21 when a review team comprising academic and student reviewers will consider documentary evidence and visit the University to meet with staff and students. The planning visit takes place on 3 February 2021 and the review visit takes place on 22 to 26 March 2021.

**Discussion**

5. The RA is a self-evaluation of our strategies, policies and practices in support of academic standards, learning and teaching and the student experience.

6. The RA covers: our strategies, structure and background information; the student learning experience; how we enhance learning and teaching (including how we develop and support staff); how we manage the quality of our courses and programmes; and how we manage our collaborative provision (where we work in partnership with other organisations to deliver courses and programmes).

7. A key development of the ELIR process is an emphasis on the contextualisation of each review to ensure value and relevance. A range of information and data was considered to identify areas of focus for our ELIR and, after consulting with students and staff, the following were agreed:

- Teaching and academic careers
- Student community and student voices
- Student support
- Widening Participation
- Student skills and employability

These are reflected on throughout the RA and will be discussed as part of the visits.

8. The RA will be supported by an Advanced Information Set (AIS) that comprises a set of supporting evidence (including a sample of key reports and an analysis of student feedback).

9. The full RA is available on the Court site:

<https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/UCC/University+Court>

#### *Preparation of the Reflective Analysis*

10. Drafts of chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5, developed using information gathered from colleagues across the University and the Students' Association, were made available to all staff and students in November and December 2019 with accompanying Teaching Matters blog posts. Comments received on the draft chapters were used to develop a first draft of the RA.

11. The first draft was then reviewed by key internal and external stakeholders in late January/early February 2020. This included four Court members who volunteered to comment on the draft and we are very grateful to them for this. Comments received on the first draft were used to develop a second draft, which was made available to all staff and students in March and April 2020 with an accompanying Teaching Matters blog post.

12. At this stage, due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, QAAS needed to make changes to their schedule of ELIRs, and asked that our review be postponed. In May 2020 QAAS confirmed the new ELIR visit dates (February and March 2021).

13. Given the new ELIR visit dates, it was agreed that the RA would be presented to the relevant committees in September 2020 in order to meet the deadline for submission of the RA and supporting AIS in early December 2020. Academic Services continued to update the RA, requesting updates from colleagues across the University and the Students' Association. The RA was then reviewed one final time by Tina Harrison, Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance.

14. Alongside updates to activities throughout the RA, the major change that has been made since the second draft is the addition of a reflection on actions taken in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

15. Unless otherwise stated, the RA represents the University's actions and intentions as at August 2020. The ELIR review team will be provided with updates on activities in advance of their visits as appropriate.

#### *Further work on presentational aspects*

16. Academic Services will continue work on the glossary of acronyms, referencing within the RA (e.g. to related sections and appendices), the appendices, typos, and web links. The Principal's foreword and photographs will also be added to the RA. The RA will then undergo a graphic design process by Communications and Marketing.

**Resource implications**

17. There are no specific resource implications associated with the RA.

**Risk Management**

18. A successful ELIR is of vital importance to the University.

**Equality & Diversity**

19. No issues are associated with this paper.

**Next steps/implications**

20. Academic Services will ensure that the RA and accompanying AIS are submitted to QAAS by the required deadline.

**Consultation**

21. On 9 September 2020 SQAC recommended the content for approval by eSenate which runs from 15 to 23 September 2020. Additionally, there has been extensive consultation with staff and students throughout the development of the RA as outlined above.

**Further information**22. Authors

Professor Tina Harrison and  
Nichola Kett  
Academic Services  
14 September 2020

Presenter

Professor Colm Harmon  
Vice-Principal Students

**Freedom of Information**

23. Open paper.



UNIVERSITY COURT

28 September 2020

Exception Committee Report

**Committee Name**

1. Exception Committee

**Date of Meeting**

2. The Committee considered business by correspondence from 10 to 15 July and 27 to 31 July 2020.

**Action Required**

3. To note the matters approved on behalf of Court by Exception Committee.

**Key points**

*Court Member Recruitment*

4. On the recommendation of the Nominations Committee, Exception Committee approved the appointment of Hugh Mitchell as a co-opted member of the University Court for a four year term of office from 1 August 2020 to 31 July 2024.

