THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

University Court
Laurie Liddell Clubhouse, Peffermill Sports Centre,
Peffermill Road, Edinburgh EH16 5LL
Monday, 28 April 2025

AGENDA

OPENING ITEMS

1	**Minute** To *approve* the minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2025	**A1**
2	**Matters Arising & Review of Action Log** To *raise* any matters arising and *review* the Action Log	**A2**
3	**Principal's Report** To *note* a report from Peter Mathieson, Principal	**B**
4	**Committee Business**	
	• Exception Committee	**C1**
	• Policy & Resources Committee	**C2**
	• Audit & Risk Committee	**C3**
	• Knowledge Strategy Committee	**C4**
	• Senate	**C5,C6**

KEY ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/DECISION

5	**Student Experience Update** To *consider* a paper presented by Colm Harmon, Vice-Principal Students	**D**
6	**Finance and Planning**	
	• **Finance and Planning Update Report** To *consider* a paper presented by Nirmal Borkhataria, Interim Director of Finance and Kim Graham, Provost.	**E1**
	• **2026-27 tuition fee structure** To *approve* changes to tuition fee structures. Paper presented by Rona Smith, Deputy Secretary Governance & Strategic Planning	**E2**
	• **Performance Measures to Support Strategy 2030: 2024-25 Mid-Year Report** To *consider* a paper presented by Rona Smith, Deputy Secretary Governance & Strategic Planning	**E3**

7	**Estates**	
	• **Capital Plan, Category C Uncommitted Projects** To *consider* a paper presented by Catherine Martin, Vice-Principal Corporate Services	**F1**
	• **Small Works Programme and Statutory Compliance Budget Allocation** To *approve* the Small Works and Statutory Compliance Programme 2025/26 allocation. Paper presented by Catherine Martin, Vice-Principal Corporate Services	**F2**
8	**Students' Association and Sports Union Reports** To *consider* reports presented by Dora Herndon, Students' Association President	
	• **Students' Association Report**	**G1**
	• **Sports Union Report**	**G2**
9	**Responsible Investment**	
	• **Responsible Investment Advisory Group: Draft Terms of Reference**	**H1**
	• **University of Edinburgh Revised Responsible Investment Policy** To *approve* the Terms of Reference and the revised policy. Papers presented by Leigh Chalmers, Vice Principal & University Secretary, and Dave Gorman, Director of Social Responsibility & Sustainability	**H2**
10	**Beyond Sustainability: Our Pathway to a Regenerative University** To *approve* the new strategy. Paper presented by Iain Gordon, Head of College of Science & Engineering, and Dave Gorman, Director of Social Responsibility & Sustainability	**I**
11	**Court Recruitment** To *approve* the appointment of new lay members of Court	**J**
12	**Development & Alumni Annual Report** To *consider* a paper presented by Chris Cox, Vice-Principal Philanthropy & Advancement and Executive Director of Development & Alumni	**K**
13	**Award of University Benefactor** To *approve* bestowal of the status of University Benefactor. Paper presented by Peter Mathieson, Principal	**L**
14	**Equality, Diversity & Inclusion**	
	• **Equality Outcomes 2025-2029 and Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Progress Report 2025**	**M1**
	• **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Data Report 2025** To *consider* papers presented by Fiona McClement, University Lead, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion	**M2**

ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL

15	**Learning and Teaching Strategy** To *note*	**N**

16 Donations & Legacies and Alumni Relations Activity **O**
To *note*

17 Resolutions **P**
To *approve*

18 Any Other Business
To *consider* any other matters

19 Date of Next Meeting
Monday 23 June, 2pm-5pm

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

UNIVERSITY COURT

24 February 2025, John McIntyre Conference Centre, Pollock Halls

Minutes

Members Present:	Janet Legrand, Senior Lay Member Simon Fanshawe, Rector Rushad Abadan, Co-opted Member Frank Armstrong, Co-opted Member Shereen Benjamin, Senatus Assessor Richard Blythe, Senatus Assessor Alastair Dunlop, Chancellor's Assessor Ruth Elliott, Students' Association Vice-President Community Ruth Girardet, Co-opted Member Dora Herndon, Students' Association President Tobias Kelly, Academic Staff Member Peter Mathieson, Principal & Vice-Chancellor Sarah McAllister, Professional Services Staff Member Douglas Millican, Co-opted Member Jock Millican, General Council Assessor Hugh Mitchell, Co-opted Member Kathryn Nash, Trade Union Academic Staff Member David Ovens, General Council Assessor Mark Patrizio, Trade Union Professional Services Staff Member Alistair Smith, Co-opted Member Sarah Wolffe, General Council Assessor
Member Apologies:	Robert Aldridge, City of Edinburgh Council Assessor Kavi Thakrar, Co-opted Member
In Attendance:	Leigh Chalmers, Vice-Principal & University Secretary Gale Macleod, Rector's Assessor Claire Sarafilovic, Governance Apprentice
Presenters & Observers:	Lewis Allan, Senior Governance Advisor to the Vice-Principal & University Secretary David Argyle, Head of College, Medicine & Veterinary Medicine Nirmal Borkhataria, Interim Director of Finance Christina Boswell, Vice-Principal Research & Enterprise Iain Gordon, Head of College, Science & Engineering Colm Harmon, Vice-Principal Students Kim Graham, Provost Catherine Martin, Vice-Principal Corporate Services Gavin McLachlan, Vice-Principal and Chief Information Officer, and Librarian Sarah Prescott, Head of College, Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences Rona Smith, Deputy Secretary, Governance and Strategic Planning Daniel Wedgwood, Head of Court Services (clerk)

Philine Rouwers, President of EU Sports Union (for item 7)
Damien Toner, Director of Estates (for item 8)
James Saville, Director of HR (for item 9)

OPENING ITEMS

Opening and welcome

Simon Fanshawe, Rector, opened the meeting and noted the apologies received. He welcomed David Ovens, the new General Council Assessor, and Claire Sarafilovic, the new Governance Apprentice, to their first meeting of Court.

The Rector noted Court's sadness at the death of Lord Cameron of Lochbroom, a former Chancellor's Assessor, noting that the University had been represented at his funeral and had offered condolences to his family.

The Rector had recently chaired a half-yearly meeting of General Council and had been the after-lunch speaker at this event, speaking on the theme of academic freedom.

Some staff members had contacted the Rector in the context of the Principal's recent all-staff communications relating to finances. They had sought further information on any criteria for future decision-making and ways in which the University would enhance its capacity to manage change.

1 Minutes **Paper A1**

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2024 were approved, subject to agreed corrections to the minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee Report to Court and the Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report.

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

<u>Matters Arising:</u>

Ordinance 217 (General Council Membership & Registration)
Janet Legrand, Senior Lay Member, notified Court that the Privy Council had approved the University's Ordinance regarding the membership and registration rules for the General Council, which Court had approved in February 2024. The Secretary of the General Council was working with University colleagues to formulate an implementation plan, which would be submitted to Court in due course.

<u>Action Log</u>

It was noted that the Action Log had been updated to include some on-going actions relating to implementation of the 2024 externally-facilitated effectiveness review of Court.

It was suggested, and Court agreed, that the Action Log should include communication of the timelines for developing the Responsible Investment Policy, as referenced in the minutes of the previous meeting of Court.

3 Principal's Report **Paper B**

Peter Mathieson, Principal & Vice-Chancellor, invited comments and questions on the report. He noted that the Court seminar session on finances that had preceded this meeting had enabled Court to provide valuable input into relevant work.

Court discussed procedures for handling communications and any enquiries received on the University's financial position.

4 Committee Business

Exception Committee **Paper C1**

Court noted the report.

Policy & Resources Committee **Paper C2**

Court noted the report.

Governance & Nominations Committee **Paper C3**

Court noted the report. It was noted that the process to appoint new co-opted lay members of Court was in progress.

Knowledge Strategy Committee **Paper C4**

Court noted the report.

Senate **Paper C5**

Peter Mathieson, Principal & Vice-Chancellor, introduced the report as Convener of Senate, noting that four sets of Senate minutes had been approved and transmitted to Court. He expressed gratitude to Lisa Dawson, Academic Registrar, and the Senate support team for recent process improvements that had facilitated greater efficiency in this area while continuing to provide for appropriate input from across the membership of Senate.

