



University Court  
Chancellor's Building, Edinburgh  
Monday, 7 October 2024

## AGENDA

### OPENING ITEMS

- 1 Minutes**  
To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2024 **A1**
- 2 Matters Arising & Review of Action Log** **A2**  
To raise any matters arising and review the Action Log
- 3 Principal's Report** **B**  
To note a report from Peter Mathieson, Principal
- 4 Committee Business**
  - Exception Committee **C1,C2**
  - Policy & Resources Committee **C3**
  - Nominations Committee **C4**
  - Audit & Risk Committee **C5**
  - Remuneration Committee **C6**
  - To approve updates to the existing Framework for Decision Making
  - Senate (Senatus Academicus) **C7**

### KEY ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/DECISION

- 5 Finance**
  - **Director of Finance's Report** **D**
  - To consider a paper presented by Lee Hamill, Director of Finance
- 6 Court External Effectiveness Review: Recommendations** **E**  
To consider a paper presented by Leigh Chalmers, Vice-Principal & University Secretary
- 7 Student Experience Update:  
Student Surveys 2024 Results and Response** **F**  
To consider a paper presented by Colm Harmon, Vice-Principal Students
- 8 Students' Association and Sports Union Reports**  
To consider the reports presented by Dora Herndon, Students' Association President
  - **Students' Association Report** **G1**
  - **Sports Union Report** **G2**

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|-----------|--|----------|
| <b>9</b>  | <b>College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine:<br/>Modernising Governance and Structure</b><br>To <u>approve</u> modifications to the School structure within the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine (CMVM), presented by David Argyle, Head of CMVM | <b>H</b> |
| <b>10</b> | <b>New Darwin – Estates Project</b><br>To <u>approve</u> funding as proposed in a paper presented by Damien Toner, Director of Estates   | <b>I</b> |
| <b>11</b> | <b>Strategic Acquisition Update</b><br>To <u>approve</u> submission of a revised offer, as proposed in a paper presented by Damien Toner, Director of Estates  | <b>J</b> |

**ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL**

- |           |  |          |
|-----------|--|----------|
| <b>12</b> | <b>Scottish Funding Council (SFC) Outcome Framework and Assurances Model</b><br>To <u>note</u>   | <b>K</b> |
| <b>13</b> | <b>Development &amp; Alumni: Alumni Relations Activity</b><br>To <u>note</u>   | <b>L</b> |
| <b>14</b> | <b>Remuneration Committee: Senior Leadership Team Annual Remuneration Review 2025 – Proposed Approach [Reserved item]</b><br>To <u>endorse</u> | <b>M</b> |
| <b>15</b> | <b>Any Other Business</b><br>To <u>consider</u> any other matters  |          |
| <b>16</b> | <b>Date of Next Meeting</b><br>Monday 2 December 2024  |          |



## UNIVERSITY COURT

17 June 2024, Room 2.55, Edinburgh Futures Institute

## Minutes

- Members Present:** Janet Legrand, Senior Lay Member  
 Simon Fanshawe, Rector  
 Rushad Abadan, Co-opted Member (items 1-10.2)  
 Frank Armstrong, Co-opted Member  
 Dora Herndon, Students' Association President  
 Shereen Benjamin, Senatus Assessor  
 Richard Blythe, Senatus Assessor  
 Ruth Elliott, Students' Association Vice-President Community  
 Alastair Dunlop, Chancellor's Assessor  
 Tobias Kelly, Academic Staff Member (items 1-10.2)  
 Peter Mathieson, Principal & Vice-Chancellor  
 Sarah McAllister, Professional Services Staff Member  
 Douglas Millican, Co-opted Member  
 Jock Millican, General Council Assessor  
 Kathryn Nash, Trade Union Academic Staff Member  
 Mark Patrizio, Trade Union Professional Services Staff Member  
 Alistair Smith, Co-opted Member (not present for item 3)  
 Kavi Thakrar, Co-opted Member (items 1-10.2)  
 Sarah Wolffe, General Council Assessor
- Member Apologies:** Robert Aldridge, City of Edinburgh Council Assessor  
 Douglas Alexander, General Council Assessor  
 Ruth Girardet, Co-opted Member  
 Hugh Mitchell, Co-opted Member
- In Attendance:** Imran Khan, Governance Apprentice  
 Leigh Chalmers, Vice-Principal & University Secretary  
 Gale Macleod, Rector's Assessor
- Presenters & Observers:** Lewis Allan, Senior Governance Advisor to the Vice-Principal & University Secretary  
 Lucy Evans, Deputy Secretary Students  
 Kim Graham, Provost  
 Lee Hamill, Director of Finance  
 Colm Harmon, Vice-Principal Students  
 Louise Kelso, General Counsel & Director of Legal Services  
 Catherine Martin, Vice-Principal Corporate Services  
 Theresa Merrick, Director of Communications & Marketing  
 James Saville, Director of Human Resources  
 Rona Smith, Deputy Secretary Governance & Strategic Planning  
 Daniel Wedgwood, Head of Court Services  
 Richard Davidson, Convener of Investment Committee (for item 3)  
 Veena O'Halloran, External Facilitator for the Court Effectiveness Review (for item 7)

## OPENING ITEMS

### Opening and welcome

The Rector welcomed members and attendees and noted apologies, as listed above. He extended a particular welcome to Dora Herndon and Ruth Elliott, as the new student members of Court, and congratulated Sarah McAllister on her re-election as Professional Services elected staff member of Court and Kathryn Nash on her re-appointment as the academic trade union member of Court.

The Rector made opening remarks focused on the University's pursuit of truth, stressing, as part of this, the importance of dialogue and debate and the need to make efforts to access and take into account a wide range of views. He also noted recent University events at which he had been present and the positive impression they had made and commented that it was a privilege to be a part of the University community.

Having opened the meeting, the Rector invited the Senior Lay Member to chair the main items of business on the agenda.

### 1 Minutes

Paper A1

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 April 2024 were approved, subject to amendments to the wording of one paragraph under item 10.

### 2 Matters Arising & Review of Action Log

Paper A2

#### Action Log

The Action Log was noted.

In relation to the completed action (relating to wider on-going work) on Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression, the Rector mentioned relevant work carried out in the context of the English higher education sector by the Office for Students. The Principal noted that the Scottish Funding Council was aware of this and able to take it into account in any relevant work for the Scottish sector.

#### Matter Arising

It was noted that the previous Court meeting had included presentation of the annual Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Report, in the context of which there had been discussion of the University's duty under the Equality Act to 'foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it'. It was suggested that that discussion had not provided reassurance that the University was approaching this duty appropriately with respect to all protected characteristics. The Vice-Principal & University Secretary noted that there had been further discussions since the April meeting and that developments regarding the memberships and remits of relevant committees were imminent. It was agreed that these should be expedited as far as possible.

### **3.1 Principal's Report**

**Paper B1**

Court noted the report.

### **3.2 Report from the Short Life Working Group on Definition of Armaments for Investments [taken before item 2]**

**Paper B2**

The Senior Lay Member welcomed Richard Davidson, Convener of Investment Committee, to the meeting and thanked him and all the members of Investment Committee for their input on this topic so far. She also thanked all those who had been involved in the Short Life Working Group on Definition of Armaments for Investments or otherwise involved in the process that had led to the current discussion, recognising that substantial work had been conducted within a restricted timescale.

Court received a summary of this process and wider work, much of it on-going, to review the University's Responsible Investment Policy. It was noted that the University Executive had already discussed the working group's report, prior to input from Investment Committee having been available.

It was noted that the issues under discussion were complex and that decisions made at this point could have longer-term consequences. Members were reminded of the duties and responsibilities of Court members, including fiduciary responsibilities and responsibility for the University's reputation. Members were also reminded of the need for confidentiality in Court's proceedings, both as a matter of principle and to ensure the accuracy of public understanding of any outcomes.

Feedback from the working group was provided. The group had focused on matters of principle, in particular the definition of controversial weapons for the purposes of investment. While it was recognised that the issue had come to prominence in the context of the on-going conflict in Gaza, the working group had, intentionally, not considered individual investments, nor how different companies might be associated with any particular conflict. Nor had the group been able to consider the impacts of any particular decision in relation to investments. It had recognised that the input of Investment Committee and potentially others would be necessary in this respect. There had been a diversity of opinion within the group. The report was intended to include all voices from within the group and, reflecting this, it presented the perceived advantages, disadvantages and risks of any potential course of action.

It was noted that the University Executive's discussion had mirrored the working group's discussions in many ways, and also generated a diversity of opinion, suggesting that the report had successfully laid out the key issues and complexities for those who were not experts in the field.

Court received a summary of key considerations from the perspective of Investment Committee, which included the following:

- The majority of the University's investments were held in pooled funds, as would be expected for an investment portfolio of this size and type. For this part of the University's investment, the University chose the fund manager

and the manager selected individual investments. Fund managers were instructed to follow ESG (environmental, social and governance) principles, according to widely accepted definitions.

- Any further exclusions imposed by the University brought complexity both at the level of principled decision-making and implementation. For example, decisions included whether to include or exclude firms in supply or distribution chains for a given product or service, in addition to producers. Examples were provided from previous decisions to divest from tobacco and fossil fuels. Changes to the University's list of exclusions could require withdrawal from certain pooled funds and this could bring a significant financial penalty.
- Further complexity related to the diverse operations of many companies in which investments might be made. A test of 'materiality' was typically employed to determine whether a given company's activity in an excluded area was of sufficient scale to trigger divestment. In some cases, a company might be largely active in areas that would be highly aligned with the University's values and policies but also have some activity in excluded areas (for example, activity in both renewable energy and fossil fuels), requiring judgment over the net positive and negative implications.

Members engaged in extended discussion, in which a variety of views were expressed. Topics of discussion included the following:

- whether Court was in a position to make an informed decision at this stage or required more information, including on the impacts of different decisions and the practicalities involved;
- the potential reputational impacts of either taking an outlying position, relative to standard ESG definitions, of being perceived to abandon political neutrality or of being seen not to take action in this case;
- the considerable strength of feeling on potential relationships between the University's investments and the conflict in Gaza – which had been expressed recently through, for example, motions passed by Senate, protests that had occurred on campus in recent weeks and representations made through a number of other groups – but also the need to establish the range and balance of opinion in the University community and encourage dialogue, rather than assume that the most prominent voices were necessarily representative of the wider community;
- the advantages or disadvantages of making certain decisions quickly, including the potential to show responsiveness to concerns within the University community and the risks of making decisions under pressure;
- the implications of the complexities around potential divestment decisions, as set out by the Convener of Investment Committee, with members observing that previous experiences might provide reassurance of the University's ability to handle such complexity but also that repeated calls for divestment for different reasons could lead to an unmanageable investment policy;
- the potential future development of international ESG standards, such that Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) and AI-directed Lethal Targeting of Human Subjects might come to be designated more widely as controversial weapons, and whether this should encourage the University to wait to ensure alignment with accepted standards or to act early and help to drive the development of such standards;

- whether the University should look beyond specific weapons systems and seek to divest from all armaments, perhaps in the longer term, or should rather recognise the importance of defence capabilities and other justified uses of arms;
- whether Court should more fundamentally examine its overall objectives and principles with regard to investments, to better prepare Court to make fully informed, principled decisions in cases like the present debate; and
- whether the University might make investments in recovery funds for Gaza, irrespective of current decisions regarding potential divestments.

Recognising that disagreements remained regarding some of the substantive points discussed, Court agreed the following outcomes:

- Court members expressed gratitude for the substantial amount of information provided by various correspondents as well as to the Short-Life Working Group on Definition of Armaments for Investments, who had completed their work in a highly compressed timeframe.
- Court was committed to reviewing the University's approach to investment, emphasising the need for openness and transparency of the work of the Investment Committee, as reflected and discussed further in the context of the recent Court external effectiveness review.
- Court members had expressed openness to expanding the definition of controversial armaments including the ways in which AI targeting and other technological or digital developments might be incorporated.
- Court had noted challenges identified by the Short-Life Working Group, specifically that there is not currently a universally agreed definition of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems and that further work would need to be done to understand how expanding our definition could be implemented in our investment portfolio.
- Court therefore requested further information on the deliverability of such a change plus an analysis of the consequences.
- This work should be completed before the next Court meeting so that a fully informed discussion could then take place. By that time, the inputs into the wider consultation on the University's Responsible Investment Policy, which is open until 31 August 2024, would also be available. [Note: This timeframe was extended to allow analysis of the high volume of consultation responses.]
- Court agreed that while further work was ongoing, the previously agreed pause in certain new direct stock investments should be continued.
- Court reaffirmed the commitment previously expressed by the Executive to ensuring that any decisions are principled, meaningful, informed, and fit for any future situation that may arise.

In addition, the Convener thanked Richard Davidson both for his contribution to the meeting and his longstanding service to Investment Committee, noting that he would shortly be standing down from the committee and that the appointment of his successor was to be reported elsewhere in the agenda of this meeting.

## **4 Committee Business**

### **Senior Lay Member's Overview**

The Senior Lay Member reflected on the constructive nature of the previous discussion and the importance of clear communication of its outcomes was discussed.

### **Exception Committee**

**Paper C1**

Court noted the report, which was closely related to the discussion under item 3.

It was clarified that the decision to make no further holdings in certain stocks had been made by the committee, responding to a recommendation made by the Principal.

### **Policy & Resources Committee**

**Paper C2**

Two matters to be dealt with elsewhere in the agenda were highlighted: changes to the draft budget that had been requested by Policy & Resources Committee (PRC); and discussion that had occurred in the context of a number of Estates-related items, including requests for capital funding. The discussion at PRC had emphasised the importance of strategic review of Estates matters, to include consideration of disposal of assets.

### **Nominations Committee**

**Paper C3**

On the recommendation of Nominations Committee, Court approved:

- the re-appointment of Hugh Mitchell as a member of Policy & Resources Committee for a further three-year term;
- the re-appointment of Hugh Mitchell, Sarah McAllister and Sarah Wolffe as members of Nominations Committee for further terms of three years;
- the re-appointment of Hugh Mitchell as Convener of Remuneration Committee for a further three-year term; and
- the re-appointment of Sarah McAllister as a member of Knowledge Strategy Committee for a further three-year term.

Also on the recommendation of Nominations Committee, Court agreed that at least three Court members be members of Knowledge Strategy Committee in the next academic year.

