



UNIVERSITY COURT

9 October 2023, Pentland Suite, John McIntyre Conference Centre, Pollock Halls

**Web Version**

**Minute**

- Members Present:** Janet Legrand, Senior Lay Member  
Rushad Abadan, Co-opted Member  
Frank Armstrong, Co-opted Member  
Sharan Atwal, Students' Association President  
Shereen Benjamin, Senatus Assessor  
Richard Blythe, Senatus Assessor  
Lauren Byrne, Students' Association Vice-President Welfare  
Alastair Dunlop, Chancellor's Assessor  
Ruth Girardet, Co-opted Member  
Tobias Kelly, Academic Staff Member  
Peter Mathieson, Principal & Vice-Chancellor  
Sarah McAllister, Professional Services Staff Member  
Douglas Millican, Co-opted Member  
Jock Millican, General Council Assessor  
Hugh Mitchell, Co-opted Member  
Kathryn Nash, Trade Union Academic Staff Member  
Mark Patrizio, Trade Union Professional Services Staff Member  
Alistair Smith, Co-opted Member  
Sarah Wolffe, General Council Assessor
- Member Apologies:** Robert Aldridge, City of Edinburgh Council Assessor  
Douglas Alexander, General Council Assessor  
Debora Kayembe, Rector  
Kavi Thakrar, Co-opted Member
- In Attendance:** Leigh Chalmers, Vice-Principal & University Secretary  
Sophia Lycouris, Rector's Assessor
- Presenters & Observers:** Lewis Allan, Senior Governance Advisor to the Vice-Principal & University Secretary  
David Argyle, Vice-Principal & Head of College  
Christina Boswell, Vice-Principal Research & Enterprise  
Lucy Evans, Deputy Secretary Students  
Iain Gordon, Vice-Principal & Head of College  
Kim Graham, Provost  
Lee Hamill, Director of Finance  
Colm Harmon, Vice-Principal Students  
Gary Jebb, Director of Place  
Louise Kelso, General Counsel & Director of Legal Services  
Catherine Martin, Vice-Principal Corporate Services  
Theresa Merrick, Director of Communications & Marketing  
Sarah Prescott, Vice-Principal & Head of College  
James Saville, Director of Human Resources  
Rona Smith, Deputy Secretary Governance & Strategic Planning

## **OPENING ITEMS**

### **1 Minute Paper A1**

Janet Legrand, Senior Lay Member, noted apologies and welcomed members and attendees. New members and attendees present at their first meeting were welcomed: Rushad Abadan, Co-opted Member; Mark Patrizio, Trade Union Professional Services Member; Louise Kelso, General Counsel & Director of Legal Services; and, Dan Wedgwood, Head of Court Services.

The minute of the meeting held on 19 June 2023 was approved.

### **2 Matters Arising & Review of Action Log Paper A2**

It was noted that the external effectiveness review of Senate has concluded and the review and its recommendations will be considered at the first Senate meeting of the new academic year, with Court to be updated subsequently.

### **3 Principal's Report Paper B**

Peter Mathieson, Principal & Vice-Chancellor, commented on:

- Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) 2023 valuation: a recent joint statement from Universities UK and the University & College Union on collaboration towards scheme stability, USS benefit improvements and reduced contribution rates was welcomed. It was noted that an employer consultation and a member consultation will follow, with the intention to implement changes early in the new calendar year;
- Exascale supercomputer: the University has been selected as the preferred location to host the UK government-funded next generation Exascale supercomputer, part of a £900m investment in the UK's computing capacity;
- Major change projects: the final phase of the new student support model and the new virtual learning environment Learn Ultra were both implemented successfully at the start of the new semester;
- Economic impact report: a link to a [video](#) summarising the findings of an independent economic impact report on the University has been circulated for members to view. A reception was also held to publicise and celebrate the economic and social impact of the University in the local community.
- Philanthropic activity: the regular update on philanthropic activity (Item 18) was highlighted, including the Insights Programme, which provides work placements and career support for widening participation students from alumni hosts.

## 4 Committee Business

### • Senior Lay Member's Overview

Janet Legrand, Senior Lay Member, noted:

- Court internal effectiveness review (Item 13/Paper L): members were thanked for their contributions as part of the review. An external review is also planned later in the current academic year;
- Participation in the Principal's Welcome Ceremonies for new students; and,
- Committee of Scottish Chairs (CSC): the University will host the CSC's next meeting, which will include a return to the University for Professor Dorothy Miell, former Vice-Principal & Head of College of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences and current Chair of the Board of Governors at Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. Condolences were expressed on the passing of Nick Kuenssberg OBE, a former Chair of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

### • Exception Committee

**Paper C1**

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

- Engineering Hub Additional Project Funding Request: the approval of additional funding to enable the award of the contract for construction services;
- Staff Benefits Scheme Trustees: the appointment of Kathryn Graham, external investment professional, for a four year term with effect from 1 August 2023
- Dr Margaret Stewart Bequest Trustees: the appointment of Jock Millican, for a three year term with effect from 1 August 2023.

### • Court Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) Sub-Group

**Paper C2**

The report was noted, including the responses to a recent USS Technical Provisions consultation and accompanying questions for employers from Universities UK as part of the response to the March 2023 valuation of the scheme. The joint statement from Universities UK and the University & College Union was welcomed as positive news that could be communicated to staff. It was noted that the University will respond to a short employer consultation on the joint statement's proposals and will publish this response.

### • Policy & Resources Committee

**Paper C3**

The report was noted. The Grade Scale Review was welcomed and the timescale for submission to Court queried. It was noted that a revised paper with further contextual information had been requested for the next meeting of Policy & Resources Committee, with the intention that it progress to Court if recommended by the Committee.

### • Nominations Committee

**Paper C4**

The report was noted.

- **Audit & Risk Committee**

**Paper C5**

The report was noted.

- **Remuneration Committee: Senior Leadership Team Remuneration Review 2024 – Proposed Approach**

**Paper C6**

*All attendees, presenters and observers aside from the Vice-Principal & University Secretary, the Director of Human Resources and the clerk absented the meeting for this item.*

Court reviewed the proposed approach of the Remuneration Committee to the annual review of the remuneration of the Senior Leadership Team, to be presented for approval by the Remuneration Committee in January 2024. The proposed general framework was supported and the following points raised:

- Scope for inclusion in decision-making of results from the National Student Survey and the Staff Survey and other measures – the approach taken is to assess the performance of individuals rather than measurement against wider metrics, which would require a different contractual model of employment;
- How individual performance is assessed – in common with other staff individual objectives are set and assessed as part of an annual review process; and,
- Taking into account the tailored nature of the sector-wide pay award for 2023/24 by staff grade, with staff in higher grades receiving an award of 5%.

- **Knowledge Strategy Committee**

**Paper C7**

The report was noted.

## **KEY ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/DECISION**

### **5 Student Survey Results 2023**

**Paper D**

Findings from the National Student Survey (NSS), Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) and Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) 2023 and actions to improve student experience were reviewed. It was commented that, while there were positive elements in the surveys, the overall findings were disappointing and there is a collective determination to improve the student experience to match the University's recognised excellence in research, as referenced in Strategy 2030. Actions to improve student experience have been prioritised as:

- Three major initiatives: student support; assessment and feedback; curriculum transformation;
- Continuous improvement work to address known "pain-points" raised by students; and,
- Greater alignment, prioritisation, co-ordination, resource planning, and communication and engagement to enable the delivery of the above.

The three Heads of College were invited to comment, with topics raised including recognition of the critical importance of improving student experience of assessment

and feedback, an area where survey results consistently show relatively low levels of satisfaction at the University in comparison to peers but where there are areas of good practice that can be learned from. Setting clear expectations on the timeliness of feedback for the benefit of students and monitoring this to achieve greater consistency was highlighted, along with building a culture of parity of esteem between teaching and research.

The following points were raised in open discussion:

- Work to ensure consistency of expectations and experience was welcomed, including considering the volume and type of assessment, with over-assessment in some areas raised;
- The typical model utilised at the University of large scale undergraduate teaching in the initial years and the reliance on written rather than verbal feedback are likely to lead to lower student satisfaction levels;
- Examples of good practice and positive changes made should be well communicated;
- Work in train, such as on minimum standards of training for PhD students who assist with teaching, should be completed and publicised;
- The risk of well-intentioned work bureaucratising student experience rather enhancing it and in taking approaches that have been tried previously but without measurably improving student satisfaction;
- Students and staff may vary greatly in their expectations and understanding of assessment and feedback and clearly explaining the approaches used at the University and reasons for this can help better align these;
- Given the importance of the subject those in leadership positions should be able to monitor progress throughout the year;
- The commitment of senior staff across the University to work in tandem and demonstrate accountable leadership has been articulated by the three Heads of College and the Vice-Principal Students;
- The importance of building a sense of community amongst students and staff can help improve understanding and reception of feedback and strengthen a feeling of student voice and agency.

Members and presenters were thanked for their contributions and the importance the Court places on improving student experience noted.

## **6 Student Recruitment 2023/24 entry**

**Paper E**

An overview of the expected outturn of the 2023/24 entry undergraduate and postgraduate student recruitment cycle was presented. Overall, while the census date has yet to be reached, it was noted that intake levels are likely to be broadly on or near target, including for Widening Participation students. Intake targets have been aligned to the Size and Shape exercise, with the intention to meet rather than exceed targets to assist with providing a high quality student experience, including ensuring availability of University student accommodation for those eligible. Some sector-wide trends in the current cycle were highlighted.

## **7 Students' Association and Sports Union Reports**

**Papers F1-F2**

The Students' Association President and the Sports Union President presented reports, with matters highlighted including:

- Student sabbatical officer objectives, including building a sense of community and belonging, particularly for Widening Participation students, the cost of living, and managing the temporary closure of Teviot Row House for renovation work and its impact on collaborative and social space for students;
- The employment of a Chinese native speaking student to assist with communications and engagement with Chinese students during Welcome Week;
- University student accommodation has been available to all those eligible under the accommodation guarantee scheme and more beyond;
- The success of student athletes in elite competitions held over the summer period was congratulated;
- Priorities for the Sports Union include supporting the physical and mental health of students, along with advocating for improved and expanded facilities to better cater for increased demand from students to participate in sport at all levels; and,
- Encouraging continuing undergraduate and postgraduate students to consider engaging in clubs and societies that they may not have initially joined as first year undergraduates.

## **8 Director of Finance's Report**

**Paper G**

The Director of Finance's Report was reviewed, including an updated Finance Strategy, a draft (unaudited) Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure for the 2022-23 financial year, management accounts for June 2023, the outcome of a review of the University's Revolving Credit Facilities and updates on external audit-related fees and the Universities Superannuation Scheme 2023 valuation.

It was agreed to approve the updated Finance Strategy with a proposed amendment included and to authorise the renewal of the existing Revolving Credit Facilities.

## **9 New Darwin Estates Project**

**Paper H**

A project update, including a revised anticipated budget for the New Darwin project to deliver the final phase of the 'Building a New Biology' project to create a new hub for the School of Biological Sciences, was presented. The context of the School's strong performance and potential to further strengthen in areas such as engineering biology as a result of a new building that would better allow for collaborative and interdisciplinary research and teaching was highlighted. It was noted that the request is for an updated provision within the Capital Plan to reflect the revised budget along with funding for professional fees to further develop the design in preparation for a full business case. It was confirmed that the project is aligned with Size and Shape plans.

Court:

- Noted the approval of an outline business case by Estates Committee on 6 September 2023;

- Approved an amendment to the budget allocated in the prioritised Capital Plan for the project;
- Approved funding for fees in order to develop the design to RIBA Stage 3 (Developed Design) in support of preparation of a Full Business Case; and,
- Noted that feasibility study fees have been spent on the project to date against 'Building a New Biology' funding.

## **10 Staff Engagement Survey**

**Paper I**

Key themes from the University-level results of the 2023 Staff Engagement Survey and lessons learned and planned next steps for future staff surveys were reviewed. It was noted that other people-related work is ongoing, including the Grade Scale Review, a review of the contribution award policy and a project on academic promotions, amongst others and Human Resources colleagues are engaging with staff trade unions on this work as appropriate. On the staff engagement survey, the low response rate was raised as a particular concern, along with a low proportion of those who did respond believing that action will be taken in response to the survey. The impact of the low response rate on the reliability of the findings was raised and it was proposed that, given the limited time available for discussion at this meeting, follow-up to the survey be returned to within a future People Report to Court.

## **11 People and Money External Review Update**

**Paper J**

An update on the Court-commissioned external review of the implementation of the People & Money System was considered. It was noted that PA Consulting have been appointed to conduct the review and will present a final report to the next meeting, which will be accompanied by a management response for review by Court.

## **12 Rectorial Election Regulations**

**Paper K**

Draft regulations and related documents relevant for the Rectorial election expected in February/March 2024 were presented. Communications of the regulations were discussed and it was noted that the draft regulations had been circulated in advance to the Edinburgh University Students' Association and the Joint Unions Liaison Committee (and a paper on the proposed election dates had been reviewed by Senate and comments received summarised in the paper) and would be published on the University website when the call for nominations is opened and publicised through usual communication channels to students and staff. It was queried how potential breaches of University policies should be reported and in response it was confirmed that during the election period this should be reported to the Deputy Returning Officer in the first instance and, if relating to a Rector after an election has concluded, through the usual process of raising a complaint, with this to be circulated to members.

The election regulations were approved, including:

- The election date and duration, with voting to take place from Tuesday 27 February to Friday 1 March 2024;
- The appointment of the Chancellor's Assessor, Alastair Dunlop KC, as the Returning Officer, with a Deputy Returning Officer to be nominated by the

University Secretary and proposed as Rona Smith, Deputy Secretary Governance & Strategic Planning;

- An option for staff members to use postal votes (as per previous Rectorial elections);
- Adding a requirement for those nominated to agree to abide by the Code of Conduct for Court Members and relevant University policies and regulations for the duration of their nomination until the end of election period (and beyond if elected) and that any breach may be grounds for disqualification (as determined by the Returning Officer, with a right of appeal to a Scrutinising Committee);
- Expanding the Scrutinising Committee to include the University Lead on Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, Professor Sarah Cunningham-Burley and the Vice-Principal & University Secretary, Leigh Chalmers, given that the Scrutinising Committee may now consider appeals relating to compliance with the Code of Conduct for Court Members and compliance with other University policies and regulations;
- Increasing the number of members of the electorate required to support a nomination from 40 to 60 given the increase in the size of the electorate since this figure was last amended, in 2009; and,
- Including in the Regulations reference to existing policies that apply to students and staff to make clear that the usual standards of behaviour and adherence to University policies apply to all students and staff engaging in the election in any form.

*The Senior Lay Member recused herself from the meeting for the remainder of the item and Frank Armstrong, Intermediary Member, was nominated to chair discussion of the remainder of the item.*

It was noted that the Court-approved statements on the 'Role Description: Rector' and 'The Roles of the Rector and Senior Lay Member' have not been reviewed since the creation of the position of the Senior Lay Member in 2020 and it would be suitable to review these at this point in time so that any changes may take effect after the upcoming Rectorial election and be made available in advance to candidates for the role of Rector. The present arrangements were reviewed in relation to other universities with the two positions of Rector and Senior Lay Member/Senior Governor/Convener of Court as Court members, noting that the University is alone in holding Court meetings at present where the Senior Lay Member or equivalent does not chair any part of the meeting if the Rector is present. It was agreed in principle to amend the 'Role Description: Rector' and 'The Roles of the Rector and Senior Lay Member' documents to state that the Rector will preside at Court meetings if present and that the Senior Lay Member will chair discussion of business items at Court meetings, with effect from after the next Rectorial election. It was agreed to delegate responsibility to the Vice-Principal & University Secretary and to the Chancellor's Assessor to agree a suitable form of wording in the two documents to reflect this decision. Other proposed amendments to the 'Role Description: Rector' and 'The Roles of the Rector and Senior Lay Member' documents were approved as set out in the paper.



*Secretary's note: wording was subsequently agreed by the Vice-Principal & University Secretary and by the Chancellor's Assessor for the 'Role Description: Rector' document as: 'the Senior Lay Member of Court (who has a role similar to that of Chair of institution in many other universities and chairs discussion of the business items at Court meetings)' and for 'The Roles of the Rector and Senior Lay Member' document as: 'the Senior Lay Member is responsible for the leadership of the University Court, will chair the business items at Court meetings and will preside at Court meetings in the absence of the Rector'*

In response to an individual comment that the position of Rector should be remunerated in order to better support individuals from a wider diversity of backgrounds in undertaking the role, the Vice-Principal & University Secretary undertook to confirm whether other universities with the position of Rector provide remuneration for the role.

*Secretary's note: it has been confirmed that the position of Rector is unremunerated at all other universities with this role.*

## **ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL**

### **13 Annual Court Internal Effectiveness Review Paper L**

The internal review of Court's effectiveness for the 2022/23 academic year was reviewed and approved.

### **14 Outcome Agreement 2023-24 Paper M**

A near final Outcome Agreement 2023-24 and associated annexes was reviewed and approved. Authority was delegated to the Deputy Secretary Governance & Strategic Planning to make any minor revisions and to submit the documentation to the Scottish Funding Council by 31 October.

### **15 Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression: update on progress and plans Paper N**

An update on the work of the Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression Working Group in academic year 2022/23 and plans for academic year 2023/24 was noted.

### **16 Annual Report to the Scottish Funding Council on Institution-led Review and Enhancement Activity Paper O**

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

**17 Development Trust – amendment to governing deed and approval of new Trustee** **Paper P**

Court:

- Noted an update on the continuing role of the University of Edinburgh Development Trust in the management of gift income across the University;
- Approved the terms of a Minute of Amendment to establish an additional independent trustee position and to appoint Perdita Fraser to this independent trustee position for a three year term of office in the first instance; and
- Delegated to the University Secretary the signing of the Minute of Amendment to effect the changes to the trusteeship of the Development Trust.

**18 Donations and Legacies; Alumni Relations Activities** **Paper Q**

Court noted donations and legacies received since the last meeting and an update on alumni relations activities.

**19 Any Other Business**

No other business was raised.

**20 Date of Next Meeting**

Monday, 4 December 2023



UNIVERSITY COURT

4 December 2023

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.
2. The activity noted supports our commitment to deliver on our vision and ambitions including all four key areas of focus highlighted in Strategy 2030: People, Research, Learning and Teaching, and Social and Civic Responsibility.

**Action requested/Recommendation**

3. In general, Court is asked to note the information presented, 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. At the most recent meeting of the Audit & Risk Committee there was an item on the University's reputation. I made some comments which led the committee to suggest that I should include them in my Introduction to the Annual Report and Accounts: I have done so and I now repeat them here for Court's benefit. I commented on two disconnects that I have repeatedly observed in my time here.
6. The first stems from the fact that I am privileged to represent the University at events locally, regionally and globally and I am always hugely gratified by the extent to which the University of Edinburgh's impact and reputation are recognised. Outside Scotland, our University is uniformly seen as a truly outstanding institution: one which people admire, respect, wish to join and/or are proud to call their alma mater. Much of this is based on our research credentials, but our societal and economic impacts more generally are also widely appreciated.
7. However, this is often much less evident closer to home, where the focus is more often on local, immediate, often controversial matters that are felt newsworthy. Of course, we have had more than our fair share of local issues: People & Money (featuring large on today's agendas), the Sustainable Travel Policy and some combative meetings of Senate, but there is a striking and persistent disconnect between the discourse locally and that further afield. That is not to say that the University is not admired locally and regionally: we have many excellent relationships and I am always treated with respect by Scottish Government, the City Council, local businesses, charities and other partners. I just wish there was as much recognition locally of the big picture as there is outside Scotland.