The Principal and the Senate Assessors noted recent improvements in the degree and style of engagement in Senate meetings and welcomed increased prominence of the student voice within Senate.

It was noted that the Senate Task & Finish Group on the implementation of Senate's effectiveness review was engaged in discussion of the interaction of Senate with its standing committees.

The work of the Senate Budget Working Group, analysing the potential impact of budgetary restraint on learning and teaching, was highlighted and it was proposed that the outcomes of this work should be shared with Court in due course.

KEY ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/DECISION

5 Finance and Planning Update Report — Paper D

Nirmal Borkhataria, Interim Director of Finance, introduced the paper, noting that Court had discussed the University's financial position and financial targets in the preceding Court seminar session and inviting any further comments and questions.

The following points were made in discussion:

- The timescale of 18 months in which to rebalance income and expenditure had been decided upon on the basis that this was an achievable goal, in the context that it was felt to be desirable to complete this process over a reasonably short and self-contained timescale.
- It was observed that setting too narrow a timescale for achieving the required change could negatively affect decision-making and reduce opportunities to ameliorate the impact on staff, but also that too long a process would entail protracted uncertainty, which would itself have negative impacts, including on staff.
- The timescale had not been driven by obligations towards lenders, but it would be important to continue to monitor debt covenant margins. It was agreed that information on covenant margins would be provided to the next meeting of Audit & Risk Committee.
- Further information on the criteria for key decisions would be welcomed both by Court members and by members of the wider community. Removing duplication would be a primary focus for decision-making.
- Protecting and enhancing the University's excellence should be an overarching priority and a key part of the context for decisions regarding cost saving measures and the timescales for achieving these. Stated intentions to protect the quality of the student experience should not be achieved at the expense of the University's research excellence, nor vice versa. Rather, the focus would be on the appropriate scale and means to deliver these.
- While the immediate proposals focused on a particular set of targets and measures, the overall aim should be to develop the capability to adapt in order to maintain efficiency and sustainable success in the longer term, preventing the need for further exercises of this kind in the future.
- It was recognised that opportunities to grow income must be pursued strenuously alongside management of costs, but noted that there was no realistic opportunity for additional income generation of sufficient scale to rebalance the University's finances to the required degree.
- It was noted that large-scale change programmes themselves carry costs and that these would need to be managed and accounted for. Details of relevant financial reporting would be formulated with input from the University's external auditors.

- The University would need to consider carefully its capacity to deliver change at the required scale. Appropriate lessons must be drawn from previous change programmes. It was observed that the University Initiatives Portfolio Board provided a structure for oversight of multiple workstreams at organisation-wide scale. Consideration should also be given to the potential benefits of commissioning external support for planning and implementation of relevant change.
- Consistency would be important to the success of the programme of change, both in communications and in dealing with people across the organisation.

Court noted the proposed framework to return the University to a sustainable financial position, which would be subject to further development.

6 Student intakes 2025-26 – Early application insight **Paper E**

Rona Smith, Deputy Secretary Governance & Strategic Planning, introduced the item, noting that this was in addition to the normal cycle of reporting to Court on student recruitment and provided relevant context for the discussion of University finances and planning.

Recruitment in the previous academic year had been short of targeted levels. although higher than the year before. What had been achieved, in the context of sector-wide reductions in demand, was a significant achievement and reflected substantial efforts on the part of colleagues working in student recruitment. In the current recruitment cycle, colleagues continued to work hard to achieve targets,

7 Students' Association and Sports Union Reports
7.1 Students' Association Report **Paper F1**

Dora Herndon, President of the Students' Association, introduced the report, noting that the election process had begun for the Association's office-bearers for the next academic year, candidate lists having been published. The Association's democracy review was highlighted and welcomed, noting that this one part of reviewing the Association's policies and practices to enhance its relevance and effectiveness. Also highlighted was the contribution of Dylan Walch, Vice President Education, to improving the student voice within Senate.

In discussion, Ruth Elliott, Vice President Community, was invited to comment on student accommodation issues. She noted that many students had reported difficulties securing suitable accommodation and that she had led efforts to coordinate campaigning on this issue across the Students' Associations of Scottish universities.

