



University Court
Videoconference
Monday, 30 November 2020

AGENDA

- | | | |
|----------|---|---------------|
| 1 | Minute
To <u>approve</u> the minute of the meeting and note of the seminar held on 28 September 2020 | A1, A2 |
| 2 | Matters Arising & Review of Action Log
To <u>raise</u> any matters arising and <u>review</u> the Action Log | A3 |
| 3 | Principal's Report
To <u>receive</u> an update from Peter Mathieson, Principal | B |

SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS

- | | | |
|-----------|--|---|
| 4 | Adaptation & Renewal Report
To <u>receive</u> an update from Barry Neilson, Director | C |
| 5 | Student Experience Update
To <u>consider</u> a paper presented by Colm Harmon, Vice-Principal Students | D |
| 6 | EUSA President's Report
To <u>receive</u> an update from Ellen MacRae, EUSA President | E |
| 7 | Audit & Risk Committee Annual Report
To <u>consider</u> the annual report presented by Caroline Gardner, Convener of Audit & Risk Committee | F |
| 8 | Risk Management Post Year End Assurance Statement
To <u>consider</u> the assurance statement by Catherine Martin, Vice-Principal (Interim) Corporate Services | G |
| 9 | Finance
To <u>consider</u> the papers presented by Lee Hamill, Director of Finance <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Director of Finance's Report• Interim Financial Update• Annual Report and Accounts 2019/20• Letter of Representation• Annual Report and Accounts 2019/20 – US GAAP | H1
H2
H3
H4
H5 |
| 10 | Planning Round Cycle 2021-22 & Student Number Planning
To <u>consider</u> an update from Tracey Slaven, Deputy Secretary Strategic Planning | I |
| 11 | 4D Cellular Medicine at the Institute of Genetics & Molecular Medicine
To <u>approve</u> a paper presented by Jonathan Seckl, Senior Vice-Principal | J |

- 12 **Development & Alumni Office Annual Report** K
To *consider* a paper from Chris Cox, Vice-Principal Philanthropy & Advancement

ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL

- 13 **Hong Kong Foundation Bank Account** L
To *approve*
- 14 **Donations and Legacies; Global Alumni Events** M
To *note*
- 15 **Integrating Climate Emergency and Strategy 2030 commitments in University Committee papers** N
To *approve*
- 16 **Enterprise IT Investment** O
To *approve*
- 17 **DiRAC3 High Performance Computer Purchase** P
To *approve*
- 18 **Staff Benefits Scheme: Proposal to switch standard security asset** Q
To *approve*
- 19 **Committee Reports**
- Exception Committee R1
 - Court USS Sub-Group R2
 - Policy & Resources Committee R3
 - Nominations Committee R4
 - Audit & Risk Committee R5
 - Knowledge Strategy Committee R6
 - Senate R7
- 20 **Resolutions** S
To *approve*
- 21 **Court Meeting Dates 2021-22** T
To *approve*
- 22 **Any Other Business**
To *consider* any other matters
- 23 **Date of Next Meeting**
Monday, 22 February 2021



UNIVERSITY COURT

28 September 2020 (Videoconference)

[DRAFT] Minute

- Members Present:** Ann Henderson, Rector (in Chair)
Janet Legrand, Senior Lay Member
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
Sarah Cooper, Senatus Assessor
Fiona Mackay, Senatus Assessor & Academic Staff Member
Claire Phillips, Senatus Assessor
Kathryn Nash, Trade Union Academic Staff Member
Sarah McAllister, Professional Services Staff Member
Joyce Anderson, Trade Union Professional Services Staff Member
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
Hugh Mitchell, Co-opted Member
Clare Reid, Co-opted Member
Frank Ross, City of Edinburgh Council Assessor
Ellen MacRae, Students' Association President
Rachel Irwin, Students' Association Vice-President Activities & Services
- Apologies:** None
- In attendance:** 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
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
Dave Robertson, Vice-Principal & Head of College
Moira Whyte, Vice-Principal & Head of College
Jonathan Seckl, Senior Vice-Principal
Tracey Slaven, Deputy Secretary Strategic Planning
Rachael Robertson, Deputy Director of Finance

1 Minute

Paper A1

The Rector welcomed members and attendees to the meeting, held by videoconference. New members Janet Legrand (Senior Lay Member), Fiona Mackay (Academic Staff Member & Senate Assessor), Sarah McAllister (Professional Services Staff Member), Joyce Anderson (Trade Union Professional Services Staff Member) and Kathryn Nash (Trade Union Academic Staff Member) were welcomed.

The Rector recorded her thanks to Angi Lamb, Rector's Assessor from 2018-2020 and staff member of Court from 2013-2017, who sadly passed away in July following a diagnosis of cancer in 2019. Angi was active in the trade union movement at a local and national level and her contribution to the Court and to the trade union movement will be greatly missed.

The Minute of the meeting held on 15 June 2020 was approved.

2 Matters Arising & Review of Action Log

Paper A2

There were no matters arising. The action log was reviewed, noting that a number of items have paused given disruption to activities resulting from the pandemic.

3 Principal's Report

Paper B

The Principal recorded his thanks to former Rector's Assessor and staff Court member Angi Lamb and reflected on her inspirational courage shown throughout her illness.

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

- Student and staff wellbeing: a number of Covid-19 cases, predominantly amongst students, are ongoing, with support in place for those affected, including food delivering for those in halls of residence. Some incidences of unlawful gatherings at student residence sites have occurred, some of which have involved police attendance. The disciplinary consequences of repeated breaches have been made clear and the number of incidents have reduced. A particular concern for the student body as a whole is the mental health impact of the pandemic and the impact upon the student experience;
- The hybrid model of online and in-person teaching currently has around 37% of teaching delivered in-person but there is wide variation within this across the University. The intention is to continue to offer a hybrid model for the benefit of students. Detailed preparations for hybrid teaching and the return to campus by students more generally have been made in consultation with health authorities and there has not been indication of transmission as a result of in-person teaching; and,
- A new collaboration with charity IntoUniversity and the University of Glasgow will provide learning centres in Craigmillar and Govan with after-school tuition and mentoring to benefit young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. Philanthropic giving of £2.7m will fund the establishment of the centres.

Members discussed the following points:

- Recognition for the additional work undertaken by many staff given current circumstances, including in workload allocations – in areas where student numbers have grown to the extent that additional teaching support is required this will be recognised as mission critical recruitment and progressed. While additional financial recognition is not planned given cost control measures, an additional day of leave for all staff on Christmas Eve has been awarded in recognition of the exceptional effort made by staff this year and five more days of annual leave can be carried over into 2021 than usual if required;
- Variation in in-person teaching by year group – Schools have considered the needs of first year and honours level students in particular when planning in-person provision;
- Mental health support – counselling capacity has increased within the University and support for staff is also being provided online. The importance of NHS mental health provision has also been raised externally;
- Student accommodation refunds – in order to ensure funding for additional support for students in the current circumstances general refunds for accommodation are not planned; and,
- Communicating the partnership working approach between the University and public authorities.

SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS

4 Student Survey Results 2020

Paper C

Findings from the 2020 iterations of the National Student Survey (NSS) and Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) were reviewed. The results remain disappointing, with a small decline in the NSS overall satisfaction score (77.6%) and a larger decline in the PTES overall satisfaction score (78.3%) in comparison with 2019. At School level, while there are some strong scores, there is a general weakness in assessment and feedback and in scores linked to a sense of belonging and engagement.

Court discussed assessment and feedback scores, the Students' Association score – likely linked to the wider theme of sense of belonging given the wording of the question, sharing best practice between Schools and the expected impact of the move to hybrid teaching, with less reliance on final assessment expected to further increase the importance of providing timely feedback.

It was noted that the NSS is currently being reviewed by the Office for Students, the regulator of higher education providers in England, and any changes will likely impact across the UK. Further analysis will be undertaken and a more detailed paper will be submitted to Senate Education Committee before the submission of an update and action plans to the University Executive later in the semester.

5 EUSA President's Report

Paper D

The Students' Association President reported on Welcome Week activities, with many taking place online, such as a virtual Activities Fair and voiced concern at the press release from Universities Scotland issued near the end of the previous week

that asked students not visit pubs, restaurants and cafes over the weekend. The press release was made without the knowledge of, or consultation with, student bodies and appeared to place extra restrictions on students compared with the rest of the population. A strong response from the University in support of students was requested. Court members agreed that students should be welcomed as residents of Edinburgh and treated in the same manner as other members of the community, with media coverage 'othering' students criticised. Opportunities for reshaping given the pandemic were also considered. Reshaping work to achieve efficiencies had been undertaken prior to the emergence of Covid-19 and strategic development in light of the new environment is being examined but any major new initiatives would likely need additional funding.

6 Adaptation & Renewal Update

Paper E

An update on the work of the Adaptation & Renewal Team established in response to the pandemic and its four work-streams of Research & Innovation; Students; Estates & Digital Infrastructure; and Re-shaping, was reviewed. It was noted that since the report was drafted an NHS testing facility has opened at the Usher Hall, with usage levels to be monitored to assess if further capacity is required.

The following points were raised in discussion:

- Support for the re-shaping work-stream in considering new ways of working and preparing for the likely longer-term impacts of the pandemic;
- The impact of the extension of the teaching day upon staff – while the period of time in each working day that teaching can be scheduled has been extended, the number of hours that an individual staff member might teach within this has not been extended;
- Variance in the amount of in-person teaching and how this might be addressed – some disciplines have particular challenges in the suitability of their teaching estate given physical distancing rules and may also have larger student intakes than planned since the regrading of A Level and Scottish Higher results. The balance of in-teaching provision will shift over the course of the year as the need to prioritise in-teaching required for certain degrees becomes more important in Semester 2;
- Helping hearing impaired students on campus if the wearing of face coverings is expected – face coverings are not expected for those with reasons not to wear them. For teaching, recorded material is being auto-captioned and fully sub-titled for those with hearing disabilities;
- Research being undertaken at the University in response to Covid-19. Research has included work on droplet spread, effectiveness of face coverings, whether existing drugs may aid treatment, mental health impacts, and the provision of advice to the Scottish and UK governments, e.g. three members of staff are participants at the UK Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) or its sub-groups and Vice-Principal Professor Andrew Morris chairs the Covid-19 Advisory Group to the Scottish Government; and,
- More information on the equality and diversity impacts in future updates would be welcome, noting that the Adaptation & Renewal work-streams have themselves helped embed consideration of equality, diversity and inclusion aspects given their memberships and approach taken.

7 Finance

• Director of Finance's Report

Paper F1

The Director of Finance reported on expected financial impacts from the pandemic, noting that all aspects of the University's operations will be impacted to some extent. The two most significant areas of impact will likely be in reduced revenue from accommodation, catering and events; and in student recruitment, with initial expectations of a decrease in tuition fee income and likely greater decrease in surplus contribution given the changing mix of student numbers by domicile. The 2019/20 annual report and accounts will be submitted to the next meeting but the unaudited position shows a below target surplus excluding funding connected to the City Region Deal, illustrating the pre-existing need to develop longer term plans to improve financial performance that have become more pressing with the emergence of Covid-19.

Members discussed the following points:

- In-year financial figures were requested as soon as they are available and these will be provided before the next Court meeting;
- Querying the level of cost savings planned relating to staff given that a surplus will likely be reported for 2019/20 and whether there is scope for a reduced level of cost savings – this is not planned as the 2019/20 outcome is below the agreed target range of a 3-5% surplus to allow for investment in University priorities and the outcome for the current year and following years remains highly uncertain; and,
- Whether additional financial support for the Students' Association will be needed before March 2021 and whether conditions linked to the financial support can be clarified – there is continual dialogue between the finance teams in the University and the Students' Association and the outcome of Students' Association applications to government schemes is also awaited. Conditions for funding have not been set rigidly in order to allow for a more joined up approach to service provision to be explored in a spirit of partnership. The Students' Association President commented that the Association's applications for Government schemes have been for larger sums than would have been the Association's preference if additional University funding had been provided at an earlier stage.

• Covid-19 Short Term Financial Funding Options

Paper F2

Finalised arrangements for access to available additional funding if financial circumstances significantly deteriorated were reviewed and agreed. It was agreed that any access of funding shall be subject to further approval from Court on the recommendation of the Principal in consultation with the Director of Finance.

8 Student Recruitment Cycle – 2020/21 Entry

Paper G

An update on student recruitment for entry in 2020/21 and mitigating actions taken in response to the pandemic was reviewed. It was noted that, while final figures are not yet available, it is likely that there will be lower numbers of student entrants in 2020/21 than planned, particularly amongst visiting students, overseas undergraduates and UK taught postgraduates but with a greater number of UK

undergraduates. Significant uncertainties also remain over the level of University accommodation occupancy and withdrawal rates during the course of the year. The Principal commented on the unprecedented complexity of the admissions cycle and thanked the Deputy Strategy Strategic Planning and all colleagues involved for their responsiveness to the needs of applicants.

ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL

9 Review of Estates Capital Projects Deferrals

Paper H

Following review and recommendation by Estates Committee and Policy & Resources Committee, Court:

- Noted 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
- Approved a further 12 months deferral of the estates projects previously deferred, bringing the total deferral period to 24 months.

10 Rector Election 2021

Paper I

The Rector confirmed that she had not received early sight of the paper and absented the meeting for the item, with the Senior Lay Member presiding.

The outcome of an independent review of the previous election regulations and proposed new election regulations for the post of Rector were reviewed. Noting that the staff trade unions have requested additional time to consider the draft regulations, it was agreed that a final draft would be submitted to Exception Committee for approval following comment from the trade unions. Minor revisions were suggested to the final draft to clarify the Returning Officer's authority to disqualify a successful candidate should evidence of a serious breach of the election regulations emerge and to state that candidates cannot have been previously excluded or dismissed while a student or member of staff at the University, mirroring a provision in the Senior Lay Member election regulations.

11 Annual Scottish Funding Council Quality Assurance Report

Paper J

The report was approved and the Senior Lay Member authorised to sign the accompanying statement.

12 Enhancement-Led Institutional Review Reflective Analysis

Paper K

The Reflective Analysis document to support to the Enhancement-Led Institutional Review was approved.

13 Committee Reports

- **Exception Committee**

Paper L1

The following matters approved on behalf of Court by Exception Committee were noted:

- On the recommendation of the Nominations Committee, the appointment of Hugh Mitchell as a co-opted Court member for a four year term of office from 1 August 2020 to 31 July 2024 was approved;
- On the recommendation of the Nominations Committee, 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 was approved;
- Revision of the Cooperation Agreement to allow provision for delivery at the Zhejiang-Edinburgh Institute, subject to China Ministry of Education approval, of postgraduate degrees awarded solely by the University of Edinburgh in the area of Biomedical Sciences, including 1-2-year MSc programme(s) and 3-4-year PhD programme(s); and, delegated authority to the Principal to sign off on the terms of agreement(s) and implementation of the arrangement in consultation with the Director of Legal Services; and,
- Opening of bank accounts for University offices in Singapore and Shanghai.

- **Court USS Sub-Group**

Paper L2

The report was noted.

- **Policy & Resources Committee**

Paper L3

The report and papers from the meeting was noted. The draft minute of the meeting will be amended to clarify that the preference of the Students' Association is to receive the full sum of additional funding in November. The Committee is fully supportive of the Students' Association and agreed to a phased approach in order to allow for more detailed discussions on reshaping activity. An update on the City Deal's Data-Driven Innovation programme was suggested as a future agenda item or seminar topic.

- **Nominations Committee**

Paper L4

The report was noted and the following committee membership appointments approved:

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**

Paper L5

The report was noted and updated Counter Fraud and Whistleblowing policies and associated procedures were approved as set out in the paper.

- **Remuneration Committee**

Paper L6

The Principal and all attendees, presenters and observers aside from the University Secretary, Director of Human Services and the Head of Court Services absented the meeting for this item.

Remuneration Committee's recommendations for the 2021 review of the remuneration of the University's Senior Management Team were considered.

Following discussion, Court agreed to endorse the:

- approach to the review of senior management salaries to be undertaken by the Principal, who will present it for approval by the Remuneration Committee and,
- approach to the review of the Principal's salary, with the current Designated Responsible Court Member (the Convener of Policy & Resources Committee and Nominations Committee), to provide an update to the Convener of the Remuneration Committee, who will present recommendations for approval by a separate meeting of the Remuneration Committee.

14 Donations and Legacies; Global Alumni Events

Paper M

Legacies and donations received since the last meeting and an update on current alumni relations activities were noted.

15 Any Other Business

There was no other business.

16 Date of Next Meeting

Monday, 30 November 2020.