8. The second disconnect relates to the portrayal of events which are occurring in Edinburgh as part of sectoral issues. Sometimes one would think that Edinburgh is the only university affected: examples are freedom of expression; academic freedom; industrial relations; partnerships with China and international security. Our students were badly affected by UCU's marking and assessment boycott but we were not the worst. However, Edinburgh got lots of adverse publicity because we were the first major university in the graduation cycle. By the time other major universities got around to graduations, the media had moved on because the story was no longer novel.

9. We must all work harder to ensure that the reality of our University is heard, appreciated and better understood across all parts of the world including in our own neighbourhood. In my further remarks below, some examples can be seen that illustrate our continuing and burgeoning excellence.

10. At the Court seminar in October, I announced the UK Government's decision to fund the UK's first and only Exascale computer in Edinburgh, news which had been embargoed until that very day. The news has been greeted enthusiastically across the University: huge congratulations are particularly due to Professor Mark Parsons who led the negotiations leading to this fantastic outcome for our University. Others including me influenced, but Mark led.

11. The successes continue to roll in: after the UK Government's AI Summit, an announcement was made of 12 new doctoral training centres in various aspects of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Only one university got more than one: that was us with three.

12. Professor Jane Hillston, who recently completed her term as Head of our School of Informatics, has been awarded the Lovelace Medal, one of the highest prizes in computer science in the UK, jointly with Demis Hassabis, the co-founder of Deep Mind. Jane becomes the first person to have won all three of the British Computer Society's three top awards, the Needham Award, the Distinguished Dissertation Award and now the Lovelace Research Medal. I am sure Court will join me in sending Jane our congratulations and our pride in her eminence.

13. In other subject areas, the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine has had spectacular success in winning research funding. Our generation of new companies is breaking records: 110 in 2020-21 (then a record and the first time exceeding a hundred), 116 in 2021-22 and now 119 in 2022-23.

14. We have gained record levels of philanthropic support in recent years.

15. Some of you joined us either at Dovecot Studios in Edinburgh or at Westminster when we launched the report by London Economics which quantifies the University of Edinburgh's economic impact: a stunning £7.5 billion contribution to the UK economy in 2021-22, with every pound of investment in UoE yielding a return of £6.92. I have missed no opportunity to tell both UK and Scottish Governments that if they want a seven-fold return on the investment of scarce public money, they should know where to invest it.

16. Some but not all of our local and regional impact is due to the superb success of the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal: we were set a very stretching

set of Key Performance Indicators and we are ahead of all of them all: including 15,000 new secure jobs created and over 100,000 people provided with data skills education and training. The magnificence of the now almost-finished Edinburgh Futures Institute will have been exhibited to Court members by the time of the Court meeting. Adding this to the Bayes Building including its superb robotics facility and shared space with national and international industrial partners; the Usher Institute at Bioquarter in which our world-leading public health researchers will be gathered together for the first time instead of being dispersed around numerous often unsuitable buildings in the city centre; the supercomputing facilities and other developments at Easter Bush and it should be obvious the transformational impact that the City Deal capital funding has had on our facilities.

17. The challenge now of course is for the people occupying those magnificent new or refurbished buildings to capitalise upon them and take the University's reputation and impact even further.

18. We have continued to make progress on some of the priorities that the Provost and I spoke about at the Court seminar in October. You will recall that uppermost in these were student experience and staff experience. With students, the successful migration to a new virtual learning environment, Learn Ultra, the introduction of the new Student Support System and major capital investments such as the Wellbeing Centre, the Nucleus at King's Buildings and the refurbishment of Teviot are strong positive examples. With staff we are clear about our desire to be an employer of choice: attracting, supporting and retaining the brightest and the best locally and from all over the world. A paper on today's Court agenda describes the latest bold proposals for investing in our staff and addressing areas where Edinburgh needs to remain competitive.

19. We hope we can harness the current moment in time at which there is, for the first time since before my arrival in 2018, no active mandate for industrial action at Edinburgh. We are not remotely complacent about the level of staff dissatisfaction, but we are determined to address this. It is not only about money, but investment will help. We have already introduced some specific policies including support for international staff which is sector-leading, and we have addressed inequalities at lower grades on such matters as annual leave entitlement.

20. The implementation of the third phase of the People and Money system has of course had significant and prolonged impact on the staff experience. In the past few weeks, the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) have given much consideration to the Management response to Court's External Review of People and Money. All of SLT accept the recommendations and have worked through the response in detail, which Court will discuss at the 4 December meeting. The question of trust in the leadership of the University is a central tenet of the report and one that we were already aware of from our daily interactions and also the most recent Staff Engagement Survey results. Earning the trust of our staff will take time and commitment and will be built around real examples of progress, demonstration of improved listening/communication and transparency. The new approach to strategic change, built around the University Initiatives Portfolio Board (UIPB), will be crucial and all members of SLT understand their role in working together to deliver that.

21. It has often been a difficult time on campus over the last few weeks where world tensions have been writ large. The very distressing Israel-Palestine war is impacting members of our community from across all aspects of the conflict. We are clear that anti-Semitism and Islamophobia have no place in our University and we continue to offer our support to all of those who need it and to call for understanding and respectful protest, where protests are taking place.

22. Concerns from a number of students, particularly around potential links to related military activity and University investments were raised at the Student Voice Forum that I participated in on 14 November alongside Deputy Secretary Students Lucy Evans and Vice-Principal Corporate Services Dr Catherine Martin. Organised by EUSA, the Forum was a good opportunity to connect directly with students and hear their comments and questions. The key themes were the student experience in general and assessment and feedback specifically, questions raised also covered student housing concerns, the impact of AI, casualisation issues for staff, and queries around disability and counselling services.

23. On our investment strategy, the University of Edinburgh endowment fund invests across a wide range of companies and we appoint independent investment managers to invest the University assets, rather than directly choosing which companies to invest in ourselves. We require our investment managers to adhere to specific exclusions – companies operating in certain industries or manufacturing certain products – as part of our commitment to investing responsibly. We are currently in contact with our investment managers about concerns raised relating to the recent events in Israel and Palestine.

24. The controversy around the screening of the film *Adult Human Female* by Edinburgh Academics for Academic Freedom has featured at previous Court meetings. The “damned if you do and damned if you don’t” nature of my job and of university leadership in general is amply illustrated by the fact that we have been condemned as institutionally transphobic and neglectful of the sensitivities of marginalised groups by those that opposed the screening and at the same time we have been criticised for not living up to our responsibilities for freedom of expression and/or of giving in too easily to vocal minorities by those that supported the screening. For my part, I am just grateful for the many hours of hard work put in by members of the senior team, other senior staff of the University and particularly to our in-house Security team and to Edinburgh Police for all their contributions to ensuring that the screening could go ahead successfully on 22 November, with those wishing to protest able to do so but without preventing those that wished to attend the event from doing so safely.

25. The recent short visit to the United States (New York, Washington DC and the San Francisco Bay Area), with Vice-Principal Philanthropy and Advancement Chris Cox and Professor Shannon Vallor, Baillie Gifford Chair in the Ethics of Data and Artificial Intelligence, was enthusiastically received by our guests: alumni, current students and staff, university partners, donors and other interlocutors. The visit progressed a number of key regional objectives including developing philanthropic goals, engaging with alumni and strategic university partnership development as well as the University of Edinburgh USA Development Trust Board Meeting in New York.

26. We were delighted that our Chancellor hosted the Chancellor's dinner in October at the Palace of Holyrood House where she presented the Chancellor's Award's to: Dr Lorraine Kerr, Senior Strategic Partnership Manager in Edinburgh Innovations - the Outstanding Contribution Award; Professor Guy Lloyd-Jones, Forbes Chair of Organic Chemistry - the Research Award; Dr Deval Desai, Lecturer in International Economic Law - the Rising Star Award; and Dr Jeni Harden, Reader based in the Usher Institute - the Teaching Award. Many congratulations to them all.

27. I mentioned Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete in my October report to Court. Vice-Principal Martin continues to lead our work to assess the extent of the impact and recommendations to address the problems: the costs now look likely to be very considerable and will impact seriously on our other capital priorities. Estates Committee will continue to be updated as this work progresses.

28. Finally, a word on graduations. As I write this, the winter graduations are well underway and it has been delightful to see them progressing without the disruptions of recent years, including due to the impact of UCU's Marking and Assessment boycott this summer. I understand that the vast majority of students impacted in the summer have now received their awards. The smiling happy faces of our graduands and their loved ones have again brought the campus alive and reminded us all of what a special place the University of Edinburgh is.

#### *Selected meetings and events from the mid-October to start December*

##### *29. University*

- Participated in the Chancellor's Dinner hosted by HRH The Princess Royal at the Palace of Holyroodhouse.
- Co-hosted with Kim Graham a celebration event for staff recently appointed to a Personal Chair.
- Welcomed attendees of the Edinburgh Future Conversations event on Leadership.
- Along with the University Secretary met with Jewish students, our Jewish Chaplains and representatives from the Jewish community to discuss support available to them and what more can be done. This meeting had been arranged prior to 7 October but obviously proved to be very timely.
- The Senior Leadership Team held an "away day" where the management response to the External Review of People and Money and investment in our staff were the main areas of business discussed. Some team development work was also undertaken.
- Consulted with Heads of School at Academic Strategy Group on investment in staff proposals including discussion of the key aspects of the grade scale review.
- Spoke to the Leaders' Forum on strategic priorities and recent successes.
- Participated in EUSA's Student Voice Forum.
- Welcomed members of the Carlyle Circle (University legacy pledgers) to St Cecilia's Hall for our annual thank you reception.

##### *30. Edinburgh and Scotland*

- Met with Chief Superintendent Sean Scott, Edinburgh City Division Commander, Police Scotland and his deputy concerning issues of shared interest.

- Participated in a Joint Ministerial meeting for the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal which included Neil Gray MSP, Lord Offord of Garvel, Civil servants from the Scottish Government and Scotland Office, and Regional City Deal Partners.
- Participated in the Scottish Finance Enterprise Board Annual Dinner and Awards.
- Chaired a meeting of Higher Education - Further Education Strategy Group, which feeds into the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal meetings, and also participated in the City Region Deal Joint Committee.

### 31. *Sector and Public Affairs*

- Participated in a Universities UK Roundtable meeting on the Israel-Hamas war.
- Participated in a tour of the House of Commons led by the office staff of alumnus and local MP Ian Murray.
- Met with Matt Western MP, Shadow Education Minister for Labour.
- Led a reception hosted by Ian Murray MP at the House of Commons on behalf of the University of Edinburgh.
- Met with Andrew Kerr, Chief Executive for the City of Edinburgh Council.
- Participated in the Scottish Covid-19 Inquiry universities roundtable discussion.
- Participated in a dinner in Glasgow hosted by the Scottish Government's Chief Scientist (Health), Professor Dame Anna Dominiczak.
- Participated in Universities Scotland events including: Lead Member for Health meetings; and a Trusted Research in the Scottish Sector meeting.
- Participated in a Scottish Funding Council Board Strategy day.
- Participated in Universities UK meetings and events including: the regular Vice-Chancellor's USS pension discussions; current issues discussion
- Met together with senior leaders of Universities UK and Russell Group with Tom Tugendhat MP, Minister of State for Security.
- Participated in a Russell Group Board meeting.
- Participated in various meetings on Security as part of my role as Lead for security issues in higher education for the Russell Group and Universities UK.
- Provided opening remarks and chaired a roundtable discussion on 'Developing Institutional China Strategies' at the British Council's Going Global Conference 2023, held at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre.
- Spoke at the Medical Schools Council Residential meeting on Future-proofing UK Health Research (in connection with the report that I recently co-chaired with Dame Julia Goodfellow for the Academy of Medical Sciences).

### 32. *International*

- Participated in a visit to Valencia with colleagues from Gaias Europa, the Universidad San Francisco de Quito, EDEM Business School, Oceanogràfic València, and Politecnico University of Valencia.
- Participated in a visit to New York, Washington and San Francisco. Activities undertaken included: an alumni event in each city; meeting with key supporters such as the Board of the University of Edinburgh USA Development Trust; Cornell University; Rockefeller Foundation; Simons Foundation; National Security Commission on Emerging Biotechnology; National Science Foundation, the University of California Davis; and participated in a US State Department Roundtable discussion.



- Participated in various League of European Research Universities meetings over two days, hosted by Trinity College Dublin.
- Welcomed colleagues from Taras Shevchenko National University, Kyiv, visiting to discuss our collaborative partnership with them.
- Welcomed Professor Zebulon Vilakazi, Vice-Chancellor and Principal, University of the Witwatersrand, and his colleagues, during their visit to Edinburgh to discuss our collaborations with them.

### **Resource implications**

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

### **Risk Management**

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

### **Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals**

35. As the paper represents a summary of recent news and general activity, it does not directly relate to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

### **Equality & Diversity**

36. No specific Equality and Diversity issues are identified.

### **Next steps/implications**

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

### **Consultation**

38. As the content is a summary of recent news no consultation is required.

### **Further information**

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

### 40. Author & Presenter

Professor Sir Peter Mathieson  
Principal and Vice-Chancellor  
December 2023

### **Freedom of Information**

35. Open paper.



UNIVERSITY COURT

4 December 2023

**Court USS Sub-Group Report**

**Committee Name**

1. Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) Sub-Group

**Date of Meeting**

2. 20-27 October 2023 (by correspondence)

**Action Required**

3. To note recent activity overseen by the Sub-Group.

**Key points**

*Consultation on employers' and trade union's Joint Statement*

4. On 5 October 2023, Universities UK (UUK) and the University & College Union (UCU) agreed a joint statement outlining proposed scheme changes resulting from the outcome of the 2023 valuation, including "collaboration towards scheme stability, USS benefit improvements and reduced contribution rates", noting that this statement would be "subject to completion of their own consultation processes". The joint statement is provided as an appendix.

5. The University, as a USS employer, was consulted on this statement by UUK. The Sub-Group considered the statement by correspondence between 20 and 27 October. On the basis of comments received, the following response was sent to UUK on 27 October:

*The University supports the proposal as outlined in the joint statement. We especially welcome the statement's expressions of commitment to the stability and long-term sustainability of the scheme and we would encourage early action to provide greater clarity on these matters. In particular, we would welcome:*

- *early scenario planning, to help clarify future expectations;*
- *early development of a common understanding of the concept of "a moderately prudent evidence-based valuation"; and*
- *clear, concise communication with scheme members to foster awareness of the importance of long-term sustainability.*

6. The University's support for the joint statement will be recorded on the University's website at:

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/finance/about/sections/pensions/pensions-news/uss>

7. Subsequently, on 30 October 2023, the USS Joint Negotiating Committee formally adopted the proposals set out in the joint statement. Any changes to the scheme remain subject to statutory consultations.

*On-going consultation on Schedule of Contributions*

8. At the time of writing, the Sub-Group is considering the University's response to a draft Schedule of Contributions proposed by the USS Trustee. Court will be apprised of the University's response, which will again be recorded in outline on the University's website.

**Further information**

9. Author

Daniel Wedgwood  
Head of Court Services

Presenter

Janet Legrand  
Convener, USS Sub-Group

**Freedom of Information**

10. Open paper



UNIVERSITY COURT

4 December 2023

Policy & Resources Committee Report

**Committee Name**

1. Policy & Resources Committee

**Date of Meeting**

2. 13 November 2023

**Action Required**

3. To note the key points from the meeting.

*The minutes of the PRC meeting on 13 November 2023 can be viewed at <https://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/GaSP/Governance/PolicyandResources/2023-2024/20231113-PRC-Minute-Web.pdf>*

**Further information**

28. Author

Daniel Wedgwood  
Head of Court Services

Presenter

Janet Legrand  
Convener, Policy & Resources Committee

**Freedom of Information**

29. Open version.



UNIVERSITY COURT

4 December 2023

Nominations Committee Report

**Committee Name**

1. Nominations Committee

**Date of Meeting**

2. 13 November 2023

**Action Required**

3. To note the key points from the meeting and to approve the recommendations as set out below.

**Key points**

*Court and Committee Memberships*

*[Note: any Nominations Committee members referenced in the paragraphs below recused themselves from the meeting for the duration of the relevant discussion]*

4. Current and expected future vacancies on Court and its committees were reviewed. For Court, it was noted that:
- The Rectorial Election Regulations 2024, approved by Court at its last meeting include a role for Nominations Committee to recommend to Court the appointment of a representative of the Court to the Rectorial Election's Scrutinising Committee; and,
  - Court members with terms of office that will conclude in summer 2024 are: Hugh Mitchell (eligible for reappointment for a second term on the recommendation of Nominations Committee); Sarah McAllister (eligible to stand for re-election for a second term, election to be held in Spring 2024); Kathryn Nash (eligible for re-appointment by the Joint Unions Liaison Committee for a second term); Sharan Atwal (eligible for re-election as a student sabbatical officer for a second term, election to be held in Spring 2024); and, Lauren Byrne (serving a second and final term of office as a student sabbatical officer, which will conclude in June 2024).
5. It was agreed to:
- Recommend to Court that Sarah McAllister be appointed as the Court representative on the Scrutinising Committee for the Rectorial Election scheduled for February/March 2024; and,
  - Recommend to Court that Hugh Mitchell be re-appointed for a second term of office as a Co-opted member of Court for four years from 1 August 2024.
6. For the Court committees, it was noted that the first term of office on Audit & Risk Committee for external member and risk specialist Ross Millar is due to conclude on 31 December 2023. It was agreed to recommend to Court that Ross Millar be re-appointed for a second term of office on Audit & Risk Committee for three years from 1 January 2024.

*Revised Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance*

7. An assessment of the University's compliance position in relation to the recently revised Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance (published at: <https://www.scottishuniversitygovernance.ac.uk/2023code/>) was reviewed. It was noted that:

- The review of the Governance Code concluded that it remained fit for purpose and only required minor revision in the light of legislative changes and some development of good practice since the previous edition;
- The revised Governance Code took effect from 1 August 2023. Institutions are expected to report on compliance on a 'comply or explain' basis within the Annual Report and Accounts 2023-24 (to be submitted to Court in the next academic year, expected in December 2024);
- As assessment of the compliance position found one area where a change in the new version has meant that a current practice is not compliant and a small number of other areas where the new version provides an opportunity to reflect on current practice;
- The one area where current practice is no longer compliant is in the treatment of conflicts of interest at Court and committee meetings, as set out in the Codes of Conduct for Court Members and Attendees. At present, the Codes of Conduct allow for the meeting chair to exercise some discretion over the handling of a declared conflict, with the default position that a person declaring a conflict will withdraw from participation in the relevant business. The revised Governance Code does not allow for discretion to be shown by the meeting chair and any person present declaring a conflict must withdraw from participation in the relevant business; and,
- Areas of current practice that were highlighted for reflection were: plans for any discontinuity in the offices of the Principal and Senior Lay Member – noting that an existing 'Contingency Deputising Arrangements for the Principal' document is already planned for review; any rules for Court members on the membership of other governing bodies or boards; the Remuneration Committee's Framework for Decision-Making document; and, guidance on severance arrangements for senior staff.