Court also agreed the recommendation of Nominations Committee that no change should be made regarding the unremunerated nature of the Rector position.

Court noted the following committee appointments that had been made, under delegated authority, by Nominations Committee:



- the extension of Alistair Smith's membership of Estates Committee for one year (matching the remainder of his current term of office as a member of Court); and
- the appointment of Alastair Laing as Convener of Investment Committee.

It was noted that other decisions regarding the membership of Investment Committee were to be deferred until the new Convener had had the opportunity to provide input and that this was in line with a recommendation of the draft report of Court's effectiveness review (see item 7 below).

## **Audit & Risk Committee**

## **Paper C4**

Court received the report. Douglas Millican, Convener of Audit & Risk Committee, highlighted the following points:

- There had been an independent exercise to audit the University's reputation management. While many stakeholders had reported that the University had a good overall reputation, specific knowledge of the University's strengths and contributions was less commonly found. This pointed to areas for improvement and relevant work was underway.
- The Committee had endorsed the Internal Audit Plan for 2024-25 and the overall quality of the work of Internal Audit and had recommended the Plan for Court's approval.
- The Committee had also expressed satisfaction with the work of the external auditor and recommended for Court's approval the External Audit Annual Plan and Fee for 2023-24.

There was discussion and clarification of the inclusion of academic freedom within the University's risk register.

Court approved the Internal Audit Plan 2024-25, the External Audit Annual Plan 2023-24 and the External Audit Fee for the 2023-24 audit.

## **Knowledge Strategy Committee**

## **Paper C5**

Court noted the report. The role of Knowledge Strategy Committee in relation to other committees was discussed and it was noted that this was relevant to discussion of the effectiveness review (see item 7 below).

## **Senate**

## **PaperC6**

Court received the report and noted that there was to be an additional meeting of Senate, as time had not allowed for all business to be covered in the previous meeting.

It was noted that the member-led paper on defence-related research had been well received. The Task & Finish Group on the recommendations of the Senate effectiveness review was considering ways to further enhance Senate meeting papers.

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

### **5 Finance**

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

**Paper D1**

Lee Hamill, Director of Finance summarised key points from his report. In broad terms, the financial position at Quarter 3 reflected that at Quarter 2. The University's reported surplus was expected to be substantial, due in large part to the consequences for the University of the recent shift in the USS pension from deficit to surplus, as a result of wider economic conditions. It was recognised that this created a communications challenge, with publicly-reported headline figures expected to be misaligned with the underlying financial position.

The size of the forecast shortfall against targeted EBITDA was discussed. It was noted that, given the nature of University activity, the scope for in-year adjustments to either income or expenditure was limited and that the planning and budgeting process (as covered in Paper D2), along with longer-term structural changes, offered much greater potential for re-balancing.

#### **Planning and Budgeting: Planning round 2024-29, 2024-25 proposals    Paper D2**

Rona Smith, Deputy Secretary Governance & Strategic Planning, introduced the planning round and budget proposals, noting that a five-year view had been provided, with a focus on the coming academic year (2024-25) for the detailed budget. She gave an overview of the financial pressures and environment of relative uncertainty facing the higher education sector as a whole, with particular risks around student recruitment and tuition fee income, while noting that the University continued to experience high demand from prospective students.

It was noted that the framing of the budget had changed as a result of input from Policy & Resources Committee (PRC). It had been agreed through that committee that the budget would be set so as to achieve EBITDA as a percentage of income at a higher level than previous proposals. There were consequently elements of the budget that remained to be worked out in detail, with a requirement to embed additional savings, or, where possible, increased income. In adopting the current proposed budget, the University's senior management was committed to delivering these further savings and/or additional income through dialogue with budget-holders. In line with discussion at PRC, it was recognised that a variety of mechanisms to deliver savings would be required, with a focus on strategic, long-term effects where possible.

The following points were raised in discussion:

- The five-year forecast showed a need for increasing levels of savings to maintain EBITDA as a percentage of income.
- A range of data was used in calculating fee revenue targets, with careful consideration of the nature of different international markets, and a degree of certainty was provided by the fact that continuing students made up the majority of fee-paying students in a given year.

- The Director of Finance confirmed that scenario planning was to be undertaken and that Court would be updated regarding this, primarily through his regular financial updates for Court members.
- While recognising that there had not been sufficient time since the PRC meeting to develop detailed proposals, Court members were keen to understand how the necessary level of cost savings would be achieved.
- It would be important to employ clear communications on actions taken in relation to the budget, both to remove uncertainty for staff and to promote buy-in for the approach taken.
- An opportunity should be created to provide more information to Court around the time of next Court meeting, recognising that there was unlikely to be sufficient time within the meeting.

Court approved the budget, noting that further information was to be provided in due course and that the University would monitor financial performance closely during the budget period and react appropriately.

## **6 Annual People Report**

## **Paper E**

James Saville, Director of HR, introduced the report, noting that this was the first annual report of its kind and that it covered the calendar year 2023, although the intention was to move to reporting in line with the academic year in future cycles. This first report was focused on activity within the central HR function but it was intended that future reports would encompass relevant work across the University.

The report had been produced as part of fulfilling a commitment to increase reporting on the staff experience at Court level. This was in addition to the continued provision of regular People Reports to the University Executive and Policy & Resources Committee.

It was noted that significant relevant work had been carried out in 2024, which was not covered in the report. The following points were highlighted:

- The first stage of implementation of the grade scale review had been completed in April 2024, bringing benefits to a large proportion of staff.
- There had been a narrowing of the gender pay gap, partly driven by the grade scale review.
- A new Predictable Working Policy and Menopause Policy were shortly to be introduced, subject to final discussions with trade unions.
- There had been work to harmonise holiday allowances, much of which produced improvements at the lowest pay grades.
- Support relating to immigration fees and visas had been further enhanced, an area in which Edinburgh was a sector leader.
- A positive change in tone had been noticed in staff engagement events, indicating improved staff morale. A staff survey was planned for early in 2025.
- Data made newly available through the People & Money system had facilitated new kinds of HR analysis.
- One area of improved insight was staff turnover. This was lower than that of most comparators in the sector and significantly lower than typical levels in many other sectors, a positive indication of staff satisfaction.

The following points were raised in discussion:

- Positive developments in the 2023 report and since were noted and the importance of clearly communicating these was emphasised. Clarity regarding the sector and institutional context would also be important in informing staff perceptions.
- Staff turnover had positive aspects, in refreshing an organisation's talent pool. This was recognised and there was consideration of how to optimise the contributions of both existing and new staff.
- While the report highlighted much positive activity, there might be scope for improved measurement of outcomes.
- Taking a broad view, there were a number of avenues for potential further enhancement of the staff experience. These included the benefits of a range of capital investments and engaging staff in improvements to sustainability.

Given limited time for discussion in this meeting, Court agreed that there should be further discussion of the staff experience in a future Court seminar or meeting.

## **7 Court External Effectiveness Review Report** [taken before item 6]

**Paper F**

Veena O'Halloran, External Facilitator for the Court External Effectiveness Review, introduced her report and thanked all participants, including members of Court, for their high levels of open engagement with the review process. She noted that the review was not a systematic audit of compliance in the area of corporate governance, although she expressed confidence in the University's arrangements in this respect. Instead, the review provided an overview of the current functioning of Court and its committees and reflected the input of participants to a considerable extent.

The quality of Court's membership was highlighted as a key strength. Many structural aspects were also commended, including the overall committee structure, mentoring and the use of Court seminars. Broad themes underpinning the report's recommendations for further enhancement included the creation of more time for strategic discussion, to include cross-cutting themes, consideration of how to enhance the student voice and the assessment of risk and appetite for risk.

It was agreed that Court should delegate initial consideration of the report's recommendations to Nominations Committee.

The following points were raised in discussion:

- Improvements to engagement with students might include joint presentations by University staff and the students' association on topics relating to the student experience. It was noted the National Student Survey was only one measure of student satisfaction and should not outweigh other perspectives on the student experience.
- It would be important for Nominations Committee to take into consideration Senate's parallel process and, in particular, to work with representatives of Senate on any changes relating to Knowledge Strategy Committee and any other areas of shared interest.

- Nominations Committee should prioritise the recommendations relating to the remit and membership of Investment Committee, given the committee's relevance to high-profile current issues (see item 3).
- The review was an opportunity to consider how Court papers and processes might be optimised to facilitate Court's governance role, with a focus on the types and quantities of information this required.

## **8 Student Experience**

## **Paper G**

Colm Harmon, Vice Principal Students, introduced the student experience update, highlighting the following points:

- The results of the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey had recently been published. Edinburgh's overall satisfaction score had risen by five percentage points. More detailed results included a significant increase in satisfaction with the provision of feedback, among other key areas of improvement.
- There had been further progress in relation to the implementation, enhancement and evaluation of the Student Support Model, which had attracted positive attention from peer institutions.
- Work had commenced on a portfolio review. This had been positively received in discussion with the Academic Strategy Group.
- Assessment and feedback continued to be a priority and there had been significant progress in improving reporting from all Schools and use of the resulting data to drive improvement.

The following points were raised in discussion:

- The new data on assessment and feedback were welcomed.
- There were significant costs associated with the Curriculum Transformation Project but a range of benefits was expected to flow from this, including streamlining of the University's offering, in addition to substantial enhancements to the student experience. The details of the business case for the project remained under discussion.

It was noted that a Court seminar on the student experience, with the involvement of the students' association, was planned to take place early in the 2024/25 academic year.

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

### **Students' Association Report**

### **Paper H1**

Court noted the report.

### **Sports Union Report**

### **Paper H2**

Court noted the report.

## **10 Estates**

Frank Armstrong, Convener of Estates Committee, provided an overview of Estates Committee's consideration of the matters for discussion in this section of the

meeting, noting that scrutiny by Estates Committee had been informed by other bodies, including Capital Projects Group where relevant.

A number of the proposals at hand requiring Court's approval were not included in the current Capital Plan. However, they had been identified as priorities and affordability had been considered carefully by Estates Committee. In some cases, the need for a degree of re-prioritisation reflected the continued impact of the disruption of estates activities during the Covid-19 pandemic. A new approach was to be taken to the planning exercise to create a robust and clear next plan. This would consider all dimensions of estates planning, including the possibility of disposal of assets.

In discussion, it was observed that the requests for approval of significant capital funding in these proposals ostensibly contrasted with the agreement elsewhere in the agenda that budgetary prudence was essential at this stage. It was noted that funds were available for all of the immediate proposed expenditure and that opportunity costs and future prioritisation were therefore the key considerations.

### **10.1 Residential Strategy 2023-2030 Update**

**Paper I**

Court approved the updated Residential Strategy. It was noted that changes made to the strategy since it had first been published in 2023 reflected numerous changes in the external context and were informed by an independent report on the accommodation market in Edinburgh.

### **10.2 Strategic Acquisition of Property**

**Paper J**

Damien Toner, Director of Estates, gave an overview of the proposal to acquire property that had become available through a potential private purchase. The site offered numerous strategic benefits through its location and relevant planning permissions. Subject to further planning permissions, the site would allow for significant expansion of the University's student accommodation and could potentially create efficiencies elsewhere in the University estate, as a result of consolidating activity.

Noting the importance of due diligence work, Court:

- supported the conclusion of ongoing acquisition negotiations with the agents of the owners of the property; and
- approved an initial funding package associated with the agreed acquisition price, VAT applicable on the purchase price and associated legal fees.

### **10.3 Churchill House Refurbishment**

**Paper K**

Catherine Martin, Vice-Principal Corporate Services, gave an overview of the proposal to undertake refurbishment of the University residences at Churchill House. This had been delayed as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and the works were now considered essential in order to return the accommodation to expected standards, for which standard levels of rent could be charged.

It was noted that the degree of structural complexity in this refurbishment had an impact on costs and that, in this context, Estates Committee had thoroughly scrutinised the cost-effectiveness of the proposals before recommending them to Court.

Court

- approved Capital Funding to progress the project to completion; and
- noted the requirement for Accommodation, Catering and Events (ACE) to secure a one-year nominations agreement to offset the loss of beds, which would be subject to a future Estates Committee approval.

#### **10.4 Sport & Active Wellbeing Facilities Development Recommendations      Paper L**

Court received an overview of the proposed projects to develop Sport & Active Wellbeing facilities. It was noted that Court's approval was sought because a reallocation of funding was requested, although the amount of funding was below the level normally requiring Court approval. A larger planned project was being reassessed as a result of changing costs and needs. It was proposed that some of the funding allocated to this should be reallocated to specific improvements to sport facilities that had been identified as urgent and/or of particular benefit.

Court approved the reallocation of part of the funding committed in the current Capital Plan for the delivery of the Peffermill Sports Complex to the seven specified small works projects.

#### **10.5 CRIC 4 – National Total-Body Positron Emission Tomography facility at Edinburgh Imaging      Paper M**

Court approved capital funding to progress the works to completion.

#### **10.6 Queens Medical Research Institute Collaboration Works      Paper N**

Court approved capital funding to progress the project to completion

#### **10.7 Midlothian Centre of Excellence and First Opinion Practice      Paper O**

Court approved capital funding to allow the project to progress to completion.

### **11 Digital**

#### **Digital Strategy      Paper P**

Court approved the strategy, noting the detailed scrutiny and recommendations for approval provided by Estates Committee, Knowledge Strategy Committee and other relevant bodies.

It was noted that Court could benefit from a future Court seminar on the physical and digital estate, to complement this strategy and provide further insight.

Court noted the update on Digital Estates capital expenditure projected for 2023/24 and forecast to 2028/29.

**ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL****12 Annual Recognition of Alumni Clubs****Paper R**

Court renewed its formal recognition of the nine University of Edinburgh alumni clubs currently recognised and noted relevant activity over the past year.

**13 Development & Alumni: Donations and Legacies and Alumni Relations Activity****Paper S**

Court noted the report.

**14 Prevent Duty Annual Compliance****Paper T**

Court noted the update report.

**15 Education Act 1994 requirements in relation to the Students' Association****Paper U**

Court noted the Certificate of Assurance.

**16 Resolutions: Degree Programme Regulations****Paper V**

Court approved:

- Resolution No. 4/2024: Undergraduate Degree Programme Regulations
- Resolution No. 5/2024: Postgraduate Degree Programme Regulations

**17 Resolutions: Chairs****Paper W**

Court approved the presented Resolutions.