UNIVERSITY COURT

30 November 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. I am sure Court members will be pleased to hear that the number of positive Covid-19 tests amongst our students, and the associated numbers of those self-isolating, continue to fall across the University. New cases daily are now regularly below double figures. Staff cases remain low and there is no evidence of in-classroom transmission, which is a sector wide pattern. We continue to deliver limited in-classroom activity in line with our hybrid model although the level of in person teaching varies across Schools and programmes. Generally students are looking for more synchronous and face to face teaching and we will work hard with our Schools to deliver this, guidelines permitting, for Semester 2.

6. Within our Halls of Residence, colleagues continue to work with incredible dedication to support students: delivering meals, cleaning buildings, offering well-being support and ensuring safety and adherence to guidelines. The large-scale disruptions seen earlier in the Semester have eased, although there are still regular infringements of rules and guidelines and we continue to discipline students where necessary. Unfortunately, police in attendance have on occasion needed to resort to making arrests, albeit in a small number of cases.

7. We continue to work closely with the Scottish Government and Public Health Officials to adapt our activity to changing guidelines in order to ensure the safety of staff and students. At time of writing the focus is very much on the pre- (especially) and post-Christmas period and the role of asymptomatic testing for students. The preparation for this, at scale and at relatively short notice, has been a very significant task but we have testing plans and procedures in place to meet expectations which also involve students from Edinburgh Napier University and Queen Margaret University.

8. Our international student numbers, while down, are faring better than the worst-case scenarios that we had considered earlier in the year. We are not complacent: questions remain around student retention and the restrictions on travel will continue to impact.

Again while not as severe as originally considered possible, the changed mix of students has resulted in a negative financial impact.

9. Our original framework for tackling the impact of the pandemic, known as Adaptation and Renewal, continues to guide our work through the anticipated phases from immediate, through mid- and into longer term activity. This links to ongoing thinking around the University's continued development including responding to pre-pandemic drivers for change such as addressing our cost base and of course Brexit. We remain in a significant period of change, both in an external and internal sense, with all of the challenges which that represents for large heterogeneous organisations.

10. One significant change project successfully delivered is the first stage "go live" of the People and Money system, which launched across the University earlier this month. Staff now use this system to undertake a range of HR related tasks including self-checking their own personal details; requesting and approving leave; and recruitment activity. An increasing number of tasks will be run through the new system with Finance processes scheduled for release early next year.

11. A staff "pulse" survey, the first of a series, has been launched to help ascertain how our staff are currently feeling about the University and their work and place within it. The results will help inform our approach to staff matters and the challenges we are all facing.

12. Whilst mentioning staff, a specific note to thank Tracey Slaven for her many contributions to the University, of which I know many Court members will have an understanding of through her impact at Court and its Committees. From January 2021 Tracey will be the University of Aberdeen's University Secretary and Chief Operating Officer, a post in which I am sure she will excel, and we wish her every success. I also note for Court that it is my intention to extend the contract by one year for the Vice-Principal and Head of the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Professor Dorothy Miell, until 31 July 2022 which will bring her in line with the majority of the Vice-Principals.

13. Within all of the challenges there are also significant successes. Two more that immediately come to mind are the City Deal and our Research performance. The Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal, to give it its full title, is widely regarded, including by Government, as an exemplar model and it continues to perform particularly well. Ambitious Key Performance Indicators are being met or exceeded and with many projects now up and running tangible positive impacts are evident including the Legal & General funded Advanced Care Research Centre; the Global Open Finance Centre of Excellence funded by the UK Government's "Strength in Places" scheme; the DataLoch for data-driven healthcare innovation; digital skills development; job creation in housing, construction and infrastructure. Bayes Innovation has exceeded targets for new companies, new jobs created and investment attracted.

14. As for core research, our success rates for grant applications remain very positive and Edinburgh recently won 4 UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) future leaders awards. This was out of 100 awards so was an excellent result given the intense competition. In addition we have been awarded 7 European Research Council starter grants.

15. Unfortunately our traditional celebration of excellence through the Chancellor's Awards has had to be curtailed this year due to the restrictions. A virtual celebration will be organised for next year. The winners were:

Impact Award - Professor Michael Eddleston, Personal Chair in Clinical Toxicology, Centre for Cardiovascular Science; Research Award - Professor Chris Speed, Chair of Design Informatics in Edinburgh College of Art; Rising Star Awards - Dr Ewa Luger, Chancellor's Fellow in Digital Arts and Humanities, Edinburgh College of Art, and Dr Davide Michieletto, Leverhulme Early Career Fellowship, School of Physics and Astronomy and the Institute of Genetics and Molecular Medicine; Teaching Award - Dr Ruth McQuillan, Senior Lecturer and Programme Director online Masters in Public Health, Usher Institute.

16. We recently met online with The Chancellor to update her with an overview of our approach to the pandemic. She interacted with representatives from various key departments including Accommodation and Catering, EUSA representatives, Student support, Estates and Health and Safety colleagues. Two leading Covid-19 research academic colleagues, Kenny Baillie and Kev Dhaliwal, also spoke to the Chancellor about their crucial work.

17. With regard to the international activities noted in the "meetings" section below, and being mindful that we have so many new Court members, I have included a little information on the international organisations that the University is part of. These organisations are an important part of our global networks which help facilitate collaboration with university colleagues around the world – collaborating in many areas including research, teaching, academic papers, sharing experiences and approaches, organising conferences and giving seminars. The key organisations are:

- Universitas 21 (U21), an international network of 27 leading research intensive universities across 17 countries. I have been a member of their Executive Committee since 2016 (the University of Hong Kong is also a member, so when I moved here in 2018 I was asked to stay on the Executive)
- The League of European Research Universities (LERU), an association of 23 research-intensive universities, sharing the values of high-quality teaching within an environment of internationally competitive research.
- UNICA an institutional Network of Universities from the Capitals of Europe. It was founded in 1990, and it is currently made up of 53 universities from 37 capital cities of Europe, combining over 175,000 university staff and 1,950,000 students.
- U7+ Alliance an international alliance of 45 university presidents who engage both in discussion and in concrete action by making commitments that universities may take to address the most pressing global challenges in a multilateral context. It is the very first alliance of university presidents aimed at structuring and advancing their role as global actors across the multilateral agenda. Its original aim was to influence the G7 governments at their annual summit although it must be said that this lofty aim remains challenging.
- UNA Europa, eight leading European research universities, combined student and staff community approaches half a million people and digital learners number in the millions. Una Europa aims to draw on our collective strengths to create a truly European inter-university environment: a University of the Future.
- The Coimbra Group - committed to creating special academic and cultural ties in order to promote internationalisation, academic collaboration, excellence in learning and research, and service to society.

Selected meetings and events from end-September to end-November

18. *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 meetings continue. In addition we recently held a virtual away day where the lessons learned from the Adaptation and Renewal work were discussed. Time was also spent on Senior Team development.
- Visited several Heads of School on site to discuss activity and understand how Schools are adapting and learning & teaching plans were working out. This has included the Schools of Engineering, Social and Political Studies, Edinburgh College of Art, Biology (Genome Facility) and Law.
- Spoke to Edinburgh University Vision Group, a group of our students wanting to hear about careers outside of their degree choices.
- Participated in the launch of the Leadership and Management Programme.
- Recorded various video messages for virtual events such as Remembrance Day service, Christmas tree lighting, winter graduations.
- Recorded a welcome address for the Edinburgh Innovation Event 2020 Roundtable.
- Hosted (virtually) Dame Stephanie Shirley who gave a talk on 'My Family in Exile from the Holocaust'.
- Participated in an Edinburgh Earth Initiative meeting.
- Participated in the Student Association's Town Hall meeting with other senior staff.
- Introduced Ben Macpherson MSP, Minister for Public Finance and Migration, who was giving the keynote presentation at the Data Conference 2020, organised by our Data Driven Innovation Department.
- Participated in the US Development Trust Board and the Development Trust Meeting.
- Welcomed attendees to a webinar in which Laura Maciver, BBC Scotland and our alumna, interviewed Dr Kenny Baillie, Academic Consultant - Critical Care, on the topic 'Can our genes predict how Covid-19 will affect us?'.
- Welcomed attendees to the David Raffe Memorial Lecture given by Rt Hon. Lord Jack McConnell of Glenscorrodale on "What Happened to Excellence?"

19. *Edinburgh and Scotland*

- Participated in several Partnership meetings with Andrew Kerr, Chief Executive of the City of Edinburgh Council, often together with leaders of Police Scotland, NHS Lothian, EVOC and other regional Councils.
- Participated in an Edinburgh Festivals Forum meeting.
- 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 the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal Annual Conversation which brings together City Region Deal partners with Scottish and UK Government representatives to review progress.
- Participated in the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal Leaders' meeting.

20. *Sector and Public Affairs*

- Regular contact and discussions with Scottish Ministers including the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education Mr John Swinney and the Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science Mr Richard Lochhead.
- The Principals of Edinburgh's universities meet monthly to update each other on activities.
- Participated in several Russell Group Board meetings.
- Participated in the Foundation for Science and Technology webinar on 'The research and development roadmap – levelling up across the UK'.
- Participated in a BBC Scotland interview about the pandemic for the Disclosure programme which aired on 19 October.
- Participated in a Universities UK meeting on the USS pension scheme valuation.
- Participated in a Jisc organised webinar on Learning and Teaching reimaged.
- Participated in a session updating on progress with the Universities UK Mental Health Strategic Leadership Tool.
- Participated in a Confederation of British Industry Scotland organised webinar with Kate Forbes MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Finance.
- Participated in a Higher Education Edtech Advisory board meeting involving Office for Students, Department of Education, Emerge, Jisc Universities UK and senior higher education leaders.
- Participated in a Scottish Funding Council Board meeting.
- Joined the Early Career Researcher UK Awards hosted by Elsevier and US-UK Fulbright Commission.
- Participated in the USS valuation for Vice-Chancellors discussion.
- Joined a panel of university leaders for "Vice-Chancellors' Question Time", at this year's THE Live UK.
- Participated in several meetings organised by Universities Scotland with Richard Lochhead and others on plans for Christmas.
- Chaired and participated in several meetings organised by Universities Scotland with various officials and Scottish Government representatives as lead member for Health matters.
- Participated in a meeting organised by Universities Scotland on the Scottish Government Covid-19 Framework and restricted blended learning.
- Participated in a Universities UK Coronavirus discussion.

21. *International (all online from Edinburgh!)*

- Participated in the U21 Peer to Peer discussions which explored operating models for universities and how to prepare graduates for a fast-changing and complex environment.
- Attended the 2020 Santander Universities Emerging Entrepreneurs Online National Final.
- Participate in a U21 Executive Committee meeting.
- Participated in the Aurora Forum Symposium.

- Participated in a Campaign for Science and Engineering webinar on 'The future of the UK and EU's relationship on research and innovation'.
- Participated in a Council for Advancement and Support of Education Finance and Investment Committee meeting and their Board meeting (I am a Trustee).
- Participated in a webinar on 'Reinventing Higher Education: New Realities, New Visions for Higher Education' organised by IE University, Spain.
- Participated in the League of European Research Universities Rectors' Assembly.
- Participated in the U7+Presidential Summit.
- Participated in a Foundation for Science and Technology webinar on 'Online teaching in higher education post-Covid'.
- Spoke at 30th UNICA General Assembly Rectors Seminar.

Resource implications

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

Risk Management

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

Equality & Diversity

24. No specific Equality and Diversity issues are identified.

Next steps/implications

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

Consultation

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

Further information

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

28. Author and Presenter

Principal and Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter Mathieson
November 2020

Freedom of Information

29. Open Paper



UNIVERSITY COURT

30 November 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 mid-September to November 2020.

Action requested/recommendation

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

Paragraphs 3-44 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

Equality & Diversity

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

Further Information

46. Author and Presenter
Barry Neilson
Director
19 November 2020

Freedom of Information

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



UNIVERSITY COURT

30 November 2020

Student Experience Update

Description of paper

1. A summary of the student experience at the University of Edinburgh from September 2020, with lessons learned, and looking forward to the next semester and academic session.

Action requested/Recommendation

2. Court is asked to note the information presented. No specific action is required of Court, although members' observations, or comment, on any of the items would be welcome.

Background and context

3. The primary focus on student experience in recent months has inevitably been on our continued response to the covid-19 crisis. This has been led by the Principal's Adaptation & Renewal Team (ART) with the major student experience issues co-ordinated by the ART: Students group, led by the Vice-Principal Students.

4. Teaching has continued to be delivered on a "hybrid" basis, i.e. a combination of on campus teaching and online teaching, with the balance varying between disciplines and courses.

5. It has become increasingly clear that students find many aspects of online delivery satisfactory, and indeed in some cases prefer online to more traditional forms of delivery. For example one of our BEng Electrical & Electronic Engineering students, [blogged](#) about how from her perspective, hybrid teaching has improved her University experience. There have also been many examples of schools introducing or developing highly innovative and creative online approaches and activities, for example [The School of Maths ASID Creation Project](#) These, and many other examples of innovation, are available on the University's [Hybrid Teaching Exchange](#), set up to share examples of good practice, insight and reflection across the University learning and teaching community.

Discussion

6. However, it has also become increasingly clear that many students miss the social interactions and bonds that are formed in more conventional on campus settings. The absence of both the normal amount of on campus teaching AND the very strict limitations on in person social and sporting activities are resulting in low levels of satisfaction and reduced "sense of belonging" to the University community. These issues are reflected in the first of our monthly "pulse" surveys of students took place in November. (We received feedback from 3,940 taught and 607 research students.)

- Three quarters of our respondents are proud to be students at the University of Edinburgh and 70% feel able to be themselves at the university;
- 50% of taught students feel motivated and engaged with their learning and only just over 50% are enjoying their learning experience;

- Just under 40% of our students feel like they are part of the University of Edinburgh community or agree that they have been able to take part in social activities;
- Research students are however expressing higher levels of satisfaction – just under 80% of postgraduate research students are satisfied with the supervision support they're receiving

7. Student behaviours (especially but not just on some of the University's residential estate) have continued to be challenging despite further investments in and much hard work by security, policing and staff involved in managing disciplinary processes. The University Secretary is convening a task group to consider and implement a range of further approaches in this area.

8. Teaching for most students ends on 4 December this year, followed by a short period for revision and then (online) exams. We are currently asking students to tell us their travel plans for the winter holidays, but we currently expect many UK students to return home once teaching has finished (having taken the two "lateral flow" covid-19 tests that are being offered to all students in December). We also expect a larger than usual number of students to remain in Edinburgh over the winter holidays due to the pandemic situation, and are developing plans for enhanced support for all those who do stay.

Conclusions

9. There is still a very high level of uncertainty around the nature and timing of the return to campus in January, with neither the Westminster nor Holyrood governments having yet provided guidance on this. We are continuing to plan on the basis that students will be expected to return to Edinburgh for the start of semester (11 January) and that delivery of learning and teaching will continue to be hybrid for all of semester 2. We are also developing plans to encourage a greater (safe) range of society activities on campus in semester 2, and to open up more group study spaces for students to use (appropriately distanced), both of which have the potential to improve the situation for students who are keen for more social interactions as part of their educational experience.

Looking ahead to 2021/22

10. If the situation for January remains uncertain, the situation for Academic Year 2021/22 is even less certain. Recent, positive announcements about vaccines offer the hope that life will be able to return to something much closer to normal by September 2021. A high-level statement of our expectations has nonetheless been developed and shared with Schools in order to inform planning, and will also form the basis for communications with applicants and offer holders:

"The University of Edinburgh is committed to welcoming you into our community and onto campus as safely as possible next September. We are all hoping for a substantial return to normal life by then but we will, as now, be fully guided by the advice of the Scottish Government and apply a cautious stance to our planning. We currently anticipate we will be able to offer on campus classroom based teaching for all but our largest course activities (for example, large lectures where we would expect material to be digitally provided). In all of our teaching we will continue to use the latest technology to enhance and support your campus

student experience. We know these are uncertain times and circumstances can change quickly but your safety is our priority.”

Looking further ahead – Curriculum Review

11. Constructive conversations around curriculum reform and the potential for transformative change have taken place with the senior leadership, Senate Education Committee, Directors of Teaching in College of Science and Engineering as well as (at the time of writing) the Heads of School in Geological Sciences and Edinburgh College of Art. Discussions with the University Executive will take place this week. A short presentation on curriculum plans will be presented to this meeting of Court as part of this agenda item and these are included in Appendix 1.

Resource implications

12. None as a result of this regular update paper.

Risk Management

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

Equality & Diversity

14. No specific Equality and Diversity issues are identified.

Next steps/implications

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

Consultation

16. This paper was written with input from the Student Insights & Analytics Pulse Survey, Information Services Group and College Learning & Teaching committees.

Further information

17. Author

Gavin Douglas
Deputy Secretary, Student Experience

Presenters

Colm Harmon
Vice-Principal Students

Gavin Douglas
Deputy Secretary, Student Experience

Freedom of Information

18. Open paper.



THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH

Curriculum Transformation – Update Court Meeting, November 30th, 2020

Colm Harmon (VP Students)

Observations/Questions

Apply

- Hundreds of UG degrees, and indeed hundreds of PGT degrees
- Our offer is not a simple one.
- Are we fully embracing diversity of applicants?
- Do we know what we are in the minds of prospective students?

