

Professional Services Staff Member Election 2020

Craig Henderson

I have been a member of staff at the University of Edinburgh for 30 years, in a variety of professional services roles in Finance and Procurement. Most of that time has been spent at the forefront of change activities; implementing new systems and processes in support of academic and professional services colleagues, delivering the strategic goals of the University.

Currently, I am Head of Finance Systems in the Finance Department, leading one of the new teams to be created by the Service Excellence Programme (SEP). This role brings me in to contact with academic and professional services colleagues through the University, delivering and supporting current systems, while also contributing to the implementation of the new People and Money system. I'm required to balance innovation and ease-of-use, with establishing proper controls and ensuring that the University can provide the proper assurances to its funders and other stakeholders.

I've also undertaken a number of voluntary roles throughout my career, including being a UCU committee member, departmental equality and diversity co-ordinator, health and safety adviser and staff experience champion. These have given me a greater insight into many of the issues that are routinely faced by colleagues, and that challenge the University as an institution. Most of my career has involved leading change and trying to improve ways of working that benefit staff, students and the institution as a whole. I have also been lucky enough to be able to contribute to activities with a broader perspective, having represented the HE sector on a Scottish Government strategic forum that has had an impact across the whole of the Scottish public sector.

I see the role of Court as a scrutinising body as crucial to the effective running of the University. I'm independently-minded, willing to ask challenging questions and would bring a down-to-earth approach to being a court member. The next few years will bring a period of significant challenge and change for the University, both from external factors and from the wide-ranging impact of the Service Excellence Programme. I believe that my extensive experience of change, both from a leadership position, and as someone directly impacted by that change, will allow me to bring a valuable perspective to the role. In particular, I have an interest in the impact of change on staff welfare and the staff experience as a whole.

I believe strongly in the role of higher education to benefit the whole of society, and welcome the University's increasing role in the community through activities such as the community engagement strategy and the City Region Deal. I aspire to be a member of Court that oversees a continued expansion to the University's role in the city and the wider community.

I hold the need for integrity and high standards of personal probity in high regard, and support colleagues in trying to meet these standards regardless of their role at the University. I would make every effort to fulfil the requirements of this role with honesty and integrity.