It was observed that the University had made a major contribution to a significant expansion in available student accommodation over the last decade.

7.2 Sports Union Report **Paper F2**

Philine Rouwers, President of the University Sports Union, joined the meeting and introduced the report. She noted a number of recent achievements of the Sports

Union, including a significant governance and policy review that had resulted in a new draft constitution and code of conduct and improvements to a number of policies. In addition, an independent report on the value of Sport at the University had been published recently. Edinburgh had enjoyed a number of successes in BUCS (British Universities and Colleges Sport) competitions in different sports.

The tender process for University sports kit was discussed. This was nearing completion and it was expected that the preferred supplier would be announced in the near future. The value of University branding on sportswear was noted.

Ahead of the forthcoming elections, the Principal noted the positive contributions made by all of the current Students' Association and Sports Union sabbatical officers.

8 BioQuarter – Scottish Power Energy Network Upgrade — Paper G

Damien Toner, Director of Estates, introduced the paper. He also explained the intended approach to capital projects in the current financial context. Given this context, a comprehensive review of capital projects was planned, with a view to pausing projects where appropriate.

It was agreed that the results of the review process would be shared with Court, following consideration by the University Executive and Estates Committee, in order to ensure appropriate oversight of decision-making regarding prioritisation and resulting expenditure.

It was noted that the BioQuarter SPEN upgrade would enable the University to fulfil understandings reached with partner organisations and would facilitate potential future investments.

Court approved, in principle, the University's contribution to partnership funding for the power upgrade.

9 Annual People Report — Paper L

James Saville, Director of Human Resources, introduced the Annual People Report for 2023/24. Recognising the time elapsed since the period covered by the report, he noted an intention to deliver such reports to the December meeting of Court in future years. As examples of positive developments, it was highlighted that: the triennial valuation of the Staff Benefits Scheme had resulted in reduced staff contribution rates; there had been progress in simplifying the academic promotions process; and there had been a notable reduction in the University's gender pay gap.

Court noted the report.

ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL

10 Edinburgh Innovations Strategy Update and Knowledge Exchange & Innovation Fund — Paper H

Court approved submission of the strategy document to the Scottish Funding Council.

It was clarified that references to increasing the number of innovation-active academic staff did not entail new staff recruitment but rather encouraging and supporting relevant activity among existing staff.

11 Self-Evaluation Action Plan — Paper I

Court noted the University's annual report to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) on activities to effectively manage quality assurance and deliver on enhancement.

References within the document to the student voice and to the Research Postgraduate (PGR) experience were particularly welcomed. It was noted that PGR students were likely to be impacted in a number of ways by the financial context as it affected the University and the wider university sector.

12 Donations & Legacies and Alumni Relations Activity — Paper J

Court noted the report.

13 Resolutions — Paper K

Court approved the following Resolutions:

- No. 1/2025: Alteration of the title of Personal Chair of Politics
- No. 2/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Neuroinflammatory Medicine

14 Any Other Business

There was no other business.

15 Date of Next Meeting

Monday, 28 April 2025

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

B

UNIVERSITY COURT

28 April 2025

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. 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

2. Court is asked to note the information presented: members' observations or comment on any of the items would be welcome.

Background and context

3. The report summarises key issues for the University and the Principal's engagement.

General Discussion

4. Sector finances have remained in the headlines since our last meeting, with the University of Dundee under particular scrutiny. Following intensive evidence sessions to the Scottish Parliament's Education, Children and Young People Committee, the Scottish Funding Council have announced an Investigation into Financial Oversight and Decision-Making led by former Glasgow Caledonian University Principal Pamela Gillies. In addition, the Scottish Government have appointed Sir Alan Langlands as Chair of the University of Dundee Strategic Advisory Taskforce. To date £22m of liquidity funding has been provided to the institution who have a deficit position of £35m.

5. I have continued to stress in all of my interactions, both internal and external, that we must take our agreed course of action in order to avoid reaching a deficit position and to secure a sustainable financial future. The Royal Society of Edinburgh's (RSE) two-day Conference on the Funding of Tertiary Education in Scotland takes place in late May and should be a welcome and timely contribution to the ongoing debate.