Prepare and Arrive

- Are we stating – or are we prepared to state - our values as an institution?
- Do we think enough about transition issues?

Progress

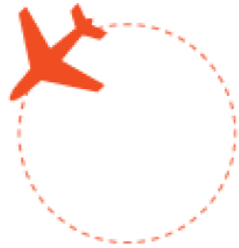
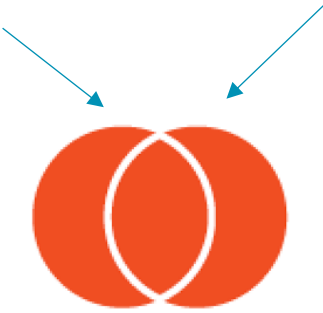
- Is the curriculum design truly one that reflects our philosophy?
- Are we teaching too much? Are we examining too much?
- Are we concerned about what happens after students leave?



The Edinburgh degree...

Deepen your disciplinary experience

Broaden your disciplinary experience



Anchor to a core discipline at the frontier of the science

Widen your experience interdisciplinary courses and challenges

Develop a **global perspective** through international experiences or cultural units

Engage in industry and community **projects**

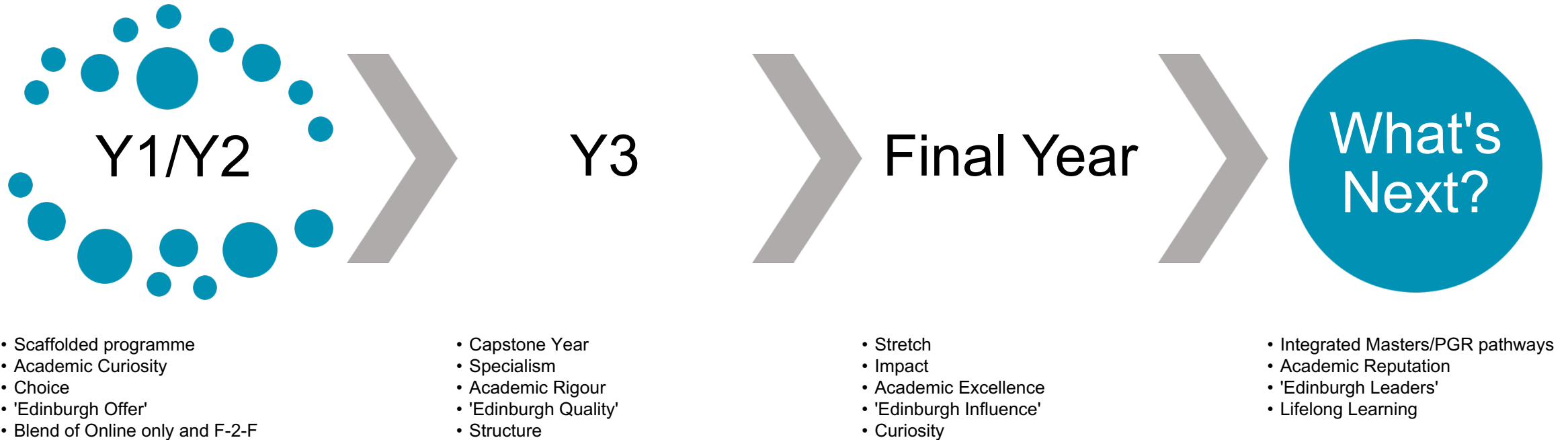
Working in **international** teams, or on international projects

Further study, postgraduate taught, PhD

Career focus in corporate, a startup, government or non-profit

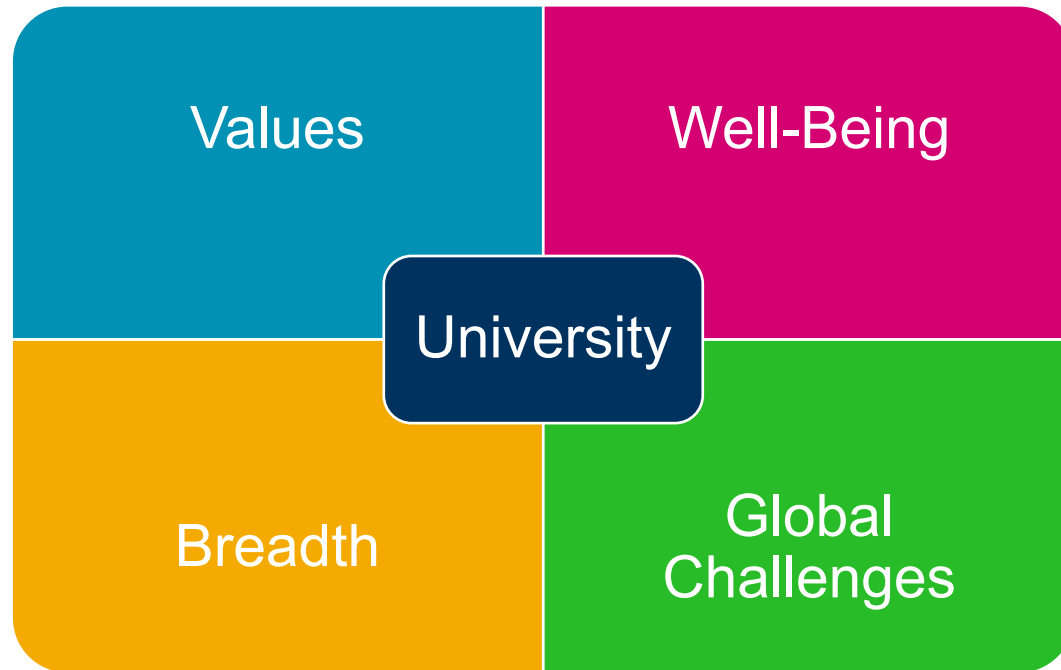
And into your next role in...
another degree, another industry, another country...lifelong affiliation

An illustration



During first two years...

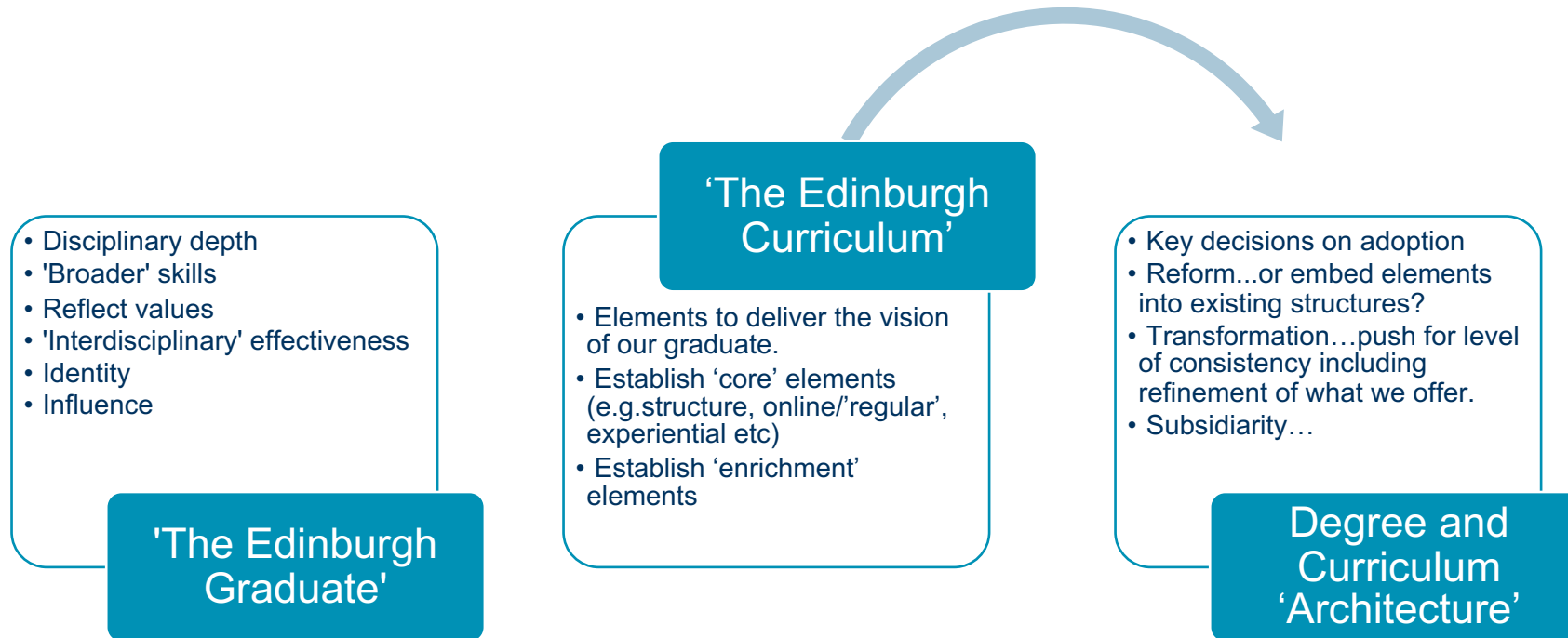
How might the 'breadth' elements work? Could we imagine content across four domains...students choose one element from each...or some variation of this?



Moving us along...

...the next 6-12 months

...the next 24 months



'Necessary Conditions' Task/Deliver

'Test/Implement'

What does it actually look like?

Take forward outside of Curriculum Reform Banner	Necessary Pre-conditions (through to spring/summer 2021)	Beyond
<p>Semester 2 planning and delivery</p> <p>Lessons learned from hybrid delivery</p> <p>Planning for delivery of 2021/22 curriculum for UG and PGT</p> <p>Curriculum & Financial Sustainability:</p> <p>PGT & Online Portfolio Review</p>	<p>Curriculum definitions and conceptualisations</p> <p>Teaching & Learning Governance</p> <p>Digital</p> <p>Skill, Post Bachelor Education, Microcredentials</p> <p>What we want ALL students to know?</p> <p>Student Support and Administration</p>	<p>Summer 2021 – decision point on set of models for curriculum</p> <p>Spring 2022 – Models stress tested and model recommended</p> <p>Implementation and first entry – through to Sept 2024 or Sept 2025</p>

Starting point

Start Point – complex educational offer motivates change...but no plan or consensus

- Extension of presentations like this – drawing on the data, qualitative assessments, samples of best practice, some provocation!
- A form of ‘co-design’ should be our objective in this early work.
- Shape the ‘task and deliver’ groups for this phase – keep them focused on the task, not the tasks (so quite linear)
- Deliver a series of ‘green papers’, shared openly.
- Test and refine across key cohorts – professional leads are critical to give a ‘frontline’ perspective to ensure the complexity is captured.
- Collate to form ‘diagnosis’ and ways forward, but also to begin to shape the interlinked elements of the work.
- Finalise to shape the next phase

End Point – Transformation programme pushes forward with high visibility and sizable consensus in place.

Keep focus on benefits...



Position for sustained success, enabling an attractive and easy to administer educational offering that also aligns to the University's mission and strategy.



We need thoughtful change that can maximise the use of existing courses, minimise student impact and avoiding long teach-out arrangements.



But we also need to not fear the really big changes – large class teaching, digital 'glass ceiling'



This will be a challenging process and so will implementation. As owners of the educational offer, Colleges and Schools lead decision making and 'do the work'. We will have to be genuine in our engagement and input with the academic and professional community



A range of quantifiable targets and benefits will need to be placed on any new design.



Implementation planning will also need to be informed by targets and milestones.



THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH





UNIVERSITY COURT

30 November 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 in Appendix 1.

Action requested/ Recommendation

2. Court is asked to note this report.

3. 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

Sabbatical Officers' Updates

4. The Sabbatical Officers have continued to work closely with the University's Adaptation and Renewal teams and provided student feedback collected by our [anonymous form](#), forums and emails from students. We also hosted a #YourVoice Town Hall event with Peter Mathieson, Colm Harmon, Tina Harrison, Gavin Douglas, Catherine Martin and Gavin McLachlan. This provided a really valuable opportunity for Senior Leadership to be open and transparent with students whilst providing answers to some frequently asked questions. Students were able to pre-submit questions or ask them during the event, the majority of which fell under four categories:

- **COVID-19 restrictions:** getting home for the winter break; consequences for breaking guidelines
- **Tuition fees and teaching:** tuition fee refunds; penalty for late payments; plans for hybrid teaching in Semester 2
- **IT and Resources:** access to texts for distance learners; IT outages; group study
- **Accommodation:** rent rebate; support over the holidays

5. The event recording and questions are available at:

www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/YourVoiceTownHall

6. At the same time, Advice Place usage also gives us a sense of the core issues affecting students, and these are similar to the issues from the Town Hall. The top 3 issues last month for the service were:

- Money (39% of all enquiries – with questions on fees being the most popular)
- Academic Issues (24% – and not always a hot topic at this time of year as students would normally be settling into their programme, but enquiries are almost 40% up on this time last year with many of these focussed on possible interruptions of study)
- Accommodation (15%)

7. We know that students still have many concerns, particularly around their sense of belonging to the University, their course and the city of Edinburgh. We appreciate that this is also a priority for the University and are looking forward to tackling this as we look towards Semester 2.

Ellen MacRae, President

8. I have continued to work closely with the University's Adaptation and Renewal teams, and I got to present about some of this work from the Student ART strand at Senate in October. Recently, I have been able to discuss my concerns, particularly around student isolation, students traveling home for the holidays and returning in the new Semester within these University meetings. I've also been able to share these concerns with members of the National Union of Students Scotland and two Edinburgh MPs that I got to meet this November. I recently participated in Sense About Science's Evidence Week where I was able to ask about Government's understanding of students' underreporting of COVID-19 and how this may influence decisions that impact students.

9. As our Students' Association venues, as hospitality spaces, have had to adapt to the changing COVID-19 guidelines, I have been directly involved in our response to this. I also aired on BBC Good Morning Scotland, talking about how Students' Association hospitality spaces were coping under the central belt restrictions. As licensed venues, we had to restrict our student facing services and the space available for students to enjoy safely, became limited. Early November, I was able to launch my Working from my Bedroom campaign, which aims to start a conversation about what working from home looks like for our students; what's challenging about it and what tips do people use to deal with this. Through an Instagram story, I reached over 1,050 accounts and had direct engagement with over 200 people. My next steps will be platforming other students and sharing their experiences also.

Rachel Irwin, Vice President Activities & Services

10. Rachel has continued to sit on the Study Spaces Working Group as part of the Adaptation & Renewal Team within the University, and has been working alongside Vice-President Education, Fizzy, to collect, report and implement student feedback to the rest of the group. To address feelings of isolation and loneliness amongst students, she has been in conversations internally on how our student groups can phase back into in-person activity when permitted, which has already seen the launch of our Coffee Buddies scheme, in which societies and student leaders can book space within our venues to facilitate 1:1 meet-ups between their members and enjoy a complimentary hot drink. Moreover, conversations have now begun with the University to establish how societies and student groups may be able to utilise University spaces, including the new Student Villages, to support extra-curricular educational activity.

11. Rachel also hosted a Town Hall for student group office bearers last month, where she gave some tips on how to improve their online presence as well as collected feedback on how they were finding this semester, and shared some examples of best practice, which office bearers reportedly found useful. She has been working closely with the Activities Representatives, hosting weekly drop-in sessions for them to discuss their manifesto aims and work on the ways that they can achieve these.

12. Finally, she has been working on several of her manifesto aims, amongst which include a 'Green During Covid-19' campaign alongside Vice-President Community,

Amanda, providing resources and tips for students on how to live sustainably despite the challenges of the pandemic, as well as working with Vice-President Education, Fizzy, to improve society representation at School-level Student Staff Liaison Committees to foster a better sense of local community and collaboration.

Amanda Scully, Vice President Community

13. Amanda has continued raising the student voice in the various committees, working groups, and meetings she sits in. She has been working closely with colleagues at Accommodation, Catering and Events and with myself, to continue providing feedback of students' experiences in halls. Amanda represented the National Union of Students Scotland in a Scottish Government workshop on Lessons Learned from the COVID outbreaks in student accommodation, emphasizing the need for clear government guidance that does not target students as one synonymous group and highlighted the increased work needed from both the government and universities in Scotland to work to reduce and provide extra welfare support during the large self-isolation periods our students have had to go through.

14. Amanda has also been working with the Transport department to provide to promote active cycling and travel and helping students access free bike lights through an Edinburgh Council campaign. Amanda has worked closely with the Social Responsibility & Sustainability Department to help shape and launch the Community Plan, emphasising a need for support for the Students Associations' volunteering service and student social enterprises and sat on the Community grants panel.