8. It was agreed that:

- Two proposed changes to the Code of Conduct for Court Members (and equivalent document for Court Attendees as appropriate) should be recommended to Court for approval: i) revisions to the text on conflicts of interest to comply with the new version of the Governance Code, as follows:

~~"A Court member or officer who has a clear and substantial interest in a matter under consideration by the Court should declare that interest at any meeting where the matter is to be discussed, whether or not that interest is already recorded in the Register or in the minute of a previous meeting. At the discretion of the Chair/Convener, the interest should be noted and, if it is relatively minor, the member should fully participate in the item of business. Otherwise, the member concerned must withdraw from participation in the relevant business should not participate in discussion and/or not vote on a decision and/or should withdraw from the meeting during the relevant discussion or decision at the Chair's/Convener's discretion."~~

ii) to expand the section on membership of other governing bodies to advise that Court members should consult with the Senior Lay Member or University Secretary before they agree to join another board either within our outwith the higher education sector, as follows:

**Membership of other governing bodies external boards/governing bodies**

“Court has agreed that it is good practice for any member of a governing body to accept appointment **as a member of an external organisation’s board/governing body** ~~as a governor of another institution in the higher education sector but only~~ after satisfying themselves that no conflict of interest will arise and after consulting the Senior Lay Member **or University Secretary and the /Chair of the two governing bodies concerned external board/governing body concerned.**

- The ‘Contingency Deputising Arrangements for the Principal’ document will be reviewed and any proposed changes submitted to Nominations Committee for initial consideration;
- Nominations Committee is content with the current arrangements should there be a discontinuity or absence in the office of Senior Lay Member, i.e. in the case of an absence, the Standing Orders of Court and the Terms of Reference for the relevant Court committees allow for other lay members to be nominated to take up any chairing responsibilities for the duration of a meeting and the Senior Lay Member can nominate other Court members to assist with any duties outside of Court and Court committee meetings as required, e.g. attending external meetings such as the Committee of Scottish Chairs and the UK Committee of University Chairs. In the case of a prolonged absence or discontinuity in the office, Court can appoint an Acting Senior Lay Member until the Senior Lay Member is able to resume duties or a new Senior Lay Member is elected;
- Remuneration Committee should review the remuneration-related aspects of the new Governance Code and consider any updates to the ‘Remuneration Committee: Framework for Decision Making’ document and the existing guidance on severance arrangements for senior staff; and,
- Audit & Risk Committee should consider the text within the Governance Code on the reporting of principal risks within the Annual Report and Accounts, for the 2023-24 version of the Annual Report and Accounts.

*External Effectiveness Review Proposal*

9. Proposed arrangements for an externally facilitated evaluation of the effectiveness of Court and its committees (‘external effectiveness review’) were considered. It was noted that initial discussions have been held with an individual suggested at the previous meeting, Veena O’Halloran, who has produced an outline proposal. It was noted that Veena O’Halloran is currently undertaking an external effectiveness review of the University of Glasgow’s Court, which is due to conclude in December 2023, and a review could begin at Edinburgh early in 2024.

10. The following points were raised:

- The reviewer and their proposed approach are in strong alignment with the preferences previously discussed by the Committee (an experienced individual, ideally with some experience of the Scottish higher education sector, rather than a consultancy firm; an approach that goes beyond a compliance check and considers effectiveness more broadly such as the extent to which the Court and its committees help enable the success of the University's Strategy 2030) and a briefing on Strategy 2030 could be given to the reviewer in preparation;
- an option to extend the time commitment could be built into the proposal and activated should this be agreed by both parties; and,
- Noting that there is a Rectorial election scheduled for February/March 2024, ensuring that the timings are suitable for the external reviewer to engage with a newly elected Rector as part of the review.

11. It was agreed to recommend the external effectiveness review proposal to Court for approval, incorporating the points raised above.

### **Equality & Diversity**

12. The equality and diversity of Court and its committees is considered when making recommendations or approvals.

### **Further information**

13. Author

Lewis Allan

Senior Governance Advisor to the

Vice-Principal & University Secretary

Presenter

Janet Legrand

Convener, Nominations Committee

### **Freedom of Information**

14. Open version.





UNIVERSITY COURT

4 December 2023

**Audit and Risk Committee Report**

**Committee Name**

1. Audit & Risk Committee.

**Date of Meeting**

2. 20 November 2023.

**Action Required**

3. To note the key points from the meeting.

**Key points**

*Annual Report and Accounts*

4. This meeting focused on consideration of key matters associated with the annual report and accounts, and supporting governance documents. It was noted that the majority of the audit work with regard to the University financial statements was well advanced but there was outstanding work to be completed, particularly in the area of bank reconciliations and intercompany account reconciliations. Whilst audit work was still ongoing, at this stage no matters that had arisen that would prevent an unmodified audit opinion. It was agreed there would be an additional meeting on 30 November to enable the Committee to make a recommendation to the Court meeting on 4 December 2023.

*Paragraphs 5-13: closed section.*

**Equality & Diversity**

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

**Further information**

15. Author  
Kirstie Graham  
Deputy Head of Court Services

Presenter  
Douglas Millican  
Convener of the Audit & Risk Committee

**Freedom of Information**

16. Open version.



UNIVERSITY COURT

4 December 2023

**Remuneration Committee Annual Report**

**Description of paper**

1. This is the annual report from Remuneration Committee to Court. In order to align with the University's financial year, Court agreed that it be submitted to the last Court meeting of the year and reflect the previous academic year.

**Action requested/Recommendation**

2. Court is invited to note the contents of the report.

**Background and context**

3. This is the fifteenth annual report from Remuneration Committee to Court. It covers Remuneration Committee activity in the period from 1 August 2022 to 31 July 2023. The last report was submitted to Court in December 2022.

4. The Remuneration Committee is responsible for the annual review and approval of revisions to the remuneration of the University's senior management, including the Principal, their direct reports and other senior staff.<sup>1</sup> Approved increases are effective from 1 January.

5. In December 2018, University Court approved revisions to the Remuneration Committee's Framework for Decision Making<sup>2</sup> to ensure compliance with the revised Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance (2017 edition), namely that, 'prior to decision-making on the remuneration package of the Principal and the senior team, all Court members will be consulted on the overall proposed approach, with the key principles underpinning the proposal explained'.

6. The key principles underpinning the Remuneration Committee Framework for Decision Making are to:

- ensure a transparent process
- ensure that the process reflects robust equality practice
- ensure that the process takes account of the quality and standing of the University of Edinburgh and to acknowledge that this quality and standing sets normal expectations of sustained high impact contribution from its senior staff
- describe and review the kinds of indicators that are used to identify sustained excellence beyond this expected level, and
- make use of appropriate comparative information on employee remuneration from established independent sources

7. The Remuneration Committee meets at least three times per year. In the time period of this report, the committee met on 12 September 2022, 30 January 2023 and 22 May 2023. Decisions relating to individual staff remuneration, for example

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ed.ac.uk/human-resources/pay-reward/remuneration-committee>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/20181203-remuneration\\_committee\\_framework.pdf](https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/20181203-remuneration_committee_framework.pdf)

appointment salaries, may be dealt with by electronic correspondence. These decisions are formally recorded at the next committee meeting.

8. Membership of the Remuneration Committee over the time of this report:

- Hugh Mitchell (Convener)
- Janet Legrand (Senior Lay Member)
- Frank Armstrong (Co-opted Member)
- Toby Kelly (Academic Staff Member)
- Niamh Roberts (President EUSA)

In attendance:

- Peter Mathieson, The Principal and Vice-Chancellor<sup>3</sup>
- Leigh Chalmers, Vice-Principal and University Secretary
- James Saville, Director of Human Resources
- Jo Roger, Director of HR Partnering – Professional Services
- Sheila Jardine, Senior HR Partner – Reward

*Approach to the remuneration review of senior staff*

9. At its meeting on 5 November 2022, Court approved the following approach to the review of senior staff remuneration, namely that it takes into account and is informed by the following internal and external factors:

- a) Internal relativities: i.e. awards made to other University staff
- b) The need to address gender pay equality
- c) The need to address ethnicity pay equality
- d) University past practice
- e) External competitiveness/comparative benchmarking: i.e. role holder salaries relative to their peer group, particularly within the Russell Group, and
- f) Broader sector context: including increased scrutiny of senior pay
- g) Sustained high impact contribution and corporate citizenship
- h) Consideration given by the Remuneration Committee to the People and Money planning and crisis response when assessing performance as part of its annual review of remuneration of members of the Senior Leadership Team

10. In addition to sustained high impact contribution and the above data driven factors, specific consideration may be given to recognising corporate citizenship and the senior staff member's role-modelling of the University's values.

11. Remuneration Committee reviews these factors annually for approval by Court.

12. In reviewing senior staff pay, the Remuneration Committee makes use of internal pay relativity data, and external pay benchmark data from Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) and from the Korn Ferry Hay Group.

13. Each year, the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) negotiates the national pay increase on behalf of the University, and c150 other participating Higher Education Institutions. This negotiation is carried out through the Joint Negotiating Committee for Higher Education Staff (JNCHES) which is

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<sup>3</sup> Withdraws when own salary, terms and conditions or severance payments are under consideration

made up of UCEA and the five Higher Education trade unions (EIS, GMB, UCU, UNISON and Unite). These pay negotiations determine the basic increase on the values of the 51 spine points on the national pay scale.

14. The UCEA pay deal for 2022-23 was split into 2 phases, Phase 1 (01 Feb 2023) seeing a 2% increase, and Phase 2 (01 August 2023) seeing a 3% increase. Remuneration Committee pays attention to these awards in determining those it approves for the senior management team.

15. The number of awards is directly linked to the population size, this is set at 30%. In recent years, to help address the gender pay gap, the awards available have been split 75% salary increments, 25% one-off lump sum payments.

*Paragraphs 16-27: closed section*

### **Resource implications**

28. The paper has no resource implications, being a report on past committee activity.

### **Risk Management**

29. Salary recommendations and decisions reflect the principles that underpin the Remuneration Committee's decision making, specifically to ensure the process of reviewing the reward of senior staff takes account of the quality and standing of the University of Edinburgh. This therefore mitigates the risk of losing key talent whilst being cognisant of the University's reputation.

### **Responding to Climate Emergency & Sustainability Development Goals**

30. This paper does not contribute to the Strategy 2030 outcomes or SDG goals as it is purely a summary of past activities.

### **Equality & Diversity**

31. Salary recommendations and decisions reflect the principles that underpin the Remuneration Committee's decision making, specifically to ensure the process for reviewing the reward of senior staff reflects robust equality practice and that the reward of senior staff is fair, equitable and responsive in a highly competitive environment.

### **Next steps/implications**

32. Annual reports summarising the activity of the Committee will continue to be presented to Court in November/December each year.

### **Consultation**

33. This paper has been written on behalf of the Convener of Remuneration Committee, Hugh Mitchell, who has agreed its content.

### **Further information**

34. Author

James Saville  
Director of Human Resources

Presenter

Hugh Mitchell  
Convener of Remuneration Committee

### **Freedom of information**

35. Open version.



UNIVERSITY COURT

4 December 2023

**Knowledge Strategy Committee Report**

**Committee Name**

1. Knowledge Strategy Committee

**Date of Meeting**

2. 24 October 2023

**Action Required**

3. To note the key points from the meeting.

**Key points**

*Presentation: University Priorities and Challenges in Ethical AI and Data Practice; AI and Data Ethics Advisory Board (AIDE)*

4. Professor Shannon Vallor, Baillie Gifford Chair in the Ethics of Data and Artificial Intelligence, gave a presentation on University priorities and challenges in ethical artificial intelligence and data practice. It was noted that the University has been a leader in AI for over 60 years, with an interdisciplinary culture of collaboration unique in the UK. The following was covered:

- An overview of the AI and Data Ethics Advisory Board (AIDE), formed in 2019 by the University Executive and comprising of subject matter experts with academic, professional services and student representation.
- Opportunities for the University with AI developments, as well as emerging and urgent issues.
- Key University community needs and ambitions for responsible AI at the University.

5. The Committee welcomed the detailed presentation, and discussed the issue of how the proposed effective and mandatory online training for all staff and students on responsible AI dimensions could be taken forward as well as how the embedding of generative AI and associated governance and oversight are being approached.

6. The Convener thanked Professor Vallor for her presentation and noted it would be helpful for KSC to receive a further update from the AIDE Board at a future meeting.

*Presentation: Digital Strategy, Digital Estate Update*

7. Gavin McLachlan, Vice-Principal and Chief Information Officer and Librarian to the University, Stephen Roy, Digital Transformation Programme Manager, and Gail Redford, Project Manager, gave a presentation on the University Digital Strategy. A background to the digital estate was provided, followed by a summary of the Digital Estate Prioritisation (DEP) Group, who are responsible for prioritising the major digital estate investments in the digital estate over the next 5-10 years. Three subgroups have met to carry out detailed discussions on possible priority areas, with the DEP Group now having agreed 6 areas to be taken forward to full business case.

These will all progress through appropriate standing governance committees for consideration and approval. An update on the Digital Strategy implementation was also noted.

8. The Committee welcomed the update.

#### *Chief Information Officer Update*

9. Key activities and updates since the last meeting were reported.

#### *Data Centre Capacity*

10. An update describing the ongoing work on the University's data centre capacity planning was presented. In discussion, it was noted that through negotiations by EPCC (part of the University of Edinburgh and the UK's leading centre of supercomputing and data science expertise), there was a national carbon efficiency saving as a result of hosting national facilities. It was also confirmed that carbon accounting for external cloud services was not currently accounted for, but the Sustainable Information Technology Group was looking into this issue.

11. It was noted that discussions with Colleges and Schools on their data centre requirements would continue, with a potential paper submitted to the December Estates Committee on plans should investment be identified as being required.

#### *Proposed Amendments to Information Technology Committee Terms of Reference*

12. The Committee discussed a proposed amendment to the Information Technology Committee's (ITC) terms of reference, primarily to bring it in line with the Delegated Authority Schedule (DAS). The governance approval routes were noted, and it was agreed it would be helpful if a more detailed report from the ITC could be provided to KSC in future, given the proposed approval level be raised from £500k to £1m (where the budget holder has confirmed the funds are available). Subject to the more detailed reports, the Committee approved the amendment to the ITC terms of reference.

#### *Digital Research Services Programme 23/24 Approval*

13. The Committee discussed a paper noting the initial 2023/24 Digital Research Services (DRS) programme investment, and the budget allocations for the DRS programme were subsequently approved.

#### *Other items*

14. The Committee noted updates on information security; the planned development and rollout of Windows 11; the Information Services Group capital envelope 2022-2028; the network replacement programme; the IT & Library National Student Survey results for 2023; a Finance Helpline and People & Money support overview; People and Money; and the timetabling and exams replacement project. Regular reports were received from the IT Committee, Library Committee, Digital Research Services Steering Group and Estates Committee.

**Further information**

16. Authors

Jamie Tait  
Governance Manager & Clerk to  
Knowledge Strategy Committee

Presenter

Colm Harmon, Vice-Principal Students

**Freedom of Information**

17. Open version.



UNIVERSITY COURT

4 December 2023

Senatus Academicus Report

**Description of paper**

1. A report of business considered by Senatus Academicus ('Senate') at meetings held on:

- 13 – 27 September 2023 (e-Senate, by correspondence)
- 11 October 2023

and a summary of feedback provided at a session held on 6 November 2023 to consider a draft Research & Innovation Strategy.

2. The Report of the Senate External Review is also available under the 'Additional Information' heading on the Court site for background information, alongside a Senate paper titled Proposed Actions in response to the Senate External Effectiveness Review. Senate's response to the proposed actions is provided in paragraphs 14-28.

**Action Required**

3. To note the key points from the report, including the Report of the Senate External Review and proposed actions in response to this.

**Discussion**

*13-27 September 2023 e-Senate meeting*

4. e-Senate considered three papers in advance of their submission to the October or December Court meetings, with any comments made summarised in the relevant Court papers. These were: Annual Report to the Scottish Funding Council on Institution-led Review and Enhancement Activity 2022/23; Rector Election Date; and, Resolutions. e-Senate also considered plans for the annual internal review of the effectiveness of Senate amongst other business, with the full agenda and papers available [here](#) and the unconfirmed minute available [here](#).

*11 October 2023 meeting*

5. The following provides a summary of business conducted at the 11 October 2023 meeting. The full agenda and papers are available [here](#) and the unconfirmed minute is available [here](#).

*Annual Report of the Senate Standing Committees*

6. Court received a copy of the Annual Report of the Senate Standing Committees at its June meeting. The Annual Report was submitted to Senate on 24 May but was not formally received as the meeting ran over time. The report was updated to take account of business conducted between May and July 2023 with the updated report presented to Senate on 11 October 2023. The updated Annual Report of the Senate Standing Committees is available under the 'Additional Information' heading on the Court site for background information.



7. An amendment to section 6.3, Academic Policy & Regulations Committee Priorities, was moved and seconded as follows:

*Audit the extent to which exceptional variations to academic policies and regulations during 2022/23 have in fact maintained academic standards*

8. Senate approved by a majority vote of 71% to agree the amendment. Senate further undertook a separate vote on the amended paper and 51% of members did not approve the paper.

*Recommendation to add EDI (Equality, Diversity & Inclusion) representation to Senate Standing Committees*

9. Senate undertook a vote on the item and 68% of members did not approve the paper as presented.

*Senate Standing Committee Composition: 2023-24*

10. Senate approved by majority vote of 52% the Senate Standing Committee Composition for 2023-24.

*Senate Exception Committee Terms of Reference and Membership 2023-24*

11. Senate approved by majority vote of 63% the Senate Exception Committee Membership.

*Membership of the Knowledge Strategy Committee*

12. Senate approved this item without requiring a vote.

*University of Edinburgh Students' Association Vice-President Education Priorities 2023/24*

13. The Students' Association Vice-President Education outlined their priorities for the year and discussed these with Senate members. The Convener extended thanks on behalf of Senate to the Students' Association VP Education and noted Senate's support for the priorities.

*Senate External Review – Presentation of findings & proposed actions in response*

14. The Report of the Senate External Review is provided to the Court for information and is available under the 'Additional Information' heading on the Court site.

15. Senate members received a copy of the external review by email on 24 August, along with a survey seeking members' comments and feedback on the report. Member comments and feedback submitted via the survey were used to inform a series of proposed actions provided in response to individual recommendations for consideration. These are provided in Appendix 1 of the paper titled *Proposed Actions in response to the Senate External Effectiveness Review* and is available under the 'Additional Information' heading on the Court site.

16. The feedback received indicates a clear need for further consideration and development of actions in response to some recommendations received via the External Review. Due to the frequency of Senate meetings and the importance of ensuring that action is taken in response to the review in a timely manner, it was proposed that a Senate External Review Task and Finish Group be established for 2023/24. The Task and Finish group would provide oversight in relation to the

implementation of proposed recommendations and drive forward work in areas where further development is needed. The proposed remit and membership of the Task and Finish Group is in Appendix 2 of the paper titled Proposed Actions in response to the Senate External Effectiveness Review and is available under the 'Additional Information' heading on the Court site.

17. Professor Ella Ritchie of Advance HE gave a brief overview of the review. Professor Ritchie reflected on the complexity of the review and extended her thanks to members for their honesty, time and valuable insight and willingness to share. The review was challenging to complete in the available timeframe and to fully understand all the nuances of the institution. However, it is hoped that the recommendations and suggestions arising from the review are useful in moving forward. Professor Ritchie urged Senate and the proposed Task and Finish Group to maintain the momentum as it moves beyond the conclusion of the review. Professor Ritchie extended her thanks to the Senate Clerk for her support throughout the review.

18. The Convener extended thanks on behalf of Senate to Professor Ritchie and her team at Advance HE for undertaking the review.

19. The Convener noted that Senate is asked to provide feedback on the proposed actions and support the formation of a proposed Senate External Review Task and Finish Group critical in taking forward some of the recommendations of the review.