6. Our indicative SFC funding for 2025-26 was confirmed in an announcement on 3 April. In aggregate, our uplifts and reductions result in a net positive year-on-year movement in total SFC funding for 2025-26 (+£4.8M, +2.8%); comparing favourably to sector uplift of 2.3%. As noted by Universities Scotland, the sector outcome is a real terms cut of 0.95%.

7. Our teaching grant allocations are increased by £0.6M (0.9%) and research and innovation grants by £4.2M (4%). The teaching grant allocation reflects the effects of both upside and downside movements, with upside arising from an increase in the unit of resource per funded place of 3.3%, countered by removal of funding associated with the removal of 204.5 funded places and c.£0.9M funding for RUK students through the expensive subjects allocation. The reduction in funded places was anticipated in our planning assumptions and was factored into intakes target-setting. Final allocations are

expected to be confirmed in May; these will include some movement in the teaching grant, relating mainly to funded places for controlled subjects.

8. In a very competitive student recruitment context, I'm encouraged that we continue to be in high demand overall, having now received almost 70,000 Undergraduate and over 85,000 Postgraduate applications to study with us in 2025-26, with the PG figure expected to increase further. Admissions colleagues are responding positively, with offer-making rates ahead of previous cycles and our attention starting to move to applicant acceptances. There remains a high level of uncertainty around outcomes for this recruitment cycle and we will continue to closely monitor the data and support applicants with their decision-making, keeping Court updated.

9. A short update was provided regarding recruitment to the role of Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and other senior roles.

Paragraph 10: closed section

11. Related events:
- Was a guest of HM The King at Windsor Castle.
- Participated in one of the regular online UUK discussions on current issues affecting the sector.
- Gave a keynote speech at the Rosalind Franklin Institute Innovation Forum 2025 on the theme of People, Places and Incentivisation
- Participated as Board member in a Scottish Funding Council Board meeting.
- Welcomed and led a Q&A with the Russell Group Directors of Planning during their visit to the University.
- Joined a Universities Scotland meeting of Principals.
- Welcomed our Chancellor, HRH The Princess Royal for the official opening of the Edinburgh Futures Institute.
- Participated in the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine's Anatomy Memorial Service in McEwan Hall.
- Delighted to welcome, and spend time with, members of the Carlyle Circle, and some of the students and staff that legacy donations have helped and supported.
- Pleased to attend some of the Science Festival events including 'The Genetic Book of the Dead with Professor Richard Dawkins' and City of Edinburgh Council's Edinburgh Medal Ceremony, awarded to Prof. Johan Rockstrom.
- Welcomed attendees of the Distinguished Lecture by Professor Geoffrey Hinton on Boltzmann Machines.

Strategy 2030 Themes
Our People

12. The Staff Survey 2025 closed on the 3 March 2025. We had a 42% (+6% compared to 2023) response rate, with 7,432 staff responding. Results indicate that a majority of people enjoy their roles, are satisfied with their work environment, and are treated with fairness and respect. Our Court-reported internal engagement KPI has increased to 58% (+4%). There are worrying scores around senior leadership and change management, and unfortunately only 24% of staff believe that action will be taken based on this survey, a point which we need to convincingly address.

13. All staff will receive access to the survey results before the end of April, and the Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) has been published.

The three highest scoring themes are:
- Your role at the university (76%)
- Your working environment (76%)
- Inclusion (76%)

The three lowest scoring themes are
- Belief in action (29%)
- Change management (25%)
- Leadership (39%)

14. University Executive has agreed three areas of focus: leadership and change; employee voice; and recognising good performance/addressing poor performance. The challenging next 18 months present an opportunity for us to demonstrate that we are committed to hearing and addressing staff concerns and building on the university's recognised strengths. Staff Experience Committee will oversee our response.

15. The outcome of the Voluntary Severance scheme is now known, with further detail for Court noted in the (closed) Finance & Planning Update paper. Court may remember that the initial four-week window for the scheme was extended by a further two, as additional information about our financial position was finalised and communicated to staff. The final position helps to deliver savings that make a contribution toward the overall cost saving targets but also underlines the need for the significant programme of change and improved efficiency that we are undertaking. The colleagues who have had their applications approved will receive formal confirmation at the end of April, with the majority leaving at the end of July 2025.

