



**KNOWLEDGE STRATEGY COMMITTEE**

**30 January 2025, Microsoft Teams**

**Web Version**

**Minute**

- Present:** Patrick Hadoke, Senate appointee  
Colm Harmon, Interim Convener  
Tina Harrison, Senate appointee  
Melissa Highton, Senate appointee  
Dylan Walch, EUSA Vice-President Education
- In attendance:** Rick Arnautovic, CAHSS representative  
Philip Best, CSE representative  
Anne-Marie Coriat, CMVM representative  
Jo Craiglee, Head of Knowledge Management & IS Planning  
Lisa Dawson, Academic Registrar  
Jen Milne, Deputy Chief Information Officer and Director of Applications Development and Operations  
Rona Smith, Deputy Secretary Governance & Strategic Planning  
Jamie Tait, Governance Manager  
John Thompson, Professor of Signal Processing and Communications and Chair of Sustainable IT Sub-Group (for agenda items 3 and 4)  
Tony Weir, Director of Information Technology Infrastructure (for agenda items 3 and 4)  
James Reid, Head of Services and Deputy Director EDINA (for agenda items 3 and 4)  
Stefan Kaempf, Director of Operations (Applications) (for agenda item 6)  
Martyn Peggie, Head of Service – People and Money (for agenda item 7)
- Apologies:** Siân Bayne, Senate appointee  
Shereen Benjamin, Court appointee  
Richard Blythe, Court appointee  
Nirmal Borkhataria, Interim Director of Finance  
Heather Lawrence, CAHSS representative  
Catherine Martin, Vice-Principal Corporate Services  
Sarah McAllister, Court appointee  
Gavin McLachlan, Vice-Principal, Chief Information Officer and Librarian to the University

**1 Minute**

**Paper A**

Members and attendees were welcomed to the meeting.

The Convenor reported that four members of the Knowledge Strategy Committee (KSC) are a quorum, however this number must include two Senate appointed members and two Court appointed members. It was noted that two Court members

confirmed by email ahead of the meeting they would be content to approve the minute in absentia.

The minute of the meeting held on 29 October 2024 was approved.

## **2 Matters Arising**

**Verbal**

- Knowledge Strategy Committee – Future Governance Update

The Convenor gave a verbal update on the future governance of KSC, noting that as set out in the minutes of the previous meeting, KSC agreed with the onward transmission to Court and Senate of three recommendations, namely:

- KSC be disbanded at the end of the current academic year;
- A new Library and Collections Committee to replace KSC as a joint committee of Court and Senate; and
- IT Committee to return to its historic norm as a management/operational committee reporting into the University Executive, but with a reporting line to Estates Committee on digital estate projects above £2m.

It was reported that since the last meeting:

- KSC's deliberations were reported to Court in December 2024 and e-Senate in January 2025. There were no comments made at Court and there were two comments made by Senate members, which will be taken into consideration going forward.
- A workshop for IT Committee was held on 16 January and a workshop for Library Committee and the University Collections Advisory Committee is scheduled for 26 February.
- The feedback from the workshops will be used to develop the proposals for these three committees in more detail before a final recommendation is made to Court and Senate.
- In addition, the terms of reference for the three Senate Committees (Academic Policy and Regulations, Education and Quality Assurance) are being compared with the terms of reference for KSC and IT Committee. This is to ensure that there will continue to be committee oversight involving Senate members of digital/educational technology matters within Senate's remit for the oversight and regulation of teaching and promotion of research, and no gaps from KSC being disbanded and the proposed changes to governance of the IT Committee.
- A further update will be provided to KSC at their next meeting on 27 March 2025.

There were no further matters arising.

## **SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS**

### **3 Sustainable IT Update**

**Verbal**

John Thompson, Professor of Signal Processing and Communications and Chair of Sustainable IT Sub-Group, and Tony Weir, Director of Information Technology Infrastructure, gave a presentation on recent work of the Sustainable IT Sub-Group

of IT Committee. This included an overview of their discussions on two different topics: Future IT Hosting Planning and Summer Internship on Energy Consumption of Large Language Models.

The Committee welcomed the presentation, and discussed progress with ELM (Edinburgh (access to) Language Models), the University's artificial intelligence (AI) innovation platform. The benefit of using ELM as opposed to external generative AI was noted, particular in relation to energy consumption (as a result of fewer computations), data security (data is secure and is not retained by third-party services to train their models or for any other purpose) and equity (ELM is free to use for all staff and students).