*Paragraphs 5-7 has been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.*

*'Whistleblowing' Court lay member contact*

8. On the recommendation of the Nominations Committee, Exception Committee approved the appointment of Sarah Wolffe as the Court lay member contact for the University's Code of Practice on Reporting Malpractice and Raising Concerns under the Public Interest Disclosure Legislation ("Whistleblowing") for a three year term from 1 August 2020.

**Full minute**

9. All papers considered and the draft minute can be accessed at:  
<https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/UCC/Exception+Committee>

**Equality & Diversity**

10. Issues related to equality and diversity were considered within each paper as appropriate.

**Further information**

11. Author

Lewis Allan  
Head of Court Services

Presenter

Janet Legrand  
Convener, Exception Committee

**Freedom of Information**

12. Closed paper.



UNIVERSITY COURT

28 September 2020

**Court USS Sub-Group Report**

**Committee Name**

1. Court Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) Sub-Group

**Date of Meeting**

2. 24 July 2020 (by videoconference)

**Action Required**

3. To note the key items discussed.

*Paragraphs 4-7 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.*

**Further information**

- |                        |                    |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| 8. <u>Author</u>       | <u>Presenter</u>   |
| Lewis Allan            | Alan Johnston      |
| Head of Court Services | Sub-Group Convener |
| 16 September 2020      |                    |

**Freedom of Information**

9. Closed paper.



UNIVERSITY COURT

28 September 2020

**Policy & Resources Committee Report**

**Committee Name**

1. Policy & Resources Committee

**Date of Meeting**

2. 10 September 2020 (by videoconference).

**Action Required**

3. To note the key points from the meeting.

*Paragraphs 3-16 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.*

**Full minute**

17. All papers considered and the draft minute can be accessed at:  
<https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/UCC/Policy+and+Resources+Committee>

**Equality & Diversity**

18. Issues related to equality and diversity were considered within each paper as appropriate.

**Further information**

- |                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| 19. <u>Author</u>      | <u>Presenter</u>                       |
| Lewis Allan            | Alan Johnston                          |
| Head of Court Services | Convener, Policy & Resources Committee |

**Freedom of Information**

20. Closed paper.



UNIVERSITY COURT

28 September 2020

**Nominations Committee Report**

**Committee Name**

1. Nominations Committee

**Date of Meeting**

2. The Committee considered business by correspondence between 7 to 10 July and between 2 to 9 September 2020.

**Action Required**

3. To note the key points and to approve the recommended committee membership appointments as set out.

**Key points**

*Court Member Recruitment*

4. The Committee reviewed a report on the outcome of the co-opted Court member recruitment process and agreed to recommend to Exception Committee that Hugh Mitchell be appointed as a co-opted member of the University Court for a four year term of office from 1 August 2020 to 31 July 2024.

*Committee Memberships*

5. The Committee reviewed vacant positions on Court committees, Sub-Groups and other bodies with Court appointed positions and agreed to recommend to Court the following proposed appointments:

Audit & Risk Committee

Clare Reid to be appointed for a one year term of office to 31 July 2021

Policy & Resources Committee

Hugh Mitchell to be appointed for a three year term of office to 31 July 2023

Court USS Sub-Group

Janet Legrand and David Law to be appointed as Sub-Group members

Independent Chair of the Trustees of the Staff Benefits Scheme

Julia Miller of Scottish Pension Trustees Limited to be appointed for an initial two year term of office to 31 July 2022

*Audit & Risk Committee External Member Appointment*

6. The initiation of a recruitment process for the appointment of a new external member of the Audit & Risk Committee was agreed.

**Full minute**

7. The draft minute can be accessed at:

<https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/UCC/Nominations+Committee>

### **Equality & Diversity**

8. Issues related to equality and diversity were considered within each paper as appropriate.

### **Further information**

9. Author

Lewis Allan  
Head of Court Services

Presenter

Alan Johnston  
Convener, Nominations Committee

### **Freedom of Information**

10. Open paper.





UNIVERSITY COURT

28 September 2020

**Audit & Risk Committee Report**

**Committee Name**

1. Audit & Risk Committee.

**Date of Meeting**

2. 10 September 2020 (by videoconference).