20. The Convener noted that two papers had been submitted by a Senate member which relate to this item. The Convener noted that the papers pre-empted some of the actions contained within Appendix 1 and committed to the papers being shared with the proposed Senate External Review Task and Finish Group, once formed, to ensure detailed consideration of the points raised, alongside other recommendations arising from the review or in response to feedback from members.

21. Members raised the following points in discussion:

- Members were pleased to see representation of staff from different career stages.
- The Group is being asked to take forward controversial and contentious items and the impartiality of the proposed Chair of the Group was raised as a potential issue.
- The time commitment required for members of the Task and Finish Group appears to be significant. The feasibility of members having capacity to serve on the Group is likely to be very challenging and unlikely to be achieved without compensation for student members and ensuring that staff members are released from work allocated to them. This was raised as a particular concern for Early Career Fellows who generally have heavier teaching loads. The Equality, Diversity & Inclusion implications of a heavy workload were noted.
- The term of office for members of the Task and Finish Group was raised. The paper indicates that the Group is expected to provide proposals for the February and May 2024 meetings of Senate and the terms of office run until 31 July 2024. The feasibility of the Group completing the work in the timelines given was raised, given the volume of work required from the Group and the

likelihood of this continuing into next academic year.

Student members highlighted that members elected to Senate for one year are unlikely to see the outcome of actions taken by the Group.

- The agenda setting process was highlighted as an area that continues to be a concern for members with the Sustainable Travel Policy and People and Money highlighted as specific examples. The agenda setting process requires consideration and Senate members would value having greater input into agenda setting in the future. Members reflected on one of the Report's review themes being a lack of trust between the Senior Leadership Team and the membership of Senate and noted this in the context of papers not shared with members and redirected to other Committees or Groups at the discretion of the Senior Leadership Team.
- The author of the papers referred to in introduction of the item expressed their strong discontent with the rationale provided to Senate for not circulating the papers to Senate. They stated that the Convener's summary of the reasons for non-circulation mischaracterised the contents of the papers, and reflected a lack of respect and trust both for the author and for the wider Senate membership. They stated that the papers served two different purposes, one providing corrections to the report, and the second summarising discussions they had had with other Senate members, which they felt had not been reflected in the review report. Additionally, they felt they had been informed in a non-negotiable way how papers would be handled, and that this approach is problematic. They further noted that the External Review and proposed actions took a narrow focus of Senate's effectiveness, and that the approach should be one which is respectful and uplifting for members.  
The Convener restated her commitment that both papers would be provided to the proposed Task and Finish Group for consideration.
- The progress towards decisions taken by Senate and improving the relationship and flow of actions between the University Court and Senate was noted as being absent from the report.  
The minutes of previous Senate meetings do not include a clearly defined action. It would be useful if Senate minutes include an action where appropriate for inclusion in the Action log.
- The methodology of the External and Internal Reviews relied heavily on members completing surveys. Consideration should be given to the alternative ways that Senate's effectiveness can be measured, including expanding surveys to the wider University population and/or measuring Senate's effectiveness via the actions taken in response to decisions taken at Senate.
- A query was raised regarding the interaction between actions arising from the External Review and actions arising from the Internal Review.
- The Senate Induction was highlighted as an area that requires greater work. The Induction process is inadequate to preparing members for Senate meetings. One student member suggested the development of a shadow system as a potential improvement.
- The actions contained within the paper were queried, with a member noting that Senate should be asked to approve the proposals.
- A long-standing member of Senate noted that one of the principal roles of Senate is to act as scrutinising body. Historically Senate has received items of University business brought to Senate for a decision, however as member

engagement has shifted and this has moved to include papers submitted by members there has been a lack of clarity on how decisions taken have translated into action, which contributes to the recent focus on procedural amendments. The Task and Finish Group should also consider the scrutinising function of Senate.

22. Members were invited to submit any further comments on the item to the Senate Clerk.

23. An amendment to Appendix 2: Senate External Review Task and Finish Group was moved and seconded. Ahead of a vote on the proposed amendment the following points were raised:

- The amendment will slightly widen the members who are able to put themselves forward for membership of the group
- The principle was included to reflect Senate's previous agreement that this should apply to the elected Senate membership of Senate Standing Committees.
- This is contradictory to the overlap of membership on Senate Standing Committees, where there is repetition of ex-officio members.

24. Senate approved by a majority vote of 78% to amend Appendix 2: Senate External Review Task and Finish Group and strike: *members who are already serve on a Senate Standing Committee cannot seek membership of the task group;*

25. The Convener invited Senate to form the Task and Finish Group.

26. A member objected to a decision on this item being taken, noting that they had been advised by the Senate Clerk before the meeting that that there would not be a vote taken on this item. The member stated that formal amendments had not been prepared based on this understanding.

27. The University Secretary proposed that some items be taken forward as a priority and sooner than the next meeting of Senate. There was not consensus regarding the formation of the Task and Finish Group, and those actions which can be progressed without requiring Senate's agreement will be taken forward. Those items which are contentious, including the formation of the Task and Finish Group will be given further consideration accordingly.

28. Senate supported the University Secretary's proposed approach without requiring a vote.

#### *Research and Innovation Strategy*

29. Senate did not reach this item ahead of the conclusion of the meeting and a dedicated session was then held on 6 November 2023 to allow Senate members to provide comments and feedback on the draft Research and Innovation Strategy. The feedback provided in this session is outlined below.

6 November 2023: Senate Session on the Research and Innovation Strategy

30. The Vice-Principal Research and Innovation, Professor Christina Boswell introduced the item. The Strategy is drafted for an internal and external facing audience and provides a clear articulation of strengths in research which is valued by funders and donors. The communication of the Strategy requires further development to clarify what the Strategy means for staff and postgraduate students. Senate's input into the communication approach is welcomed.

31. The following points were raised in discussion of this item:

- The Concordat is not referred to in the Strategy though is referred to in the Research Cultures Plan, it would be valuable if the Strategy also refers to this. The University closely monitors its compliance with the Concordat.
- The Researcher Hub would be a useful tool to promote the Strategy within the University.
- Greater emphasis on the time required to undertake research and associated activities is required. The Workload Allocation Model was highlighted as one area requiring greater emphasis.
- The Strategy outlines the importance of public and policy engagement with research. There is a need for recognition of greater support for this work by allowing adequate time for staff to undertake research and these associated activities. Linking this with the UN Sustainable Goals may be worthwhile.
- There is an absence of information on Intellectual Property and the legal frameworks surrounding it within the Strategy. Professor Boswell noted in response that this level of detail is too granular for what is required for the Strategy.
- A statement on how the University provides support for researchers engaging in research on controversial topics would be valuable for inclusion.
- The Strategy could provide greater emphasis on the University's efforts to address inequity in investment and funding across disciplines. Highlighting the support provided by the University to its postgraduate research students including matching the UK Research & Innovation Stipend, and provision of sick and maternity pay for students on research scholarships. Additionally, the Strategy could further highlight issues which affect postgraduate research students including inequitable funding across different disciplines.
- The Strategy would benefit from key statements of intent being made more prominent and being placed closer to the beginning of the document.
- Recognition of the multi-disciplinary approach to training postgraduate research students would be valuable for inclusion in the Strategy.
- There appears to be a disparity between Arts and Humanities and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) subjects with a significant focus on data driven research leaving little space for alternative approaches. There is differing feedback on this element with an alternative view offered by those working in STEM disciplines.
- The Strategy would benefit from greater focus on students and the positive benefits which a strong Research Strategy can bring to other cohorts of students, including undergraduate students. Suggestions made for reflection in the Strategy include highlighting how research can benefit the teaching of undergraduate students, fewer opportunities for research in disciplines other

than STEM and widening the list of underrepresented students listed under Training and Support.

- Greater integration of research-led teaching would be beneficial and link the Strategy to the Curriculum Transformation Programme.
- Greater engagement with on-the-ground researchers is essential to ensuring that there is ongoing feedback on the Strategy which will contribute to its success.
- Feedback was provided on the language used at various points within the Strategy with a suggestion that consideration be given to ensuring emphasis and language is mindful of the decolonising work taking place at the University.
- Concern was raised regarding centralisation and the development of a central ethics review process. Professor Boswell noted that this wording on this required tweaking and confirmed that ethics processes will remain devolved and tailored to disciplinary context.

32. Members were thanked for their time and engagement with the Senate session on the Research and Innovation Strategy. The comments raised in discussion would be considered by those responsible for the Strategy and incorporated where feasible ahead of being received at University Executive and University Court in December.

#### **Further information**

33. Authors

Olivia Hayes  
Academic Policy Officer

Presenter

Peter Mathieson  
Principal & Vice-Chancellor

Lewis Allan  
Senior Governance Advisor to the  
Vice-Principal & University Secretary

#### **Freedom of Information**

34. Open paper



UNIVERSITY COURT

4 December 2023

**People & Money – External Review Report**

**Description of paper**

1. Following the Court meeting on 5 December 2022, Court issued a statement which noted that *‘a timely and rigorous External Review of the implementation of the People & Money system should be instigated....to help inform future decision-making and oversight for major change projects and system procurement and implementation’*.

2. The External Review fieldwork is now complete and the report and outputs of the Review are to be considered by Court at this meeting. This paper provides a brief recap of the process undertaken and is also intended to support Court in its consideration of the External Review and the decisions required.

*Paragraphs 3-17: closed section*

**Risk Management**

18. This is an extremely important matter for Court consideration. The risks associated with effective management of strategic change programmes (as evidenced through P&M) are high on the University Strategic Risk Register and there is a clear need to ensure that this risk area is managed more effectively going forward. The arrangements for disclosure and sharing of the External Review outputs also include important aspects of risk for Court consideration.

**Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals**

19. There are no specific climate or sustainability considerations in relation to this paper.

**Equality & Diversity**

20. Many staff members, students and other stakeholders have been directly impacted by the People & Money implementation challenges over the last 12 months in particular. It has been extremely important to ensure that their voice and views have been heard through the External Review. It will also be important for them (and the colleagues who have been directly involved in assisting with the External Review) to have the opportunity to see the outcome, lessons to be learned and the Management Response / Action Plan moving forward.

**Consultation**

21. The content of this paper has been discussed with Janet Legrand as panel member and Senior Lay Member of Court, prior to sharing with University Court.

**Further information**

22. Author & Presenter

Leigh Chalmers

Vice-Principal & University Secretary

## **Freedom of Information**

23. This paper is closed.

*[Note: the External Review was approved for publication and can be found here, with an accompanying statement from the Senior Leadership Team:*

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/news/staff/2023/external-review-of-people-and-money>]





UNIVERSITY COURT

4 December 2023

**Performance measures to support Strategy 2030: 2022-23 year-end report**

**Description of paper**

1. This paper provides Court with an update on performance for our Strategy 2030 KPIs, providing a year-end position on our agreed measures showing data on the direction of travel, alongside historical and benchmarking data, where available. The attached annex presents the Strategic Performance Framework Court measures, developed in consultation with colleagues across the University.

2. The Strategic Performance Framework (SPF) is an integral part of delivering on Strategy 2030, sitting alongside strategic change projects and staff engagement activities.

**Action requested/Recommendation**

3. Court is asked to review the progress report presented in the annex noting that some measures are only reportable on an annual basis. Court is additionally asked to consider the proposals for KPI4 (Efficient Systems), KPI10 (Curriculum Transformation) and KPI12 (Student Experience), which had not been finalised at the previous reporting point. University Executive and Policy and Resources Committee have commented on the proposals which have been considered and are reflected in this paper.

*Paragraphs 4-32: closed section*

**Resource implications**

33. There are resource implications in developing and monitoring the SPF, principally but not exclusively within Governance and Strategic Planning, with frequency of reporting a key consideration. This includes staff time across the University and development of tools to help us develop robust, and more automated, mechanisms to present and disseminate information. Delivery of KPI ambitions is, however, clearly linked to our institutional and financial strategy and so it is important for us to closely monitor progress.

**Risk Management**

34. Performance measurement is essential in allowing the University to monitor its exposure to, and mitigation of, various risks. Measures reported to Court focus on those that are highest impact and therefore highest risk for the University. Our performance framework is also a feature of our annual report and accounts.

**Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals**

35. In developing our performance measures, we have worked with Social Responsibility and Sustainability (SRS) colleagues and our relevant activities reflected in the SPF are in line with those of SRS and tackling the climate emergency.

36. Each group of measures is mapped to the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals.

### **Equality & Diversity**

37. Promoting equality, diversity and inclusion is key to Strategy 2030, our underlying values and our obligations under the Equality Act. This means several of our measures are relevant to assessing progress in relation to EDI and include some specific metrics for our Equality Outcomes 2021-25.

*Paragraphs 38-41: closed section*

### **Consultation**

42. To develop this set of Key Performance Indicators and prepare this progress report we have consulted across the University, and we will continue to engage as we refine the SPF measures.

### **Further information**

43. Author

Jennifer McGregor  
Strategic Planning

November 2023

Presenter

Rona Smith  
Director of Strategic Planning and  
Insight

### **Freedom of Information**

44. Open version.



UNIVERSITY COURT

4 December 2023

**Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report to Court**

**Description of paper**

1. This paper addresses the requirement for the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) to provide an annual report to Court.

**Action requested/Recommendation**

2. Audit and Risk Committee is asked to *consider* and the annual report, noting that elements of the assurances provided to Court therein are subject to the completion of processes to approve the Annual Report and Accounts (see Paper H2).

*Paragraphs 3-22: closed section*

**Risk Management**

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

**Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals**

24. This paper does not contribute directly to the SDG goals as it is fulfilling a regulatory requirement.

**Equality & Diversity**

25. No major equality impacts have been identified.

**Next steps/implications**

26. If approved by the Committee, this will form the basis of the Annual Report to Court, which will go to Court on 4 December 2023. The Convener and Vice-Principal and University Secretary will approve the final wording of the Report.

**Consultation**

26. To be reviewed by Audit and Risk Committee prior to progressing to Court.

**Further information**

27. *Author*

Kirstie Graham  
Court Services  
November 2023

*Presenter*

Douglas Millican  
Convener, Audit & Risk Committee

**Freedom of Information**

28. This paper is closed



UNIVERSITY COURT

4 December 2023

**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 2022-23.

**Action requested/Recommendation**

2. To note the information presented.

*Paragraphs 3-7: closed section*

**Risk Management**

8. The University continues to manage the major risks as set out in the Strategic Risk Register 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 Court to sign off the Annual Report and Accounts 2022-23.

**Consultation**

11. Each College and Professional Services Group was contacted to obtain updates.

**Further information**

12. Author

Chris MacLean

Risk Manager

24 November 2023

Presenter

Catherine Martin

Vice-Principal Corporate Services

**Freedom of Information**

13. Open version.



UNIVERSITY COURT

4 December 2023

Director of Finance's Report

**Description of paper**

*Paragraph 1: closed section*

2. This paper is aligned with all of the outcomes set out in Strategy 2030 by supporting the University's continued drive towards financial sustainability.

**Action requested/Recommendation**

3. Court is asked to note and comment on the latest update.

**Background and context**

4. This paper provides the Director of Finance's regular update on finance related issues for Court.

*Paragraphs 5-15: closed section*

**Risk Management**

16. The University manages its financial risk by not breaching the Group risk appetite as described in its financial metrics. EBITDA provides the University with a proxy for the cash we generate from our internal operations. The target range for this metric is 7-9% of total income.

**Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals**

17. The Director of Finance and the Finance Team fully support the outcomes of Strategy 2030 and the UN Sustainable Development Goals by working to secure the ongoing financial sustainability of the University. The University's approach to climate change is referenced in the 2022-23 Annual Report and Accounts. This is covered in Strategy 2030 through our commitment to Social and Civic Responsibility.

**Equality & Diversity**

18. 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**

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

**Consultation**

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

**Further information**

21. Authors

Ricky O’Kane  
Interim Head of Group Finance

Presenter

Lee Hamill  
Director of Finance

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

27 November 2023

**Freedom of Information**

22. Open version.



## UNIVERSITY COURT

4 December 2023

### Annual Report and Accounts 2022-23

#### Description of paper

[Note: The University's Annual Report and Accounts can be found at [https://www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/uo\\_e\\_annual\\_accounts\\_2023.pdf](https://www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/uo_e_annual_accounts_2023.pdf)  
This document includes the financial results for the University Group for the financial year ended 31 July 2023.]

*Paragraphs 1-13: closed section*

#### Risk Management

14. A report, Understanding Our Risks, is included in the Annual Report and Accounts to 31 July 2023.

#### Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

15. This Director of Finance and the Finance Team fully supports the outcomes of Strategy 2030 and the UN Sustainable Development Goals by working to secure the ongoing financial sustainability of the University. The University's approach to climate change is referenced in the 2022-23 Annual Report & Accounts. This is covered in Strategy 2030 through our commitment to Social and Civic Responsibility and via a number of individual case studies throughout the document.

#### Equality & Diversity

16. University funds are managed in accordance with its policies on equality and diversity. The Operational Review in the Annual Report and Accounts includes sections on social responsibility and sustainability and equality and widening participation.

#### Next steps/implications

17. [The 2022-23 Annual Report and Accounts were signed off by Court Exception Committee ahead of the Scottish Funding Council's deadline.]

#### Consultation

18. The key reports have been drafted in consultation with stakeholders and the figures have been prepared and reviewed by our external auditors, PwC. The Annual Report and Accounts 2022-23 were presented to Audit & Risk Committee on 30 November 2023.

#### Further information

19. <u>Author</u>	<u>Presenter</u>
Ricky O'Kane	Lee Hamill
Interim Head of Group Finance	Director of Finance
30 November 2023	

#### Freedom of Information

20. Open version



## UNIVERSITY COURT

4 December 2023

### Letter of Representation – University of Edinburgh Annual Report and Accounts 2022-23

#### **Description of paper**

1. The draft letter of representation from PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (PwC), in respect of the Annual Report and Accounts for the University Group for 2022-23.

#### **Action requested/ Recommendation**

2. To note the letter of representation and note the back to back Letter of Representation, provided by the Director of Finance to Court.

#### **Background and context**

3. The letter of representation will provide PwC with a written declaration that the Annual Report and Accounts are sufficient and appropriate and without omission of material facts.

4. In making the statements in the letter the Principal acknowledges the responsibilities placed on him and on the Court, by various statutes, standards and memoranda for the effective stewardship of the resources and proper conduct of affairs. To make such statements the Principal and Court must rely on a number of checks and balances incorporated into the processes and procedures (internal control systems) necessary to effectively manage resources. They must rely on the advice of professional advisors and on the professional ethics of the academic, research and support staff.

#### **Discussion**

5. The letter of representation for the University is presented.

#### **Resource implications**

6. There are no specific requests for resource in the paper.

#### **Risk Management**

7. A report, Understanding Our Risks, is included in the Annual Report and Accounts to 31 July 2023.

#### **Equality & Diversity**

8. University funds are managed in accordance with its policies on equality and diversity. The Operational Review in the Annual Report and Accounts includes sections on social responsibility and sustainability, equality and widening participation.

#### **Next steps/implications**

9. The University's letter of representation will be signed by the Principal and Senior Lay Member after the Court meeting. It will then be sent to PwC so that they have the assurances in place to allow them to sign the audit certificate for the University's Annual Report and Accounts for 2022-23.



**Consultation**

10. The letter of representation has been drafted by PwC and reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee on 30 November 2023.

**Further information**

11. <u>Author</u>	<u>Presenter</u>
Ricky O’Kane	Lee Hamill
Interim Head of Group Finance	Director of Finance
30 November 2023	

**Freedom of Information**

12. Closed paper. The letter is to be agreed by Court on 4 December 2023 for signature by the Principal and Senior Lay Member of Court. The Annual Report and Accounts will be finalised, signed and then published in due course on the University’s website and the letter of representation will be also made available at that stage.