15. Amanda has also been focusing on her manifesto work where she has brought forward fighting the climate emergency onto the Students' Association's agenda through working with Vice-President Activities & Services, Rachel, to launch a 'Green During COVID-19' campaign with the help of our green student groups. Further, she has helped start work towards developing a new internal sustainability policy at the Association and brought forward a policy to work with local and ethical businesses through our voucher and incentive schemes. Finally Amanda launched her 'Community Guide' interest form where she is hoping to get students and staff at the university to share their favourite aspects of living in Edinburgh to celebrate the local area and give students' an idea of what they can still do while living in the city.

Fizzy Abou Jawad, Vice President Education

16. Fizzy has been utilising her position in key committees and groups across the University to work toward completing her manifesto aims. In her efforts to improve teaching and feedback, Fizzy is currently conducting a Student Representative consultation asking Reps what their expectations for this semester were compared to the reality and what they hope next Semester will look like. Fizzy intends to pass on this feedback to the University to aid their planning for Semester 2. She has also been working with Tina Harrison, Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance, on preparing guidance for Schools on how best to foster a sense of community. This work is a result of our open letter to the University regarding learning and teaching, the work aims to mitigate the feelings of isolation and loneliness our students are experiencing as a result of online learning.

17. In her efforts to improve School Representative awareness, Fizzy is working with the Student Experience Officer at the College of Science and Engineering and has been in

contact with all of the College of Science and Engineering Schools Communications team to encourage them to share information about the respective School Reps. This is an active area of work for Fizzy and something she intends to expand on next semester. Fizzy has also held two School Rep Forums this semester, the first of which was with Undergraduate School Reps only and the most recent had both Undergraduate and Postgraduate School Reps. The forums were successful and many of the School Reps are excited to be a part of Fizzy's awareness raising efforts. Fizzy has been utilising the School Representative network to get feedback and discover emerging issues throughout this academic year.

18. Fizzy now has a seat on the new Adaptation and Renewal Curriculum and Student Experience group and will utilise the Representative network to ensure that students' views are accurately conveyed in this group, so that the University offerings reflect what students want. With the National Union of Students Scotland, Fizzy also met with Richard Lochhead, Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science, and raised concerns about the lack of funding for counsellors alongside Niamh, Vice-President Welfare. She has since been in contact with the Minister regarding the #YourVoice Townhall event we hosted for students, the Minister asked for Fizzy to pass on student feedback from the event which is currently being collated and will be sent to the Minister.

Niamh McCrossan, Vice President Welfare

19. Niamh brought a paper to Association Executive to echo LGBT+ Liberation Officer, George Ross', asks for period products in all toilets. Now a free period product dispensary has been relocated to a centralised space in Teviot so all students have access to them, regardless of gender. She attended the Conference for Change, and sat on the panel discussing gender-based violence and sexual assault on campus. This event also focused on Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic and LGBT experiences, a theme which Niamh is exploring with the Wellbeing Service in order to offer culturally competent care. Working with Lucy, our Women's Liberation Officer, she is producing a mini-series to be premiered during the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence (25 November - 10 December). This will also feature student led groups, and our liberation campaigns.

20. With the National Union of Students Scotland, Niamh met with Jason Leitch, National Clinical Director in Scotland, to speak about the mental health implications of COVID. She also met with Richard Lochhead, Minister of Further Education, and raised concerns about the lack of funding for counsellors. We remain concerned around students not feeling like they can seek support if they have experienced violence or harassment whilst breaking current gathering guidelines. Niamh is launching a harm reduction and safe drug use project, initially started by 2019/20 Students' Association President, Andrew Wilson. Drug testing kits have been purchased, and the team is working with Crew 2000 to deliver drug intervention and education sessions.

21. She has worked with the Widening Participation department at the University to work on marking Estranged Students Solidarity week (23-27 November). This will focus on showcasing what support is available to students who choose to disclose to the University they are estranged. On Student Council policy updates, Niamh and myself have begun communications with other Edinburgh Sabbatical Officers, and the National Union of Students Scotland President, on lobbying the Edinburgh Council to address

issues that disabled students face when applying for the National Entitlement Card (NEC) for free bus travel. Also, the Women of Colour mural workshop has been facilitated, designs have been created, and painting will commence this month for a mural in Potterrow Dome.

Student Representation

Postgraduate Elections

22. Our Postgraduate elections ran in October, and we now have a new cohort of 21 Postgraduate School Reps, and a central Postgraduate Research and Postgraduate Taught Representative. Although we have seen a slight 'delay' in engagement with some activities this year due to students taking longer to settle in and navigate the University in more complex circumstances, engagement with our Postgraduate elections was very positive – we had 47 candidates overall across 24 positions, and voter turnout was 36% up on the previous year. We think this is partly due to Postgraduate Students being keen to get involved beyond their studies, meet other people, and make the most of opportunities to take on a position of responsibility when perhaps other activities/volunteering/part time work are more limited in the particular context this year, and partly due to the start of semester seeing more students actively raising issues and organising around these, and the opportunity to be a representative being appealing to them.

Local academic representation and activity

23. We have now run several online live/synchronous training sessions for programme reps, and peer support leaders. New online communities on Microsoft Teams set up for these groups are very active and we have a much better sense of activity as a result. Noticeably with programme reps, who perhaps have been operating more independently and isolated from each other before, they are far more connected with us, and with each other than before to the digital communications we're using, and we are currently considering how best to capitalise on this. We have an ambition to be able to measure and report on the impact of local academic representation, although this would require a project based approach to explore further.

Student Council

24. Student Council has met online once a month, with attendance increasing to 65 students in October, up on the in-person meeting at the same time last year. We record the meetings and make them available to be watched/listened to, and anecdotally we know some of our reps are sharing the content with their constituents in their schools etc, but currently aren't able to measure total engagement with this.

Mental Health and Wellbeing: #Lets Talk

25. This year, we've extended our usual Mental Health and Wellbeing Week programme to 3 weeks. Organised by the Association in collaboration with the University, the programme consists of events, activities and helpful tips aimed to support students and highlight the year round work we all do on supporting better mental health and wellbeing.

26. This year our programme of events consists of predominantly online activity, although these are all live, interactive sessions – from a virtual fitness bootcamp, to mindfulness sessions, to talks and panel discussions, coffee and chat sessions,

discussions on alcohol and drugs, and the impact of isolation. You can see the full programme here:

<https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/yourvoice/ourwork/mentalhealthweek/>

27. It's worth noting here that our Advice Place has reported a 54% increase in enquiries relating to mental health in Semester 1 so far compared to this time last year, and more widely, research on Generation Z (16-23 year olds) published by GlobalWebIndex.com recently tells us that 1 in 3 young people say their mental or emotional wellbeing has become their greatest concern since the pandemic.

Societies and Student Groups in a hybrid context

28. Given the restrictions in place at the start of semester, and the rules on meeting, and on events, our student groups have been operating primarily online this semester. Our groups have been incredibly creative, and many of our activities have seen higher levels of engagement with online activity than the usual in-person activity. 3000 international students are participating in our online Buddies programme, supported in groups by 400 volunteers, and we are seeing regular weekly attendances of 50+ at our live Tandem Language events online, and at many of our Peer Learning sessions. Societies continue to organise talks, discussions, quizzes and much more.

29. Some groups where it was previously challenging to engage in person (e.g student parents, commuter students) have responded positively to our online mixers and socials, and we have a nice model for running online socials that we are sharing to enable more groups to do this – recognising it was the informal/incidental time at the start and end of scheduled group activities in person that was perhaps where deeper connections and friendships started to form, we are thinking about how else we can replicate that. For example, encouraging our societies and peer support groups to have time at the end of an activity/online workshop just for some chat is a simple, but important mechanism.

30. This month we also launched our 'coffee buddies' scheme, which encourages those involved in societies, student groups, and student reps to meet 1-2-1 with another student in their group over a (free) coffee in Potterrow or Teviot, to enable some in person connection.

31. We are developing our routemap for a return to physical activity, based on the levels of the new Scottish Government Framework document. Under current rules, of 6 from 2 households, the feasibility of in person activity remains pretty limited, but 2 ways forward are emerging – firstly, piloting in person activity with specific groups where national guidance for that activity exists (similar to sport), and secondly, we are keen to work with the university on developing a shared approach to a wider variety of activity coming under the definition of educational activity, which would enable larger groups (no more than 30) to meet. We will be submitting a request to the Buildings Review process to enable some of our larger spaces to be signed off for student group use for in person activities/workshops that might fall under this definition and this would be a major step forward.

November 2020 financial update

32. A high level summary of the Association's financial position at the end of September 2020 (the Association's half year point) is shown below.

£ 000's

	YTD		
	Actual	Budget	Variance
Commercial	(941)	(935)	(6)
Block Grant	1,522	1,522	-
Total net income	581	587	(6)
Membership Engagement & People Development	(550)	(568)	18
Corporate Services	(627)	(637)	10
Marketing & Communications	(169)	(177)	8
Central Overheads	233	218	15
Total expenditure	(1,114)	(1,163)	50
Surplus / (deficit)	(533)	(577)	44

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

Central overheads includes income from CJRS government scheme

33. Note that the budget shown is a revised budget rather than the original which was produced pre-lockdown. Extensive use has been made of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) – total income of £1.4m was claimed under this scheme between April and September, of which £660k related to salaried staff and was therefore represented a saving on committed costs to the Association. The remaining £740k was reclaimed to retain pay for hourly staff, largely students, under the scheme.

34. Income/expenditure projections for the full year are poor. While the environment continues to change, making accurate planning more challenging, the latest forecast for the full year 2020/21 indicate a deficit of £1.5m. This excludes any additional grant funding that may be given by the University.

35. The position for next year (2021/22) is nearly as poor at bottom line level, with a further deficit of £1.4m. While we are assuming that trading will improve significantly compared to the current year, we also assume that there will be no furlough income and that some profitable activity such as nightclubs, conferences & events and the Edinburgh Festival will not return in full until at least 2022. This is after we have assumed staff cost savings of over £400k factored in over the full year. It is only into the following year that the forecast indicates a return to a near break-even position.

36. The Students' Association has been free of debt or overdraft since 2015. Our cash forecasts indicate that the reserves built up over the subsequent years will hold out until March 2021 at which point additional support will be required. We are working with our bank, Santander, to secure a £1m loan and £0.5m overdraft facility. Additional grant funding of up to £450k has been indicated by the University, some of which may be payable in March 2021. We are of course grateful to the University for this indication of support, as reported to the last Court.

37. Since we requested this additional grant of £450k back in July three key changes have happened:

- i. The £450k funding request was declined on the basis it was made, conditions were added creating uncertainty, and no decision from the University was made until mid-September. Principally this delay, rather than the conditions, resulted in

us increasing our loan application under the UK Government Coronavirus Business Interruption Scheme (CBILS) to £1m from the £500k intended.

- ii. The trading environment has worsened substantially since the original proposal, with far lower numbers on campus, and greater restrictions on activity under the (emerging) Scottish Government framework. In addition, we have downgraded further the expectation of income from both Semester Two and the Festivals season 2021. As a result, we anticipate the net trading impact of the pandemic to be worse by c£500k than the original proposal forecast. However, the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (Furlough) has recently been extended, which we anticipate will help to support some of this shortfall in the trading revenues – perhaps up to 50% of the additional losses may be covered.
- iii. Our immediate cash position is above forecast, partly due to the lower activity levels, recruitment freeze and of course the enhanced income from the CJRS. However the income and expenditure account (actual and forecast) is far worse than back in July when we made our request.

38. Consequently, we are now cutting costs to a greater extent than previously reported – but in line with the funding request proposal, and planning to cut further. As presented at the time we understood the financial position across the University is bleak, and to provide certain funding wasn't acceptable to the University. This led to an immediate cut in activity, mainly cutting back on speculative community building and engagement activity around the Freshers Week/ extended welcome period, as well as some central costs where immediate savings opportunities could be found.

39. Whilst the CJRS is indeed something of a jobs lifeline, one has to appreciate that to date we have 'topped up' salaries to 100%, plus pension and National Insurance costs which must be covered by the employer are not insignificant as our pension scheme is USS. We have initiated a voluntary redundancy programme which should meet its initial financial target and start to see cost benefits from early 2021. We are now planning for further (compulsory) redundancies and the closure or 'hibernation' of services that we forecast will be required in 2021.

Strategy and Planning update: Re-shaping

40. We are continuing our programme of work on Re-shaping to enable us to consider and adapt our business model in the light of the extensive, and ongoing impacts of Covid-19: Firstly, the financial impact we have already seen, and which will continue for some time, and further, the need to repay loans and build reserves (c£2m) will see an indirect financial impact for years to come. Secondly there is the cultural, behavioural and operational impact of the pandemic – e.g. will students' mode of study change forever; what will the use of digital technology look like in future; and what are the longer-term changes in consumer behaviour.

41. We have agreed that the broad priorities and principles of our Strategic Plan through to 2025 remain relevant, but recognise how we deliver on it will change. We are seeking through this work to address the challenges of the pandemic and serve our students better.

42. We have a series of workshops with our Trustees between now and Christmas, enabling consideration on aspects of our work and student experience. We also have staff workshops in the same period. Both of these activities also draw heavily on extensive student insight and feedback from our members both through existing survey data and feedback during the year to date (from town hall events, our student feedback form, and themes drawn from the Advice Place), as well as external insight reports.

43. By January we will be in a position to recommend a clear direction of travel on all key aspects of activity and business model for implementation and delivery in 2021 onwards.

Staff Wellbeing Support

44. In this very challenging context, we are also aiming to support staff both those working from home and working on site in our buildings and spaces. In the light of changing government restrictions, and particularly as Edinburgh entered Level 3, to provide some certainty we have made it clear to 'office-based' staff that working from home is likely to remain the norm until the end of March at this point. We have launched a programme of training for staff and managers on effective working from home, and managing teams remotely, in collaboration with Edinburgh College. In addition we have introduced other measures to try and enable staff to balance the challenges of remote working at home – Quiet Wednesdays aim to see an afternoon of far less meetings, and reduced email traffic, we schedule no internal meetings during 12.30 – 1.30 and we are encouraging staff to plan and manage their time to enable time away from screens and/or to get outside during daylight hours where this is operationally possible. We are encouraging staff to use annual leave to take a longer Xmas break if they can, although we are not matching the University's closure on the 18th so this will be locally managed depending on operational need, with some spaces and facilities and core support services such as the Advice Place being available up to and including 23 December. It's worth noting here that from April to the end of August we implemented Wellbeing Wednesdays – a 'rest' half day, along with a further additional half day per week rest time to be used flexibly to provide respite at that point.

45. We also have a staff wellbeing committee now to generate ideas and suggestions for how all our staff can be supported – this includes input from staff working on site in our buildings and outlets who face different challenges and have less flexibility than those working from home. This month we are also running a staff feedback and suggestions exercise to help us shape our approach to staff support and staff engagement over the coming year.

Resource implications

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

Risk Management

47. Not applicable.

Equality & Diversity

48. 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

49. There are no next steps to be taken as a result of this paper.

Consultation

50. 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

51. Author

Ellen MacRae
Edinburgh University Students'
Association President
November 2020

Presenter

Ellen MacRae

Freedom of Information

52. This paper is open.

Edinburgh University Sports Union (EUSU) President's Report

Despite ever-present government restrictions and circuit breakers preventing a delivery of sport in its full capacity, Edinburgh University Sports Union continues to go from strength to strength, inspiring the University community with our incredible volunteers and fantastic achievements across a number of areas.

In our 2019-20 end of year survey, 91.7% of respondents stated that joining a sports club was the most important thing in their university experience. Therefore, our key aim throughout the challenges the pandemic has presented has been to keep the sense of community and belonging which sport provides to students, and offer as much activity as is safe to do so.

Welcome Week and Club Activity

Prior to club activity resuming, all clubs appointed COVID officers and completed detailed risk assessments relating to mitigating COVID risk. This has led to fantastic engagement from clubs as they are in constant communications with the Sports Union staff team via our 'Sport at Edinburgh' Microsoft Teams group to update on any changes to guidelines and restrictions. Club COVID Officers must have completed SportScotland training and these individuals have been responsible for informing the Sports Union staff of any confirmed or suspected cases. They also make sure that individual has contacted NHS Test and Protect, as well as completing the University self-isolation form. To streamline this process, the staff team created COVID flowcharts to ensure that the expectations and requirements on COVID officers and the individual in question were very clear. We believe this system has been crucial to limiting the spread of COVID across our clubs.

Upon the return of students in Welcome Week, we recorded 6,500 Sign Ups across our 123 taster sessions at Sport and Exercise facilities. These sessions prioritised new students and we are very proud of the opportunities we provided for new students to meet individuals upon their arrival in Edinburgh. Alongside in-person activity, we ran our first ever Virtual Sports Fair across three days in Welcome Week, offering virtual booths for new students to speak to committee members. We engaged 5,000 unique users across these three slots. The tremendous amount of time and effort put in by our student coaches, volunteers and officials has led to 4034 registered Sports Union members as of November 15th. Approximately one-third of these members hold s20 or s21 matriculation numbers, therefore demonstrating strong engagement of new students with the Sports Union.