The number of Chairs created and implications for staff costs were discussed. Relevant procedures were outlined and it was noted that benchmarking with comparator institutions was conducted in this area.

**18 Any Other Business**

Court approved the rescheduling of a Court meeting.

**19 Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 7 October 2024, all day (seminar and meeting)





UNIVERSITY COURT

7 October 2024

Principal's Report

**Description of paper**

1. The paper provides a summary of the Principal's main activities and preoccupations 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. 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. The start of autumn always brings with it a sense of renewal and this year was no different as the 2024/25 academic year got under way and we welcomed our new and returning students. The celebrations went very well this year with a positive atmosphere evident across the campus including for the formal Welcome Ceremony in McEwan Hall, at an excellent Student Services Information Fair, and through a full range of social activity organised by Edinburgh University Students' Association, the Sports Union and other students themselves.
6. I'd like to highlight two important initiatives from the start of this year:
  - Our new micro course on Sexual Consent was provided to all incoming Undergraduates (UG) and, at the time of writing, has had a 75% open rate and a 67% completion rate and has been completed by 6,033 new UG students. The roll out to Post Graduate (PG) students is well underway with over 3,061 PG students now having completed the course, and its promotion continues via social media.
  - We are also seeing good participation with our Making Transitions Personal initiative whereby UG and PG students are asked to complete a personal resource which holds information on aspirations and concerns as they start their time at Edinburgh. Student Advisers have access to the information and can follow up with students at welcome meetings and the content is used to send tailored information reminding students how they can take forward activities and access support.
7. Over the summer months we had a change of UK Government with Sir Keir Starmer's Labour Party securing a significant majority in the July General Election. We had reasonable engagement with the Party that now forms the new government in the run up to the election and have hosted the Rt Hon Iain Murray, the new Secretary of State for Scotland, since his appointment at visits to the Edinburgh Futures Institute and

Roslin. Unfortunately, the new Government's decision to cancel the AIRR+ funding (total £500m) that had been won by Edinburgh, UCL and Durham in a competitive process via UKRI and also to "shelve" the funding for an Exascale supercomputer, which had been promised to Edinburgh in writing by the previous Government, has meant that there has been a somewhat strained start to building new relationships on that front. A rapid review of AI infrastructure led by Matt Clifford has been announced and we, particularly Professor Mark Parsons, have been fully engaged with that and indeed in a number of conversations about the benefits that Exascale would bring generally to the UK economy and to the advancement of science.

8. Following a competitive process, the University was chosen as the preferred location for the UK Government's Chief Scientific Adviser (CSA) retreat. This was an excellent opportunity for the CSAs to hear about Edinburgh's strengths and contribution nationally and globally. They were welcomed by the Provost Professor Kim Graham, who was joined by Vice-Principal Research & Enterprise Professor Christina Boswell at the opening reception, where there were opportunities to engage with the CSAs and to speak about Edinburgh's many strengths including the City Region Deal and progress with our Data Driven Innovation agenda. The CSAs also visited the National Robotarium.

9. The University's refreshed approach to strategic change projects that are now overseen by the University Initiatives Portfolio Board (UIPB), reporting to the University Executive, continues to progress. A range of programmes are now running under UIPB including the People and Money Roadmap activity which was submitted to UIPB as an outline business case in August. In flight elements of agreed work include the development of a new solution for the allocation of directly incurred research salaries and the final development and implementation of the solution to forecast staff costs. There are also smaller "business as usual" activities underway: a new user access role to allow a greater number of staff to be able to process a goods receipt for any purchase order has already been delivered; improved process documentation and guidance is also underway and additional capacity for the Edinburgh Research Office to address the persistent New Project set up backlog. Wider projects running under UIPB include Curriculum Transformation and Growing Research Together. A new process of engaging with leaders about UIPB has been established via a "Leaders Update" call, the first of which was successfully delivered to over 100 colleagues in August by Provost Kim Graham, Vice-Principal Catherine Martin and Gillian Richardson, Director of Strategic Change (interim). These calls will give the opportunity for information to be shared and questions asked about UIPB activity. The next call is in diaries for early November.

10. Such initiatives are part of ongoing activity to build understanding in our community of the University's direction and priorities in an open and transparent way. A range of additional co-ordinated activities fall under this umbrella including the reintroduction of in-person all staff meetings which now include an opportunity to meet informally with members of the senior team, individual members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) hosting their own engagement sessions, the Senior Leadership Team meeting with smaller groups of staff around particular themes or in specific Schools and this year we look to work with our new student sabbaticals on ideas for improved engagement opportunities with our students over the next two semesters. There is some indication that elements of this activity are having an impact, with positive feedback and an uptick in interaction with targeted communications. A staff survey is due to take place later this academic year, which will provide further insight as to the extent of these positive effects.

11. The Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) and joint trade unions pay negotiations have concluded, unfortunately without agreement. As a result, to avoid any further delays to staff receiving the uplift, UCEA has instructed employers to implement the final pay offer to all staff at the earliest opportunity. Colleagues in the University of Edinburgh have been advised they will receive this in their October pay, due to the lateness of the announcement meaning that the changes could not be made before the September payroll cut-off.

12. The pay award is in two instalments. The first is a £900 uplift to all points on the UCEA pay spine and is to be backdated to 1 August 2024. Note: The grade scale changes in April and our Real Living Wage accreditation means staff in the first grade on our scale (UE02) receive higher salaries than UCEA and so will receive less than £900 on implementation. However, the 2024 Real Living Wage will be announced in October, which will again increase pay for staff in grade UE02.

13. The second instalment, from 1 March 2025, is the remaining balance of an uplift which represents between 5.7% and 2.5% in total, weighted towards the lower end of the pay spine as outlined below:

- Staff earning up to £29,605 (point 22) will receive a £1200 increase in total – an additional £300 in March 2025
- Staff earning between £30,407 and £46,485 (points 23-37) will receive a £1150 increase in total – an additional £250 in March 2025
- Staff earning above £47,874 will receive the £900 uplift and a variable amount by pay point which results in a total uplift of 2.5% in March 2025

14. The joint trade unions are discussing balloting members for industrial action. We will continue to remind our staff and unions about the important improvements we have delivered locally which have increased pay for staff at Edinburgh, including the recent Pay Grade Scale review, now fully implemented, which meant more than 15,000 staff have had their pay increased.

15. We continue to focus effort on how our community addresses matters where there are strongly held, and often opposing, views. The Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression Working Group provides a focal point for a range of activity that involves a broad cross-section of our community to affirm principles, ensure we are up to date and transparent in our approach to legislation and to help our students develop the skills and knowledge to participate with confidence in society's contested spaces. Activity over the summer to populate the identified workstreams and agree work/outputs will be completed in November 2024 and will enable a comprehensive, coordinated, programme and communication plan for the overall Working Group.

16. A new University Lead for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Fiona McClement, has been appointed bringing with her experience from two Russell Group universities, UCL and Leeds. We look forward to working with her and benefiting from the wealth of her experience when she joins Edinburgh in the early part of 2025.

17. The University's Compliance Group, which looked at Prevent referrals and potentially controversial events taking place on campus, has changed its name and focus and is now known as the Speakers and Events Oversight Group. The Speakers and Events

Oversight Group has an expanded membership, which includes representatives from all three Colleges. The Group's purpose is to have oversight of events which have been deemed high risk as part of the University's room booking process and/or escalated directly under the Policy on Speakers and Events, so that it can seek to support and enable events to take place under safe conditions and in line with our principles around upholding academic freedom, freedom of expression and dignity and respect. It will also have a role in post-hoc analysis of lessons learned from events held.

18. It feels timely to update Court on our approach to international activity, particularly as our existing Vice-Principal International Professor James Smith decided to step down at the beginning of last month. Provost Professor Kim Graham and Vice-Principal and University Secretary Leigh Chalmers have started a light-touch review considering how we approach and organise international activity across the University. The initial outcomes have been discussed at SLT, and more widely, and there is much consensus about the priorities. Members of SLT and other senior staff continue to lead in key areas whilst the scope and responsibilities for a new Vice-Principal International are finalised. Our lead external partners have been informed.

19. Another reorganisation that has taken place is that the Edinburgh Research Office have moved from their current reporting line in Finance to take up a closer alignment with Edinburgh Innovations, both reporting directly into Corporate Services Group. This new arrangement started from 1 September and is intended to facilitate even greater opportunities for closer working between key elements of the University's research and innovation infrastructure.

20. As already communicated to Court members, I should note at this point that the Director of Finance Lee Hamill tendered his resignation on 23<sup>rd</sup> September and is moving on to a new role. On behalf of Court, the Senior Leadership Team and the wider University, I thank Lee for all his work as Director of Finance and before that as Deputy Director and I wish him success and happiness in the future.

21. We are always proud of our alumni: recent news is that the new Prime Minister of Sri Lanka is to be our graduate Harini Amarasuriya. Harini completed an Edinburgh PhD in Social Anthropology in 2011, with an ethnographic study of child protection services in Sri Lanka. Her PhD was the outcome of a joint programme with Queen Margaret University, set up in the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami. Since graduating, she has continued to work with colleagues in Edinburgh, notably as a co-investigator on Court member Toby Kelly's ERC project on the anthropology of conscience.

22. In addition to the general paper on Development & Alumni (D&A) engagement that is included for this meeting, I wanted to draw Court's attention to the large group of alumni, staff, former staff and other friends of the University who remember the University in their Wills, and join the Carlyle Circle. This programme is expertly and thoughtfully led by Morag Murison from within D&A whose legal background continues to be essential as some Estates can be complex.

[Paragraphs 23-24: closed section]

25. A busy summer saw great success with the Edinburgh Festivals and Fringe in and around campus and particularly with the Edinburgh Book Festival at the Edinburgh

Futures Institute (EFI). The new home of the Book Festival was a long-planned excellent fit and a fantastic opportunity to promote EFI and the University for all attendees. Across the whole Festival period, the University hosted 62 performance spaces and 90 hospitality/back up spaces with 1,212,826 tickets/performances in University buildings. This generated rental income for reinvestment by the University. In addition, a total of 59,500 bed nights were provided to known Edinburgh Festival groups and performers in our accommodation in 2024.

26. Summer also saw the resounding success that was the Paris Olympics with 14 University-linked athletes taking part and two bronze medals helping to inspire the next generation. Medallists Oli Wilkes and Aleksandra Kalucka were simply sensational in their performances, Oli in the men's fours rowing and Aleksandra in Sport Climbing.

#### *Selected meetings and events from mid-June to early October*

##### *27. University*

- Welcomed Kate Forbes MSP, Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Gaelic, to the Edinburgh Futures Institute.
- Welcomed Lisa Nandy MP, Shadow Secretary of State for International Development (at the time of the visit), Lord Jack McConnell, Former First Minister, and Kirsty McNeill, candidate for Midlothian (at the time of the visit) & Exec Director Save the Children, to Easter Bush for a tour of the Roslin Institute.
- Participated in a change management for leaders workshop organised by the new University Initiatives Portfolio Board.
- I was guest speaker at one of the regular Human Resources All Staff Team calls and thanked staff for their efforts and spoke about priorities for the University.
- Hosted a reception at Regent Terrace for colleagues from Gujarat Biotechnology University on their visit to Edinburgh and the University.
- Welcomed participants of the UK international Sports Injury and Illness Prevention Inaugural conference held at The John McIntyre Conference Centre, and also participants to the second International Union of Laboratories and Experts in Construction Materials, Systems and Structures conference on Earthen Structures, held at the King's Buildings campus.
- Participated in a guided tour of the Drumbrae forest site and a tree planting ceremony, organised by the Forest and Peatlands team. I was particularly proud to plant the first of what will be two million trees as part of our Court-approved sustainability plan.
- Hosted a garden party at Abden House to thank all those involved in helping the graduations to be such a success.
- Participated in regular meetings with the Students' Association Sabbatical Officers.
- Welcomed attendees to the MBChB Medical class of 1974 50th reunion reception.

##### *28. Edinburgh and Scotland*

- Participated in an Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal Joint Committee, and chaired the Higher Education and Further Education Strategy Board.
- Participated in a Royal Society of Edinburgh meeting on Scotland's Response to Gaza.

- Participated in a meeting of the Newbattle Abbey College Trust Board, and a tour of their campus.
- Participated in a reception at the United States Consulate to celebrate the Edinburgh Festivals.

#### 29. *Sector and Public Affairs*

- Participated in several Scottish Funding Council Board meetings.
- Participated in regular UUK online meetings on various issues including the situation in Palestine and Israel, and UK matters.
- Participated in the UUK Residential meeting, and chaired a session on 'Security considerations for university leadership' at which the Director-General of MI5, Ken McCallum, spoke.
- Participated in various Universities Scotland meetings: Members' Strategy Day, Main Committee, Funding Policy Group.
- Participated in several Russell Group Board meetings.
- Participated in a UCEA Heads of Institution briefing on the 2024-25 New JNCHES pay round.
- Participated in a Scottish Government Ministerial Roundtable on widening access to higher education.
- Participated in a Festival reception hosted by the Secretary of State for Scotland, Rt Hon Ian Murray MP. He also visited the Edinburgh Futures Institute and Roslin Institute to meet key university stakeholders to discuss areas of mutual interest.
- Participated in the Underbelly Festival press Launch.
- Participated in a Universities Scotland Cross Cabinet Collaboration meeting on Health.
- Met with Caroline Hiscox, the new NHS Lothian Chief Executive in an introductory meeting.
- Participated in a Scottish Financial Enterprise Roundtable with Jonathan Reynolds MP, Secretary of State for Business and Trade.
- My six year term of office as Lead Member for Health for Universities Scotland came to an end in August with a series of handover meetings.
- Co-hosted with Leina Shi, Director Education China, British Council, the 'Building China Capability in UK Higher Education' event at the Royal Society in London.
- Participated in the Carnegie Trust Board away day.

#### 30. *International*

- Participated in several Universitas 21 meetings.
- Spoke at the Humanitarian Affairs Asia organised University Scholars Leadership Symposium on, "The Compassionate Edge: A New Paradigm for Leadership".
- Participated in a Mastercard Presidents meeting.
- Participated in several online League of European Research Universities Board of Director meetings.
- Participated in a meeting with the Deputy Ambassador of Israel to the UK, to discuss concerns raised to them by members of our University community.
- Participated in an introductory meeting with the new United States Consul General Edinburgh, Kathryn Porter.
- Participated in a meeting with the Austrian Secretary of State for Economy, Professor Dr. Martin Kocher, Ambassador Bernhard Wrabitz, Trade Commissioner Michael Müller, and Christoph Crepaz, Honorary Consul of Austria.