**UNIVERSITY COURT**

**4 December 2023**

**Grade Scale Review**

**Description of paper**

1. This paper presents to Court, on behalf of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), a proposal to implement reforms to the University's salary grade scale. These proposals result from a review initiated in October 2022, set in the context of the University's Strategy 2030 commitment to be an employer of choice, enabled through delivery of our [People Strategy](#). The purpose of the proposed changes is not only to improve the University's competitiveness in recruitment markets, but also to drive positive change within the University, in return for improved recognition and reward and in conjunction with wider, ongoing initiatives to enhance the staff and student experience.

*Paragraphs 2-4: closed section*

**Action requested/Recommendation**

5. Court is invited to **approve** the Grade Scale Review proposals as the underpinning step for a wider set of initiatives to improve staff experience, set within the context of strategic prioritisation and underpinned by commentary on financial considerations.

*Paragraphs 6-52: closed section*

**Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals**

53. Improved staff engagement and less industrial action may enable better delivery of our climate and sustainability goals, and we are proposing to undertake implementation of the GSR in way which continues to create the financial opportunities to invest in our Climate Strategy as a further key priority, alongside our People Strategy and enhancing Student Experience. Together, these will ensure the University continues to demonstrate progress towards:

- a. UN SDG8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
- b. UN SDG10: Reduce inequality within and among countries

**Equality & Diversity**

54. The EQIA has been completed for the proposals within the GSR, including the potential impact on our gender pay gaps based on current headcount levels. In the short term, the main impact for grades UE01-9 comes from the levelling of staff at the bottom of each grade when new scales are implemented, and the unblocking of staff at the top of the scale.

55. The changes to grade UE10 progression for steps 1-6 will reduce the grade UE10 pay gap and halve the time it takes for staff to reach the top of the automatic progression scale, reducing the pay gaps over time.

56. Ethnicity, disability and other protected characteristics pay gaps are included in the EQIA, which will be published should the proposals be approved.

*Paragraphs 57-62: closed section*

## Consultation

63. University Executive and Senior Leadership Team  
Remuneration Committee  
Staff Experience Committee  
Grade Review Steering Group  
Finance  
Trade Unions

## Further information

64. Authors  
James Saville  
Director of HR  
  
Rona Smith  
Deputy Secretary Governance &  
Strategic Planning  
  
Jo Roger  
Director HR Partnering, Professional  
Services  
  
Kim Graham  
Provost  
  
David Argyle  
Vice-Principal and Head of College  
of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine  
  
Christina Boswell  
Vice-Principal Research and  
Enterprise  
  
Leigh Chalmers  
Vice-Principal and University  
Secretary  
  
Iain Gordon  
Vice Principal and Head of College of  
Science and Engineering  
  
Lee Hamill  
Director of Finance  
  
Colm Harmon  
Vice-Principal Students  
  
Catherine Martin  
Vice-Principal Corporate Services  
  
Gavin McLachlan  
Vice-Principal and Chief Information  
Officer  
  
Sarah Prescott

## Presenter

Peter Mathieson, Principal & Vice-  
Chancellor

Vice-Principal and Head of College  
of Arts, Humanities and Social  
Sciences

**Freedom of Information**

65. Open version .



UNIVERSITY COURT

December 2023

Student Experience Update

**Description of paper**

1. This paper provides an update on: Curriculum Transformation, Student Support Model and actions outlined in the paper from the previous meeting of Court (9 October 2023), *Student Experience Update: Student Surveys 2023 Results and actions*.

**Action requested/Recommendation**

2. Court is asked to note the findings presented in this paper and to comment on the proposals for how the University is progressing on our plans to improve the quality of the student experience.

*Paragraphs 3-37: closed section*

**Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals**

37. This paper supports the SDG “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” as part the strategic objective to improve student experience. The proposals would not hinder the achievement of any other UN SDGs or exacerbate the Climate Emergency.

**Equality & Diversity**

38. Relevant Equality Impact Assessments will be required as plans are developed. The work undertaken will support greater equality, diversity, and inclusion for students within our community.

**Next steps/implications**

39. We will continue to prioritise the work outlined above, as part of a series of initiatives to improve the student experience.

**Consultation**

40. University Executive and Academic Strategy Group members, as well as wide discussions within Colleges, Schools, and Student Experience Services.

**Further information**

41.	<u><i>Authors</i></u>	<u><i>Presenter</i></u>
	Lucy Evans, Deputy Secretary Students	Colm Harmon, Vice-Principal Students
	Kim Graham, Provost	
	Colm Harmon, Vice-Principal Students	
	Barry Nielson, Director of Strategic Change	

**Freedom of Information**

42. Open version .



UNIVERSITY COURT

4 December 2023

**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.
2. The Students' Association's activities contribute to the following aspects of Strategy 2030:
  - i) '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'

**Action requested/Recommendation**

3. Court is invited to note the report, and consider its contents as supporting other initiatives and projects designed to improve student satisfaction and enhance the student experience.

**Background and context**

4. This paper outlines current activity, notes current issues for students being worked on by our student representatives, and also outlines the organisation's financial and strategic developments. It is a regular standing item on the Court agenda.

**Discussion**

*Introduction*

5. The recent increase in conflict in the Middle East has impacted the student community in many ways, whether it is those students with a direct immediate and personal connection via personal relations, or increasing anxiety and activism amongst others with broader concerns and different levels of connection. As a team we have made an active effort to recognise and address this so that we can best support our students. There have been increased protests on campus relating to the conflict, one of which involved a student being arrested and charged over the course of four hours and involved large amounts of police presence and large community protest against the detainment. This has increased both our own, and wider student concerns over the safety and welfare of students on campus leading us to write an open letter ([open letter](#)) addressing this concern.
6. We are also, unfortunately, seeing increases in hate crime on campus particularly relating to antisemitism and Islamophobia – including being reported via our own Advice Place. We have been actively working to proactively address this and are intent on creating a larger proactive campaign surrounding the University's Report and Support service in an effort to reach less engaged students on campus who might benefit from this reporting service.

7. We have been participating with university colleagues in a new group to enable understanding and information-sharing regarding the wide range of impacts and concerns from staff and students where we have also been able to share insights from students, and our services, to contribute to future planning of support and communications.

#### *Updates from Sabbatical Officers*

##### *Sharan Atwal, President 2023/24*

8. Alongside my usual commitments and meeting cycles I have been working steadily on some of my manifesto points and broader aims to increase student engagement and support some of our most marginalised students through community building and practical support.

9. I organised and chaired our first Student Voice Forum with the intention to hold Senior Leadership at the University accountable in a transparent way and for students to get their concerns across directly. We had panelist attendance from our Principal, Deputy Secretary Students and Vice Principal Corporate Services and high levels of student engagement through questions and online polls. Topics raised by students attending included student housing, support for student mental health, challenges in accessing disability-related adjustments, the University's investment portfolio and concerns about ethical investment, implementation of mandatory consent courses, and quality and speed of feedback on assessment. I am pleased with the engagement we had surrounding the event and positive reception from students. I am reviewing the forum and intend to repeat it next Semester.

10. I have been working on strengthening our joint Russell Group Students' Union manifesto through case studies on our priority areas of, international and postgraduate students, fees and funding and industrial relations, in the lead up to a general election. I have also been investigating campaigns and survey results relevant to these themes to further strengthen the manifesto.

11. I have also been developing a student scholarship consultation plan to ensure student concerns and priorities drive the work of the new Scholarships Subgroup. This group is reviewing current provisions and making recommendations relating specifically to funding for international and Widening Participation students.

12. To mark Estranged Students Solidarity Week, I have been working with staff from the Widening Participation team, Careers Service and Stand Alone UK to put together events focused on support and community building. Lauren and I have discussed plans to mark this week and ensure continued support for care experienced and estranged students.

13. I was very pleased to have successfully trialled one of my manifesto points which was to introduce a voting incentive to encourage higher levels of student engagement. This resulted in the highest number of students voting in an October election and a 68% increase from last year which was the second highest turnout. We are working to review the data from this and see how we can structure this incentive for the March elections.

*Katie Hardwick, VP Activities and Services 2023/24*

14. Katie has been continuing to focus on food provisions within the Students' Association and the University. Katie and Alma have restarted the breakfast club, in the new student community lounge which takes place every Friday morning providing students with a free breakfast. This ensures that we are supporting students during the cost-of-living crisis in a welcoming space where people can meet and support each other.

15. Katie and I have been meeting students, Sport and Exercise and University staff from CSE to discuss the facilities available on King's Campus. She has also met student representatives alongside Carl to look at possible solutions for increasing the range of facilities such as the social spaces, events, sports facilities, and food outlets. Katie, Alma and I have been working closely to run a series of events on King's Campus with the hope to improve the sense of belonging and community on King's Campus as currently students often feel isolated from the rest of the university community.

16. Katie has continued her work with Information Services Group (ISG). Katie and I presented at the all-staff meeting for ISG on our key areas of work relevant to the department. She has also been endorsing a new business case for library services and working with University collections on retrieving archival material showing the history of the Students' Association. This will be included on the hoardings going up around Teviot. Katie has also been consulted on for the University's new Internal use of A.I. strategy piece, ensuring the piece supports students to engage with new technologies.

17. Our Sabbatical team attended the NUS Gathering in Glasgow where she met with fellow sabbatical officers to identify key areas of work within Scotland. Katie and Carl also attended the NUS conference 'Our Manifesto, Our Future' in Sheffield Students Union where she met with others from across the UK to discuss the NUS manifesto ahead of the general election.

*Lauren Byrne, VP Welfare 2023/24*

18. Following recent events in Israel and Gaza, Lauren has been in conversation with the University, particularly Security, Edinburgh Global and the Chaplaincy to discuss extending the offer of support to all students, so that anyone who is being impacted can access support they may need.

19. The Sabbatical team took Anti-Muslim and Islamophobia Awareness training, in light of Islamophobia Awareness Month. We also took Antisemitism Awareness Training, to ensure we are able to support our students to the best of our abilities. Lauren attended the first meeting of the Faith and Belief subcommittee of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion committee, discussing plans to ensure the inclusion and protection of different student communities.

20. Lauren has been in continuous conversation with University colleagues about showing support for trans students and emphasising the importance of them feeling protected and safe on campus.



21. Lauren presented on her work to update the #NoExcuse campaign as part of the “Understanding Gender in the Contemporary World” course. As part of her work to relaunch activity on this campaign, we held a workshop for survivors on Surviving University with the Consent Collective. Lauren also attended the Emily Test Charter Gender-based Violence Conference in Glasgow, learning from sector experts on legal representation, domestic violence and policy in this vital area.

Lauren has been gathering feedback for a review of the Student Maternity and Family Leave policy, to ensure student parents are engaged on this process and engaged on the result.

22. As part of the implementation of the new student support model, Lauren has met with the project managers working on the implementation of a student welfare case management system to understand how students will be supported through this system. Lauren presented to a range of University staff at the Student Support and Wellbeing Conference on the current barriers faced by students in terms of their wellbeing, and the steps needed to better this in future.

23. Lauren has also been involved in shaping the final version of our first Student Mental Health Agreement in collaboration with the University and Sports Union, a document that aims to collate in one place all of the offerings available to support students with their mental health.

*Alma Kalina Rießler, VP Community 2023/24*

24. In the past two months, Alma’s work has focused on sustainability and ensuring the student voice is amplified in conversations around climate justice. In collaboration with the University’s department of Social Responsibility and Sustainability, they organised a student climate strategy consultation. It will allow students to feed directly into the new Climate Strategy which is currently being developed and will ensure that students help shape sustainability decisions at the university for years to come.

25. Alma has attended multiple conferences on different aspects of sustainability and climate justice. They attended the first-ever Gaelic conference on climate change, which focused on how to bring climate change conversations forward in the Gaelic-speaking world. Alma is also attending the Autumn Forum of EAUC, The Alliance for Sustainability Leadership in Education. The forum will bring together sustainability campaigners from across Scotland to discuss how to achieve a more sustainable higher education.

26. Alma’s second focus has been on community-related issues. As a member of the University’s Community Grants Panel, Alma has been reviewing and scoring applications. The grant scheme funds community initiatives from local community groups and student societies.

27. They have also continued to connect with Gaelic-speaking communities in the city, and are in touch with Ionad Gàidhlig Dùn Èideann, Edinburgh’s Gaelic community group. Within the student community, Alma has networked with student representatives at the Association’s October Elections, where they presented the results, as well as by attending the student representative mixer.

*Carl Harper, VP Community 2023/24*

28. Carl is continuing to look for ways to tackle hidden course costs, particularly in schools that are most effected and through committees where related expenses are homed or managed. Carl has met with Juan Cruz, Principal at Edinburgh College of Art (ECA) and the ECA undergraduate representative to discuss means to approach the matter. They have also liaised with members of library committee to discuss how to approach the matter of printing credits. Carl is continuing to meet with staff and students from relevant schools to develop an approach.

29. Carl is exploring and advocating means to ensure that more academic staff receive clearly structured inclusivity and accessibility training.

30. Carl is also working to facilitate healthy student engagement and amplify the student voice. They have chaired three College Student-Staff Liaison Committee (CSSLC) meetings and met beforehand with representatives to prepare them to effectively contribute to discussions.

31. Carl aims to particularly foster student engagement around assessment and feedback. Carl chaired the Association's student representative forum and invited Deputy Vice Principal Students (Engagement), Tina Harrison to speak on the assessment and feedback principles and priorities. This helped in scoping out representatives that would be willing to co-create rubrics and share other means of best practice regarding the communication of assessment expectations. Carl and Tina brought this work forward to the student engagement strategy group for curriculum transformation to discuss the best strategy to facilitate co-creation efforts, with intentions to roll out a strategy in the second semester.

32. Carl has acted as a panel member on the Principal's Teaching Awards, a scheme that grants funds to pedagogical academic projects that aim to develop learning and teaching and prioritised bids which involved more undergraduate and postgraduate students. Similarly, Carl has acted as a panel member on the Student Partnership Agreement, and prioritised projects that centred inclusivity and accessibility.

33. Carl is working collaboratively with the University to find ways to reward students who lead Peer-Learning Support Schemes and is liaising with others about related actions brought forward at student support model board.

*Strategic Plan to 2025 and Strategic Review*

34. Our Trustee Board have reviewed our current Strategic Plan which runs to 2025, and we have determined that we will now extend the plan to 2026 with some minor updates, and to reflect some refreshed KPIs and the tools to measure them. Partly this is because the plan remains wholly relevant, and partly it reflects the hiatus in some areas of work as a result of the impacts of the pandemic. We do not believe at the current time that we should start a new Strategic Review and Plan Development process rather than focus on accelerating the planned key areas of work in our current plan and achieving our ambitions in relation to those. The last year or so have seen a focus on our priorities of Supporting and Empowering our Staff, and Sustainable Finance, developing a Robust Finances plan. Current areas of

development are Targeted Development of Services and Teviot Row House re-imagined for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and our focus as we move to the final phase of the plan will be further development on extracurricular activity, with our complementary priorities of Supporting Students' Personal and Professional Development, and Building and Supporting Student Communities.

### *Elections*

35. Our October elections saw us attract 115 students to run for a variety of predominantly Postgraduate representative positions across Schools. Students were also able to vote for Edinburgh peers to represent them at the UK National Union of Students. This year's candidates were able to attend training and events to create a sense of community and support whilst the elections took place, and had access to 1-2-1 information and advice via Teams if they wished. We were also asked by the School of Law to facilitate their first year School Rep elections using the Association's online system.

36. 2702 voters cast 7017 votes, a 68% increase in voters from 2022, and a 6% increase in votes, making it our highest number of votes and voters in October in over 8 years. Partly this was due to high numbers of candidates for some roles, but the most significant factor was our pilot of incentivised voting, to build awareness of the elections and drive engagement. This is a common feature at many other institutions, and might commonly be on an individual, 'transactional' basis – vote, and get free print credit – or, more about engagement and community spirit. For example, Manchester offers a menu of group incentives and discounts to its voting members throughout the election period as turnout increases, with these ranging from free snacks, to tickets for events, followed by an additional free wellbeing activity for students on campus, and a prize draw for a piece of tech.

37. For our pilot we wanted to reward voters, and encourage them to work together towards a common goal, and have students actively encourage their friends to vote, in order to share the prize with them. We focussed on encouraging students to vote as a way of generating a reward for the electorate to be redeemable for a week after voting closed (a free hot drink), with the option of also being entered into a prize draw to win a small group prize for them and 4 friends who also voted. Our candidates also found the incentives to be a useful tool in giving potential voters a variety of reasons as to why they could/should vote, whoever they were voting for. 25% of voters claimed their free drink the week after the elections.

38. Communications regarding the incentives were well-received, with 66% of students opening our elections emails with subjects highlighting the opportunity – much higher than usual. We are now considering voter incentives for our March elections, following the success of the pilot as the start of a journey of engagement. These traditionally have much higher turnout than our October elections – given that they include the Sabbatical elections – and we have a strategic objective to increase turnout.

39. We are also in discussions with University colleagues regarding promotion of the position of Rector, and building student engagement with the Rectoral elections taking place in spring 2024, to ensure students can be engaged through voting and also through nominating potential candidates.

### *Teviot Refurbishment and Decant and Potterrow developments*

40. Teviot Row House has now (22 November) formally been handed over to the University and contractors who will begin the redevelopment scheduled to be completed in May 2025.

41. October and November have seen significant work on the decant stage of the project, with the whole building being cleared and many items being disposed of, moved into storage, or repurposed in other spaces. We have continued to work to finalise the upgrading and expansion of Potterrow student spaces. Potterrow is much transformed, with extended opening hours, new décor, furniture, and facilities, including welcoming and attractive seating/study/recreation areas (the addition of pool tables in response to student feedback), the re-opening of bar and catering facilities during the day in addition to the Baristo coffee shop, retail offer, and other student facing services already on offer (e.g Student Voice Hub, Advice Place).

42. We have reached a count of an average of 2,500 students visit each day, and this is still growing. (Contrasts with Teviot Row House reaching 4,000 a day and peaking at around 8,000 in a day). We do remain a little challenged by the overall state of the Potterrow building, including ongoing issues with water leaking through the roof which are also impacting Chaplaincy facilities and the many students and societies who use them – there is no doubt this impacts the experience of those using the building.

43. This month saw the launch of our Student Community Lounge – an additional space in Potterrow created via the decanting of around 50 colleagues based in our office there to alternative office space on Roxburgh Street, which happened during November. This has enabled us to create additional student space designed for flexible use – from studying, socialising, group activity, to an ideal home for some community events and meet-ups. We now have a regular programme of weekly and monthly student-led community events, for Postgraduate, LGBTQ+, and other groups to gather, plus a regular Gaelic speaking gathering and a Women's Book Club, and anticipate adding to this depending on student feedback.

44. With this space ready, we have now relaunched our weekly Friday Breakfast Club from 8am, introduced by sabbatical officers last year in response to students' cost of living concerns, providing a warm space and free breakfast. Over 180 students dropped into the first session of Breakfast Club last Friday. The Lounge is a dedicated alcohol-free social space, and also hosts our Heat and Eat station, with microwaves, hot water, and plenty of seating nearby.

### *Celebrating students, and staff*

45. We will shortly be announcing our Awards schemes for this year. The Association-run Teaching Awards and Student Awards have both been a staple of the academic calendar for several years now, although both underwent some evolution during and after the pandemic, with particularly in the case of the Teaching Awards, a focus on digital promotion and announcement of the Awards. We are planning for that scheme to culminate in a larger scale in person event for the first time since 2019, to regain the feelgood factor it's hard to recreate online, and enable

shortlisted staff to enjoy a celebratory event attended by students and senior University staff as well. Both schemes enable students to submit nominations, for teaching and support staff, and individuals or student groups respectively, making these valuable community-led initiatives and enabling us to see what students really value in their academic, and extra-curricular experience.