Prior to the recent Lothian circuit breaker, there were 429 weekly sessions in Sport and Exercise facilities, equating to 645 hours a week. Meanwhile, as of October 28th, 6,445 student gym memberships and 67,429 gym access bookings had been recorded at Pleasance, as well as 2,125 attendances in Climbing and 1,693 swim bookings at St Leonards. This goes alongside 2,529 gym access bookings at Easter Bush. The statistics once again demonstrate the key role that sport has continued to play in students' lives during Semester 1 and all of the fantastic work completed behind the scenes by both Sport and Exercise and Sports Union staff to keep this activity possible.

To cater for isolating students, clubs such as gymnastics, trampoline, karate, kickboxing, orienteering and parkour have opened weekly conditioning sessions to all students. We have created a dedicated web space in order to advertise these sessions and hope this has provided some fun for those students not able to leave their rooms. Additionally, orienteering are hosting a weekly bake off Zoom call, as we support our very own Peter Sawkins who has now reached the semi-final of this years' GBBO!

An overwhelming demonstration of the WeAreEdinburgh spirit came when asked at the last minute if we could help the University with food deliveries to isolating students. In just over 2 hours, we were able to rally 145 students who volunteered their time to help their peers.

Inclusion work

Our end of year survey from 2019-20 was completed by 276 individuals and illustrated that 40% of students felt their sports club was as inclusive as possible. This obviously shows we have a way to go amongst our own members, in addition to reaching other groups across the university not currently engaging with us. As a result, we formed our Inclusion Committee, chaired by Daniel Mutia, our Vice President Inclusion, made up of representatives of international students; ethnic minorities; LGBT+; Postgraduate; widening access; and women in sport. Additionally, 9 of our clubs are in contact with the EUSA society 93% club, to understand how to make their clubs more accessible and inclusive to those from a widening participation background.

A huge amount of work has already been done by our Inclusion Committee, including pulling together an extremely comprehensive document of Black Lives Matter resources with our trampoline club. This was circulated to all clubs to provide some help to making all clubs more inclusive. In November, our two Women in Sport officers organised 15 female athletes across a variety of our sports clubs completed 5 ironmans in 5 days, raising £1,880 for Period Poverty Edinburgh, who work to provide sanitary products to those in need.

We also recently updated the EUSU Code of Conduct, with support from Adam Bunni, the Head of Regulations and Governance Team in the University's Academic Services department. This goes alongside being actively involved in the #NoExcuse campaigns and the work of the Consent Collective to combat sexual violence on campus and our focus on Active Bystander and CHANGES Intervention training to combat negative behaviours across sports clubs.

Intramural Sport

Our Intramural Sport (IMS) Committee, led by Fergus MacKenzie (Vice President Intramural) and Charley Ross (Intramural Coordinator), worked hard to release an Intramural Sport captain's handbook in September. This was also supported by an extremely comprehensive Intramural captains training this year. In previous years, this mostly focused on administrative areas, there is much more to being an IMS captain, particularly around behavioural expectations.

The targets for Intramural participation this year have been far surpassed, with 155 teams currently entered across 25 leagues, with Basketball, Squash and Rugby not

currently running given SportScotland guidelines. This is up from 22 leagues last year. In order to overcome COVID restrictions, we have adapted outdoor pitches to create five outdoor netball courts. These will ensure we can host the 22 IMS netball teams and working with Netball Scotland for community use. Unfortunately, IMS leagues have not officially been able to start in Semester 1 but we are hopeful this activity will be able to resume in Semester 2, providing a key sense of community for many students.

Wellbeing

Given the unique challenges of this year, student wellbeing has been at the forefront of all of our activity so far. Sophie Weeden, our Wellbeing Officer, has worked on creating a dedicated wellbeing pack for all club welfare officers. A huge amount of planning has also gone into EUSU campaigns across Mental Health and Wellbeing Week(s) across November; we released a video highlighting men's mental health which has a reach of just over 28,000, across all platforms; we are running Mind Athletics and Growth mindset workshops; and have created a brand new social media campaign.

Inspired by the Women's Hockey club and Humans of New York, we have begun the #PeopleofEUSU campaign, where we spotlight volunteers, from across our Sports Union and their individual stories. This allows people to feel a human connection to others and has helped us open the conversation surrounding mental health and its multifaceted affects. Many clubs have also supported Movember and other mental health related campaigns during this time, highlighting the importance of student wellbeing across our membership.

We have also continued to support the ConcussEd programme run by Dr Stephanie Adams, as part of a Scotland-wide secondary pilot, to further educate our members on the impact of concussions and the need to take these seriously. Our Executive Committee also supported in the release of a recent concussion video by local media company Ground Level Up.

As we continue to navigate the challenges of 2020, and enter the potential British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) competition of Semester 2, we will aim to keep student engagement as high as possible. We continue to celebrate our far-reaching benefits and achievements, led by our small staff team and 800+ volunteers. I hope we continue to provide a light for the University in this challenging time and can support our students to have the best possible experience in 2021.



UNIVERSITY COURT

30 November 2020

Audit & Risk Committee Annual Report

Description of paper

1. This paper provides a summary of the Audit & Risk Committee's activities and opinions for 2019/20. It provides assurances to the University Court on the internal control environment, risk management, value for money, fraud and irregularity to provide Court with sufficient assurance in these areas, prior to signing off the Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 July 2020.

Action requested/Recommendation

2. Court is invited to agree that the report provides reasonable assurance that the University's internal control environment during 2019/20 was sufficiently adequate for Court to approve the Annual Report and Accounts.

Paragraphs 3-25 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

Resource implications

26. There are no resource implications associated with this paper. The Audit & Risk Committee is a central part of the University's governance arrangements and is comprised of voluntary members from the University Court or from professionals in the field: this will continue during 2020/21.

Risk Management

27. The University has a low appetite for risks in the areas of compliance and finance.

Equality & Diversity

28. No major equality impacts have been identified.

Next steps/implications

29. The Report provides assurances to Court as part of the process to enable it to approve the Annual Report and Accounts 2019/20.

Consultation

30. This Report was reviewed and approved by Audit & Risk Committee at its meeting on 19 November 2020.

Further information

31. Author

Kirstie Graham
Deputy Head of Court Services
November 2020

Presenter

Caroline Gardner
Convener of Audit & Risk Committee

Freedom of Information

32. This paper is closed.



UNIVERSITY COURT

30 November 2020

Risk Management Post Year End Assurance Statement

Description of paper

1. This paper reports on Risk Management Post Year End Assurances in support of the Annual Report and Accounts 2019/20.

Action requested/Recommendation

2. Court is invited to note the information presented.

Paragraphs 3-6 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

Resource implications

7. There are no specific resource implications.

Risk Management

8. The University continues to manage the major risks as approved by Court in June 2019, and to monitor emerging issues.

Equality & Diversity

9. No specific Equality and Diversity issues are identified.

Next steps/implications

10. The paper provides assurances to Court as part of the process to enable it to sign off the Annual Report and Accounts 2019/20.

Consultation

11. Each College and Professional Services Group was contacted to obtain updates or confirmation of nil returns.

Further information

12. Author & Presenter
Catherine Martin
Vice-Principal (Interim) Corporate Services
November 2020

Freedom of Information

13. Closed paper.



UNIVERSITY COURT

30 November 2020

Director of Finance Report

Description of paper

1. The paper provides an update on a new proposed approach for managing the short term investment of donations in Appendix 1 as well as an update on the progress of discussions between the University and Edinburgh University Students' Association (EUSA).

Action requested/Recommendation

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

Background and context

3. The paper provides a regular update on finance related issues for Court.

Paragraphs 4-13 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

Equality & Diversity

14. 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

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

Consultation

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

Further information

17. <u>Authors</u>	<u>Presenter</u>
Rachael Robertson	Lee Hamill
Deputy Director of Finance	Director of Finance

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

16 November 2020

Freedom of Information

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



UNIVERSITY COURT

30 November 2020

Planning Round Cycle 2021-22 & Student Number Planning

Description of paper

1. The purpose of the paper is to confirm the timetable for the 2021-22 planning round and to articulate the proposed approach to managing uncertainty in relation to student number planning.

Action/Recommendation:

2. Court is asked to note the:
- approach to the 2021-22 planning cycle;
 - approach to managing uncertainty in relation to student number planning;
 - preparation of a Clearing project for 2021-22; and,
 - update on the student intake for 2020-21.

Paragraphs 3-22 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

Equality & Diversity

23. Consideration of equality and diversity issues will be raised during senior executive review of individual plans and in our collective prioritisation.

Next steps/implications

24. Colleges to confirm student number targets for Rest of UK and International (including EU and excluding Irish) applicants.

Further Information

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 25. <u>Authors</u> | <u>Presenter</u> |
| Tracey Slaven | Tracey Slaven |
| Deputy Secretary Strategic Planning | Deputy Secretary Strategic Planning |
| Lee Hamill | |
| Director of Finance | |
| Jonathan Seckl | |
| Senior Vice-Principal | |
| 24 November 2020. | |

Freedom of Information

26. Closed paper.



UNIVERSITY COURT

30 November 2020

4D Cellular Medicine at the Institute of Genetics and Molecular Medicine



Description of paper

1. This paper sets out the case for a University investment to match a Medical Research Council (MRC) capital commitment and build an expansion of the Institute of Genetics and Molecular Medicine (IGMM) at the Western General Hospital. This will accommodate the new 4D cellular medicine hub for the MRC Human Genetics Unit (MRC HGU).

Action requested/Recommendation

2. Court is invited to note and approve.

Paragraphs 3-24 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

Risk Management

25. Risks are detailed in the Business Case, none are considered to require amendment of the University risk register

Equality & Diversity

26. The new construction does not bring any change to policies and working practices at IGMM or MRC HGU and so an Impact Assessment has not been completed

Next steps/implications

27. Following University Court approval, confirmation will be provided to MRC of the University's matched capital commitment and a formal capital award will be initiated. Following preliminary steps, mobilisation on site is programmed for July 2021 with occupation March 2023.

Consultation

28. The Business Case has been prepared by MRC HGU and IGMM leads with estates and finance business partners. The Business Case was approved by the Project Board on 5 August 2020 and the BioQuarter and Western General Programme Board on 3 September 2020 and Estates Committee on 15 September 2020 approved the Business Case, in principle, subject to capital commitment from MRC. It is available for information as a background document on the [Court site](#). Policy & Resources Committee considered the funding proposal on 16 November 2020 and agreed to recommend it to Court for approval.

29. This paper has been reviewed by the IGMM Director, Director of MRC HGU and Head of College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine.

Further information

30. Authors

Dr Catherine Elliott, College Registrar
College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine
Helen Wood
Estates Development Manager
Western General Hospital
5 November 2020

Presenter

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

Freedom of Information

31. Closed paper – commercially confidential



UNIVERSITY COURT

30 November 2020

Development and Alumni Relations Office: Annual Report and progress update for year 2019-20

Description of paper

1. This paper summarises progress made across campus in taking forward philanthropic fundraising and alumni relations programmes, underpinned by a five year business plan agreed for the Development & Alumni (D&A) Office in 2016. The full D&A Annual Report is attached for information, which includes more detailed data tables and commentary for perusal by Court members. This covering paper identifies the key elements within that Report, and updates Court on progress with the multi-year Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for investment and philanthropic income set out in the 2016 business plan. It also highlights a number of key opportunities and challenges that lie ahead for the remainder of 2020/21.

Action requested/Recommendation

2. University Court is asked to note the report and comment on the focus and overall direction of travel of D&A and the University's philanthropic and alumni programming.

Paragraphs 3-7 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

Resource implications

8. No additional resource for D&A is sought through this Paper.

Risk Management

9. Risks associated with D&A's core activities are assessed fully through the University Secretary's Group risk register. Reputational risks relating to the University from gift acceptance are covered through the well-developed procedures of the current Ethical Fundraising Advisory Group, which will become the soon-to-be-launched Income Due Diligence Group.

Equality & Diversity

10. D&A seeks to be at the forefront of positive action on Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) issues, whether that is scholarship fund-raising for widening participation (and more recently Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic specific scholarship programmes), engagement of alumni as participants and champions for specific University EDI programmes, and through positive EDI-influenced decisions regarding which alumni we seek to spotlight and celebrate through our communications. As for so many parts of the University, we have significant work still to do to attract, recruit and support a more ethnically diverse workforce, and have started a project to look at this, drawing on global expertise through CASE (the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education) and other sources.

Next steps/implications

11. No formal next steps or communications are anticipated, but feedback from University Court on the future direction of travel and the action plan summary above

will be embedded in detailed work plans, alongside feedback from the Colleges on our separate but connected College-specific plans.

Further information

12. Author & Presenter

Chris Cox

Vice-Principal Philanthropy & Advancement

Freedom of Information

13. Closed paper – commercially confidential.



UNIVERSITY COURT

30 November 2020

Bank Account for University of Edinburgh Hong Kong Foundation Ltd

Description of paper

1. In order to enable the University's activities in the East Asia region, it is recommended that a bank account be opened to support the activities of the University of Edinburgh Hong Kong Foundation (the "Foundation"). The bank account will be a Hong Kong bank account.

Action requested/Recommendation

2. Court is invited to approve the opening of a bank account with HSBC, in the name of 'University of Edinburgh Hong Kong Foundation Limited' which will be operated as set out below. As per the University's Delegated Authority Schedule, the Director of Finance will be the Court Signatory for the opening of the account.

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

Equality & Diversity

17. There are no equality & diversity issues associated with this decision.

Next steps/implications

18. If approved, the Director of Services, Development & Alumni will instruct the opening of the account with HSBC with involvement from the Finance Department and in accordance with University requirements around bank mandate control.

Consultation

19. The paper has been prepared by Development & Alumni in consultation with the Finance Department and Legal Services.

Further information

20. Author

Kate Brook
Director of Services
Development & Alumni

Presenter

Chris Cox
Vice-Principal Philanthropy & Advancement

Freedom of Information

21. Closed paper – commercially confidential.



UNIVERSITY COURT

30 November 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 10 September 2020 to 31 October 2020.
2. The paper also includes an update on current alumni relations activities.

Action requested/Recommendation

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

Paragraphs 4-18 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

Resource implications

19. 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

20. 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

21. 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

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

Consultation

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

Further information

24. Authors

Gregor Hall
Finance Manager
Natalie Fergusson
Global Alumni Clubs and Groups Manager
Development & Alumni

Presenter

Chris Cox
Vice-Principal Philanthropy &
Advancement

Freedom of Information

25. Closed paper.



UNIVERSITY COURT

30 November 2020

**Integrating awareness of the Climate Emergency and our Strategy 2030
Commitments in University Committee papers**

Description of paper

1. The paper adds a new section within the template and guidance for papers to Court and its committees and the University Executive with the intention of integrating consideration of the Climate Emergency, United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Strategy 2030 outcomes into future University committee papers.

Action requested/Recommendation

2. To approve the inclusion of a new section (included in Appendix 1) in Court and committee paper templates.

Background and context

3. This integration into University committee papers is a part of wider efforts to embed consideration of these critical longer-term issues transparently in the thinking, work and planning of the University. Our Social and Civic Responsibility Plan committed us to critically engage with, and contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals.

4. A request to include consideration of the SDGs within all future Court papers was made at a September 2019 Court Seminar on the climate emergency and agreed by Court members. A request was also made to include consideration of Strategy 2030 outcomes within all Policy & Resources Committee papers and it is therefore proposed to:

- Include a new section on both Strategy 2030 outcomes and the SDGs in Court and Court Committee templates given the linkages between Strategy 2030 and the SDGs (e.g. Strategy 2030 outcome number 10 is: 'We will see integrated reporting of our whole organisational impact against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals');
- Seek to also add this new section to University Executive and Senate papers, including those of their standing committees, tailored where appropriate.

5. As a first step, relevant Estates Committee papers have included a new sustainability section since December 2019. Feedback has been positive, with engagement from Committee members on the information presented.

Discussion

6. The template and guidance for University Executive and Court committee papers is attached in Appendix 1, with the new section included within paragraphs 9-10. Paper authors are asked to identify which, if any, of the 13 Strategy 2030 outcomes and 17 UN SDGs the proposals in the paper will contribute towards (or hinder, and if so, any mitigations that would counter-balance this) and evidence for this. The logos for the likely most relevant UN SDGs are included to help encourage their use and engagement by the Committee members when reviewing the paper.