**Action Required**

3. Court is invited to note the key points from the meeting and approve the updated Counter Fraud and Whistleblowing policies and associated procedures, attached as appendices.

*Paragraphs 4-10 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.*

**Full minute**

11. The full minute will be available in due course on:  
<https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/UCC/Audit+and+Risk+Committee>

**Equality & Diversity**

12. No direct equality and diversity implications were raised in this report

**Further information**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 13. <u>Author</u><br>Kirstie Graham<br>September 2020 | <u>Presenter</u><br>Caroline Gardner<br>Convener, Audit & Risk Committee |
|---|--|

**Freedom of Information**

14. This paper is closed.



UNIVERSITY COURT

28 September 2020

**Donations and Legacies; Global Alumni Events**

**Description of paper**

1. A report on legacies and donations received by the University of Edinburgh Development Trust or directly by the University from 30 May 2020 to 9 September 2020.
2. The paper also includes information on upcoming global alumni events in response to Court's request for sight of these to enable Court member attendance if in the vicinity at the time.

**Action requested/Recommendation**

3. Court is invited to note the legacies and donations received and the update on current alumni relations activities.

*Paragraphs 4-6 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.*

*Global Alumni Events*

7. The Covid-19 pandemic continues to impact alumni events across the globe with the ongoing postponement of in-person events for the foreseeable future in the majority of locations. We continue, however, to connect our global alumni community through a range of new and enhanced online engagement programmes.
8. Alumni have responded positively to enhancements to digital communications, including a twice monthly edition of Enlightened and a new social media initiative, the Edinburgh Snap Reunion, which reunites alumni wherever they are in the world in a series of 'snap' reunions. A new season of our Guardian University Awards 2020 shortlisted podcast, [Sharing things](#), is in production. The new [Sharing things blog](#) which features stories and current experiences from across the University community has published eight contributions so far, including perspectives on navigating life after university as a 2020 graduate, adjusting to remote work, and helping small businesses to survive the pandemic.
9. A key focus has been supporting both our graduating and incoming students, with [Platform One](#) playing a central role in our efforts. Targeted campaigns invited Platform One members to support the Class of 2020 in making the most of our community during an especially difficult transition period into a challenging job market and more recently to welcome new students and help them to settle into life and feel 'at home' among friends at the University.
10. Alumni volunteers have also supported a wide variety of online events throughout July and August, including conversion and pre-departure sessions for new students around the world by taking part in virtual panel and Q&A discussions. Online sessions connecting alumni and students as they start their studies follow during welcome week.
11. A series of webinars is currently being developed to engage alumni and others in the University's research response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Further virtual events

will be planned over the coming months to engage the global alumni community. We expect these events to be engaging and meaningful, presenting the opportunity to bring our community together in new ways rather than replicating our in-person events online.

### **Resource implications**

12. There are no specific resource implications associated with this paper. The funds received will be appropriately managed in line with the donors' wishes.

### **Risk Management**

13. There are policies and procedures in place to mitigate risks associated with funding activities including the procedure for the ethical screening of donations.

### **Equality & Diversity**

14. There are no specific equality and diversity issues associated with the paper. Cognisance is however taken of the wishes of donors' to ensure these reflect the University's approach to equality and diversity and that these comply with legal requirements.

### **Next steps/implications**

15. The University is grateful for the support provided to enable it to continue to provide high quality learning and research.

### **Consultation**

16. This paper has been reviewed and approved by Chris Cox, Vice-Principal Philanthropy & Advancement and Executive Director of Development & Alumni.

### **Further information**

#### 17. Authors

Gregor Hall

Finance Manager

Natalie Fergusson

Global Alumni Clubs and Groups Manager

Development & Alumni

### **Freedom of Information**

18. Closed paper.