### *Looking ahead to Semester 2*

46. Whilst semester 1 is in full swing, we are also ready for Semester 2. The Association will be a hub for some key orientation activity for the 1000 or so new visiting students from abroad who arrive in early January, and we're working in partnership with the Induction team, and other university colleagues to ensure those students receive a warm welcome and start to acclimatise to their new home before Semester 2 begins. The first week of Semester will see our Give it A Go Week return as usual, with a programme of society and sports taster sessions, and an Activities Fair in Potterrow – this enables all students to re-engage with activity, find something different, and also enables new arrivals to easily try out and see what's on offer.

47. February will see us participate in National Volunteering Week, with a volunteering fair featuring an array of charities showcasing opportunities for students to get involved, and our regular Housing Fair will provide an opportunity for students to consider their options and know their rights as they leave university accommodation and enter the private sector, or move within it.

48. March will, as always, see us run elections for our Sabbatical Officer positions, as well as around 50 other student representative positions, including undergraduate school reps, liberation officers, and campaign representatives. We'll be launching our resources for those considering running for a position very shortly, with a promotional campaign to build interest in and engagement with both running for positions, and voting in March. We anticipate including voter incentivisation, following our successful pilot in October to build awareness and increase peer to peer encouragement around voting.

*[paragraphs 49-61: closed section]*

### **Resource implications**

62. This is a regular update report, there are no resource implications outlined.

### **Risk Management**

63. Financial risks are highlighted in the report.

### **Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals**

64. Several of the activities outlined do support a wide variety of the SDGs.

### **Equality & Diversity**

65. 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**

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

**Consultation**

67. Consultation on this paper was not required.

**Further information**

68. Author & Presenter

Sharan Atwal

President 2023-24

December 2023

**Freedom of Information**

69. Open version.



UNIVERSITY COURT

4 December 2023

**Edinburgh University Sports Union Report**

**Description of paper**

1. This paper is to note developments at Edinburgh University Sports Union (EUSU) since the last Court meeting, providing updates on current work and strategic progress.
2. EUSU's activity and direction contribute to these aspects of Strategy 2030:
  - iv) We will be leading Scotland's commitment to widening participation.
  - v) 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.
  - vi) We will have created opportunities for partners, friends, neighbours and supporters to co-create, engage with the world and amplify our impacts.

**Action requested/Recommendation**

3. Court is invited to note the impact that university sport has on the student experience and sense of belonging as detailed in this report. Court is also invited to consider the impact that additional staffing capacity has created through EUSU this year (point 6).

**Background and context**

4. It is important that court are updated on the key projects and direction of sport which are central to student experience, sense of belonging and wellbeing for many at Edinburgh.

**Discussion**

*Student Engagement*

5. As at 14 November 2023 EUSU had sold 9,906 memberships between 7,779 individuals (many individuals have multiple memberships).
6. As at 14 November 2022 EUSU had sold 8,486 memberships between 6,400 individuals.
7. Year on year this is an increase of 1,420 memberships (16.7%) and 1,379 individual members (21.5%).
8. By the end of semester 1 our clubs will have played 721 BUCS (British Universities and Colleges Sport).

*New EUSU Staffing Impact*

9. In 2022 EUSU received additional university grant funding for a new grade 4 graduate position of Sport Participation Activator. This moved the staffing base of EUSU from 7 to 8 FTE staff.

10. Callum Ball was introduced in the role and has had a terrific impact particularly in the space of Intramural Sport (IMS). Some impact highlights of his new position are summarised below:

- a. 18% increase in IM team entries
- b. 70% increase in individual IM Memberships
- c. 45% increase in Academic School IM entries
- d. 7 School sport coordinators established (157% increase in entered teams from these 7 schools)
- e. 2 new IM sports introduced

11. A full IMS impact report is available. Please contact [sports.president@ed.ac.uk](mailto:sports.president@ed.ac.uk) to access the report.

12. The creation of School Sport Coordinators has the potential to be transformational for school sense of belonging efforts. Callum has connected with School Support Networks and provided training and resources to facilitate the establishment of IM teams that would be embedded within school structures. These connections also support understanding of wider sport and activity opportunities in schools and help expand the reach of sport's impact across our institution. We are excited to see this rolled out in more schools next year.

13. The IM programme has grown predominantly in outdoor sports. Capacity did restrict the creation of additional Wednesday league and indoor teams.

14. The Business case for this role included a note of adding an additional grade 4 position in 2023/24. Due to the significant impact of this initial position, we will be requesting funding for this additional position in the next planning round.

#### *Student Development*

15. Our Coaching and Volunteering Academy, led by Neil Rankin, is delivering 2 versions of the Edinburgh Award for leadership and coaching with 68 participants.

16. Our coaching and volunteering fund has provided £3,500 towards coach development and training.

17. A new paid student intern role has started with our sustainable clothing kit supplier, Player Layer. This role is focussed on content creation promoting Edinburgh Kit and our shared sense of belonging online.

#### *Get Involved! – Edinburgh Winter Run*

18. On Saturday 20 January the Edinburgh Winter Run will be taking place in Holyrood Park. This is a real community event bringing together individuals from across our UoE community showing how sport can help forge connections and a sense of belonging. We encourage all staff, students and court members to join the fun! You can book your space at the event here:

<https://durtyevents.com/product/edinburgh-winter-run-5k/>



### *Sport Fundraising Review*

19. Alongside Development and Alumni, and Sport and Exercise, EUSU is supporting a Sport Fundraising review taking place over the next 3 months.

20. This will focus on how we can develop alumni links and fundraising to support Sport at Edinburgh's ambitions as well as identifying how sport can be utilised as a valuable tool and touch point to support wider D&A and university activity.

### *Student and Staff Active Wellbeing Survey*

21. Sport and Exercise have launched two new surveys to help us better understand the mental wellbeing of our university community and the impact of engaging with regular movement. This will refine strategy focussed on enhancing student and staff wellbeing.

### *Global Impact – World Netball and Volunteer Zambia*

22. Volunteer Zambia is a sports development charity programme that EUSU, along with 6 other UK universities, is central in supporting. Due to its powerful impact, World Netball have partnered with the programme to expand the model across other African nations. We will continue to support the development of this programme which is changing lives in African communities.

### *Good News!*

#### 23. Swimming

- 50m Short Course Breaststroke Scottish Record for Kara Hanlon (beating her own record twice in November!)
- BUCS 100m IM record for Archie Goodburn
- European Championships Team GB selection for Kara Hanlon and Archie Goodburn

#### 24. Athletics

- Cardiff Cross Challenge, World Athletics Cross Country Tour Gold Label event, won by Megan Keith

#### 25. Scotland Women Rugby

- 12 current and former UoE students were in the Scotland squad which won the WXV2 title in late October.

#### 26. Principal's Medal

- Sport is delighted that Claire Cruickshank, Head of Women's Rugby, is being recognised with the Principal's Medal
- Claire's coaching skills, player support and development have helped create an exceptional women's rugby programme which can be displayed through its impact on international rugby as show above.

#### 27. UoE Finalists in Scottish Women in Sport Awards

- Claire Maxwell (Netball Alum) – A Decade of Inspiration in Sport Award
- Eilidh Doyle (Athletics Alum) – Pioneer in Sport Award
- Isla Hedley (Triathlon First Year) – Young Sportswoman of the Year Award

### **Resource implications**

28. This paper has no current resource implications. There are resource implications for point 14, but this will be included in our planning submission for 2024/25.

### **Risk Management**

29. This paper contains no key risks.

### **Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals**

30. This paper contributes to the following SDGs

- SDG3 – Good Health and Wellbeing

All the work we do at EUSU is focussed on enhancing the health and wellbeing of our university community.

- SDG4 – Quality Education

We believe our student/volunteer development efforts contribute to a more complete and expanded education for students.

- SDG5 – Gender Equality

The work of Volunteer Zambia creates safe spaces for girls to engage in sport. We are committed to supporting this.

- SDG10 – Reduced Inequalities

Volunteer Zambia delivers educational programmes and supports social enterprise in Zambia which has a significant impact on reducing inequality and extreme poverty.

- SDG17 – Partnerships

Volunteer Zambia is partnered with Sport in Action who operate in Zambia, utilising sport as a means to provide young people with education and empowerment.

### **Equality & Diversity**

31. Equality and Diversity is considered in all of EUSU's work. This paper does not require an Equality Impact Assessment.

### **Next steps/implications**

32. Please reach out via [sports.president@ed.ac.uk](mailto:sports.president@ed.ac.uk) if you have any follow up questions or would like to explore collaborative opportunities.

### **Consultation**

33. Consultation for this paper was sought from:

- Assistant Director and Head of Sport (Ross Simpson)
- Sports Programme Manager (Millie Doherty)
- Sport Participation Activator (Callum Ball)
- Sport Coordinator – Volunteering and Participation (Neil Rankin)
- Active Health Manager (Katherine Corbett)

### **Further information**

34.	<u>Author</u> Peter Sawkins Sports Union President	<u>Presenter</u> Sharan Atwal EUSA President
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### **Freedom of Information**

35. Open Paper



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH



## UNIVERSITY COURT

4 December 2023

### Edinburgh Futures Institute

#### Description of paper

1. The purpose of the paper is to provide an update on the Edinburgh Futures Institute (EFI) and to seek approval of additional funding to complete the project.
2. The proposals in the paper will contribute to the following outcomes set out in Strategy 2030:
  - Our estate will be fit for purpose, sustainable and accessible. We will support learning, research and collaboration with our neighbours, businesses and partners.

#### *Paragraphs 3-54: closed section* Risk Management

55. A very detailed and active project risk register is maintained and this has been scrutinised by the project team as part of the forecasting activity to capture and make provision for dealing with the financial exposure of potential risks through to completion of the project. The risk register is routinely reviewed by the project team and the main contractor to ensure that all risks are mitigated.

#### Equality & Diversity

56. There are no equality and diversity issues identified at this point.

#### Next steps/implications

57. Following approval by University Court, the project will be taken forward to conclusion within the revised budget approval.

58. The EFI Commercial Sub Group of the Project Board will continue to meet monthly to ensure the project is delivered within the revised funding envelope.

#### Consultation

59. The EFI Commercial Sub Group and the Project Board have been fully consulted ahead of making this funding request. Estates Committee considered in detail the request for additional funding at a virtual meeting held on 9 November 2023 and agreed to recommend approval of additional funding to Policy and Resources Committee and subsequently University Court. Policy and Resources Committee met on 13 November 2023 and agreed to recommend approval of the additional funding to University Court.

#### Further information

60. Further information can be provided by Jane Johnston.

#### Authors

Jane Johnston,  
Director of Estate Development

#### Presenter

Gary Jebb  
Director of Place

Gary Jebb  
Director of Place  
24 November 2023

## **Freedom of Information**

61. Open version



UNIVERSITY COURT

4 December 2023

**Research & Innovation Strategy 2030**

**Description of paper**

1. The draft Research and Innovation (R&I) Strategy 2030 sets out the University's objectives and plans for research and innovation over the coming seven years, further elaborating the goals articulated in Strategy 2030.
2. The R&I Strategy is closely aligned with the ambitions and outcomes of the Research dimension of Strategy 2030, which aims to deliver the following vision: "Our ethos of working without boundaries will deliver a step change in innovation and research". It also contributes to:
  - the People dimension of Strategy 2030, through its priorities for ensuring a healthy research culture and environment;
  - Teaching and Learning, through forging new missions to galvanise commitment to shared goals across our staff and student community;
  - Social Responsibility & Sustainability, through its measures on marshalling our research to address urgent local and global challenges, including the climate emergency.

**Action requested/Recommendation**

3. University Court is asked to discuss and approve the Research & Innovation Strategy, and comment on/endorse next steps.

*Paragraphs 4-21: closed section*

*The Research & Innovation Strategy 2030 has been published at <https://www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/research-and-innovation-strategy-2030.pdf>*

**Consultation**

22. The R&I Strategy was developed in consultation with a wide range of relevant groups and committees, as noted in paragraph 4.
23. Feedback and comments were also received from the Provost, Heads of College, Director of Strategic Planning and Insight, Vice-Principal International, and Edinburgh Innovations leadership.
24. Members of Senate provided feedback and comments on the R&I Strategy at a dedicated Research and Innovation Senate session on the 6 November. Members who were unable to attend the session were invited to submit written comments to the Vice Principal Research and Enterprise.
25. The R&I Strategy was discussed by the Policy and Resources Committee on 13 November, and on 14 November recommended by University Executive for transmission to Court for approval.

26. At each stage of the consultation process we have sought to incorporate comments and feedback from stakeholders, ensuring the final draft is as inclusive and representative of diverse voices and experiences from across the University research community as possible.

**Further information**

27. Authors

Professor Christina Boswell  
Vice Principal Research and  
Enterprise

Dr Kirsty Collinge  
Senior Project Officer Research  
and Enterprise

Presenter

Professor Christina Boswell  
Vice Principal Research and Enterprise

**Freedom of Information**

28. Open version .



UNIVERSITY COURT

4 December 2023

**Court External Effectiveness Review Proposal**

**Description of paper**

1. This paper proposes arrangements for an externally facilitated evaluation of the effectiveness of Court and its committees (hereafter an 'external effectiveness review').

**Action requested/Recommendation**

2. To approve the proposed arrangements for an external effectiveness review.

**Background and context**

3. The Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance (in both the new 2023 version and the previous 2017 version, the text is identical) states that:

*The governing body is expected to review its own effectiveness each year and to undertake an externally facilitated evaluation of its own effectiveness and that of its committees, including size and composition of membership, at least every five years. As part of these processes or separately, the effectiveness of the academic board (also known as Senate, Senatus Academicus or academic council) is expected to be reviewed similarly.*

4. An external effectiveness review of Court last took place in the 2018/19 academic year<sup>1</sup>, five years previously, and we are therefore expected to undertake a review in the current academic year. An external review of Senate has recently taken place and will be reported upon separately. In preparation for the Court review, Nominations Committee has considered the topic in its recent meetings, including:

- Reflections on the previous external review;
- Reflections from members with experience of external board reviews in other organisations;
- Whether an individual with higher education governance experience, particularly in the Scottish context, or a consultancy firm with experience of external board reviews in other sectors would be preferred, and potentially suitable individuals or firms if so; and,
- The preferred approach to be taken in the review.

5. Nominations Committee expressed preferences for:

- A review that goes beyond a simple compliance check and considers effectiveness more broadly, such as the extent to which the Court and its committees help enable the success of the University's Strategy 2030;
- Opening the review with a survey of Court and committee members; and,

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<sup>1</sup> The review's report is published here:

<https://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/GaSP/Governance/Court/ExternalEffectivenessReport.pdf> along with an update from February 2022 on action taken in response:

<https://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/GaSP/Governance/Court/20220201-ExternalEffectivenessReport-ProgressUpdate.pdf>

- An individual with significant experience of the higher education sector, ideally with some experience of the Scottish higher education sector, rather than a consultancy firm. A potentially suitable individual was suggested.

6. The individual suggested, Dr Veena O'Halloran, has been approached and has expressed interest, with proposal below reviewed by Nominations Committee at its most recent meeting and recommended to Court for approval.

## **Discussion**

### *Proposal – the reviewer*

7. Veena O'Halloran is likely uniquely qualified to undertake the review given the preferences expressed by Nominations Committee as Veena:

- Has served as University Secretary and Compliance Officer for five years (2017-2022) at another Scottish research intensive university, the University of Strathclyde, with the first-hand experience of a Court, senior management and interactions between the two that a University Secretary role involves;
- Earlier in her career, Veena served as a Senate member on a Court, gaining the perspective of being a Court member and serving on committees equivalent to Policy & Resources Committee and Nominations Committee;
- Recently supported the Committee of Scottish Chairs in their review of the Governance Code, culminating in the revised 2023 version;
- Served as a non-executive member on the board of the Scottish Funding Council from 2015 to October 2023, gaining experience of a being non-executive board member and serving on the Access and Inclusion Committee, Finance Committee, Audit and Compliance Committee and the Remuneration Committee;
- Is currently undertaking an external review of a peer institution, the University of Glasgow, which is due to conclude early in the new year and could be a useful source of learning and benchmarking for our own review; and,
- Shares the preferences expressed by Nominations Committee for the approach to the review (covered below).

8. More biographical information is appended to the paper.

### *Proposal – the approach*

9. Veena O'Halloran has proposed the following approach:

Summary: the external facilitator would carry out the review through a combination of review of governance documentation and structural arrangements, consultation with members of Court, meetings with senior staff and with the secretariat to the Court and attendance at Court and its committees. A final report identifying any recommendations for enhancement to current arrangements and/or opportunities for further enhancement would be presented to the meeting of Nominations Committee on 27 May 2024 and then to Court on 17 June 2024.

10. In more detail, this would consist of:

i. Review of governance documentation and structural arrangements:

- Governance structure, arrangements and operation.
- Court documentation and committee papers for recent session(s).



- Actions taken in response to the previous effectiveness review.
  - Arrangements for assurance of compliance with statutory instruments and the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance 2023.
- ii. Consultation with members of Court and the University Leadership
- Undertaking a questionnaire survey of Court members
  - Meetings with members of Court in defined groups
  - Meetings with the Senior Lay Member; Rector; Principal; University Secretary; and Court secretariat.
  - Attendance at Court and Committees of Court.
- iii. Reviewer's reflection and observations on the views of individuals and those expressed in response to the survey, plus observations by the University Secretary/Clerk to Court.
- Additional relevant themes or lines of enquiry will be pursued.
- iv. Identification of any recommendation and areas for enhancements
- Recommendation for enhancements of what is currently in place, and/or through consideration of new or different approaches.
- v. Final Report
- Final report to be discussed with the Nominations Committee.

## **Resource implications**

*Paragraph 11: Closed section*

*Time – Court members and staff*

12. The reviewer will engage with Court members, including the Rector elected from March 2024, and staff involved in supporting Court. The reviewer will also need administrative support from the Court Services Office in organising meetings and providing material for the desktop research based elements of the report and in answering queries on particularities at the University of Edinburgh. The reviewer will be briefed at the outset on Strategy 2030 as per the suggestion from Nominations Committee. The review will be undertaken flexibly on a part-time basis over the first half of the new calendar year to enable the reviewer to observe committee meetings and follow the Court meeting cycle.

## **Risk Management**

13. An external effectiveness review should aid good risk management.

## **Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals**

14. The preference to consider effectiveness in enabling the success of the University's Strategy 2030 encompasses the Sustainable Development Goals and many climate aspects, including the Carbon Net Zero by 2040 target.

## **Equality & Diversity**

15. This will also be considered as a part of the external review.

**Next steps/implications**

16. If approved, the University Secretary will finalise the arrangements with Veena O'Halloran, working towards a report to be presented to the Court meeting on 17 June 2024, with oversight from Nominations Committee.

**Consultation**

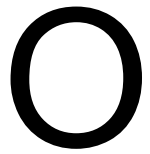
17. The paper follows discussions at Nominations Committee, which has recommended the proposal for approval.