The Convener thanked colleagues for their presentation, and noted an update to Senate on the benefits of ELM would be helpful.

#### **4 ELM Infrastructure Rollout Update**

**Verbal**

James Reid, Head of Services and Deputy Director EDINA, gave an update on the ELM infrastructure rollout. The development roadmap was highlighted, including the aim of improving the user experience and the ability to upload multiple documents. Related projects were also flagged, including AskEDHelp, the Unidesk chatbot that integrates AI technology with the University's existing call management system.

The Committee welcomed the presentation, and noted the considerable amount of work undertaken by EDINA to get to this stage, including demonstrating appropriate rigour through the ISG Ethics Board. The relatively low number of ELM users was discussed, noting that promotion through the Edinburgh University Students' Association and on MyEd may be helpful, with a focus on highlighting the benefits discussed in the previous agenda item.

#### **5 Chief Information Officer Update**

**Verbal**

Key activities and updates since the last meeting were reported, including:

- **EUCLID Options, Oracle Redwood and Implementation Plan.** It was noted the significant amount of work that had already been undertaken on these projects, as outlined in Papers B and C.
- **Technology sector.** It was again reported there had been increasing consolidation of the sector, resulting in price increases for both software and library materials.
- **Risk of vendor lock-in.** There continue to be mitigation plans around the risk of vendor lock-in.

#### **6 EUCLID Options**

**Paper B**

Lisa Dawson, Academic Registrar, provided a summary of work to look at options regarding the ongoing and future operation of EUCLID, the student records system used for all matriculated students at the University, taking into consideration recent engagement with the current software provider.

The Committee discussed the paper and context provided, noting for any university a move to a new student record system would be a major change project.

The Convener thanked colleagues for their work to date on this critical topic, noting further updates would be provided to KSC.

## **7 Oracle Redwood and Implementation Plan**

**Paper C**

Martyn Pegg, Head of Service – People and Money, provided an update on progress with Oracle Redwood. It was reported that Oracle Redwood is the first major redevelopment of the Oracle Fusion user interface in the last 8 years, delivering changes to many of the screens that our staff use in People and Money. It was noted that positive changes for HR Learning through Redwood had been successfully implemented and well received by our learning providers and staff. The project is led by a senior programme board (Finance, HR and Research Programme Implementation Board) with representation from across the University. It was also noted the ISG Disability Service was closely involved given Redwood is expected to improve accessibility issues previously reported to Oracle.

The Committee welcomed the positive implementation of the work to date, with the first phase of the project due to be delivered by December 2025.

## **8 Digital Accessibility**

**Paper D**

The Committee noted an update on digital accessibility with regards to the Digital Strategy and recent UK government audits of University systems.

It was confirmed that the operational and ongoing work associated with the Centre for Open Learning (COL) was intended to provide an exemplar for University departments and areas to follow and embed accordingly. A report on the learnings from the COL work would be disseminated and communicated in due course.

## **ITEMS FOR NOTING**

It was confirmed that no items had been selected in advance by members and attendees for discussion and that they would be noted without the expectation of discussion.

## **9 Recovery of Stolen Archival Documents**

**Paper E**

The Committee noted the update.

## **10 Digital Estate Capital Envelope 2024-2029**

**Paper F**

The Committee noted the update on Digital Estate capital envelope projected for 2024/25 and forecast to 2029/30.

## **11 Digital Estate Status Update** **Paper G**

The Committee noted a summary of progress on the substantive Digital Estate projects and project RAG report.

## **12 Information Security Update** **Paper H**

The regular Information Security update paper, providing a summary of the current external cyber threat environment, together with details of ongoing centrally managed technical control improvements that will further enhance University cyber security controls, was noted.

## **13 Major IT Expenditure Commitments Update** **Paper I**

The Committee noted an update on the latest position of major capital and revenue IT expenditure commitments in excess of £200k.

## **14 Library & University Collections Annual Report 2024** **Paper J**

The Committee noted the report.

## **15 Information Governance Framework** **Paper K**

The Committee noted the Information Governance Framework, Information Governance Group terms of reference and membership, and Frequently Asked Questions on the Framework.

## **16 Committee Reports**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• IT Committee</li><li>• Library Committee</li><li>• Estates Committee</li></ul>	<b>Paper L1</b> <b>Paper L2</b> <b>Paper L3</b>
--	---

The reports were noted.

## **17 Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

## **18 Date of Next Meeting**

Thursday 27 March 2025, 10:00 – 12:00 (hybrid meeting)