- Welcomed His Excellency, Mr Yeocheol Yoon, Korean Ambassador to the UK, on a visit to the University.
- Welcomed His Excellency The Hon Phil Goff, High Commissioner of New Zealand to the United Kingdom, together with The Hon Grant Robertson, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Otago and some of his colleagues to the University.
- Participated in meetings of the University of Ljubljana International Advisory Board.

### **Resource implications**

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

### **Risk Management**

32. 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**

33. 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**

34. No specific Equality and Diversity issues are identified.

### **Next steps/implications**

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

### **Consultation**

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

### **Further information**

37. Peter will take questions on any item at Court.

### **38. Author & Presenter**

Professor Sir Peter Mathieson  
Principal and Vice-Chancellor  
October 2024

### **Freedom of Information**

39. Open paper.



UNIVERSITY COURT

7 October 2024

Exception Committee Report

**Committee Name**

1. Exception Committee

**Date of Meetings**

2. The Committee considered business by correspondence over 23-26 July 2024 and 26 August – 2 September 2024.

**Action Required**

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

**Key points**

*Committee Appointments*

*Paragraphs 4-5: closed section*

*Multi-Functional Devices*

*Paragraphs 6-7: closed section*

8. Exception Committee:

- approved the budget for the University's new Multi-Functional Devices contract, subject to final confirmation of the terms of the contract; and
- delegated authority to Gavin McLachlan, Vice-Principal and Chief Information Officer and Librarian, to act as the authorised signatory for this contract.

*Paragraph 9: closed section*

**Further information**

10. Author

Daniel Wedgwood  
Head of Court Services

Presenter

Janet Legrand  
Convener, Exception Committee

**Freedom of Information**

11. Open version. Committee memberships are listed publicly on the University website.





UNIVERSITY COURT

7 October 2024

**Policy & Resources Committee Report**

**Committee Name**

1. Policy & Resources Committee (PRC)

**Date of Meeting**

2. 10 September 2024

**Action Required**

3. To note the key points from the meeting (approvals recommended by PRC are brought forward elsewhere in the Court agenda).

*The minutes of the PRC meeting on 10 September 2024 can be viewed at <http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/GaSP/Governance/PolicyandResources/2024-2025/20240910-PRC-Minute-Web.pdf>*

**Further information**

21. Author

Daniel Wedgwood  
Head of Court Services

Presenter

Janet Legrand  
Convener, Policy & Resources Committee

**Freedom of Information**

22. Closed paper.



UNIVERSITY COURT

7 October 2024

**Nominations Committee Report**

**Committee Name**

1. Nominations Committee

**Dates of Meetings**

2. 23-26 July (by correspondence), 2-8 August (by correspondence) and 13 September 2024

**Action Required**

3. To note the key points from the meetings

**Key points**

23-26 July 2024 (by correspondence) and 2-8 August (by correspondence)

4. Nominations Committee considered a small number of committee positions that had not been finalised by the time of the Committee's previous meeting on 27 May.

*Paragraphs 5-7: closed section (committee memberships are listed on the University's website)*

13 September 2024

*Externally Facilitated Effectiveness Review: Recommendations*

8. Responses to the 17 recommendations from the externally facilitated effectiveness review of Court and its committees were considered. It was noted that the review was positive in its overall assessment of the effectiveness of Court and its committees and that the recommendations were, in the words of the report, 'opportunities for enhancement' that 'should be regarded not as firm requirements for implementation, but rather as suggestions for consideration'.

9. It was agreed that, if the committee supported a proposed response to a recommendation, it should be submitted to the next Court meeting (7 October). Any proposed responses that require additional development in the Committee's view should be resubmitted to the Committee's next meeting (11 November) before progression to Court. Proposed responses to 15 of the 17 recommendations were agreed and are included within the separate paper submitted to this Court meeting, titled 'Externally Facilitated Effectiveness Review: Recommendations'.

*Court Member Recruitment: General Council Assessor*

10. A recruitment process for a new General Council Assessor following Douglas Alexander's appointment as a UK Minister of State was considered. The procedural requirements including a joint Selection Panel were noted. The membership of the Selection Panel was confirmed as previously agreed with the General Council to be:

- i. Convener of Nominations Committee (Janet Legrand) – panel chair
- ii. Principal (Peter Mathieson)
- iii. University Secretary (Leigh Chalmers)

*Three members nominated by the General Council, normally expected to be:*

- iv. Convener of the General Council Business Committee (Gordon Cairns)
- v. A current General Council Assessor nominated by the General Council
- vi. Secretary of the General Council (William Duncan)

11. A draft advertisement, draft role description, the skills register of Court members and equality and diversity information were all reviewed. It was agreed that:

- Financial skills and experience should be a particular priority in this recruitment and the advertisement and other documentation should reflect this;
- The importance of improving the gender balance of Court should also be highlighted to the Selection Panel, noting that the gender representation objective under the Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018) is not currently met by Court;
- Criteria in the role description should be further reviewed with a view to streamlining where appropriate; and,
- Noting the preferences of the General Council, including a desire for an appointment to be made before the February 2025 Court meeting, a search agency would not be used on this occasion but the advertisement should be widely circulated to those eligible to apply (graduates of the University of Edinburgh who are not current staff or students).

12. There was also encouragement for other future lay member vacancies on Court to be considered at pace and by correspondence if suitable.

### **Equality & Diversity**

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

### **Further information**

14. Authors

Daniel Wedgwood and Lewis Allan  
Governance & Court Services

Presenter

Janet Legrand  
Convener, Nominations Committee

### **Freedom of Information**

15. Open version.



UNIVERSITY COURT

7 October 2024

**Audit and Risk Committee Report**

**Committee Name**

1. Audit and Risk Committee.

**Date of Meeting**

2. The meeting was held on 5 September 2024.

**Action Required**

3. Court is invited to note the key points from the meeting and approve updates to the Committee's Terms of Reference set out in an Appendix.

*Paragraphs 4-18: closed section*

**Equality & Diversity**

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

**Further information**

20. Author

Kirstie Graham  
September 2024

Presenter

Douglas Millican  
Convener of the Audit and Risk Committee

**Freedom of Information**

21. Open version



UNIVERSITY COURT

7 October 2024

**Remuneration Committee: Revised Framework for Decision Making**

**Description of paper**

1. This paper submits proposed updates to the existing Framework for Decision Making document for Remuneration Committee.

**Action requested/Recommendation**

2. To approve an updated version of the Framework for Decision Making document.

*The approved Framework document can be viewed at  
<https://human-resources.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2024-10/Remuneration-Committee-Framework.pdf>*

**Equality & Diversity**

9. A key aspect of the Framework is to aid equity and fairness in decision making for senior staff remuneration, including considering equality impacts.

**Next steps/implications**

10. If approved, the document will be followed by Remuneration Committee with immediate effect and published on the website.

**Consultation**

11. Remuneration Committee has considered the proposed updates and recommends these to Court for approval.

**Further information**

12. Authors

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

Sheila Jardine  
Senior HR Partner - Reward

Presenter

Hugh Mitchell  
Convener of Remuneration  
Committee

**Freedom of Information**

13. Open version.



UNIVERSITY COURT

7 October 2024

**Senatus Academicus Report**

**Committee Name**

1. Senatus Academicus ('Senate')

**Date of Meeting**

2. 18 June 2024 and e-Senate, 3-14 June 2024

**Action requested**

3. Court is invited to:

- note the report of business considered by Senatus Academicus ('Senate') at the reconvened meeting held on 18 June 2024;
- note the report of e-Senate business conducted between 3 June and 14 June 2024; and
- note that the full minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2024 will be provided to Court following their approval by Senate and that the full agenda, papers and minutes of Senate meetings are published on the [Senate website](#).

4. Further, Court is invited to note that, as the reconvened meeting on 18 June was inquorate, this report summarises the outcome of the non-contentious business conducted at the meeting. Article 5 of the Senate Standing Orders provides for Senate to provisionally deal with unopposed business that the Convener judges to be of a non-contentious character. In practice, during Senate meetings, the Convener will present all papers listed on the agenda (billet). Any member may object, and where an objection is raised the item is considered contentious. If the meeting is inquorate, then the item will be held over to the next meeting.

**Key points – reconvened meeting on 18 June 2024**

*Senate Exception Committee Membership & Terms of Reference*

5. Senate approved the Senate Exception Committee Membership and Terms of Reference.

*Senate External Review Task and Finish Group - Update & Proposals*

6. Senate approved the following proposals arising from the Senate External Review Task and Finish Group:

- to increase the annual meeting time for Senate to 12 hours;
- to adopt a meeting format of four, three hour long, meetings;
- to hold meetings within the standard university semester;
- to commence meetings at 1.10pm, in line with the standard University timetable;
- to hold meetings between 1:10pm and 4pm;
- to hold meetings in a hybrid format as standard; and

- to provide in-principle support for meetings being recorded to support the drafting of minutes.

### **Key points – e-Senate, 3-14 June 2024**

7. Senate members were invited to comment on the following items via an e-Senate meeting which took place Monday 3 June – Friday 14 June.

#### *People & Money Improvement Plan 2024-26*

8. Eight members provided comment on this item. Comments varied, ranging from overall contentment with the plan to dissatisfaction on the grounds that the plan

- did not provide clear deliverables or target dates for addressing known issues;
- did not sufficiently take account of the impact of staff working with the current system;
- did not adequately outline the prioritisation process for improvements (while recognising that the paper might not be the appropriate route for this); or
- did not address motions previously approved by Senate.

9. Three members provided detailed examples of specific issues experienced in relation to the People and Money system and feedback on the impact of these on staff workload and morale.

10. Two members queried a presentational change in the paper for Human Resources related matters, and queried whether this reflected an absence of related action.

11. The comments were passed to the author of the paper.

#### *Court Resolutions – Personal Chairs*

12. Four members provided comment on this item. Three were supportive comments. One member queried whether the paper was complete. The paper provided assurances that all the resolutions followed the same format as the example provided. The comments were passed to the author of the paper.

### **Full Agenda and Papers**

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

### **Further information**

13. Author

Fraser Rudge  
Committees and Governance  
Manager

Presenter

Peter Mathieson  
Principal & Vice-Chancellor

Academic Services  
September 2024

### **Freedom of Information**

14. Open paper.



UNIVERSITY COURT

7 October 2024

Director of Finance 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.

*Paragraphs 3-34: closed section*

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

35. 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**

36. 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**

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

**Consultation**

38. This paper has been reviewed by Lee Hamill, Director of Finance.

**Further information**

39. Author

Ricky O'Kane  
Head of Group Finance

Presenter

Lee Hamill  
Director of Finance

27 September 2024

**Freedom of Information**

40. Open version.





UNIVERSITY COURT

7 October 2024

**Externally-Facilitated Effectiveness Review: Recommendations**

**Description of paper**

1. Following review and support from Nominations Committee, the paper provides proposed responses to the recommendations from the report of the externally-facilitated effectiveness review of Court and its committees (hereafter the 'external review').

*Paragraph 2: closed section*

**Background and context**

3. Court received the report of the external review at its meeting on 17 June and agreed to delegate to Nominations Committee initial consideration of the report's 17 recommendations. The report was approved for publication and is now available on the University [website](#).

*Paragraphs 4-9: closed section*

**Equality & Diversity**

10. The report noted that the close attention given to equality and diversity in the recruitment of Court members in recent years has been commented on positively. The report's recommendations on student voice, seminars and committee memberships have been made with equality and diversity considerations in mind.

**Next steps/implications**

11. Any agreed responses will be implemented. Further work will be undertaken on those still in development.

**Consultation**

12. The proposed responses draw upon comments from Court members made during the external review and when first reviewing the report in June, as well as from Nominations Committee's consideration at their meeting on 13 September.

**Further information**

13. Author

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

Presenter

Leigh Chalmers  
Vice-Principal & University Secretary

**Freedom of Information**

14. Open version. Finalised responses to the recommendations and a record of subsequent follow-up actions will be published.



University Court

7 October 2024

**Student Experience Update: Student Surveys 2024 Results and Response**

*Paragraphs 1-41: closed section*

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

42. 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**

43. Relevant Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) will be required as plans are developed. The work undertaken will support greater equality, diversity and inclusion for students within our community. The student surveys are assessed with key EDI indicators.

**Next steps/implications**

44. We have discussed and received support for all of the above with University Executive and Heads of Schools at Academic Strategy Group.

**Further information**

45. Authors

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Presenter

Colm Harmon, Vice Principal (Students)

46. Open version.



UNIVERSITY COURT

7 October 2024

**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:
  - '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 notes current issues for students being worked on by our student representatives, updates on current activity. It is a regular standing item on the Court agenda.

**Discussion**

*Introduction*

5. First, I would like to thank Court members for being so welcoming and uplifting. I've had the opportunity to chat with most of you at least once now, even if briefly, and it has been a huge help in making me feel like an integrated and valued part of this body, so thank you.
6. The last Court meeting was mine and my fellow officers' second week in post, and much of our time since the last meeting has been dedicated to deepening our understanding of our roles, getting to know senior University staff, and of course: learning many acronyms. By the time of writing this, we are much more confident in our roles and capacity to influence. The return of undergraduate students to campus means our work is about to get more intense, but equally more fulfilling as well, and we are ready for the challenge.
7. Also, since the last meeting there have been Graduations which did experience some minor disruptions, as well as Welcome Week. This transition of students out and new students coming in presents a good opportunity to reflect upon what grievances with the University some of those outgoing students might have had while graduating, and what we can do to ensure a new generation of students don't hold the same grievances.

8. One of our efforts to address this can be seen in our work on our Student Experience Framework, which will be presented at the seminar before Court. We've noticed the phrase 'student experience' being used to mean a lot of things and being applied to a number of projects that may or may not actually impact students at all. Therefore, we undertook a project over the summer to identify the underlying principles of why students care about the issues they do. The framework is our analysis of feedback we receive from students or have seen reflected in surveys like NSS and the Student Life Survey, across various issues. We hope this framework will contribute language to describing student experience, help people better understand the student psyche, and better prioritize 'student experience' projects going forwards.