**Further information**

18. <u>Author</u>	<u>Presenter</u>
Lewis Allan	Leigh Chalmers
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**Freedom of Information**

19. Open paper aside from paragraph 11 (commercially confidential).



**UNIVERSITY COURT**

**4 December 2023**

**General Council Membership & Registration Ordinance**

**Description of paper**

1. University of Edinburgh Ordinance No. 186 (Appendix 1) has defined the criteria for membership of the General Council (GC) since 1991. At its meeting on 29 November 2021 Court approved that the Ordinance be reviewed to address unsatisfactory clauses which had been identified as anachronistic and causing confusion. These issues have been addressed in the attached Draft New Ordinance (Appendix 2).
2. The current Ordinance (Appendix 1) offers membership only to those with University degrees or to senior academic staff. These restrictions do not reflect that the University now confers other awards to graduates and are at odds with the value attached to an inclusive multi-professional University community articulated in Strategy 2030. The review identified the University grade structure as a means of defining comparable criteria for academic and professional staff. The criteria for staff membership of the GC defined in the Draft New Ordinance (Appendix 2) reflect the University's contemporary ethos while also recognising the requirements of the role and responsibilities of GC members.

**Action requested/Recommendation**

3. Court is asked to approve the transmission of the Draft New Ordinance as set out in Appendix 2 for statutory consultation.

**Background and context**

4. The report presented to University Court in November 2021 proposed that Ordinance 186 should be amended substantially so that GC membership could be conferred on:
  - i. all those graduating with academic awards approved by Senate, not just degrees;
  - ii. all administrative, professional, and technical staff at grade 8 and above, to give parity with similar grade academic staff already eligible to join General Council;
  - iii. all Honorary awards and appointments – not just Honorary Fellows and Honorary graduates.
5. Court agreed to 'The initiation of a process of review of Ordinance No. 186 (General Council Membership & Registration) with a view to amending the criteria for General Council membership to resolve identified issues set out in the paper'.
6. During that review period, further consideration of the resource and implementation requirements was made by Development and Alumni (D&A) as it manages the General Council (GC) Register within its Charity Customer Relationship Management (CRM) database. This identified practical data management issues, particularly around extending membership to all Honorary appointments. Also, major changes were about to take place to the CRM systems.

7. Now that the changes to the CRM system have bedded down, it was decided to carry out a more detailed review of the resource implications of the proposed changes to Ordinance 186 and this has been carried out by a working group which included members of the D&A Services Team and the Secretary and the Assistant Secretary of the GC.
8. The Working Group report presented to the University Secretary concluded that:
  - a. Most (but not all) of the proposed changes to Ordinance 186 as recommended in the previous report to Court would be straightforward to incorporate into the General Council Register.
  - b. Any additional resource requirements arising from bringing in new categories would be temporary and manageable through phased implementation of changes to incorporate existing staff or award holders who would become eligible.
  - c. The main change from the previous proposal should be not to extend General Council membership to all Honorary appointments, such as Hon Professors, Hon Readers, Hon Senior Lecturers or Hon Lecturers. This earlier proposal arose from confusion over the category of Honorary Fellows eligible to join General Council. When Court decided in 1991 to include this group, it was meant to apply only to those awarded University Honorary Fellowships on the recommendation of Senate, and not to College appointed Honorary Fellows, but this distinction was not made clear enough in subsequent documentation.
  - d. The data management difficulties associated with including hundreds of College Honorary appointments in the General Council Register are complex, time consuming and onerous. As a result, there should be no extension of eligibility to include College appointed Honorary Fellows, Honorary Professors or Honorary Lecturers, as similar data management issues would arise.

## Discussion

9. The proposed amendments to unsatisfactory clauses of the current Ordinance are shown in red in the Draft New Ordinance (Appendix 2).
  - (i) **Not all who now graduate receive degrees.** The current Ordinance restricts GC membership to those awarded degrees. In addition to degrees, there are currently about 30 other awards that can be made by the University, some of which confer the status of being a graduate of the University. Clause 1(a) has been reworded with input from the Director of Student Systems & Administration to reflect the contemporary flexibility in awards and inclusivity, while maintaining the University's formal academic standards, by permitting all graduates of the University to become members of GC. For example, the new wording opens GC membership to those graduating with postgraduate diplomas or those completing joint degrees with partner Universities. This change is reflected in the wording of Clauses 3 and 4(a) of the Appendix 2 which substitute the term 'academic award' for degree.
  - (ii) **Anomalies.** The 'ex officio' GC membership of the University Chaplain has now been specified in Clause 1(c). The invitation to retain membership is made

consistently to members demitting office in Clause 1(e) or completing their term of appointment after 3 years in Clause 1(f).

(iii) **Anachronism.** The registration fee referred to in Clauses 1(d-e) and Clause 7 of the current Ordinance (Appendix I) was discontinued by the University in 2012 and has been omitted from the Draft New Ordinance.

(iv) **Administrative simplification.** The changes create an opportunity to consider data flows and processes with the aim of increased efficiency. This will continue in the implementation phase. Offering membership for staff on appointment would be administratively simpler than initiating that after one year in post (Clause 1(c) (iv) of Appendix I). The current reference to retirement - Appendix I, clause 1 (e) - has been removed. The Draft New Ordinance retains the criterion for former staff who were members of General Council and were employed by the University for at least 3 years prior to leaving to be invited to retain their GC membership on leaving the University, except for those who leave because they have been dismissed or following disciplinary action.

(v) **Parity of membership for academic and professional staff.** The academic job titles formerly used to define GC membership criteria translate to University Grade 8 and above. Use of the University Grade profiles offers a means of achieving comparable criteria for professional staff. Clinical academics have their own scale. The wording of the relevant clauses 1(e & g) of Appendix 2 was provided by HR.

### **Resource implications**

10. Any additional resource requirements arising from bringing in new categories would be temporary and manageable through phased implementation of changes to incorporate existing staff or award holders who would become eligible. Potentially the largest group of additional members of GC are those who graduated with awards which were not degrees but as they are already in the D&A CRM database, including them in the General Council Register is straightforward.

### **Risk Management**

11. The General Council Register sits within a database managed by D&A with close attention to data protection legislation and data security. A detailed Data Protection Impact Assessment of the proposed changes was carried out by the Working Party in its review of implementation and this was approved by the University Data Protection Officer.

### **Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals**

12. A more diverse membership would ensure that the General Council was better equipped to play its part in supporting the University to deliver its Strategy 2030 outcomes and the Sustainable Development Goals.

13. A key issue for ensuring a contemporary database of active GC members is to align with the University's digital strategy which makes more effective use of digital technology to engage with members sustainably e.g. targeted communication; voting; hybrid events.

### **Equality & Diversity**

14. Current criteria for GC membership discriminate in favour of academic staff to the exclusion of other staff groups. One aim of the review is to propose a more equitable basis for staff membership and hence a GC membership which better reflects the diversity of the University's community. An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out by the Working Party. This has since been approved by the University Secretary and the proposed changes will contribute to meeting the University's general equality duty under the Equality Act 2010.

### **Next steps/implications**

15. Court approval of the transmission of the Draft New Ordinance triggers a statutory 8-week period of consultation with Senate and the General Council which is required to inform the preparation of the final draft of the New Ordinance. This final draft must be approved by Court before onward transmission for consideration by the Scottish Universities Committee and, in due course, for approval by the Privy Council.

### **Consultation**

16. It is recommended the consultation period begins on 29 December 2023 as this would allow consideration of the Draft New Ordinance at the meeting of Senate on 7 February and at the General Council Half Yearly Meeting on 17 February 2024. Given that 29 December 2023 falls during the University's Christmas and New Year closure period the consultation documents will be circulated in mid-December, to give all consultees at least 8 weeks not including closure period to consider. Court would be informed of the outcome of the consultation at its meeting on 26 February 2024.

### **Further information**

17. Author

Dr William Duncan  
Secretary to General Council

Presenter

Lady Wolffe  
General Council Assessor

### **Freedom of Information**

18. Open paper.

## Appendix 1

### UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH ORDINANCE No 186

#### GENERAL COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP AND REGISTRATION

At Edinburgh, the Eighth day of July, Nineteen hundred and ninety-one years.

WHEREAS the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966, Section 10(1), provides that the University Court shall cause to be maintained a register of members of the General Council in accordance with provisions to be prescribed by Ordinance:

AND WHEREAS in terms of Sections 3 of the said Act and of paragraphs 1 and 5- of Part I of Schedule 2 thereto, the University Court has power to amend by Ordinance the composition, powers, and functions of, 'inter alia', the General Council, and to prescribe the conditions under which the register of members of the General Council is to be maintained:

AND WHEREAS the University Court deems it expedient to amend the composition of the General Council and to amend the conditions under which the register of members of the General Council is to be maintained:

THEREFORE the University Court of the University of Edinburgh, in exercise of the powers conferred upon it by Section 3 of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966, and with particular reference to paragraphs 1 and 5 of Part I of Schedule 2 to that Act, hereby statutes and ordains:

1. The General Council of the University of Edinburgh shall consist of:

(a) all persons on whom the University has conferred degrees other than Honorary Degrees, whose names shall be recorded in the Register of Graduates referred to in Section 3 of this Ordinance, in accordance with the provisions of this Ordinance:

(b) all persons on whom the University has conferred an Honorary Degree or on whom it has conferred the title of Honorary Fellow of the University.

(c) during their tenure of office -

(i) the Chancellor of the University;

(ii) the members of the University Court;

(iii) the Professors of the University;

(iv) all Readers, Senior Lecturers, and Lecturers in the University who have held any such office for a period of one year:

(d) former members of the University Court and former Professors who have elected to pay the statutory registration fee, if any.

(e) former Readers, Senior Lecturers and Lecturers who have retired after holding any such office in the University for a period of three years and who have elected to pay the statutory registration fee, if any.

2. The University Court shall from time to time appoint a Registrar of the General Council, upon such conditions as the Court may determine, and the Court shall provide such assistance for the performance of the Registrar's duties as it may consider necessary. The office of Registrar may be held in conjunction with any other office in the University

3. The Registrar shall ensure that a Register of Graduates is maintained, recording the full names of all persons on whom the University has conferred a degree other than an Honorary Degree, the address of each graduand at the time of registration for graduation, the date of graduation, and the degree conferred.

4. The Registrar shall also ensure that a Register of Members of the General Council is maintained, recording

(a) the full names in alphabetical order and addresses (where known) of all graduates whose names are recorded in the Register of Graduates and who are not known to be dead, or presumed dead failing contrary information after eighty years from the date of graduation, together with, in each case, the first degree recorded in the Register of Graduates, and the year of graduation in that degree;

(b) the full names, in alphabetical order, and addresses (where known) of all other members of the General Council not known to be dead and the offices in virtue of which they qualify for membership.

5. <sup>1</sup> .....

6. If any person whose name is not included in the Register of Members - shall consider that it should be so included, it shall be competent for him or her to appeal to the University Court if the Court considers that such person's name should be included in the Register of Members - in terms of this Ordinance, it shall direct the Registrar to amend the Register accordingly. The decision of the Court shall be final.

7. The University Court shall have power to decide whether a fee shall be required as a condition of graduation in any degree or as a condition of membership of the General Council for those categories of persons mentioned in Section 1(d) and (e) of this Ordinance, and to fix the amount of any such fee. Those categories of persons mentioned in Section 1(b) of this Ordinance shall not be required to pay such a fee.

8. Ordinance No 174 (General Council Membership and Registration) is hereby revoked.

9. This Ordinance shall come into force after its approval by Her Majesty in Council on a date to be determined by the University Court.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF .....

Approved by Order in Council, dated 11 February 1992.

<sup>1</sup> Omitted by Ordinance No. 202, now superseded by Ordinance No. 213



UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH ORDINANCE No 217

GENERAL COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP AND REGISTRATION

At Edinburgh, the [Number] day of [Month], [Year]

WHEREAS the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966, Section 10(1), provides that the University Court shall cause to be maintained a register of members of the General Council in accordance with provisions to be prescribed by Ordinance:

AND WHEREAS in terms of Sections 3 of the said Act and of paragraphs 1 and 5- of Part I of Schedule 2 thereto, the University Court has power to amend by Ordinance the composition, powers, and functions of, `inter alia`, the General Council, and to prescribe the conditions under which the register of members of the General Council is to be maintained:

AND WHEREAS the University Court deems it expedient to amend the composition of the General Council and to amend the conditions under which the register of members of the General Council is to be maintained:

THEREFORE the University Court of the University of Edinburgh, in exercise of the powers conferred upon it by Section 3 of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966, and with particular reference to paragraphs 1 and 5 of Part I of Schedule 2 to that Act, hereby statutes and ordains:

1. The General Council of the University of Edinburgh shall consist of:

(a) all persons who **having successfully met the requirements of an academic award other than an Honorary Degree and have graduated from the University of Edinburgh and** whose names shall be recorded in the Register of Graduates referred to in Section 3 of this Ordinance, in accordance with the provisions of this Ordinance:

(b) all persons on whom the University has conferred an Honorary Degree or on whom it has conferred the award of Honorary Fellow of the University. [Note: this provision does not apply to those appointed by Colleges or Schools as Honorary Fellows.]

(c) during their tenure of office -

- (i) the Chancellor of the University;
- (ii) the members of the University Court;
- (iii) **the Chaplain to the University.**

[Drafting note: all Professors, Readers, Senior Lecturers, Lecturers are now included under (d) below]

**(d) during the tenure of their appointment: all staff of the University appointed to roles assigned to University Grade 8 or above and their grade equivalent(s).**

(e) those 'ex officio' members in Clause 1(c) who accept the invitation to retain their membership of the General Council on demitting office or completion of their period of appointment; [Drafting note: former Professors are now included under (f) below]

(f) former staff (admitted previously as per Clause (d) above) who accept the invitation to retain their membership of the General Council after being employed by the University for a period of at least three years in a role assigned to Grade 8 or above or equivalent and who leave University employment except when dismissed or in other similar categories of case as may be determined by the Registrar.

2. The University Court shall from time to time appoint a Registrar of the General Council, upon such conditions as the Court may determine, and the Court shall provide such assistance for the performance of the Registrar's duties as it may consider necessary. The office of Registrar may be held in conjunction with any other office in the University

3. The Registrar shall ensure that a Register of Graduates is maintained, recording the full names of all persons on whom the University has conferred an **academic award** other than an Honorary Degree, the address of each graduand at the time of registration for graduation, the date of graduation, and the **award** conferred.

4. The Registrar shall also ensure that a Register of Members of the General Council is maintained, recording

(a) the full names in alphabetical order and addresses (where known) of all graduates whose names are recorded in the Register of Graduates and who are not known to be dead, or presumed dead failing contrary information after eighty years from the date of graduation, together with, in each case, the first **academic award** recorded in the Register of Graduates, and the year of graduation in that **academic award**.

(b) the full names, in alphabetical order, and addresses (where known) of all other members of the General Council not known to be dead and the offices in virtue of which they qualify for membership.

5. .... [Omitted by Ordinance No. 202, now superseded by Ordinance No. 213]

5. If any person whose name is not included in the Register of Members shall consider that it should be so included, it shall be competent for him or her to appeal to the University Court **and** if the Court considers that such person's name should be included in the Register of Members - in terms of this Ordinance, it shall direct the Registrar to amend the Register accordingly. The decision of the Court shall be final.

6. Ordinance No **186** (General Council Membership and Registration) is hereby revoked.

7. This Ordinance shall come into force after its approval by **His** Majesty in Council on a date to be determined by the University Court.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF **these presents are sealed with the Common Seal of the University Court of the University of Edinburgh and subscribed on behalf of the Court in terms of the Requirements of the Writing (Scotland) Act 1995**

*[signature to be added]*  
*Professor Sir Peter Mathieson*  
Member of the University Court

*[signature to be added]*  
*Leigh Chalmers*  
Vice-Principal & University Secretary

Approved by Order in Council, dated *[insert date when known]*



## UNIVERSITY COURT

4 December 2023

### University Health and Safety

#### Description of paper

1. This paper provides an annual report on the health and safety arrangements at the University and provides information on the objectives in relation to health and safety management in 2024.

#### Action requested / recommendation

2. Court is invited to review and discuss this paper.

#### Background and context

3. The safety and the health of the people who make up our University community is a core value of the institution and is fundamental to our ability to be successful in our research, teaching and work, supporting the aspirations of Strategy 2030. The arrangements in place to support this require to be effective, well-implemented and they should address the risks presented by the University's operations and activities. The University uses a number of mechanisms to review these arrangements; this report is provided to Court to assist it with its remit.

4. The University Safety, Health and Wellbeing Committee (USHAWC) met on 16 December 2022, 29 March 2023 and 30 August 2023 and the minutes and papers are available for members on request.

5. Court members are required to be aware of the [updated Management Standard](#) (October 2023). This document is produced by The Universities Safety and Health Association (USHA) in partnership with Universities Colleges Employer Association (UCEA) and endorsed by Universities UK (UUK). It will be issued by UUK to all Principals/Vice-Chancellors in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) imminently. The communication is expected to be accompanied with a helpful educational video and will be made available to members. As a reminder, this document sets out responsibilities across the institution from the governing body through all layers of management including requirements related to members of Court.

6. The University Executive (UE) reviews quarterly health and safety reports presented by the Vice-Principal Corporate Services, the senior officer with a designated remit for health and safety. UE has access to the USHAWC's SharePoint site and it is expected that members there view the minutes of meetings and reports.

7. The USHAWC updated its [Terms of reference](#) in early 2022: it operates as both a management and a consultative committee, with all seven University management areas represented and both staff and student representation (Trade Unions and EUSA), meeting three times a year. The seven area representatives act on behalf of their senior management and as conduits, bringing matters to the Committee and communicating to local senior management, in their 62 areas, information as

necessary. The USHAWC has three thematic sub-committees: Radiation Safety, Biological Safety and the new Health & Wellbeing Sub-Committee (staff), where strategy and operational programme delivery are reviewed, and each of these reports annually to USHAWC (with additional reporting as needed during the year).

8. The USHAWC's annual standing reports (section 7 of Annex 1) provide management information on a full range of health and safety matters with performance reviewed and discussed. Data submitted in the reports is collated through self-declaration annual reports from Heads of School/Departments, management reports and centrally by the Corporate H&S Department.

*Paragraph 9: closed section*

*Leadership H&S Management Standard*

10. *"The Governing Body has strategic oversight of all matters related to health and safety for their institution and should seek assurance that effective arrangements are in place and are working. The information contained in the Management Standard details practical guidance that will assist in ensuring members of the Governing Body satisfy themselves that the HEI meets its health and safety responsibilities",* Leadership and Management of Health and Safety in Higher Education Institutions, October 2023

Court members' understanding of health and safety management at the University is important to the health and safety culture of the University. The management standard sets out expected action and should be reflected in our own institution's approach. The University's H&S Policy is in the process of being reviewed in 2024 and the revised management standard is used as a reference point in the process. Court members and the senior leadership should understand the University's committees and arrangements pertaining to health, safety and wellbeing as part of their remit. Training programmes will be revised as the Policy is reviewed in 2024. Staff training is provided for Heads of School and staff regarding their responsibilities. Human Resources are in early discussion on update to leadership training and are incorporating existing education within the central approach to senior leadership training for new and emerging leaders in the University. Consideration will be given on the best way to ensure Court members are aware of their responsibilities, likely a briefing session aimed directly at them, which will be taken forward by the Director of H&S in early 2024.

11. *Significant Updates during 2022-2023*

- **Fire Safety:** With a significant change to the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's response to fire alerts in Scotland in the summer of 2023, the University successfully delivered its new response to this and this has been well executed by Estates' Security and local staff across the institution with advice of the University Fire Safety Unit (FSU). The FSU launched a new IT platform called Riskbase which allows all key stakeholders (Estates/School/Department) to view and update their building fire risk assessments, improving the ability to monitor progress.
- **Respiratory Health-New University Code of Practice on Local Extract Ventilation(LEV) Management:** Estates and Health and Safety worked together to introduce a consistent approach to the management of LEV, including

procurement of the testing for this critical equipment present in many areas of the organisation to remove contaminants from the workplace. The University has in excess of 1000 such systems. This standard will also lead to better financial planning for replacement of this equipment.