7. Comments on the text in the template would be welcome along with thoughts on other means of engaging committee members and paper authors. It is intended to create support, training and guidance to help authors and committee members and suggestions on what this could entail would be welcome. We wish to avoid a new section being seen as a 'tick box' for both paper authors and committee members and are conscious that additional requirements can be seen as burdensome by both authors and committee members so wish to encourage rather than demand engagement. If committee members critically engage with and discuss information provided in the new section then over time authors are more likely to focus attention on this area, creating a virtuous cycle of engagement. The fact that Court members have requested a section on the UN SDGs is a positive start, as is the Estates Committee experience with a new sustainability section in papers.

Resource implications

8. The intention is to encourage paper authors and University committee members to engage more fully in considering how proposals could impact on the University's Strategy 2030 and the UN Sustainable Development Goals so a greater time commitment is envisaged for both authors and readers. No direct financial implications are envisaged.

Risk Management

9. Greater engagement with Strategy 2030 and the SDGs should reduce the risk that the University does not meet the Strategy 2030 outcomes and contributes positively to the SDGs. The extent to which the addition to the paper template have helped foster greater engagement and the need for any refinements could be made could be assessed by Committee members and secretariat support after an initial 12 month period.

Equality & Diversity

10. Many of the Strategy 2030 outcomes and SDGs are directly intended to achieve positive equality and diversity impacts, e.g.

Strategy 2030 outcomes with direct equality and diversity impacts

- iv) Improved digital outreach will see us enabling global participation in education.
- v) We will be leading Scotland's commitment to widening participation.
- vi) We will be a destination of choice, based on our clear "Edinburgh Offer". All of our staff and students will develop here, whether they are from Leith, Lisbon, Lahore or Lilongwe.
- viii) Edinburgh will become the Data Capital of Europe. We will deliver inclusive growth, provide data skills to at least 100,000 individuals, and create new companies and solutions for global challenges.
- xii) Multidisciplinary postgraduate education pathways will support flexible whole-life learning.
- xiii) Our estate will be fit for purpose, sustainable and accessible. We will support learning, research and collaboration with our neighbours, businesses and partners.

Examples of relevant UN Sustainable Development Goals for equality and diversity

Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

- Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries

Next steps/implications

11. If approved, the new template will feature within the next cycle of Court and committee papers.

Consultation

12. An initial paper was submitted to the Social Responsibility & Sustainability Committee on 18 August and then revised and submitted to the University Executive on 10 November and supported by Policy & Resources Committee on 16 November.

Further information

13. Author

Lewis Allan
Head of Court Services
24 November 2020

Presenter

Tracey Slaven
Deputy Secretary Strategic Planning

Freedom of Information

14. Open paper.



COMMITTEE NAME

Date

Title of Paper

Description of paper*

1. State the purpose of the paper in clear non-technical terms
(Length guide: 1 or 2 sentences)

2. Explain briefly how the proposals in the paper will contribute to one or more of the outcomes set out in Strategy 2030, deleting those outcomes which are not the focus of this activity. (Length guide: 1 or 2 sentences)

- i) We will see our research having a greater impact as a result of partnership, international reach and investment in emergent disciplines.
- ii) The undergraduate curriculum will support breadth and choice, preparing students, graduates and alumni to make a difference in whatever they do, wherever they do it.
- iii) We will be a global leader in artificial intelligence and the use of data with integrity.
- iv) Improved digital outreach will see us enabling global participation in education.
- v) We will be leading Scotland's commitment to widening participation.
- vi) We will be a destination of choice, based on our clear "Edinburgh Offer". All of our staff and students will develop here, whether they are from Leith, Lisbon, Lahore or Lilongwe.
- vii) We will have created opportunities for partners, friends, neighbours and supporters to co-create, engage with the world and amplify our impacts.
- viii) Edinburgh will become the Data Capital of Europe. We will deliver inclusive growth, provide data skills to at least 100,000 individuals, and create new companies and solutions for global challenges.
- ix) We will have more user-friendly processes and efficient systems to support our work.
- x) We will see integrated reporting of our whole organisational impact against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.
- xi) We will be on track to be a Carbon-Zero University by 2040.
- xii) Multidisciplinary postgraduate education pathways will support flexible whole-life learning.
- xiii) Our estate will be fit for purpose, sustainable and accessible. We will support learning, research and collaboration with our neighbours, businesses and partners.

Action requested/Recommendation*

3. Detail what Court/the Committee is being invited or recommended to do. If there are financial implications, the finance template should also be completed (more details below in the Resource implications section). The [Delegated Authority Schedule](#) can help in clarifying whether Court or another Committee's approval is required. Example: "Court is invited to approve/note/consider/receive x." (Length guide: 1-3 sentences)

Background and context

4. Court and Committees need to be able to understand very quickly what it is they are being asked to consider and why. This section should cover the reasons for the paper. (Length guide: 1-2 paragraphs [sequentially numbered])

Discussion

5. This is the meat of the paper – please provide sufficient detail for Court/Committee Members to understand the issue and any proposals and options.

6. Comments should be focused on essential information and the key issues necessary for good decision-making. Alternative options and arguments for and against proposals can also be included here, as well as the rationale for any course of action. More headings and paragraphs can be added to draw out key issues. (Length guide: 1-3 pages)

Resource implications

7. Please detail here any resource implications associated with the paper. If appropriate, outline the costs and how they will be met. Please specify if funds are being requested. Court will not approve any new policies/procedures where the cost implications are not clearly identified. Normally proposals are expected to be met from within existing budgets and should be approved by the relevant College/Professional Services Group budget holder, with additional items being identified in the planning round. If the paper requests new resources, over and above approved budgets, or where there is a material re-profiling of existing planned resource the Financial Template must be completed to assess the financial impact of the decision. This should be submitted as an appendix to the paper. Any additional costs, e.g. VAT or other taxes should be specified. Procurement of >£50k for goods or services and >£2million for works must follow EU Procurement Directives in force from April 2016. (Length guide: 1-2 paragraphs)

Risk Management

8. Key risks and mitigating measures associated with the proposal should be outlined here. You may wish to reference the [University's Statement of Risk Policy and Risk Appetite](#). (Length guide: 1 sentence – 1 paragraph)

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

9. This section is provided to allow the articulation of intended contribution to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (delete any that are not applicable – the most likely appropriate SDGs are listed below with the full seventeen goals listed here: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>):

10. Provide supporting information beneath the identified UN SDGs to justify the contribution of the paper towards these. If the paper does not contribute to SDG goals state: This paper does not contribute to the Strategy 2030 outcomes or SDG goals (and explain why, e.g. 'as it fulfilling an external regulatory requirement' or similar). If the proposals would hinder the achievement of any UN SDGs or would exacerbate the Climate Emergency please state this and set out any mitigating actions that would minimise or counter-balance the effect. (Length guide: 1-2 paragraphs)



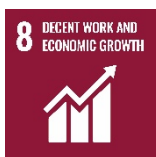
Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages



Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all



Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls



Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all



Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation



Reduce inequality within and among countries



Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable



Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns



Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

Equality & Diversity*

11. The University is required by law (Equality Act 2010 and supporting Regulations) to give due consideration to equality and diversity. If proposing new or revised policies or practices these also require an [Equality Impact Assessment](#) (EIA). Please

detail whether equality and diversity has been considered, whether an EIA is required and any major equality impacts. (Length guide: 1 sentence – 1 paragraph)

Next steps/implications

12. Include a summary of what will happen next, including communications. For example, who will be responsible for overseeing any changes or for implementation? (Length guide: 1 sentence – 1 paragraph)

Consultation*

13. Include details of consultation, whether internally and externally, on the proposals in the paper. Include here whether any other Committees have reviewed the document and their views. (Length guide: 1 sentence – 1 paragraph)

Further information*

14. Author

Forename Surname
Position/Area of the University
XX Month Year

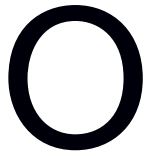
Presenter

Forename Surname
Position/Area of the University

Freedom of Information*

15. State whether the paper is either an Open paper or a Closed paper. If closed, explain why, e.g. commercial confidentiality. The default expectation is that papers will be published in full on the University website and are classed as 'open.' Some sections of closed papers are typically still published: the title, action requested, equality & diversity, consultation, further information and freedom of information sections. If these are also sensitive and should not be published, please inform the Committee secretariat. (Length guide: 1 sentence)

**Text in these sections will normally be published even if the paper is classed as a 'closed' paper.*



UNIVERSITY COURT

30 November 2020

Enterprise IT Infrastructure Investment

Description of paper

1. This paper outlines the proposed investment in our Enterprise Infrastructure, which provides the consolidated platform for central on-premises IT services aside from high performance research computing.

Action requested/Recommendation

2. Court is invited to approve Option B for investment in the project.

Paragraphs 3-24 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

Risk Management

25. Individual risks for each of the options presented in the paper are noted in the options appraisal.

26. Procurement risks will be managed through the procurement project, with the procurement department proposing a Competitive Procedure by Negotiation (CPN) to enable the University to tailor the solution from a short-list of bidders and ensure maximum value is delivered.

Equality & Diversity

27. There are no direct equality and diversity implications from this paper. Equality impact assessments will be performed for any relevant service changes.

Next steps/implications

28. Following approval, the procurement process will be started and a project board will be formed to oversee the procurement.

Consultation

29. Consultation has occurred with the Head of Finance, Chief Information Officer, Information Services Group Senior management, Procurement, Legal Services, the College Computing Professionals Groups, Information Services Group Core Systems strategy group and IT Committee. The IT Committee, Knowledge Strategy Committee and Policy & Resources Committee have all considered the proposal and are supportive, recommending that it progress to Court for approval.

Further information

30. Authors

Tony Weir
Director of IT Infrastructure
Information Services

Graeme Wood
Head of Enterprise Services,
IT Infrastructure

Presenter

Gavin McLachlan
Vice-Principal, Chief Information Officer
and Librarian to the University

Freedom of Information

31. This paper is closed, due to commercial sensitivity.



UNIVERSITY COURT

30 November 2020

Purchase of the Extreme Scaling DiRAC3 High Performance Computer Service

Description of paper

1. This paper requests approval for the purchase of an externally-funded High Performance Computing (HPC) facility: the Extreme Scaling DiRAC3 service. This facility will be the latest in a line of HPC systems installed at Edinburgh over some 15 years to serve the needs of Particle Physics Theory researchers around the UK, and led by Edinburgh.

Action Requested/Recommendation

2. Court is invited to approve the purchase of the latest DiRAC facility for Particle Physics.

Paragraphs 3-10 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

Risk Management

11. Best practice is being followed with regard to the University's procurement processes and the Procurement Department is fully engaged. Risks will be managed by following the University's best practice.

Sustainability

12. The procurement will include sustainability aspects covering:

- Ethical, safe and fair working conditions throughout product supply chain (with a focus on Electronics Watch)
- Minimising multiple risks related to conflict minerals, mining and material extraction
- Minimising multiple risks related to carbon and energy use, climate change, toxic chemicals, material scarcity, biodiversity, pollution throughout the lifecycle of these products, including extraction, manufacture, transport, use and end of life
- Minimising climate and carbon emissions impact, in reportable ways leveraging performance data and emissions reporting

13. EPCC has been committed to running the Advanced Computing Facility efficiently and minimising energy usage since refurbishing the site in 2004. Since then all National High Performance Computing services have been installed in rooms with cooling designed specifically for them. We have a strong focus on "free cooling" – using the cool climate for 70% of the year to remove heat from our hot water rather than chilling. We also minimise the use of Uninterruptable Power Supplies (saving around a 10% overhead each year). EPCC are also developing novel approaches to cooling and heat reclamation. A study is currently in progress with Estates and Geosciences to look at using local mine water to create a heat battery. Funding for this has already been applied for. In addition, the University has been exploring possible approaches to carbon sequestration via forests planting or peatlands restoration which remains under consideration. Current planning includes the carbon

associated with the proposed expansion through to 2040, but not for any additional exa-scale computing developments.

Equality & Diversity

14. We will mandate that any supplier meets the University's expectations on equality and diversity, such as social responsibility and fair work terms.

Next steps/implications

15. Should approval be granted by Court, we will then place a Purchase Order with the chosen supplier for proffered HPC equipment, which will be signed by Professor Dave Robertson, Head of College of Science & Engineering.

Consultation

16. The Chief Information Officer is aware and supportive of this investment. Finance Department are engaged in setting up the grant and we are liaising closely with colleagues in Procurement. The paper has also been reviewed by Knowledge Strategy Committee on 20 October and Policy & Resources Committee on 16 November and has been recommended for approval by both.

Further information

17. Author

Professor Arthur Trew
Assistant Principal Computational
Science

Presenter

Gavin McLachlan
Vice-Principal, Chief Information
Officer and Librarian to the University

Freedom of Information

18. Closed paper – commercially confidential as it relates to a planned procurement.



UNIVERSITY COURT

30 November 2020

Staff Benefits Scheme: Proposal to switch standard security asset

Description of paper

1. This paper requests approval to the proposal to switch one of the University's existing standard securities granted to the Staff Benefits Scheme (the "SBS", the University's in-house pension scheme for professional services staff in Grades 1-5) in order to appropriately reflect the overall intended and agreed value of assets being assigned for this purpose.

Action requested/Recommendation

2. Court is invited to agree to the proposed switch of asset as standard security granted to the SBS, subject to the endorsement of the SBS Trustees of this switch.

Paragraphs 3-9 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

Equality & Diversity

10. None identified.

Paragraphs 11-13 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

Consultation

14. This paper has been reviewed by the Director of Finance and the Director of Legal Services. Estates colleagues were consulted in identifying the Substitute Property. The proposal was recommended for approval by Policy & Resources Committee on 16 November 2020.

Further information

15. For further information please contact Terry Fox, Director – Finance Specialist Services (Terence.fox@ed.ac.uk, 0131 650 2166)

16. Authors

Terry Fox and Ann Fraser
Finance Department
24 November 2020

Presenter

Lee Hamill
Director of Finance

Freedom of Information

17. Closed paper – commercially confidential



UNIVERSITY COURT

30 November 2020

Exception Committee Report

Committee Name

1. Exception Committee

Date of Meeting

2. The Committee considered business by correspondence from 23 to 30 October 2020.

Action Required

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

Key points

Rector Election Regulations 2021

4. Exception Committee noted that, following the Court meeting on 28 September, the three staff trade unions have confirmed that they do not support the addition of an option to re-open nominations, and approved the:
 - Date for the Rector election, with voting to take place from Tuesday, 23 February 2021 until Friday, 26 February 2021;
 - Appointment of the Chancellor's Assessor, Sheriff Principal Alastair Dunlop QC, as the Returning Officer, with a Deputy Returning Officer to be nominated by the University Secretary; and,
 - Rector Election Regulations 2021 (without the inclusion of an option to re-open nominations, maintaining the status quo position given the differing views of the two representative bodies for the student and staff electorates).

Full minute

5. The paper considered and the minute can be accessed at:
<https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/UCC/Exception+Committee>

Equality & Diversity

6. Issues related to equality and diversity were considered within the paper.

Further information

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 7. <u>Author</u> | <u>Presenter</u> |
| Lewis Allan | Janet Legrand |
| Head of Court Services | Convener, Exception Committee |

Freedom of Information

8. Open paper.



UNIVERSITY COURT

30 November 2020

Court USS Sub-Group Report

Committee Name

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

Date of Meeting

2. 28 October 2020 (by videoconference)

Action Required

3. To note the key items discussed.

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

Further information

- | | |
|---|---|
| 7. <u>Author</u>
Lewis Allan
Head of Court Services
24 November 2020 | <u>Presenter</u>
Alan Johnston
Sub-Group Convener |
|---|---|

Freedom of Information

8. Closed paper.



UNIVERSITY COURT

30 November 2020

Policy & Resources Committee Report

Committee Name

1. Policy & Resources Committee

Date of Meeting

2. 16 November 2020 (by videoconference).

Action Required

3. To note the key points from the meeting.

Paragraphs 4-19 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

Full minute

20. 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

21. Issues related to equality and diversity were considered within each paper.

Further information

22. Author

Lewis Allan
Head of Court Services

Presenter

Alan Johnston
Convener, Policy & Resources Committee

Freedom of Information

20. Closed paper.



UNIVERSITY COURT

30 November 2020

Nominations Committee Report

Committee Name

1. Nominations Committee

Date of Meeting

2. 16 November 2020 (by videoconference)

Action Required

3. To note the key points and to approve the appointments of:
- Sarah Wolffe QC as the Court nominee to the Scrutinising Committee for the 2021 Rector election; and,
 - Ross Millar, Chief Risk Officer at Artemis Investment Management LLP, as an external member of Audit & Risk Committee for a three year term of office from 1 January 2021.