#### *Sabbatical Officer Objectives*

9. As it's the start of our term, I feel it would be beneficial to Court to be introduced to our individual priorities for the year, as they serve as a good introduction to what current priority issues are to students. These are the issues we campaigned on, and our progress on them is held directly accountable to students through our Student Council.

#### *Dora Herndon- President*

1. **Fix the University guarantor scheme** to allow more students onto it and work to ensure more letting agencies accept it.
2. **Lobby for international students**, utilizing Edinburgh's position as an institution, as well as our Association's position in the NUS and RGSU to address legal barriers to better experience.
3. **Push for affordable transport options for all students**, ideally in the form of free bus passes for students over 22.

#### *John Rappa- Vice President Activities and Services*

1. **Promote the expansion of free breakfast provision** ensuring every student across our campuses as access to a quality, free breakfast at least once per week
2. **Support on-campus student-led sustainable initiatives** giving our community a sense of ownership of our spaces
3. **Empower students to take care of their health and wellbeing** through the provision of relevant information and services

#### *Ruth Elliott- Vice President Community*

1. **Support students through the housing crisis** by advocating for affordable housing, tenants' rights, and emphasizing the importance for their student experience
2. **Establish on-campus canteens**, ensuring students have access to affordable and nutritious hot food
3. **Take the lead on sustainability**, uplifting students' voices on the climate crisis and ensuring we're having a positive impact

#### *Dylan Walch- Vice President Education*

1. **Support students to make informed course selections** by utilizing a wide range of data to support students in making the correct choice for them.
2. **Transform student voice** through creating policies on how we collect feedback, closing the feedback loop, and creating pathways for feedback to move between University structures without being lost.
3. **Put up alumni banners around campus** to give the University a face and identity, create a greater sense of community, and most importantly promote a sense of pride to be members of the Edinburgh community.

#### *Indigo Williams- Vice President Welfare*

1. **Centre trans students** and build a University community where they feel safe, receive specified support, and are respected.
2. **Raise the number of BME representatives in university decision-making spaces and leadership positions**, creating a University structure and culture which prioritizes their voices, counteracting centuries of marginalization
3. **Ensure all students are highly aware of the mental health and wellbeing support available to them** and can easily access the services they need, while countering misconceptions about the many services provided

#### *Key areas of recent work*

10. What follow are summaries of 3 key areas of work across the team currently – Student Voice; Housing; Student Engagement. Going forwards, this is how I intend to summarize our work, rather than individual updates.

#### *Student Voice*

11. An issue for students, as reflected in NSS scores, is the University's feedback culture. Students provide feedback in a variety of forms, which they then get no response to, then feel either ignored or undervalued, which then leads them to be less likely to engage in the future. The University is consistently trying to collect feedback from students but is inconsistent at responding to feedback in a way students would see.

12. Because of this, I am on a Student Voice group that sits under the Student Lifecycle Management Group. Through this group, I work with the student analytics team to improve the University's 'Student Life Survey' and its response rate, create best practice guidelines for feeding back to students after a survey, and exploring the path of non-survey feedback, such as how to collect it, how to action it, and how to inform students of it.

13. Dylan, our VP Education, is passionate about utilizing all the qualitative student feedback which is left unaddressed. The University has an elaborate network of 'Student-Staff Liaison Committees' across subjects and schools, but the response to student feedback across these varies wildly. Their purpose is for students to be able to feedback within their local area and support change. However, feedback often fails to be converted into actions, tracked, or fed into other committees, making it difficult for School and Programme reps to be confident in their ability to represent students and make change. Additionally, we underutilize valuable qualitative feedback. Representatives are best placed to identify issues, co-create solutions, and follow-up on results. The Association provides training and support, but how the

representatives are treated and utilized varies by School. This year, in collaboration with the Student Voice group, we are working to empower student representatives and create a more equal experience across schools, while also creating a better process for responding to qualitative feedback.

### *Housing*

14. As in previous years, housing continues to be a major issue for students. One issue with addressing it has been the lack of available data. We know there is a problem, but sometimes discussions can go back and forth on the extent of it. Our Accommodation service hasn't accepted the results of any third-party efforts at data collection in the past. There was an effort this year, led by Ruth, to get a question on our matriculation form that asks if, at the time of matriculation, students have secured their term-time accommodation. Because the matriculation form goes out to all students, and at a time when many might be struggling to find accommodation, it would have been an excellent opportunity to collect data and promote support to students that need it. However, the request did not get to the website team in time to be properly tested. Hopefully, that will be in place for matriculation next semester, and the subsequent year. We have also gotten a question about housing onto the University's 'Student Life Survey'. As the survey goes out in October, the timing is less beneficial for capturing how many students struggle to find housing but will catch students still without a term-time address.

15. Ruth has also been involved in housing at the Council level, providing a deputation in support of the Council exploring ways to support expansion of the Student Housing Co-operative, and Scottish Parliament level, attending a Cross-Party Group on housing. With examination of student housing and PBSA's being carried out at both levels, she is making sure students' thoughts are heard on these matters.

16. Opportunities like the strategic acquisition considered on today's agenda are important from a housing standpoint, as University-owned accommodation allows us to control the price and quality, as well as helping to fill what was estimated by a report by the Cross-Party Group on Housing to be a ~13,000 student bed shortfall across the city of Edinburgh.

17. I have also been doing work to try and improve the effectiveness of the University-run guarantor scheme. The lack of a UK guarantor creates a barrier to private market rentals for international students and students from a low-income background. This is an issue when private flats have historically been the most affordable option available to students. Having a guarantor option for these students is key to unlocking the benefits of the private market for them. The current scheme is difficult for many students to get onto and isn't accepted by most letting agents in the city, meaning work needs to be done for it to serve its intended purpose.

### *Engaging Students*

18. Across the team, we've put a lot of effort into engaging with students. Welcome Week was a great example, with all of us helping run tours and attending events. John (VP Activities and Services) managed to speak to every single student society! We all did our best to be visible and accessible throughout the week, and to connect with as many students as possible.

19. We have also done our best to engage with student groups on specific issues. For example, with the conflict around Israel and Palestine, John and Indigo (VP Welfare) have maintained dialogue with the Justice for Palestine Society. Ruth and Indigo have also made a point to seek out and consult Jewish students about their experience on campus. Additionally, following the riots over the summer, Ruth worked with international societies to create a video welcoming international students to help them feel welcome and at ease.

20. We are also committed to doing our best to communicate updates through social media. Dylan and I post weekly LinkedIn updates that get good engagement with both staff and students. Ruth has been great at ensuring a constant stream of content on to our Instagram. We are also planning to do physical outreach stalls this year, to meet students face to face. On top of that, I am planning joint outreach with Senior Leadership across multiple campuses.

### *Organisational Updates*

21. As a new team we have also been getting to grips with a deeper understanding of the Association itself and particularly at a Trustee level with our Strategy and finances:

### *Strategy and Planning*

22. The Association is working towards completion of our Strategic Plan 2019-2026. At this stage, several key projects have come to fruition – out of necessity, further amplified by the impacts of the pandemic, our initial focus was on strengthening our financial position.

### *Paragraphs 23-24: closed section*

25. Internally over this period, we have also completed a pay and reward review, including the introduction of (strategically focused) competences and a new grading system. We have managed to introduce the Real Living Wage, a key strategic target (an aspiration shared by Court), and progressed significantly with our digital transformation projects, ranging from e-commerce to support for Advice and Representation systems (accelerated by the pandemic, ironically).

26. The Teviot Row House renovation is of course a key element of our strategy 'Historic Teviot reimaged for the 21<sup>st</sup> century'. Whilst the works are now focused on compliance renovations rather than re-imagining, this hasn't stopped us thinking hard about how the building use changes on reopening and in the following years. Along with others from the team I am on our internal working group looking at the way we will operate the building and the evolution of services.

27. I also sit on the University Estates Project Board for the Teviot renovation. The work is long overdue and from what I've seen to date students will welcome the care and attention that's going into renovating the world's oldest purpose-built students' union building. Much of the work is 'hidden' in the fabric and services of the building, but there are great and visible improvements in accessibility and in peeling back the decades of change and rediscovering some of the original features. We are now

working on the basis on some delays because of the complexity of the works, but the extent is not yet clear at the time of writing.

28. Aligned to the Teviot re-opening, and also part of our broader strategy, we are acting on the findings of a strategic project to review Association approaches to student groups and student development. The first action now underway to build a single, shared articulation of student leaders'/volunteers' support and development journey, from recruitment onwards – ultimately this will culminate in some revised approaches prior to rep / leaders' changeover and induction from March 2025. In addition, we continue to develop further service transformation as we consider the future operation of Teviot Row House, which will also be a hub for student community-building, and an active programme of personal development and wellbeing.

### *Festival*

29. The Association hosts our Festival Partners, Pleasance Theatre Trust, across Potterrow and Pleasance locations, from mid-July for setup and then the month of August. Obviously, we would have normally also hosted Gilded Balloon in Teviot. Our team run all catering and bar operations and ensure visitors have a great experience. The 2024 festival was delivered successfully, particularly given some challenging weather over the first 2 weekends, which has a tangible impact on visitor numbers and dwell time. Final numbers are still being resolved but initial reports show a good control of costs and labour and a margin close to target. We are expecting to deliver a contribution ahead of budget. It's worth noting that we, along with some other venues, experienced additional city planning challenges in the run-up to Festival, requiring significant additional consultancy and legal costs.

30. Whilst the festival remains a significant part of the trading contribution for the year, it's worth remembering it also allows us to facilitate a number of student productions and provide some specialist arts industry experience and jobs. Adding in the core hospitality business, we supported almost 200 additional job opportunities, with the majority of these being University of Edinburgh students, and a further 26% being students from other institutions.

### *Welcome Week*

31. This year's Welcome Week ran from Sat 7- Sun 15 September. It was great to see students around campus again in volume. The entire organisation was involved in supporting and delivering the week in a collective effort to welcome over 19,000 new students to the city, the University and our services and support, and support them to feel at home in our community. We also recruited and trained 120 student volunteers to enable peer to peer welcome activity and orientation, and the Sabbatical Team and I were very focussed on engaging with new students through a variety of events and welcome talks, including being able to participate in the Principal's Welcome, large scale postgraduate induction, and input to the Parents and Supporters event.

32. The Association ran and supported 315 events (146 programmed by us and 169 by student groups) over the eight days. Our See the City tours programme was very successful, and the Sabbatical Officers also led some tours! Our new mascot, Dusty made daily appearances and proved popular with students. They even played pool in



Potterrow with some new friends, and took part in Jazz night, a Body Combat session, and greeted students as they exited the Principal's Welcome.

33. The GEM (our large-scale temporary space to provide a hub for daytime Welcome activity) on Bristo Square welcomed 44,000 visitors across 7 days of Fairs (Plant, Vintage and Poster Sales, Activities Fairs, Sports Fair and Freebies Fair). In particular, the Sports and Activities Fairs enable Sports Clubs and Societies to engage directly and let new students see the array of possibilities on offer to support them to meet people, find their community, and feel at home.

34. In addition, our very popular 'Take What you Need' event enabled almost 700 students to gather household items for free, left behind by students leaving student accommodation last year, promoting re-use and sustainability.

35. Interest in the wide range of social events to support students to connect was high, with over 600 postgraduate students coming to our PG afternoon mixer, and over 90 teams joining our Pleasance Quiz! Our staff welcomed and signposted new students as they navigated induction, and settling into the city.

36. We contributed to various central university induction events and a range of School induction activities across a wide variety of campuses. We were also able, through the Advice Place service, to help many new students resolve any early practical issues. Whilst the majority of students have a relatively smooth transition, we were still supporting new students or returners to navigate accommodation issues, access emergency accommodation, and manage the impacts of some external funders' process issues (particularly US student loan recipients) – working in collaboration with University colleagues also.

37. We currently have a student feedback survey running to gain insight into the impact of our welcome work and students' satisfaction with the communications, events and services we provided.

#### *A look ahead to Semester 1 Activity*

38. It's perhaps worth noting that after a very busy Festival, and Welcome Week, attention immediately turns to delivery of Semester One activity for our members. This includes:

- training and development and engagement with our new student reps and leaders, with a range of training and social events, as they get off to a good start with their activities for members – we do now have over 420 student groups taking into account societies, peer support and various other student committees;
- October elections to elect our new Postgraduate representatives amongst others;
- the launch of both our annual Teaching Awards, and Student Awards in October; and
- a rapid increase in demand for individual support and advice through the Advice Place as new students settle in and returning students navigate start of year issues including academic progression, housing challenges and resolving financial/cost of living issues.

39. This is in addition to our trading activity, varied entertainment programme, and provision of community spaces across all our sites, as well as supporting around 2000 semester 1 room bookings from our student groups.

40. As the late night entertainment market becomes challenging within the city we continue to diversify our offering to provide variety, and events of different shape and size – coming up this semester we will provide a range of smaller capacity events including but not limited to cultural events such as Diwali, Digital Detox Parties, Games nights, Open mic, K Pop, ceilidh workshops, roller discos.

#### *Student Voice Activity*

41. As the representative body for all students, several core representation activities return for the semester. Our October elections will see us elect new PGT and PGR representatives for every School. Our Student Council meetings will resume – these provide opportunity for student reps and other student members to attend, debate and vote on student policy issues that matter to them, and also provide an important element of sabbatical officer accountability. The first meeting of the year will be considering proposals for the representation of Widening Participation students.

42. We will also be supporting effective local academic representation through induction of over 1200 programme representatives who volunteer within their School to represent their year group, and linking them with their elected School Reps. We also begin our regular programme of rep forums, to create community amongst student representatives and enable feedback and information sharing – these sometimes include input from key university colleagues on topics of interest/priority. The Association therefore supports a number of active and committed student representatives at all levels, although the issue remains that the representation feels effective only when the students and representatives see change as a result of their efforts.