- **Biological Safety:** A single standard has been introduced for the management of all Containment Level 3 laboratories with an accompanying Biological Safety Unit formal audit process.
- **Radiation Safety:** A significant update to the University's Code of Practice on Classified Radiation Workers following a shift in the Health and Safety Executive's guidance to employers. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) launched their new Registration and Consent system on 01/10/2023. This changes the way employers apply to them for new consents to carry out certain practices relating to work with ionising radiation. The University currently has four practices requiring consent for its work. The Radiation Protection Unit has also introduced a number of new practical guidance documents regarding laser safety processes.
- **Enforcement Visits:** There has been several planned and reactive enforcement visits to the University from enforcement agencies across a range of topics. These have all been detailed and discussed at USHWC regarding the nature of the visit and any response or action taken. The only outstanding matter pertains to communication on an HSE visit in 2022 regarding the management of animal allergens. The University has written to senior HSE management to demonstrate the areas of improvement made in response to a notice of contravention and also requested the further review of what we considered to be inaccurate findings. This matter was specific to the Occupational Health profession's return to the use of onsite health surveillance using Spirometry (lung function tests), following a pause across the UK by the majority of professionals (responding to HSE advice) across all relevant sectors, due to the pandemic. This matter was raised with the professional bodies and advisors to the HSE. It is expected that communication will be issued to close off the matter: however, although we have communicated with the HSE on three occasions in 2023, this matter remains open. Annex 2 shows all enforcement contacts from August 2022 to date.
- **Hybrid working:** has introduced substantial change to most Schools and Departments. As reported last year, there will be a lasting impact from the pandemic on the world of work particularly through increased digitisation of work which has been factored into the evaluation of organisational H&S risk. The University has accepted this new way of work formally, after reviewing the impact of pilots, with the publication of the [University Hybrid Workplace Policy](#) approved by UE in 2023; the H&S department contributed to the consultation highlighting the risks presented. The health and safety online training on homeworking was reviewed in line with the introduction of this new Policy. Schools and Departments have raised that staff numbers have not returned to buildings and are experiencing a noticeable impact on the provision of their building fire safety stewards and first aid trained staff available on site. This is being addressed through increased staff training for more roles.
- **Training:** Significant unanticipated work was undertaken in 2023 to transfer all of the University online H&S training courses, due to the P&M requirements, to the three new platforms for our staff, students and visitors. It is noted that the system could not accept historical records, these will require to be kept locally: in time, however, we will have fuller data to utilise as an organisational KPI. This will help

the University to track delivery and uptake of staff training and support better organisational monitoring and reporting.

- **RAAC:** In late summer 2023, the UK Government’s Department for Education issued new guidance on the risks associated with reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) which highlighted a potential serious concern of the structural integrity of these panels. The University had previously (2018/19) undertaken a review of the condition of our panels and were therefore in a good position to understand areas of concern. An IMT was stood up, chaired by the Director of Corporate Services, which took action to undertake surveys of all areas with RAAC and put in place an improvement plan based upon the condition of the RAAC. Plans are well underway to remove or reinforce RAAC panels, with a number of areas put back into use. However, a number of lecture theatres and other significant areas will remain out of use until 2024 and remedial actions can be completed.

*Future Look 2024*

12. **University staff health and wellbeing** This is a significant development area, which will be co-ordinated through the Corporate Health and Safety Department, taking a collaborative approach across the institution with key partners. It is noted that student wellbeing is overseen separately and there is good liaison between the areas on programmes to ensure the approach is holistic in the organisation. The University has very good arrangements to support mental health and policies in place and the emerging University commitment to mental health will bring these together in 2024, to promote them effectively, introduce objectives and manage these well.

13. **Objectives of the organisation for 2023-24**

<b>Objectives, summarised from USHWC Plan July 2023-24</b>	<b>Delivery date</b>
Review the University’s Health and Safety Policy in 2024	June 2024
Review the organisational design for access to H&S competent advice for all seven management areas	June 2024
Produce a University Risk Profile to enable improved annual reporting	April 2024
Review the provision of Occupational Health advice for activity and staff population to future proof the service	April 2024
Review provision of H&S management information to identify improvements to organisational reporting	June 2024
Review the approach to general H&S induction for all staff	August 2024
Introduce the new University Mental Health Commitment & Framework and review the associated guidance on prevention of stress and promote the support available for staff.	April 2024

**Resource implications**

14. There is no financial impact of this paper. There is likely to be, however, an impact in terms of the need for increased training and a developing mental health

and wellbeing agenda and this will form part of the normal planning round considerations for 2024-25.

### **Risk management**

15. The safety and the health of the people who make up our University community is fundamental to our ability to be successful in our research, teaching and work, supporting the aspirations of Strategy 2030. This report forms part of the measures used for the organisation to review how the risk to staff, students, suppliers and visitors is managed.

### **Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals**

16. This paper provides the Committee with information on the current management of health and safety and the key risks and controls with a forward look for 2024. Management of health and safety contributes to UN Sustainable Development Goals 3 and 8 – Good Health and Wellbeing and Decent Work and Economic Growth. The work described in support for disabilities contributes to the achievement of UNSDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities (see below).

### **Equality & diversity**

17. The work undertaken to support H&S Annual plan and evaluation of risk will continue to improve the workplace in terms of health and safety for all, therefore, should ensure our diverse workforce enjoy a consistent experience. This paper provides an update on the new Staff Disability Advisory Service which was launched in 2023, a service which follows the social model for disability in assisting to remove barriers in the workplace for staff.

### **Next steps/implications**

18. This paper is presented to support Court in meetings its requirements concerning health and safety.

19. Author

Suzanne Thompson  
Director of Health and Safety  
9 November 2023

Presenter

Catherine Martin  
Vice-Principal Corporate Services  
18 November 2023

### **Freedom of Information**

20. Open version





UNIVERSITY COURT

4 December 2023

**Development & Alumni: Granting of Probate**

**Description of paper**

1. This paper requests Court assistance to secure the grant of a probate application.

*Paragraphs 2-13: closed section*

**Resource implications**

14. There are no immediate resource implications arising from this paper but the paper seeks permission to access a bequest to benefit medical research at the University.

**Risk Management**

15. There are no significant risk implications arising from this paper.

**Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals**

16. There are no relevant factors identified.

**Equality & Diversity**

17. It is considered that the proposal does not impact on equality and diversity.

*Paragraph 18: closed section*

**Consultation**

19. There has been consultation with Legal Services, external solicitors and Court Services.

**Further information**

20. Author

Morag Murison  
Head of Legacies and Planned Giving  
Development & Alumni Office

**Freedom of Information**

20. Open version



UNIVERSITY COURT

4 December 2023

Donations & Legacies and Alumni Relations Activity

Description of paper

- 1. A report on legacies and donations received by the University of Edinburgh Development Trust or directly by the University of Edinburgh from 1 September 2023 to 31 October 2023.
- 2. The paper also includes an update on current alumni relations activities.
- 3. All gifts contribute to different aspects of the University’s goals under strategy 2030 and due diligence procedures ensure there is no conflict with the values summarised in the strategy.

Action requested/Recommendation

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

Paragraphs 5-7: closed section

Global Alumni Events

- 8. Upcoming global alumni events:

<b>Singapore</b> Alumni breakfast event hosted by Prof Colm Harmon, Vice-Principal Students	November 2023
<b>Shanghai, China</b> St Andrews Day Ceilidh	November 2023
<b>Alexandria, USA</b> Alexandria Scottish Christmas Walk Parade	December 2023
<b>Toronto, Canada</b> Edinburgh University Club of Toronto Burns Supper	January 2024
<b>Washington DC</b> Edinburgh University Alumni Club of Washington DC Burns Supper	January 2024
<b>Toronto, Canada</b> Edinburgh University Club of Toronto Annual Dinner	April 2024

Recent Global Events

- 9. In October, the Alumni Engagement team, in collaboration with the Business School Alumni team, hosted a highly successful networking event in London. Attended by over 100 recent graduates and a number of alumni volunteers, the evening was a fantastic opportunity for professional and personal connections. This event marked a significant step in rebuilding our engagement in London and revitalising the alumni network.

10. The Edinburgh University Club of Toronto hosted Professor John Devaney, Centenary Chair of Social Work and Head of the School of Social and Political Science, and colleagues including Professor Ramona Alaggia from the University of Toronto, and Mary Glasgow, Chief Executive of Children 1st, for a highly engaging event in October. Guests heard about the joint seed funded project by the Universities of Edinburgh and Toronto, which looks at trauma-informed care for children and youth, bridging knowledge and practice.

11. As part of a delegation visit to the USA, we hosted three successful open to all alumni events in November in New York, Washington DC and the San Francisco Bay Area. In New York, the Principal warmly welcomed over 60 guests, including alumni, supporters, and current students. The audience received an update on recent University developments, followed by a keynote talk by Professor Shannon Vallor, the Baillie Gifford Chair in the Ethics of Data and Artificial Intelligence at the Edinburgh Futures Institute. Chris Cox, Vice Principal Philanthropy & Advancement, then chaired a Q&A for the highly engaged audience. The following week, an equally successful event with a similar format took place in Washington DC, with nearly 80 guests in attendance. Speeches also included Washington DC Alumni Club President and new USA Development Trust Director, David Gray, and alumni volunteer and supporter of the Insights Programme, Lauren Vicary.

12. The final event in the series took place in Palo Alto with 60 guests attending on the night. This event was our first large scale event on the West Coast for a number of years and took a different format. Hosted by the Principal who shared a University update, the event featured a fireside conversation led by Professor Vallor on AI: past, present and future, with guest panellists Stanford Professors Rob Reich and Christopher Manning, and Irene Solaiman, who is an AI safety and policy expert and Head of Global Policy at Hugging Face. This event was filmed we look forward to sharing in it in a range of communications over the coming weeks. All three events included a drinks reception, allowing guests to network, make new connections and catch up with old friends.

13. These events were part of a huge range of activity that took place over the week and also included a series of philanthropy, partnership, and government meetings, as well as the USA Development Trust Board meeting and a special lunch for Insights programme hosts in DC.

#### *Student Engagement*

14. Within our online series 'How to' Information Sessions, we conducted a session on "How to Make Connections with Platform One." This aimed to equip students with valuable insights into effectively utilizing Platform One.

15. The [Student Experience Grants](#) annual application window commenced on 12 October and concluded on 9 November. These grants, offer one-time contributions of up to £5,000 aiming to support innovative projects and initiatives geared towards enhancing students' social, academic, sporting, or cultural development. The team is currently reviewing all the submitted applications. Following this, the selection committee will determine the winners, with announcements scheduled for January 2024.

#### *Alumni support for Student Recruitment*

16. Looking forward in November, we are planning to host three alumni panel events for Postgraduate Virtual Open Days. Six alumni will offer their insights and advice to during the

events. These sessions aim to foster a sense of connection and provide prospective postgraduate students with valuable insights into their potential academic journeys in Edinburgh.

### *Digital Communications*

17. The graduate welcome email was issued to our newest alumni in October. Additionally, the first two editions of the Multi Story Edinburgh newsletter (for recent graduates) for the academic year 2023/2024 were disseminated in September and October, providing valuable updates and insights to our diverse alumni community.

### *Print*

18. The Communications team produced a refreshed version of the Multi Story Edinburgh handbook. The publication contains advice, insight and signposts to further support, together with features on recent graduates and experiences they can pass on. To ensure widespread distribution and accessibility, 8,500 copies have been ordered, with plans to distribute them during the upcoming graduation ceremonies in November and December 2023. Additionally, copies will be mailed to graduates unable to attend their ceremonies, with dispatch scheduled for early 2024.

19. Following the positive feedback the Communications team received for the graduation handbooks, work for a new printed publication 'Enlightened', especially for an alumni audience, is now underway. As with Development & Alumni's digital magazine of the same name, the new printed publication will be a way for alumni to read impactful stories about the University and their fellow alumni. The magazine will be mailed out at the start of December to a group of alumni identified by the Business Enhancement team.

### *Podcasts*

20. We continue to develop the Multi Story Edinburgh podcast which has had over 8,000 downloads to date. Season 5 of Multi Story Edinburgh was released with the first episode in September. This first episode has been the best performing episode of Multi Story Edinburgh since its inception. In addition to five new episodes, four specials were also produced.

21. A new podcast, 'Enlightened Conversations,' made its debut in the summer of 2023. The inaugural episode featured three Edinburgh graduates exploring themes such as ageing well, extended working lives, and the strength of a multigenerational workforce. This podcast, operating under the Enlightened brand, serves as a dedicated space for cultivating meaningful conversations on diverse and topical subjects. Garnering over 600 downloads to date, it has been actively promoted to our alumni and staff networks. Work is currently underway for the second episode, which will delve into the fascinating topic of AI, based on the recordings of the recent Palo Alto event

### **Resource implications**

22. 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**

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

### **Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals**

24. The preference of many donors to make a difference in the world through their support of our teaching and research ensures that a number of specific gifts tie in directly with the University's work across climate mitigation and the SDGs.'

### **Equality & Diversity**

25. 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**

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

### **Consultation**

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

### **Further information**

28. Authors

Gregor Hall  
Finance Manager

Gloria Omuya  
Alumni Relations Project Officer  
Development & Alumni

Presenter

Chris Cox  
Vice-Principal Philanthropy &  
Advancement

### **Freedom of Information**

29. Open version



UNIVERSITY COURT

4 December 2023

**Resolutions**

**Description of paper**

1. This paper invites Court to approve Resolutions to establish Chairs (i.e. professorial positions) in accordance with agreed arrangements and the requirements set out in the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966 and to alter the title of a Chair.
2. This paper contributes to the Strategy 2030 outcome 'We will be a destination of choice, based on our clear "Edinburgh Offer"'.

**Action requested/Recommendation**

3. To approve the following Resolutions presented in final format:
  - No. 112/2023: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Selective Breeding
  - No. 113/2023: Alteration of the title of Chair of Chemical Biology
  - No. 114/2023: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Human Geography and Ethnography

**Background and context**

4. The Universities (Scotland) Act 1966 enabled Court to exercise by Resolution a wide range of powers, including the creation and renaming of Chairs. The Act sets out the procedure for making Resolutions. This includes a period of consultation with the Senate, the General Council and any other body or person having an interest.
5. The circumstances leading to the creation of a Chair are typically either:
  - i. the creation of a Personal Chair as a result of an individual's promotion, which has been approved by the Central Academic Promotions Committee; or,
  - ii. the creation of a Personal Chair as a result of an approved recruitment exercise at a professorial level, where the new appointment will have input into their appropriate Chair title;
  - iii. the creation of a substantive Chair, where the Chair title is not linked to an individual.
6. As Chair titles are approved by Resolution, they can only be altered by Resolution.

**Discussion**

7. The draft Resolutions were circulated to General Council and Senate for observations. Following comments received from a member of Senate, seeking a rationale for the proposed new title of the existing Personal Chair of Chemical Biology, an error was identified and corrected in the draft of Resolution No.113/2023. The final Resolution, as submitted for approval here, uses the correct new title, Chair of Organic Chemistry.

**Resource implications**

8. Part of the approval process for new Chairs involved confirmation of the funding in place to support the posts.

**Risk Management**

9. There are reputational considerations, which are considered as part of the University's approval processes.

**Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals**

10. This paper does not directly contribute to the climate emergency or SDGs as it is fulfilling a legislative requirement.

**Equality & Diversity**

11. There are no specific equality and diversity issues associated with this paper. Equality and diversity best practice and agreed procedures are adopted in appointing individuals to Chairs.

**Next steps/implications**

12. Senate and the General Council will be informed of the approval of the final Resolutions. The list of approved Resolutions is annually reviewed and published on the University's website.

**Consultation**

13. Senate and the General Council are asked for observations on Resolutions and a notice is published online to enable observation from any other body or person having an interest to express observations.

**Further information**

14. Author  
Kirstie Graham  
Court Services Office

**Freedom of Information**

15. Open paper.

**UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH**

**Resolution of the University Court No. 112/2023**

**Foundation of a Personal Chair of Selective Breeding**

At Edinburgh, the Fourth day of December, Two thousand and twenty three.

WHEREAS the University Court deems it expedient to found a Personal Chair of Selective Breeding:

THEREFORE the University Court, after consultation with the Senatus Academicus and in exercise of the powers conferred upon it by Section 3 of the Universities (Scotland) Act, 1966, with special reference to paragraph 5 of Part II of Schedule 2 to that Act, hereby resolves:

1. There shall be a Personal Chair of Selective Breeding in the University of Edinburgh.
2. The patronage of the Chair shall be vested in and exercised by the University Court of the University of Edinburgh.
3. Notwithstanding the personal nature of this Chair, the terms and conditions of appointment and tenure which by Statute, Ordinance and otherwise apply to other Chairs in the University shall be deemed to apply in like manner to the Personal Chair of Selective Breeding together with all other rights, privileges and duties attaching to the office of Professor.
4. This Resolution shall come into force with effect from 1 July Two thousand and twenty three.

For and on behalf of the University Court

LEIGH CHALMERS

University Secretary



**UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH**

**Resolution of the University Court No. 113/2023**

**Alteration of the title of Chair of Chemical Biology**

At Edinburgh, the Fourth day of December, Two thousand and twenty three.

WHEREAS the University Court deems it expedient to alter the title of the Chair of Chemical Biology founded by Resolution 1/1999 as amended by Resolution 31/2004;

AND WHEREAS paragraph 5 of Part II of Schedule 2 to the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966, provides that the University Court may, after consultation with the Senatus Academicus and with the consent of the incumbent and patrons, if any, alter the title of existing professorships;

AND WHEREAS the Chair dealt with in this Resolution is in the patronage of the University Court itself:

THEREFORE the University Court, after consultation with the Senatus Academicus and in exercise of the powers conferred upon it by Section 3 of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966, with special reference to paragraph 5 of Part II of Schedule 2 to that Act, hereby resolves:

1. The Chair of Chemical Biology shall hereafter be designated the Chair of Organic Chemistry.
2. This Resolution shall come into with effect from 1 September Two thousand and twenty three.

For and on behalf of the University Court

LEIGH CHALMERS

University Secretary

**UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH**

**Resolution of the University Court No. 114/2023**

**Foundation of a Personal Chair of Human Geography and Ethnography**

At Edinburgh, the Fourth day of December, Two thousand and twenty three.

WHEREAS the University Court deems it expedient to found a Personal Chair of Human Geography and Ethnography:

THEREFORE the University Court, after consultation with the Senatus Academicus and in exercise of the powers conferred upon it by Section 3 of the Universities (Scotland) Act, 1966, with special reference to paragraph 5 of Part II of Schedule 2 to that Act, hereby resolves:

1. There shall be a Personal Chair of Human Geography and Ethnography in the University of Edinburgh.
2. The patronage of the Chair shall be vested in and exercised by the University Court of the University of Edinburgh.
3. Notwithstanding the personal nature of this Chair, the terms and conditions of appointment and tenure which by Statute, Ordinance and otherwise apply to other Chairs in the University shall be deemed to apply in like manner to the Personal Chair of Human Geography and Ethnography together with all other rights, privileges and duties attaching to the office of Professor.
4. This Resolution shall come into force with effect from 22 May Two thousand and twenty three.

For and on behalf of the University Court

LEIGH CHALMERS

University Secretary