Key points

Court and Committee Memberships

4. The current membership of Court and its committees and a forward look at expected vacancies was reviewed.
5. The processes and timings for filling expected vacancies for Co-opted member(s) and a General Council Assessor were considered, with the following points agreed:
- The recruitment processes should operate in parallel but with a clear distinction made between the roles, such as the responsibility for the General Council Assessor to act as a link between the General Council and the Court;
 - While operating in parallel, interviews for the General Council Assessor should take place before the Co-opted member interviews, in order to allow suitable candidates to also be considered for the Co-opted position if appropriate;
 - A search agency should be utilised with an objective to encourage a broader diversity of well-qualified candidates, particularly in terms of ethnic diversity. In addition to using a search agency, the University should also advertise the positions widely, including in locations that may help reach a broad range of well-qualified candidates; and,
 - Exploring at University Secretary level whether there is interest from peer institutions in similar approaches to the use of search agencies for lay member appointments to governing bodies, such as pricing that reflects the voluntary, unremunerated nature of the position.
6. The need for succession planning for a wide range of committee memberships and other roles undertaken by two lay members with terms of office concluding in summer 2021 was noted. Options will be presented to the next meeting, with imaginative thinking and flexibility encouraged.

7. It was agreed to recommend to Court approval for the appointment of Sarah Wolffe QC as the Court nominee to the Scrutinising Committee for the 2021 Rector election. *Secretary's Note: the Scrutinising Committee has the purpose of hearing appeals from any candidates who have been disqualified by the Returning Officer, Alastair Dunlop QC, the Chancellor's Assessor, for any serious breaches of the regulations. There are three members of the Scrutinising Committee: a Court nominee; the Students' Association President; and, a staff Trade Union nominee.*

Audit & Risk Committee External Member Appointment

8. A report on the outcome of a recruitment exercise to appoint an external member of Audit & Risk Committee was reviewed. It was noted that a potential skills gap in risk management with the departure of one member had been identified and highlighted in the advertisement. The selection panel's unanimous recommendation of Ross Millar, Chief Risk Officer at Artemis Investment Management LLP, was agreed for recommendation for approval by Court, with a proposed three year term of office from 1 January 2021.

Full minute

9. The draft minute can be accessed at:

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

Alan Johnston
Convener, Nominations Committee

Freedom of Information

12. Open paper.



UNIVERSITY COURT

30 November 2020

Audit & Risk Committee Report

Committee Name

1. Audit & Risk Committee.

Date of Meeting

2. 19 November 2020.

Action Required

3. Court is invited to note the key points from the meeting.

Paragraphs 4-13 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

Full minute:

14. All the papers considered at the meeting and in due course the Minute can be accessed on the wiki site:

<https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/UCC/Audit+and+Risk+Committee>

Equality & Diversity

15. There are no specific equality and diversity issues associated with this report.

Further information

16. Author
Kirstie Graham
Deputy Head of Court Services
November 2020

Presenter
Caroline Gardner
Convener of the Audit & Risk Committee

Freedom of Information

17. This paper is closed.



UNIVERSITY COURT

30 November 2020

Knowledge Strategy Committee Report

Committee Name

1. Knowledge Strategy Committee

Date of Meeting

2. 20 October 2020 (by videoconference).

Action Required

3. To note the key points from the meeting.

Paragraphs 4-19 have been removed as exempt from release due to FOI.

Full minute

20. All papers considered at the meeting and the draft Minute can be accessed at:
<https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/UCC/Knowledge+Strategy+Committee>

Equality & Diversity

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

Further information

22. Author

Lewis Allan
Head of Court Services
24 November 2020

Presenter

Doreen Davidson
Convener of Knowledge Strategy
Committee

Freedom of Information

23. Closed paper.



UNIVERSITY COURT

30 November 2020

Senatus Academicus Report

Committee Name

1. Senatus Academicus.

Date of Meeting

2. Meeting of e-Senate by correspondence from 15-23 September and Senate by videoconference on 7 October 2020.

Action Required

3. To note the key points from the e-Senate and Senate meetings.

Key points

e-Senate meeting, 15-23 September

Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) Reflective Analysis

4. e-Senate reviewed and commented on the Reflective Analysis document prior to its submission to Court on 28 September.

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

5. e-Senate reviewed and commented on the Annual Report prior to its submission to Court on 28 September.

Draft Resolutions: Chairs

6. e-Senate considered the Draft Resolutions below and offered no observations:
 - Draft Resolution No. 75/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Organic Synthesis
 - Draft Resolution No. 76/2020: Foundation of a Personal Industrial Chair of Data-Driven Manufacturing
 - Draft Resolution No. 77/2020: Alteration of the title of the Chair of Chemical Reaction/Catalysis Engineering

Draft Resolution: Removal of Members of the University Court

7. Comments were received on clause 4 on non-voting members and these have been passed to the author of the paper [*Secretary's note: the comments and proposed response are included in Paper S – Resolutions*].

Rector Election Date

8. Comments were received on whether the proposals included sufficient fallback options in the light of a public health emergency and these have been passed to the author of the paper. [*Secretary's note: this was considered in the Rector Election Regulations paper reviewed by Court on 28 September*].

Senate meeting – 7 October
Convener's Communications

9. Professor Peter Mathieson (Convener) welcomed colleagues to the meeting. The Convener highlighted the enormous amount of hard work carried out in difficult circumstances across a huge range of activities in order to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic, and to the revision of school examination results in the summer. Staff were thanked for their extraordinary efforts and commitment that have enabled the University to function effectively during this period.

10. In relation to the Covid-19 response, the Convener noted that:

- Pending any advice to the contrary from the Scottish Government, the University currently aimed to provide blended delivery of courses, with some in-person contact and some online contact.
- Current numbers of cases of Covid-19 among students are around 300, with numbers of current cases in staff at less than 10. There is currently no evidence of acquisition of infection in the classroom.
- As a result of changes to school exam grades, some courses are very over-subscribed because of the increase in the number of applicants who met the entry requirements. The University aimed to be flexible in relation to applicants who met their offer requirements.
- The University is prioritising providing a safe campus, providing support for students who are Covid-positive or are in self-isolation, and providing guidance and support on wellbeing to the community as a whole.

11. The Convener noted a number of priorities that preceded the pandemic, including Brexit, the pension dispute and the rising cost of pension contributions, climate change, and the imperative to improve student and staff experience. Financial challenges to the University are also a priority, including but not limited to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.

12. In relation to a question on bringing students back to campus, the Convener noted that the University is acting in line with Scottish Government advice, and in line with other Scottish universities, and that extensive work and planning has gone into safety developments including scenario planning for infections occurring amongst the University population. While preparations for students to self-isolate in halls of residence were made, it was acknowledged that the difficulties of applying the public health definition of a 'household' to student accommodation were not fully recognised and the University is actively discussing this issue with public health authorities.

13. In relation to questions on Senate being informed and involved in responding to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Convener noted that Senate is updated through the Convener's communications. However, Senate was not an integral part of the decision-making process that was adopted. The Adaptation and Renewal process has involved many members of staff and student representatives, representing many different constituencies. There was a requirement for extremely rapid decision-making, responding at times to guidance that was changing over hours or days, and under these conditions, a normal decision-making process was not possible. A great deal of effort has been put into communicating decisions to Senate and to all staff and students.

14. In relation to a question on whether decision-making has been influenced by staff views, the Convener noted the suggestion to create a four-day spring holiday came from outwith the senior team, and that a Students' Association suggestion that students be released from their rental contracts in response to the initial outbreak of the pandemic was also adopted.

15. In relation to a question on why staff were being asked to work on-campus when Scottish Government advice is to work from home where possible, the Convener noted that the requirements for staff to work on campus changed with the start of semester and return of students, and it was no longer possible for some staff to work entirely from home. The University is in regular discussion with public health and government advisors and works within government guidance.

16. A question was raised about signage requesting people to wear masks in buildings. Signs have been updated across campus, and colleagues were encouraged to contact their building manager in the first instance if they have concerns that signs have not been put up.

17. The Convener confirmed that there are no announcements to make about compulsory redundancies, and that measures that are being taken are with the aim of avoiding compulsory redundancies.

18. Questions were raised about possible increases in staff workloads if staff numbers are reduced, and about how staff are being supported to avoid burnout. It was noted that if an application under the voluntary severance scheme is accepted, this is on the condition that the university can manage without that role.

19. A suggestion was received, noting that the Welcome Week app has been a success with high levels of use, and suggesting that this could be used outwith Welcome Week to facilitate student social activities online.

*Senate Presentation and Discussion: Adaptation and Renewal Team (ART):
Students – Reflections, Lessons and Next Steps*

Introduction – Professor Colm Harmon, Vice-Principal Students

20. Professor Harmon noted that the work of the ART: Students project was originally focused on Semester 1, but it is now clear that it will be a bigger piece of work, looking at Semester 2 and beyond. A key principle of the project has been that the University will closely follow Scottish Government guidance, and this will continue.

21. Professor Harmon described the initial stages of the ART: Students project as working towards reopening campus, and defining and developing hybrid teaching. He noted that there may be lessons that can be learned from this experience of hybrid and digital delivery of teaching and learning.

22. One aspect of the University response that may distinguish it from other universities is the fact that Schools own the decisions on how to deliver hybrid models. ART: Students engaged with Schools to find out for example which programmes they wanted to deliver, which programmes they wanted to move to

digital delivery, and which courses they wanted to run. Schools then worked on planning hybrid delivery and ART: Students worked to support Schools in this. This took place in the context of marketing legislation that requires students to be informed of major changes to programme delivery: this required that some decisions on course and programme delivery had to be made very quickly, to meet deadlines to provide students with information.

23. Professor Harmon reported that the hybrid model has been delivered to a large extent, but the proportion of in-person synchronous teaching hours is highly variable across programmes, following decisions by Schools on how to deliver teaching. Professor Harmon identified this variation as a concern for students, including some complaints about low levels of synchronous and in-person teaching, and this will be raised with Heads of Schools.

24. Previous planning assumptions that restrictions would be relaxed by semester 2 have been revised, and hybrid delivery will continue into semester 2. Professor Harmon noted that some programmes, particularly those with accreditation requirements that necessitate in-person lab work, for example, had intended to deliver these courses in semester 2 and work is underway with the relevant Schools to address this.

25. Looking towards the next academic year, Professor Harmon indicated that lessons from the experiences of course and programme delivery in 2020/21 will be fed into discussions on curriculum reform, but emphasised that these discussions are still to be had, and no decisions have been made about retaining any elements of hybrid delivery.

Student Support – Gavin Douglas, Deputy Secretary Student Experience

26. The Deputy Secretary reported on the work undertaken by the Rethinking Student Administration and Support strand of the ART: Students project, including moving induction, orientation and matriculation processes online, enhancing online student skills and development resources, and developing online events to support students' sense of community and belonging. Work has continued on projects on administering the special circumstances process, the development of the Study and Work Away (SWAY) team in Edinburgh Global, and the launch of EdHelp, which has been used heavily since the start of semester, and received very positive feedback. Highlights of online support and opportunities included an online course fair, and a Welcome video from the Principal, which was accessed by far larger numbers of students than would normally be able to attend the annual in-person Welcome event in the McEwen Hall.

27. Timetabling has been extremely complex and challenging and continues to be challenging going into hybrid delivery in semester 2.

Building Ongoing Curriculum Resilience – Tracey Slaven, Deputy Secretary Strategic Planning

28. The Deputy Secretary outlined the priorities and structure of the curriculum resilience work undertaken to date. Three main strands of work were identified: adapting the curriculum and curriculum delivery for semester 1; learning lessons from semester 1 and feeding these lessons into semester 2 planning and delivery;

and learning longer-term lessons from the experience of hybrid teaching. The work was led by a central group, but decisions on curriculum delivery were discipline specific and made within Schools.

29. Changes to the student cohort have resulted from both the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and the changes to UK examination results, with higher than anticipated numbers of home undergraduate students being admitted. Plans are currently being revised to take account of the current Covid-19 context and teaching in semester 2 will be delivered as hybrid.

Internationalising Edinburgh – Professor James Smith, Vice-Principal International

30. Professor Smith described developments in international student and staff mobility and transnational activity, noting that ongoing changes in these areas have been exacerbated by the effects of Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic.

31. The University is involved in extensive student and staff mobility and is very successful in attracting ERASMUS funding, receiving 25% of all funding distributed to the UK. This mobility tends to be Euro- and Anglo-centric, with a year-long exchange for students still seen as the ‘gold standard.’ In future, more diverse opportunities are likely to be of value, to provide greater access to students with a range of needs and commitments. Feedback from students indicates that shorter term, more experiential learning opportunities would be particularly valued. Measures to improve sustainability, such as carbon offsetting, virtual mobility, and ‘internationalisation at home’ are also being explored.

32. Demand for transnational education is increasing and this is expected to continue, with numbers of overseas students undertaking a UK degree while located abroad now outnumbering those who travel to the UK. The focus of the University has been on opportunities in South and East Asia, but it is now necessary to increase the range of opportunities. One current project, Una Europa, a collaboration with seven leading European universities, was highlighted.

Student Perspectives – Ellen MacRae, President of the Students’ Association

33. Ms MacRae highlighted current key priorities for students and the Students’ Association, particularly support for mental health and wellbeing. Tackling student isolation, resulting from Covid-19 restrictions and potentially exacerbated by asynchronous online teaching, was also highlighted. The importance of students having opportunities to develop communities with like-minded peers was highlighted. It was also noted that in some contexts, moving services online has increased their accessibility to students, and lessons should be learned from this.

34. Ms MacRae will continue to work with the University on planning for semester 2, and to ensure that the University continues to listen to students throughout this process. Ms MacRae highlighted in particular the importance of ensuring students are informed of arrangements for semester 2 as early and as fully as possible, to allow students to plan and to try to reduce students’ anxiety and uncertainty.

35. Following the presentations, there were questions and discussions, including on the topics below:

- Online teaching resources, including captioning of recorded lectures and capacity to deliver a 'hybrid classroom' involving simultaneous in-person and online teaching, are being continuously developed. It was confirmed that the University does not require staff to edit automatic captioning, though staff may choose to do this.
- Support for mental health and wellbeing of staff, particularly for new staff and to avoid burnout, was discussed. Staff were encouraged to discuss issues with line managers, and links to support and resources were circulated to all attendees following the meeting.
- The collaborative and supportive approach of the Students' Association, and their vital role in supporting and representing students was recognised and affirmed.
- Some comments challenged the senior leadership on 'over-promising' the availability of in-person teaching to students, and asked for greater clarity on definitions of hybrid teaching including requirements for synchronous and in-person teaching.
- It was confirmed that no decisions have been made concerning whether changes to teaching delivery made this year will continue in the longer term (for example increased hybrid or online teaching). Experiences this year will be fed into the Curriculum Review project led by the Vice-Principal Students, but discipline-specific requirements and School approaches will remain paramount.
- The quality of technology and internet access available to online students in their home location was recognised as a barrier to accessing online teaching in some instances, and this is not an issue that the University can easily address.
- It was reiterated that the University will continue to comply with Scottish Government guidance on Covid-19 restrictions, and it was noted that keeping education open remains a priority and that based on discussions with the Scottish Government, travelling to work in education continues to be considered necessary travel.
- In response to comments on whether staff feedback is taken into account by senior leadership, it was affirmed that staff feedback is heard, but that many and contradictory views are heard, from many sources, and that not all feedback can or will be acted upon.

Formal Business

Senate members' feedback on presentation and discussion topics

36. Comments were received from two Senate members (both Wardens in halls of residence), highlighting issues faced by students self-isolating in halls. New students in particular are liable to feel very isolated if they have not had opportunities to develop a social group. Students who are self-isolating are also using halls as a learning and teaching environment, and this may have a negative impact on their studies. If restrictions are likely to be long term, it may be necessary to review policies in order to ameliorate problems, such as reviewing how students are allocated to flats (and therefore to potential social groups).

37. The Convener noted that it is recognised that the definition of a household being used in public health management does not fit the situation of students in halls of

residence, and the University is raising this with public health authorities, to try to develop effective definitions of households.

38. The Senate members, and their fellow Wardens, were thanked for the vital work they are doing in supporting students. The Senate members were invited to follow up with the Vice-Principal Students so that their comments can be fed into the ART: Students work.

Edinburgh University Students' Association (EUSA) Priorities for 2020-21

39. Senate noted and welcomed the EUSA Vice-President Education's priorities. These priorities have also been reported to the Senate Quality Assurance Committee and Senate Education Committee, and those committees are discussing how they can support the Students' Associations' objectives.

Senate Effectiveness Review 2019/20

40. Senate supported the recommendations in the report.

Senate Standing Orders – minor updates

41. The updates to the Standing Orders were approved.

Senate Exception Committee Remit and Membership

42. An updated remit and committee membership were approved.

Senate Elections 2020/21 – provisional dates

43. Senate noted the paper. No comments were received.

Senate Committees Effectiveness Review – Questionnaire Initial Analysis

44. Senate noted the report.

Full Agenda and Papers

45. <http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/committees/senate/agendas-papers>

Equality & Diversity

46. No key implications for equality and diversity were raised by Senate. All paper authors are asked to consider and identify equality and diversity implications.