#### *Paragraphs 43-53: closed section*

#### **Resource implications**

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

#### **Risk Management**

55. Financial risks are highlighted in the report.

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

56. Several of the activities outlined support a wide variety of the SDGs.

#### **Equality & Diversity**

57. 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**

58. We would welcome feedback from Court in relation to any of the issues outlined.

**Consultation**

59. Consultation on this paper was not required.

**Further information**

60. Author

Dora Herndon

EUSA President 2024-25

Presenter

Dora Herndon

EUSA President 2024-25

**Freedom of Information**

61. Open version.



UNIVERSITY COURT

7 October 2024

**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 activity and direction contribute to the following aspects of Strategy 2030;
  - i) The undergraduate curriculum will support breadth and choice, preparing students, graduates and alumni to make a difference in whatever they do, wherever they do it.
  - ii) We will be leading Scotland's commitment to widening participation.
  - iii) 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.
  - iv) We will have created opportunities for partners, friends, neighbours and supporters to co-create, engage with the world and amplify our impacts.
  - v) Our estate will be fit for purpose, sustainable and accessible. We will support learning, research and collaboration with our neighbours, businesses and partners.

**Action requested/Recommendation**

3. Court is invited to note the impact that university sport has on the student experience and sense of belonging as detailed in this report.

**Background and context**

4. With the 2024/25 academic year now well underway, and Welcome Week successfully concluded, EUSU has focussed on engaging the new and returning University population and promoting the value of sport within the University community. Our efforts are centred on ensuring that students have access to a wide range of sporting opportunities from the outset, fostering a sense of belonging and wellbeing through physical activity. Additionally, we aim to upskill and support our volunteers in facilitating a positive culture and experience throughout all activity. This paper outlines the initiatives, priorities, and strategic direction of the Sports Union as we enter the new year.

**Discussion**

*Welcome Week Reflections*

5. Welcome Week was a vibrant start to the academic year, with EUSU having a strong presence across campuses to engage with as many students as possible.
6. The Sports Fair was a brilliant start to Welcome Week at Bristo Square, attracting over 7,000 students throughout the day. Note that this number is lower than previous years, due to reduced operating hours. Hosting the Sports Fair in the Gem venue proved to be a success once again, providing an excellent experience for attendees and allowing Pleasance facilities to be utilised optimally for club taster

sessions. We are grateful to the University and EUSA for confirming the continued use of the Gem in future years, as it has clearly enhanced the overall Welcome Week experience.

7. EUSU offered 320 taster sessions and welcome events on the UoE events app. We appreciate the use of the app, as it has streamlined Welcome Week for our clubs, making it easier for them to advertise their activities and reach a wider audience of students.

8. Edinburgh hosted the first-ever British Universities & Colleges Sport (BUCS) Women's Super Rugby fixture at the Hive Stadium. This milestone was a fantastic showcase of elite women's sport and a testament to the growing profile of women's sport at the University.

9. 2023/24 was an excellent year for membership, with 8,642 SU members. As of 20 September, we have 1,837 Sports Union members, which tracks ahead of membership numbers as of this time last year.

#### *Coaching & Volunteering Academy*

10. The Coaching & Volunteering Academy (CVA) continues to play a key role in supporting the development of our club leaders, coaches and volunteers. Ahead of Welcome Week, we held our annual Club Conference on 4 September 2024, with 114 committee leaders attending across 61 clubs. We brought together speakers to discuss topics including the role of sport and our volunteers in fostering a sense of belonging and how clubs can implement further positive shifts in club culture. EUSU also delivered Club Committee Training to provide our volunteers with the necessary knowledge and skills to excel within their roles.

11. This year we are aiming for at least 3 committee members from every club to complete the Active Bystander training to continue working towards providing a safe and inclusive University experience.

12. Jill Reid has joined the staff team within EUSU as Sport Participation Activator, a new 12-month position for recent graduates. She will focus on workforce development within EUSU and the CVA.

#### *Recreational, Intramural and Competitive Sport*

13. As of 20 September, 116 teams have entered into our Intramural (IM) programmes. All IM sports with capacity limits have already "sold-out" showing that we need to continue expanding our offering. We currently have 30 Schools across the University engaging directly with our IM programme, with several schools now fully funding their IM teams. Twelve schools now have dedicated School Sport Coordinators, up from 7 last year.

14. This year we have introduced two new SU clubs, Padel and Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, with both having high attendance and engagement throughout their Welcome Week activity. Tennis has also been added as an IM sport this year.

15. The BUCS season officially started the week of 30 September, with Edinburgh taking part in 67 fixtures that week. This season we will have 116 teams competing

in BUCS competition and 6 teams are newly promoted to the BUCS Premier League tier!

16. Noah Wells has joined the staff team within EUSU as Sport Participation Activator, focusing on developing our recreational and intramural sport programmes.

*Good news!*

17. Olympic and Paralympic Success

- a. Medallists: Associated athlete Stephen Clegg, 2x Gold Medals and a Paralympic Record (Swimming), first-year student Aleksandra Kalucka, Bronze Medal (Sport Climbing), and alumnus Oli Wilkes, Bronze Medal (Rowing).
- b. Further University representation from;
  - i. Current students – Charlie Aldridge and Megan Keith
  - ii. Alumni – Lucy Hope, Seonaid McIntosh, Sarah Robertson, Amy Costello, Lisa Thomson, Grace Reid and Melanie Woods.
- c. UoE Sport and D&A will be hosting a celebration event in the Playfair Library in October to showcase the success of our athletes.

18. The Women's Orienteering team won the BUCS Team of the Year award at BUCS Conference, as well as our Active Lives programme being shortlisted for the Active Wellbeing Programme Award.

19. The annual Men's Scottish Varsity Match between the University of Edinburgh and the University of St Andrews took place at the Hive Stadium on 21 September (after submission of this report). This event serves as a great opportunity to bring new students together, encouraging positive engagement with the University community.

*Direction of Sport at Edinburgh*

20. The EUSU Strategy 2020-2024 has come to an end, and we are in the process of creating a Vision for Sport at UoE in conjunction with Sport & Exercise and Moray House. Following this, EUSU will create a new strategy to align with the Vision, enabling us to set specific targets which will be relevant to everyone involved in Sports Union activity. We continue to see the strength of EUSU as a separate entity from the University, to empower the experience of our students.

21. University facility space continues to be a limiting factor for our 71 clubs and EUSU activity. Most of our clubs are at a stage where they need to expand their offering to engage more students, but capacity constraints limit what we can do. We are extremely thankful for the investment in our sporting estate at the last Court meeting. The new hockey pitch has since been completed, and further projects now well underway. Our students have been incredibly grateful for these improvements, and we hope we can continue to strive for world-class facilities, particular further indoor space, across campuses over the next few years.

22. UoE Sport has gained several partnerships over the summer months including;

- a. Designated as the Centre of Excellence for Scotland's Senior International Hockey Programme.

- b. Awarded National Olympic Training Centre status along with Scottish Rowing and the University of St Andrews for Coastal Rowing.
- c. Awarded Aquatics GB National Diving Centre Programme partnership hosts.
- d. We are in the process of signing a Charter as UoE Sport, on behalf of the University, with Scotland's national mental health charity, SAMH (Scottish Action for Mental Health). The partnership will strengthen our work in active wellbeing advocacy, upskilling our staff and volunteers, and enhancing our existing programmes and initiatives. Whilst UoE Sport will be the first to engage with SAMH, we hope this partnership can expand to other areas within the University who could benefit from working with SAMH. The partnership will be announced publicly over the coming weeks.

23. The cost-of-living crisis continues to place significant pressure on our clubs and members, particularly with the sharp rise in external facility and transport costs over the past three years. These increases inevitably impact our students through higher club membership fees. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to the University for the increased Sports Union grant this academic year, which has been invaluable in providing greater financial support to our clubs. This additional funding allowed us to raise club grants by an average of 3% and expand resources such as our Equipment Fund. As we continue to navigate these challenges, this support from the University will help us make important strides in keeping sport accessible and affordable for all students.

### **Resource implications**

24. N/A

### **Risk Management**

25. No major risks.

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

26. This paper contributes to the following SDGs;

- a. 3 – Good Health and Wellbeing. All the work we do at EUSU is focussed on enhancing the health and wellbeing of our university community.
- b. 4 – Quality Education. We believe our student/volunteer development efforts contribute to a more complete and expanded education for students.

### **Equality & Diversity**

27. This paper does not require an Equality Impact Assessment.

### **Next steps/implications**

28. The Sports Union President and Executive Committee oversee the strategic direction of the Sports Union. Please reach out to [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**

29. Consultation for this paper was sought from Millie Doherty (Sport Programme Manager), Mark Munro (Director of Sport & Active Health), and Polly Pearce (Sports Coordinator – Competitions).

**Further information**30. Author

Philine Rouwers  
Sports Union President  
20 September 2024

Presenter

Dora Herndon  
EUSA President

**Freedom of Information**

## 31. Open Paper





UNIVERSITY COURT

7 October 2024

**College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine:  
Modernising Governance and Structure**

**Description of paper**

1. This paper seeks approval to modify the School structure within the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine (CMVM), as part of a wider programme of modernisation. This is required to enhance delivery against Strategy 2030, improve cross college working and alignment to change priorities across the university.

2. The proposed changes to CMVM are part of a wider programme of modernisation across college to improve effectiveness and strategic planning. Over the past 18 months, through inclusive engagement, an organisational framework, aligned to university structures, has been developed. Modernisation will enable greater transparency and equity in ways of working and set the scene for transformational, sustainable change across college aligned to delivery of the university academic mission.

3. Modernisation underpins Strategy 2030 outcomes, in particular through:
- **Education.** Research led teaching and careers will be transformed. Duplication will be reduced, equity and transparency enhanced. Postgraduate taught education and pedagogic research will come together into a single school enabling a multidisciplinary future focussed portfolio.
  - **Research.** Modernisation will enable systems level horizon scanning and build permeability between sectors, disciplines and organisations.
  - **Data.** Strengths in population data, health and agritech will be enhanced. The Dean for innovation, working with other colleges, EI, EFI, GAIL etc will accelerate innovation across college through data and machine learning.
  - **Estate.** As a College will identify shared approaches to use of space and work across college(s) in prioritisation of needs.
  - **User friendly processes and efficient systems.** Our commitment is to equity, to be as open as possible but closed as necessary. Modernisation simplifies, reduces variation, points of failure and increases opportunities for consolidation and sustainable change.
  - **Outreach, engagement and diversity.** Opportunities to share expertise e.g. in patient and public engagement are enhanced.
  - **Carbon zero.** For the first time college and school level responsibilities, are identified, creating a community of practice that supports university and college level approaches.

**Action requested/Recommendation**

4. Court is asked to:
- note wider work across CMVM to modernise ways of working; and
  - comment on and approve the revised School structure for CMVM.
5. Court is asked to approve the structure pursuant to University Court Resolution No.19/2001 (Academic Management Arrangements). This requires that:

“The creation of Schools and their assignment to Colleges, other than initially, and in the future their merger or other restructuring or discontinuation shall be determined by the Court on the advice of the Principal acting on the recommendation of the relevant Head of College and having consulted affected groups of staff and the Senatus Academicus.”

6. In line with this, the proposed new School structure is recommended to Court for approval by the Head of College, David Argyle, with the support of the Principal, following consultation with College staff and the Senatus Academicus ('Senate').

### **Background and context**

7. CMVM is one of the three Colleges in the University of Edinburgh and its underpinning strategy of 'One Biology, One Medicine, One Health' focusses on delivering transformational impact in research, innovation and education.

8. CMVM's current operating model and structure were established in 2001 and have evolved over the past 23 years following the implementation of College structures across the University. In this time, CMVM, the UK higher education landscape, medical, biomedical and veterinary sectors have evolved considerably and grown in size. Legislative frameworks and general complexity across the sector have increased.

9. Governance and ways of working have not kept pace with these changes. Accountabilities and structures are not always clear, joined up or easy to navigate, nor is it easy to deliver on our commitments to enhance equity and diversity and develop the careers and skills of our students and staff.

10. Over the past eighteen months, we have partnered with staff, students, and university colleagues to develop a vision for a modernised College, including through focussed discussions with professional services staff and research and teaching teams. More detail is in the attached Background Paper.

11. As a first step, a principle-led framework was co-created with the College Operations Group (COG) to guide the work. These principles have framed our approach, and will continue to do so. They help us develop indicators and to hold ourselves to account as we shape the future. The principles are:

- ***People and community first.*** Modernisation must have increased focus on community, equity, diversity, inclusivity and openness. Design principles must include career development and transitions and the multiple facets of leadership.
- ***Join up/ consolidate.*** Our starting point should be trust. We should delegate locally by default and alongside this simplify, reduce duplication/complexity and identify areas for joint working. College roles should be focussed where a strategic need for coordination/action is required or where pooling scarce expertise/resource at a college level makes sense.
- ***Clear governance and openness in decision making.*** The College must have an overview of opportunities and risks. Decision making and data to

be as open as possible, and as closed as necessary. Community and agency at all levels is key, with clarity on accountabilities and responsibilities.

- **CMVM as a learning organisation.** We must build learning into ways of working and become more comfortable with co-creation, iteration, disruptive ideas and adaptation following feedback. Indicators (qualitative and quantitative) must evolve.
- **CMVM as an effective partner.** We must work in a way that aligns to our values at all levels. Resilience and effective communication come from strong foundations.

## Discussion

12. The proposed modernisation of CMVM involves changing CMVM's structure from five university management entities (School equivalents), consisting of three Deaneries and two Schools, into six schools, each of the new Schools with clear strategic alignment to the delivery of the College mission and Strategy 2030.

13. Change would be achieved by dissolving Deaneries and introducing a six-school structure. Each School would have a common organisational framework with clear accountabilities, expectations and requirements of leadership. Each of the six Schools would be considered equivalent in the new structure and be broadly balanced in terms of complexity and scope. Alongside this there will be clarity on matters that are delegated to each School, and which matters are reserved to College or University.

14. The proposed changes to CMVM College structure are summarised below (this is an oversimplification and not a direct mapping):

	Current School / Deanery structure	Proposed Future School Structure (TITLES tbc)
i	Edinburgh Medical School	Edinburgh Medical School (Incorporating BMS)
ii	Royal Dick School of Veterinary Studies (RDSVS)	R(D)SVS
iii	Deanery of Biomedical Sciences	Neuroscience and Cardiovascular Sciences
iv	Deanery of Clinical Sciences	Tissue Regeneration and Repair
v	Deanery of Molecular Genetics and Population Health	Genetics and Cancer
vi	Deanery of Molecular Genetics and Population Health	People, Populations and Data

15. In the past eighteen months across CMVM we have focussed on developing a framework for a modernised College, starting first with governance, leadership roles and associated structures necessary to take the next steps (Figure 1 below). Specifically, we have:

- Updated terms of reference for the College Executive Group (CEG) and Operations Group (COG), enabling clearer decision making and more transparency. The College Executive Group operates as the senior decision-making body across the College, being informed by and able to delegate to the College Operations Group.

- Restructured and appointed to College Dean roles that align better with other Colleges and University needs, with clear accountabilities and responsibilities and an increased emphasis on equity, transparency and community.
- Reviewed and re-aligned our professional services (PS) leadership roles across the College, ensuring clear accountabilities and responsibilities. This team, made up of DoPs/COOs/ College PS leadership and University Business Partners, makes up the College Operations Group (COG).



• **Figure 1** – Revised College structure and leadership



## *School Management in the proposed new structure*

16. Each School will have a Head of School and a Director of Professional Services or equivalent, with a consistent professional services structure in each School enabling greater join-up, alignment and strategic planning across College(s) and with partners.

17. Schools will be the managerial and budgetary units in the College and will have responsibility for planning income and expenditure. They will work across the College to integrate plans that contribute to a coherent strategy at College and University levels. Each School will have responsibility for key aspects of delivering teaching, research and innovation. Retaining key academic leadership posts as part of the School management team, which usually include a Director of Teaching, a Director of Quality and a Director of Students, alongside professional services leads.

## **Resource implications**

18. Underpinning our modernisation programme is a relentless drive for greater transparency (open as possible, closed as necessary), simplification and equity in ways of working. The adoption of a common professional services framework sets the scene for us to reduce variation in approach, reduce points of failure and increase opportunities for consolidation into expert hubs where appropriate. It also will enable us to work more effectively with University business partners and enhance strategic planning. Our revised approach brings together professional services and academic leadership to embed sustainable change in support of our academic mission.

19. Overall, modernisation supports enhanced cost control and a coordinated approach to income generation. It is a core part of our response to the current financial constraints facing the University and sector. Modernisation will help us manage operating costs and enhance cost recovery from external funds as we:

- Identify where duplications exist and address them
- Partner better across Colleges and share resource
- Diversify and increase income
- Align with and play a key part in shaping and delivery of university-wide initiatives
- Improve staff and student experience.

## **Risk Management**

20. We continue to work with Internal Audit and the University risk team to refine our approach to risk management, maintaining College-wide oversight through College Executive and Operations Groups.

21. The key risks associated with our proposed modernisation are:

- (i) **Change readiness:** Staff may be resistant / not welcoming of change.  
Rating : Impact High – Likelihood low: **Green**  
We have as far as we can mitigated risks of readiness through careful engagement, through extensive consultation, and refinement of our approach. We have adopted the principles of the ProSci change management framework and are enhancing skills across the College in managing change. Using ProSci tools in the summer we received

feedback that teams welcomed the change but recognised the need for support and tools to take the next steps. If approved by Court then the next step is for School-level leadership (Academic and PS) to undertake more detailed mapping and consultation with delivery leads, unions and University colleagues. We are collaborating with HR to build a community of practice across the College of individuals with change management experience and training to support our wider work.

- ii) **Loss of trust through not delivering change.** Impact high, likelihood medium / low . **Amber** – if approved by Court this rating reduces to **Green**

We know that whilst uncertainty about the future across the University and sector is a concern, a greater concern is us not taking action and failure to modernise ways of working. We risk retaining outdated, inequitable, less effective ways of working and a major loss of trust across our College community.

- iii) **Inability to deliver 2030 ambitions.** Our current College success is built on planning that began 15-20 years ago. A major risk to us retaining academic leadership would be to not implement this programme of modernisation and not be in a position as a University to take a long-term strategic view. This can in part be ameliorated by modernisation but also requires University-level alignment. Current budgetary constraints may precipitate behaviours that lead to fractured short-term decisions across budget areas that lose sight of the whole and wider strategic impact we seek to have as a University. Impact high, likelihood medium. **Amber**

22. We will continue to work closely with University colleagues (including Internal Audit) as we refine our approach to workload allocation across the College. Our Business Operations lead maintains an up-to-date risk register across the College. Modernisation is a crucial part of CMVM's risk mitigation strategy.

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

23. Through our revised structures we for the first time allocate specific responsibility for academic and professional services leadership across sustainability. This enhances our ability to ensure Sustainable Development Goals and climate emergency mitigations are embedded across the way we work.

24. College modernisation enables us to work in a more systems-based way, collaboratively, across Colleges and budget areas to enhance our engagement and delivery against our social and civic responsibility commitments. Modernisation supports improved business planning and will provide opportunities to embed social and civic priorities and SDG alignment. Our programme of work shaping the Edinburgh Medical School 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary (2026) is truly cross College and University, and is aligned to climate and SDG priorities.

25. Through efficiencies, simplification and reduction in duplication we will reduce our climate footprint both in the short and longer term.

## **Equality & Diversity**

26. The College has appointed a new Dean role of Equity, Inclusion and Community that reflects the importance we place on equality and diversity, the work of the EDI committee and the importance of inclusion being at the heart of the College culture. This role will work collaboratively with college professional services lead for Change and Community with responsibility for EDI.

## **Next steps/implications**

27. Following an extensive discovery phase including a high level consultation with leaders and staff, the College is beginning the academic year 2024/25 with a new College leadership team that is dedicated to modernising the College and partnering with the University to achieve the 2030 strategic plan. With the leadership framework established, we will move to shaping and designing structures and teams across the College. Integral to our approach is continued collaboration with Trade Unions and staff; to listen, to review and refine plans and deliver effective implementation.

## **Consultation**

28. There has been extensive consultation and engagement over the past eighteen months, including:

- Over 70 one-to-one confidential consultations with members of the College Senior Leadership Team, College Executive Group, College Operations Group (COG) and senior members of staff across the College and University.
- 5 management away days; 5 College-wide open townhalls, numerous invitations to comment and feedback (including an open SharePoint site where all papers, FAQs, etc. are located).
- A paper was presented to Senate, in May 2024. Senate identified the restructure as an opportunity to adhere to good change management practices.
- University Executive reviewed the proposals on 9 August and recommended the proposed new School structure to Court for approval.

29. Continued staff engagement is crucial at all stages as we progress with the College modernisation and further detailed consultation will be undertaken if the plans are approved, which will include more localised consultations complemented by College-wide town halls.

## **Further information:**

### **30. Authors**

David Argyle (Head of College, CMVM)  
Anne Marie Coriat (CMVM Registrar)

### **Presenter**

David Argyle (Head of College, CMVM)  
Anne Marie Coriat (CMVM Registrar)

September 2024

## **Freedom of Information**

31. Open version.





UNIVERSITY COURT

7 October 2024

**New Darwin – Estates Project**

**Description of paper**

1. This paper is presented to recommend to University Court approval of funding, to progress the project to completion. The project is in the current Capital Plan approved by University Court and is recommended to Court following the Policy and Resources Committee meeting on 10 September 2024.

*Paragraphs 2-47: closed section*

**Consultation**

48. The paper has been reviewed by the Head of College and College Register, College of Science and Engineering, the Director of Estates and Director of Estates Development have been consulted. The paper was considered on 28 August 2024 by Estates Committee and on 10 September 2024 by Policy and Resources Committee. Both recommended approval of capital funding as set out in the paper.

**Further information**

49. Author

Jo White  
Estates Development Manager

Presenter

Damien Toner  
Director of Estates

**Freedom of Information**

50. Open version



UNIVERSITY COURT

7 October 2024

Update on Strategic Acquisition

**Description of paper**

1. This paper provides an update on the strategic acquisition opportunity discussed at the last meeting of Court. It requests approval from University Court to progress with the acquisition and submit a revised formal offer.

*Paragraphs 2-47: closed section*

**Consultation**

48. This paper has been developed in consultation with Accommodation, Catering and Events (ACE) and Finance. The information contained within the paper was presented to Estates Committee for consideration by electronic correspondence between 5 and 9 September 2024. It was also considered by Policy and Resources Committee on 10 September 2024.

**Further information**

49. Author

Damien Toner, Director of Estates  
Jane Johnston, Director of Estate Development  
23 September 2024

Presenter

Damien Toner  
Director of Estates

**Freedom of Information**

50. Open version

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UNIVERSITY COURT

7 October 2024

**Scottish Funding Council (SFC) Outcome Framework and Assurances Model**

**Description of paper**

1. This paper provides details of SFC's new Outcome Framework and Assurances Model which replaces the Outcome Agreement process for universities and colleges from 2024-25.

2. Our contribution to SFC's Outcome Framework and Assurances Model (OF&AM) is framed by Strategy 2030, and therefore any of the narrative we submit to SFC for the OF&AM is aligned with aspirations articulated in Strategy 2030.

**Action requested/Recommendation**

3. University Court is asked to note the changes to SFC's approach to outcomes and assurances, and to note that there are still elements to be finalised by SFC. We will keep Court and committees apprised of any significant change to the process and thus any impact to what is set out below.

**Background and context**

4. Since 2012, Outcome Agreements (OAs), alongside regular data returns, have been the primary way in which institutions provide context to SFC, and through which SFC are assured around the University's use of funding. OAs set out our specific activities and outcomes which would be supported by SFC's funding over the following year, and these covered the full breadth of SFC's funding and policy interest. In 2024-25, the University received around £180m funding from SFC for recurrent teaching and research and innovation purposes. We also receive funding for other purposes, including capital (~£21m) and other non-recurring strategic grants.

5. SFC's 2021 [Review of Coherent Provision and Sustainability](#) set out the case for evolutionary change across the whole Scottish tertiary education, innovation and research system. Since the publication of the Review and the acceptance of the recommendations by the Scottish Government, SFC have been working with universities and colleges, through sector groups and other official channels, to develop the scope and the parameters of a new approach to assurance and accountability. During 2024-25, SFC will transition to the new [Outcome Framework and Accountability Model](#) with phased implementation. This paper sets out SFC's approach, noting that some elements may evolve as the new approach beds in.

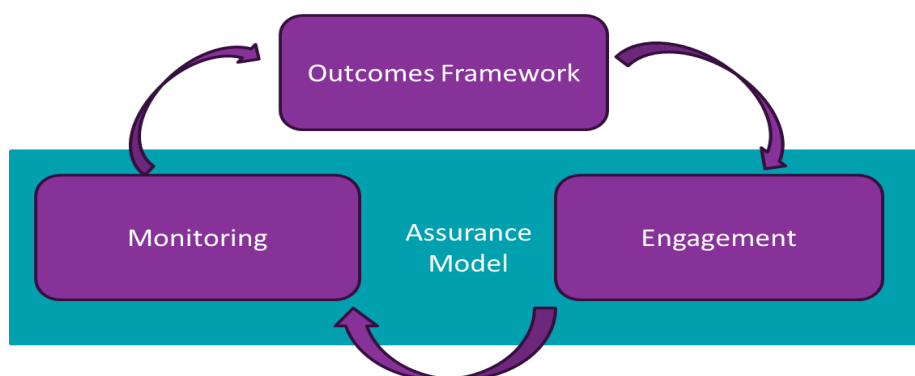
**Summary of new approach**

6. SFC will continue to communicate its expectations about outcomes through funding allocations, guidance, financial memoranda and letters of grant with attached funding conditions, but the OF&AM will replace the current assurance and accountability arrangements from academic year 2024-25.

7. The **Outcomes Framework** sets out SFC's expectations of colleges and universities in return for the funding they receive. In a change from the previous OA approach, SFC will not specify targets or bespoke expectations for individual

institutions. Instead, outcomes will be expressed more generally across the broad range of areas that matter to students, employers, the Scottish Government and other key stakeholders.

8. The **Assurance Model** comprises the mechanisms by which SFC will engage with colleges and universities and monitor their delivery of outcomes. This includes how SFC may intervene with colleges and universities if an issue is identified, to gain assurance, and to support them in addressing challenges and issues that may arise.



Framing this model is SFC's *"desire for engagement with the sector to be proportionate, consistent, accountable, transparent and targeted only where needed."*

9. A key and essential difference from the OA process is that the Outcomes Framework will not require institutions to agree in advance with SFC bespoke outcomes and activities that will be delivered in the following academic year. Instead, SFC will use the Assurance Model to monitor what colleges and universities have delivered in the previous academic year, and this will give flexibility for institutions to adapt to changing circumstances during the academic year while *"having clarity and year-on-year consistency about the outcomes and expectations against which they will be monitored"*.

10. The OF&AM is intended to:

- Make SFC's expectations of institutions clearer
- Focus on outcomes achieved by institutions, rather than activities we plan to undertake
- Reduce the burden for institutions by making greater use of existing data and sources of information and significantly reducing the requirement for written commentary
- Provide SFC with an agreed framework through which it will monitor the full breadth of institutional performance
- Take account of the nuance of individual institutions' circumstances through a continued programme of regular institutional engagement.

## Monitoring

11. Under the new OF&AM, many aspects of existing monitoring and data collections will be incorporated into the new arrangements. As well as ongoing data and information returns, SFC has incorporated the requirement for thematic reviews of particular areas to gain assurance and identify good practice for wider

dissemination. Details of the thematic reviews have yet to be fully developed and shared by SFC.

12. Under the monitoring arrangements, institutions are being asked to provide contextual commentary on how we have delivered against the outcomes in the Outcome Framework. This will supplement and contextualise the data and information returns and support SFC in their understanding of our activities and future policy development.

13. For Research Excellence, High-quality Learning and Teaching and the Knowledge Exchange and Innovation Fund there has been engagement with the sector to co-develop approaches to assurance and accountability that is integrated with the OF&AM.

### ***Research Assurance and Accountability***

14. The [Research Assurance and Accountability Report](#) is the new way for SFC to monitor the Research Excellence expectations and which will provide assurance to SFC that institutions are investing core research grants (REG and RPG) in line with expectations, as well as providing evidence that demonstrates the benefits from the investment.

### ***Quality***

15. Alongside the new OF&AM, SFC have issued revised guidance on [Quality for Colleges and Universities for AY 2024-25 to AY 2030-31](#). Scotland's new Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework (TQEF) forms part of the OF&AM and is the tertiary education sector's new approach to quality assurance and enhancement for colleges and universities.

16. The TQEF is a shared set of principles, delivery mechanisms and outputs that can be applied to the different contexts of colleges and universities to give assurance on academic standards and the quality of the student experience and ensure accountability for public investment in learning and teaching.