Further information

47. *Author*

Kathryn Nicol, Academic Policy Officer
Academic Services

Freedom of Information

48. Open paper.



UNIVERSITY COURT

30 November 2020

Resolutions

Description of paper

1. The paper invites Court to:

- approve a Resolution presented in final format, No. 74/2020 Removal of Members of the University Court. This follows consideration of a first draft at the 15 June Court meeting and subsequent consultation with the General Council and Senate; and,
- approve Resolutions to establish chairs and change the names of existing chairs in accordance with agreed internal arrangements and the requirements set out in the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966.

Action requested/Recommendation

2. Court is invited to approve:

- Resolution No. 74/2020: Removal of Members of the University Court
- Resolution No. 75/2020: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Organic Synthesis
- Resolution No. 76/2020: Foundation of a Personal Industrial Chair of Data-Driven Manufacturing
- Resolution No. 77/2020: Alteration of the title of the Chair of Chemical Reaction/Catalysis Engineering

Background and context

3. In accordance with the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966, Court has powers exercisable by Resolution in respect of a number of matters. The Act also stipulates that Senate, the General Council and any other body or person having an interest require to be consulted on Resolutions throughout the period of a month with the months of August and September not taken into account when calculating the consultation period.

Removal of Court Members Resolution

4. The Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 (hereafter 'the Governance Act') empowers Court to make rules regarding the procedure for the removal of any Court member should it wish to do so. An existing Ordinance and accompanying Resolution set out a procedure for the removal of co-opted members (i.e. a category of member appointed by Court itself) only. Court agreed in September 2017 that the Ordinance and Resolution should be extended to encompass all categories of Court member given the new legislation. This will enable equal treatment of all Court members.

5. An Ordinance to this effect was agreed by Court on 15 June and the first draft of the accompanying Resolution was considered by Court at the same meeting. It was agreed to issue the draft Resolution for consultation with Senate and the General Council and it now returns in final format to Court for approval with the consultation having concluded.

6. In line with the approach agreed by Court of extending the current rules to all members, the new Resolution makes minimal changes to the current procedure aside from those specified in the Governance Act. These are:

- extending the procedure to apply to all members;
- specifying the member under consideration cannot vote on their own removal; and,
- specifying that, if a vote is passed, the member can seek a review of the decision in order to have it reconsidered or quashed.

Discussion

7. Draft Resolutions No. 75-77/2020 relating to the creation and renaming of Chairs were referred to the General Council, Senate and more widely for consultation and no observations were received. As the text of these Resolutions follow a standard format they are not included in this paper but are available under the 'Additional Information' section of the [Court site](#).

Removal of Court Members Resolution: General Council response

8. The General Council's Constitutional Standing Committee formally considered the draft Resolution No. 74/2020 Removal of Members of the University Court and the Secretary to the General Council submitted a response to Court on 24 August 2020. The full response is included in Appendix 1 and is summarised below. The General Council:

- Support a Resolution on this topic and its application to all members of Court on an equal basis;
- Support the proposed procedure up to the point where the Court votes on the matter and the subject of the complaint then has the right to seek a review;
- Suggest that the Resolution includes additional text to clarify that such a review will be carried out by someone appointed by Court who is appropriately qualified and is not a Court member or University employee or someone who has been previously involved in the matter;
- Suggest that consideration be given as to whether the grounds for review might be articulated, such as:
 - the grounds for removal were those provided for in the Ordinance;
 - the procedure adopted was fair and proportionate, and in accord with the principles of natural justice;
 - there is a reasonable basis for the outcome or decision, having regard to the whole circumstances.

Suggested response from Court to the General Council comments

9. It is suggested that Court respond to the General Council as follows:

- Welcome the General Council's response and its support for a Resolution on this topic to apply to all members of Court on an equal basis;
- Agree that additional text on the appointment of the reviewer and who the reviewer should be is helpful and that the text suggested by the General Council should be added to the Resolution with one minor change to specify that the reviewer should be appropriately qualified *in the view of the Court* – this is to make clear that the decision as to whether a potential reviewer is appropriately qualified is for Court to make, rather than jointly with the member in question or by a third party; and,

- Agree to articulate the grounds for review along the lines suggested by the General Council.

Senate response

10. The e-Senate meeting held by correspondence between 15 to 23 September 2020 considered the draft Resolution and one Senate member provided comments. Their full response is included in Appendix 2 and is summarised below.

11. The Resolution requires a two-thirds majority at a Court meeting for a Court member to be removed and the member in question is not eligible to vote. The respondent asked if the member in question still counts as being amongst the members present for the two-thirds standard and if this rule has been checked for consistency against all applicable rules of procedure. The respondent then suggests that it would be prudent to allow the member in question ‘to allow members to vote on their own removal, as involuntary recusal is a strong measure to take against someone who has been merely accused but not certified by vote of meriting removal’ and asks if there are ‘other situations where just a proposer and seconder alone are entitled to deny another member of Court the vote?’

Suggested response from Court to the Senate member

12. It is suggested that Court respond to the Senate member to:

- Welcome their response;
- Note that, while the Court has sympathy with the line of reasoning, it is bound to follow the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016, which requires that: ‘the person who is the subject of the resolution does not count in any calculation arising (and the person is not eligible to vote on the resolution)’¹. This means the member in question cannot vote in this circumstance and they should not be included within the number required for a two-thirds majority and the Resolution will be amended to clarify this; and,
- Agree that this is an unusual position and that there are no other situations where a proposer and seconder can deny another member of Court the vote but this is a requirement in primary legislation that Court is bound to follow (and that Nominations Committee, which currently includes 7 Court members, would consider any case in the first instance and advise the Court accordingly. Court would therefore be very unlikely to accept a motion from two members that had not followed review by Nominations Committee first).

Amended Resolution

13. A revised draft Resolution incorporating the amendments mentioned in the suggested Court responses above is included in Appendix 3 with the amendments marked up. A minor revision to avoid the use of gender specific pronouns is also proposed.

Resource implications

14. There are no anticipated resource implications associated with approval of these Resolutions. For Resolution No. 74/2020: Removal of Members of the University Court, an independent reviewer may require remuneration but the right of review is

¹ Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016, 13 (3) (b), available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2016/15/contents>

enshrined in legislation so this would be a necessary compliance cost for the University.

Risk Management

15. The draft Resolution intends to address the risk of a Court member being unable to exercise their duties or behaving in an unacceptable or improper way and/or damaging the reputation of the Court while being unwilling (or unable) to resign their membership. It closely follows an existing Resolution while incorporating new requirements set out in the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016.

Equality & Diversity

16. By extending the existing procedure to all members of the Court, the draft Resolution treats all Court members on an equal basis. A right of independent review helps protect against bias in decision-making, in addition to the high bar set of a formal vote with a two-thirds majority required.

Next steps/implications

17. Responses will be sent to the Secretary of the General Council and the Senate member who commented on the draft Resolution. The Resolution will come into effect when the Ordinance it sits beneath is approved by Her Majesty in Council, expected within the coming months.

18. Senate and the General Council will also be informed of the approval of Resolutions on the creation or alteration of title of Chairs and the list of approved Resolutions is annually reviewed and published on the University's website.

Consultation

19. A first draft of Resolution No. 74/2020: Removal of Members of the University Court was considered by Court on 15 June 2020 and the proposed final draft follows consultation with the General Council and Senate and incorporates changes suggested by the General Council and a clarification prompted by comments from a Senate member. Senate and the General Council are asked for observations on all draft Resolutions and a notice is published on the website to enable observation from any other body or person having an interest to express observations.

Further information

20. Author
Lewis Allan
Head of Court Services

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

Freedom of Information

21. Open paper.



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

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24 August 2020

Dr Lewis Allan
Head of Court Services
University of Edinburgh
Old College
South Bridge
Edinburgh
EH9 9YL

Dear Lewis

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

The General Council was invited to comment on the above draft Resolution.

Process for generating this response on behalf of the General Council

The General Council formally charges its Business Committee with responsibility for taking forward on its behalf any business arising between its statutory meetings. During the Covid-19 pandemic the Business Committee and its standing committees have continued to work electronically, by e-mail and online meetings.

The above Draft Resolution was formally considered by the Constitutional Standing Committee. It was posted on the General Council website, giving individual members the opportunity to comment. In the absence of any such comment being received, the Constitutional Standing Committee approved a draft response to the consultation, which was then considered and approved by the Business Committee on behalf of the General Council.

Accordingly, what follows is the response of the General Council to the Draft Resolution.

Support for Paragraphs 1 - 3

The General Council fully supports the need for a Resolution to lay out the procedure to be followed in the event of the perceived need to remove a Court Member. All Court members being held to the same standards, the same procedural Resolution should apply to the removal of any Court member.

We understand and support the need for sufficient flexibility in the Resolution to manage the diversity of issues that could arise in these unfortunate circumstances.

We therefore support the proposed procedure up to the point where the Court votes on the matter and the subject of the complaint then has the right to seek a review.

Potential reputational risk in the procedure for review

While the need to remove a Court member is likely to be very rare, the process has the potential for acrimony and significant reputational risk for the University if and when an aggrieved subject seeks to have the decision reconsidered or quashed. This potential reputational risk is the basis for our concern about the review procedure as outlined in the draft Resolution.

To protect its reputation the University must exhibit fairness, proportionality, objectivity, impartiality and respect for confidentiality in its conduct throughout this procedure. We feel it should be possible to enshrine the essence of these principles in the Resolution concerning the management of a review of the decision, without being overly prescriptive.

Issues for Court to consider

We invite Court to consider the following points for the avoidance of potential difficulties should the review process have to be activated:

1. The reviewer

Independence of the reviewer. It is essential that the person conducting the Review is independent and appropriately qualified. While we imagine it would be desirable to appoint someone with legal or professional HR experience, we do not feel the professional qualification need be specified.

The draft Resolution is not explicit about ***who appoints the reviewer***. This could usefully be clarified. We are content that Court itself would appoint the reviewer but would suggest that this underlines the importance of a commitment to the independence of the reviewer and of the scope of the review being articulated in the draft Resolution.

Proposed amendment: We suggest the concern about the reviewer could be addressed by adding a single sentence following the end of paragraph 4: e.g.

..... An appropriately qualified person, who is not a member of the University Court, an employee of the University or anyone previously involved in consideration of the matters to be reviewed, will be appointed by the University Court to undertake an independent review.

2. Scope of the review

The draft Resolution provides for a review 'in order to have the resolution reconsidered or quashed'.

It leaves unclear the scope of the review which we assume is intended to be essentially procedural. Court may wish to consider whether this could usefully be indicated in the draft Resolution.

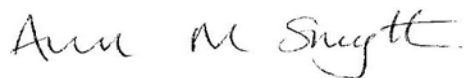
Consideration should be given as to whether the grounds for review might be articulated, to encompass the following:

Chairman HRH The Princess Royal
Secretary Professor Ann M Smyth
(to whom all correspondence should be addressed)

- the grounds for removal were those provided for in the Ordinance;
- the procedure adopted was fair and proportionate, and in accord with the principles of natural justice;
- there is a reasonable basis for the outcome or decision, having regard to the whole circumstances.

I look forward to hearing the court's response in due course.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ann M Smyth". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Professor Ann M Smyth
Secretary of the General Council

Chairman HRH The Princess Royal
Secretary Professor Ann M Smyth
(to whom all correspondence should be addressed)

Senate member comments

From: Kathryn Nicol, Clerk to Senate
Sent: 29 September 2020 16:40
To: Lewis Allan_
Subject: Feedback from Senate on Draft Resolution

Dear Lewis,

This is to formally pass your comments from Senate on the Draft Resolution: Removal of Members of University Court, presented to E-Senate in September 2020.

The feedback received is below, and I have noted to the Senate member who submitted the comments that this will be fed forward into the consultation process, which ends at the end of October.

Best wishes,
Kate

Senate feedback:

Regarding clause 4, is the non-voting member still counted among the members present (if indeed present) for the purposes of the two-thirds standard for passage? Either way, has this rule of involuntary recusal been checked for consistency against all applicable rules of procedure?

I would presume the member continues to count as present for the purposes of margin of passage since the standard refers to members present rather than proportion of votes cast. In this case, recusal from voting presumably has no effect, as a non-vote and a no-vote equally do not add to the 2/3 quota required for passage. As such, it may be procedurally prudent simply to allow members to vote on their own removal, as involuntary recusal is a strong measure to take against someone who has been merely accused but not certified by vote of meriting removal. Are there other situations where just a proposer and seconder alone are entitled to deny another member of Court the vote?

This is precisely the kind of situation where it is important for everyone to know in advance the precise implications of a procedural condition lest the impartiality of its application be challenged in the event of a close decision.

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

Resolution of the University Court No 74/2020

Procedure for Removal of Members of the University Court

At Edinburgh, the Thirtieth day of November, Two thousand and twenty.

WHEREAS University of Edinburgh Ordinance No. 216 empowers the University Court to determine by Resolution the procedure to be used in exercising the power of removal of members of the Court:

THEREFORE the University Court, in exercise of the powers conferred upon it by section 3 of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966, with special reference to paragraph 8 of Part II of Schedule 2 to that Act, HEREBY RESOLVES:

1. The Nominations Committee of the Court shall, at the request of any member of Court or the Secretary to the University, and only at such request, consider every instance in which, under the provisions of Ordinance No. 216, the possibility arises of the removal of a member of the Court; determine *prima facie* whether a case for consideration of removal by the Court has been established; and advise the Court.
2. The Nominations Committee shall found its consideration only on the provisions of Ordinance No. 216 and shall take all known factors into account.
3. In an instance where the Nominations Committee decides that *prima facie* a case for consideration of removal by the Court has been established, the member concerned shall within seven days receive written notification of the complaint ~~against him or her~~[\[drafting note: suggested deletion as this avoids the use of gender specific pronouns\]](#). The matter shall then be considered by the University Court at its first scheduled meeting thereafter, provided that this will be at least fourteen days after the meeting of the Nominations Committee. The member concerned shall have the opportunity to submit a written statement to, and the right to be heard at, the Court meeting. Such written statement shall cover only the specific matter of the complaint against the member.
4. Removal of a member of the Court shall require a formal motion, duly proposed and seconded in accordance with the Standing Orders of the Court and supported by at least two-thirds of those members present. The member who is the subject of the motion is not eligible to vote on the motion [and is not counted as present for the purposes of calculating a two-thirds majority, as per the Higher Education Governance \(Scotland\) Act 2016, 13 \(3\) \(b\)](#). If the motion is passed, the member who is the subject of the motion may seek a review in order to have the resolution reconsidered or quashed. [An appropriately qualified person in the view of the University Court, who is not a member of the University Court, an employee of the University or anyone previously involved in consideration of the matters to be reviewed, will be appointed by the University Court to undertake an independent review if requested by the member who is the subject of the motion. The grounds for review encompass:](#)

- whether the grounds for removal were those provided for in Ordinance No. 216;
- whether the procedure adopted was fair and proportionate, and in accordance with the principles of natural justice; and,
- whether there is a reasonable basis for the outcome or decision, having regard to the whole circumstances.

5. The Court shall determine other aspects of the procedure to be adopted in considering the removal of a member.

6. This Resolution shall supersede those parts of all previous Resolutions dealing with procedures for removal of Members of the University Court and specifically revokes Resolution No.28/2000.

7. This Resolution shall come into effect on the date of the approval of Ordinance No. 216 or on the date of the approval of this Resolution by the University Court, whichever is the latter.

For and on behalf of the University Court

SARAH SMITH

University Secretary



UNIVERSITY COURT

30 November 2020

Dates of 2021-22 Meetings

Description of paper

1. This paper proposes Court meeting dates for the 2021-22 academic year.

Action requested/Recommendation

2. Court is invited to approve the dates.

Background and context

3. The proposed meeting dates follow a similar pattern to those scheduled in recent years. These are two meetings in Semester 1 and three meetings in Semester 2.

Discussion

4. The proposed meeting dates are as follows:

2021-22

Wednesday 6 October 2021 (Seminar and Meeting)

Monday 29 November 2021 (Meeting)

Monday 21 February 2022 (Seminar and Meeting)

Monday 25 April 2022 (Meet the Court event and Meeting)

Monday 13 June 2022 (Meeting)

Resource implications

5. Court servicing costs are met from existing budgets.

Risk Management

6. Regular scheduling of Court meetings contributes to the good governance of the University.

Equality & Diversity

7. No equality and diversity issues are anticipated.

Next steps/implications

8. If agreed, invitations will be issued to Court members and attendees.

Consultation

9. Offices of the Principal, Senior Lay Member and the University Secretary.

Further information

10. Author
Lewis Allan
Head of Court Services

Freedom of Information

11. Open paper.