17. The TQEF has been created with key partners, colleges, universities, sparqs (student partnerships in quality Scotland) and quality agencies and builds on Scotland's approach to quality assurance. Colleagues in Registry are leading on this work, and will also respond to the [open consultation](#) on the Tertiary Quality Enhancement Review (TQER) as part of the new TQEF framework.

18. For the overall OF&AM, the University's Governance & Strategic Planning team (GaSP) will continue to manage the relationship with SFC, and will seek support from colleagues across the University as the new regime beds in.

### ***Knowledge Exchange and Innovation Fund***

19. The Knowledge Exchange and Innovation Fund (KEIF) replaces the University Innovation Fund (UIF) and is a new model which will begin from AY 2024-25. The UIF, and the data that drives it, was outdated, with allocations for UIF being informed by historic data. There have been recent new policy drivers ([National Innovation Strategy](#) and the [Entrepreneurial Campus Blueprint](#)) which supported the need to change the UIF model.

20. The KEIF focuses on university strategies to articulate the broader value of Knowledge Exchange and Innovation activities to Scotland, and how national metrics can be developed to further recognise these and improve the KEIF allocation model.

21. 2024-25 is the first iteration of the KEIF model, and it sets a direction of travel for Scottish institutions. SFC acknowledges that further development work and long-term changes will be required which can only be delivered over several years. SFC have made the commitment to work in partnership with the sector to develop the model beyond AY 2024-25.

### **Timing**

22. The new OF&AM will be implemented in phases:

#### ***Phase 1: August to December 2024***

23. The Phase 1 period covers the initial stages of the transitional year and SFC have indicated that they would like to discuss some of the detail of the OF&AM with institutions to test plans and assumptions and to gather additional feedback on the proposed approach to monitoring.

24. In addition, SFC have indicated that they would like to seek institutions' view on the sign-off procedure for the new approach. The detail of this has yet to be finalised, and SFC has proposed that they engage further with the sector on this. If there is a requirement for some parts of the OF&AM to be signed off by Court, we will take papers through the normal committee cycle in line with our approach for the Outcome Agreement. Where sign off by Court is not required, we will share commentary through internal committees before seeking sign-off from the Accountable Officer (the Principal).

25. We will engage with SFC to share our feedback on the planned approach.

#### ***Phase 2: January to July 2025***

26. During this phase, SFC will test the new approach to monitoring with institutions. This will take into account feedback received from institutions during Phase 1.

27. SFC will engage with sector groups and institutions on other elements of the new approach and adjustments to the process will be made as a result.

### **Resource implications**

28. SFC have been careful to present the new assurance and accountability arrangements as being less burdensome on colleges and universities. Until we have completed one cycle, we will not know what the resource requirements will be across the University. GaSP will continue to oversee arrangements in line with the approach on OAs.

29. The rolling programme of deadlines means that the internal resource to comply with SFC's requirements could, in the short term, increase compared with the previous annual Outcome Agreement arrangements. As some details and timings are yet to be published by SFC, it is difficult to gauge the exact resource requirements.

## **Risk Management**

30. Failure to provide SFC with acceptable assurances as outlined above could potentially impact on our reputation with the Scottish Government, stakeholders and staff and could potentially undermine funding arrangements.

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

31. Engagement in the Outcome Framework and Assurances Model with SFC fulfils an external regulatory requirement, and our activities which are covered by the OF&AM contribute to all of the SDGs. Whilst we are not being asked to articulate these goals in the information which we provide to SFC, the narrative of how we aim to fulfil the requirements of SFC's OF&AM touch upon all aspects of the SDGs.

## **Equality & Diversity**

32. Equality and diversity objectives are cross-cutting across all of our activities reflected in the Outcomes Framework. We have a statutory requirement to produce and publish our National Equality Outcomes, as well as producing our Public Sector Equality Duty reports and we will continue to provide these alongside the Outcomes Framework. Evidence of EDI will be expected throughout contextual commentary, as well as in the thematic reviews.

## **Next steps/implications**

33. We will continue to engage with SFC on the development of the OF&AM, and seek contributions from colleagues as appropriate.

## **Consultation**

34. This paper has been reviewed by Rona Smith, Deputy Secretary, Governance & Strategic Planning, and Pauline Manchester, Deputy Director of Planning & Policy. We are working with colleagues in Edinburgh Research Office, Registry and Edinburgh Innovations on the three aspects of teaching quality, research and Knowledge Exchange outlined above.

## **Further information**

### **35. Author**

Jennifer McGregor  
Strategic Planning

August 2024

### **Presenter**

Rona Smith  
Director of Strategic Planning & Insight  
and Deputy Secretary

## **Freedom of Information**

36. Open paper



UNIVERSITY COURT

7 October 2024

Development & Alumni: Alumni Relations Activity

**Description of paper**

1. The paper provides the total of legacies and donations received by the University of Edinburgh Development Trust or directly by the University of Edinburgh from 13 May 2024 to 30 August 2024 and an update on current alumni relations activities.
2. 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**

3. Court members are asked to note the legacies and donations totals received and current alumni relations activities.

**Background and context**

*Paragraphs 4-5: closed section*

**Global Alumni Events**

*6. Upcoming global alumni events*

<b>Nairobi, Kenya</b> Scottish Universities alumni event	September 2024
<b>London, UK</b> Scottish Universities recent graduate event hosted by Scotland House	September 2024
<b>Jakarta, Indonesia</b> Alumni event hosted by International Recruitment Team	October 2024
<b>Osaka and Tokyo, Japan</b> School of Politics and Social Science and Business School alumni event hosted by School Recruitment Managers	October 2024



<b>New York, USA</b> Delegation visit featuring open to all flagship alumni event in New York with smaller scale activity in Washington DC and Boston to be confirmed	November 2024
<b>Toronto, Canada</b> Virtual talk by Prof Shannon Vallor for the Edinburgh University Club of Toronto	November 2024

### *Recent Global Event*

7. The Business School hosted their annual Global Alumni Day in May on the theme 'Whose Business is AI?', with over 200 alumni and students registered to join in person and a further 160 online. The following day the UEBS alumni team, in collaboration with three Beijing-based alumni and a current student ambassador, held an online event for Business School alumni in China on the theme 'AI: The View in China'. Over the summer, the Business School also hosted alumni events in Dublin, London and Reykjavik as part of student treks and an alumni dinner in Toronto.

8. Alumni across the globe engaged in a wide range of engagement opportunities throughout June. A number of alumni in the Netherlands joined Edinburgh representatives, including the Principal, for a special event at Leiden University to announce The Hague Global Futures Hub, a collaboration between the University of Edinburgh and Leiden University.

9. Representatives of the University of Edinburgh Alumni Association of Hong Kong and the University of Edinburgh Hong Kong Foundation attended a special opening event of the Eric Liddell Exhibition in Hong Kong hosted by British Consul General to Hong Kong and Macau, Brian Davidson CMG.

10. Chris Cox, Vice-Principal Advancement, hosted an informal alumni event in Zurich during his visit to Switzerland for an Una Europa conference.

11. Ashley Warmington and Catriona Armstrong, Regional Development Managers for North America, hosted an informal alumni event in Dallas.

12. There were also a number of volunteer-led activities. The Scottish Universities Alumni of Chicago group, led by Edinburgh alumnus and key Scottish Development International contact Brandon Beech, hosted an alumni gathering and networking event for alumni in the Chicago area.

13. The UK Alumni Network in France organised a picnic event at Parc Monceau in Paris, replacing their regular happy hour event for a more family friendly summer get-together, and the University of Edinburgh Alumni Association of Hong Kong hosted a whisky tasting networking event.

14. In August, as part of a visit to Uganda in relation to the IGNITE Nursing programme funded by the Burdett Trust, Professor Liz Grant and Rachel Bruce, Philanthropy Manager CAHSS, hosted an alumni event in Kampala. Later that month, Professor Helen Hastie, Head of the School of Informatics hosted an alumni

event in Palo Alto. Craig Skeldon, Head of Business and Operations in the School of Informatics, and Ashley Warmington, Regional Development Manager North America, joined Professor Hastie and 20 alumni to hear the latest news from the University and Informatics.

### **Alumni support for Widening Participation**

#### *Insights Programme*

15. During 3-7 June, 91 students took part in Insights Week, with 796 applications received for this year. This is a 26% increase in participants and a 74% increase in application numbers when compared to last year (72 participants and 458 applications received in 2022/23).

16. During this year's Insights Immersion Week, students visited alumni in Boston, New York, Washington DC, London, or Edinburgh and Glasgow. Students worked together in teams of 7-10 in their allocated host city. Their itinerary was designed to raise awareness of different sectors, inspire them and demystify professional life, while also being able to enjoy some cultural activities.

17. 122 alumni volunteered their time to support this year's programme. This includes alumni who hosted 30-minute virtual "Coffee Conversations" as a part of the students' development workshops, individuals who attended networking receptions hosted in each city, and the more formalised hosting of students at workplaces.

18. Participating alumni represent a diverse range of career stages and sectors. We are also seeing recent graduates, who benefited from the programme as students, now supporting Insights as alumni hosts, in a positive cycle of support.

19. Feedback regarding this year's programme is extremely positive. The student cohort's confidence in key skills develop through the programme increases, with nearly all responding students (66% of participants) confident or very confident in these skills at the end of the programme. 100% of alumni respondents feel more connected to the University after participating as Insights hosts and would recommend getting involved to other alumni.

### **Student Engagement**

20. During Welcome Week, the PGT Welcome Event took place in McEwan Hall with three alumni speakers, each giving their insight to the new students and answering their questions.

21. Also included as part of Welcome Week was our PGR social and networking event in the Playfair Library. There were over 200 new and current students and alumni in attendance, allowing our researchers to network and offer advice to new students. Our Alumni guest speaker was Dr Durai Arun Pannir Selvam, who gave the students some great words of wisdom. There were also a range of information stands from EUSA, EI, IAD, Alumni Relations and Research Services.

### **Alumni support for Student Recruitment**

22. Alumni Ambassadors supported a range of international student recruitment activities over the summer, sharing their experiences of studying at Edinburgh. This included 23 ambassadors supporting across an online event for offer holders in

Europe and in-person events in Istanbul, Paris, Madrid and Berlin. A further 27 ambassadors supported a series of online events for postgraduate offer holders across East Asia, with events for students from China, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, Macau and Taiwan. In person new student predeparture events in Shanghai, Beijing and Guangzhou were supported by 18 ambassadors.

23. Two alumni volunteers took part in a Student & Alumni Panel Session during Postgraduate Discovery Days in August, giving useful insight to prospective students.

### **Digital Communications**

24. A new digital newsletter, 'Events and Opportunities,' launched in March 2024 and the first edition was opened by an impressive 79,000 alumni. We have since sent a follow-up mailing with further opportunities and events and over 73,000 alumni opened the email. The Communications team is currently working on a new edition due at the end of September 2024.

25. Issue 7 of the digital [Enlightened](#) magazine was published at the end of May 2024 featuring more alumni impact stories. Work on Issue 8 is currently underway, with the next edition due for publication in September.

26. The graduate welcome email will be issued to our newest alumni in mid-September. The first issue of 2024/2025 Multi Story Edinburgh newsletter is scheduled for late September.

27. The Communications team produced a refreshed version of the Multi-Story Edinburgh handbook. The publication contains advice, insights and signposts to further support, together with features on recent graduates and experiences they can pass on. The handbook will be distributed digitally to all recent UG graduates as a follow up communication to the graduate welcome email.

### **Podcasts**

28. We continue to develop the Multi Story Edinburgh podcast which has had over 9,449 downloads to date. Season six of Multi Story Edinburgh has now been recorded and edited by D&A's Podcast student intern. The season will be released at the end of September. In addition to five new episodes, two specials have also been produced.

### **Resource implications**

29. There are no specific resource implications associated with this paper.

### **Risk Management**

30. There are policies and procedures in place to mitigate risks associated with funding activities including the procedure for income due diligence across campus.

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

31. 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**

32. There are no specific equality and diversity issues associated with the paper. However, cognisance is 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. We also actively promote a range of EDI-related scholarships and wider programmes to donors, including the MCF programme highlighted above, the Black British Scholarships programme, the Nyerere Scholarship and specific PhD scholarships to attract candidates from under-represented groups.

33. D&A is also closely connected to the current Review of the University's History and Race, ensuring alumni engagement with the findings and recommendations as they emerge. We also help alumni to understand the University's position on a range of EDI-related issues as these are played out (with greater or lesser degrees of accuracy) in the public domain and in the media.

### **Next steps/implications**

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

### **Consultation**

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

### **Further information**

#### **36. Authors**

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Finance Manager  
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#### **Presenter**

Chris Cox  
Vice-Principal Philanthropy &  
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### **Freedom of Information**

37. Open version



UNIVERSITY COURT

7 October 2024

**Remuneration Committee: Senior Leadership Team Annual Remuneration Review 2025 – Proposed Approach**

*Note: All Court attendees aside from the University Secretary (attending in governance role as Secretary to Court) and the clerk to Court will recuse themselves from the meeting for this item.*

**Description of paper**

1. This paper outlines the Remuneration Committee's recommended approach for the 2025 review of the Remuneration of the University's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and the Principal's salary.
2. This proposal will contribute to the outcome set out in Strategy 2030 to 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 asked to endorse the approach to the review of SLT remuneration and the Principal's salary, which will be presented for approval by the Remuneration Committee at its January 2025 meeting.

**Background and context**

*Senior Leadership Team – Annual Review*

4. The Remuneration Committee is responsible for the annual review and approval of revisions to the remuneration of the University's SLT, including the Principal and their direct reports. Approved increases are effective from 1 January 2025.
5. In December 2018, University Court approved revisions to the Committee's [Framework for Decision Making](#) 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'.

*Paragraphs 6-16: closed section*

**Next steps/implications**

17. The agreed approach, supported by detailed comparative data will be used to inform decisions for increases to the Principal and senior leadership team salaries at the separate Remuneration Committee meetings in January 2025.

**Consultation**

18. The proposed approach to the review of senior staff remuneration has been endorsed by the Remuneration Committee.

**Further information**

19. Author

James Saville

Director of Human Resources

Presenter

Hugh Mitchell

Convener, Remuneration Committee

**Freedom of Information**

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