16. Early March saw the first of three in-person Leaders' Forum meetings planned for 2025. The Forum is formed of c.160 University leaders and has a revised remit giving greater focus to delivery of the University's mission and to act as a bridge between developing and delivering University strategy. Around 130 people participated in the meeting in March concentrating on the financial challenges and associated actions including an overview of the workstreams plus table discussions looking at how we can work differently and the challenges to that. The in-person meetings are augmented with a monthly online leaders update call. For the wider staff body, the SharePoint site continues to be a depositary for all of the financial information and FAQs related to the cost savings. Kim and I recently sent out a video message with the latest available information and we are committed to continuing to engage with staff regularly as we move through the next period.

17. We received formal notification of a ballot for strike and action short of strike (ASOS) from UCU commencing on 7 April. UCU's ASOS include a range of actions from a marking and assessment boycott and refusal to do any processes associated with the cost saving programme. The ballot closes on 20th May.

18. Unison opened a consultative ballot for three weeks from 7 April to consult members on whether to open a formal ballot for industrial action. Both ballots are due to our refusal to rule out compulsory redundancies in relation to cost savings (which we have not done because it would be dishonest to do so at this stage).

19. Related events:
- Chaired the appointment panel for the Director for the Institute for Neuroscience and Cardiovascular Research.

- Chaired the CFO recruitment.
- Participated in a meeting of the Leaders Forum.
- Participated in a meeting about safety on campus with EUSA.

Learning, Teaching and Students

20. Court will note that a detailed update on Student Experience initiatives and progress is included as a full agenda item covering activity and progress on: Assessment and Feedback, Portfolio Review, Curriculum Transformation and Teaching Timetabling and Course Selection.

21. In addition, I would like to draw attention to the recent round of EUSA facilitated initiatives aimed at building student engagement with the University leadership. This is a new approach, led by the EUSA President, and includes:

- A Student Elected Representatives and Senior Leadership Roundtable which took place on Monday 24 March. I was joined by Catherine Martin, Lucy Evans, Colm Harmon and Gavin McLachlan. Discussions were wide-ranging across University finances, fees and funding, the postgraduate research student experience, the experience of minority student groups, the student voice, internationalisation and facilities issues.
- University Executive Student Pop-ups. We have had two of these events with Dora and Lucy present for informal Q&A in the Main Library and Nucleus, with a time slot promoted to students to encourage the conversation.
- Coffee and social event, for students to meet with University staff, from key areas such as Exceptional Circumstances, funding support, accommodation, Res Life, wellbeing. David Argyle, Lucy Evans and Iain Gordon attended an event in the Potterrow Community Lounge and this provided a good chance to chat with students and answer their questions in an informal setting.

22. We hope to continue this approach next year with regular similar events.

23. Court may be aware of a serious incident on campus on Friday 28 March when one of our students, taking part in a demonstration outside the Main Library, was physically assaulted with a knife by a member of the public. The School that the student belongs to are leading on offering full support after what is undoubtedly a very shocking incident. We are assisting Police Scotland with their investigation of the incident.

24. Over the course of the academic year our Security Teams support many events, including protests, which take place across the campus in addition to their routine duties. In our experience events are always safer when there is strong co-operation between Security and demonstration organisers and we will continue to promote that approach. There are undoubtedly lessons that can be learned from this distressing incident and we will ensure a full investigation takes place.

25. The key student surveys have launched for 2025: the National Student Survey (NSS), Postgraduate Research Students Survey (PRES) and Postgraduate Taught Students Survey (PTES). At the time of writing response rates are: NSS, 54.3% which is down on the rate at this time last year 56.73%; PRES 11.8% which is slightly lower than the rate at this time of the last survey in 2023 12.9%; PTES 6.16% which is also lower than last year 10.13%. We continue to promote the surveys in all relevant channels.

26. Hack The Burgh took place in March, the largest hackathon in Scotland and hosted by the University. Registry Services, the Students' Association, Information Services and various Schools presented a challenge to students who participated from universities across Scotland. It was a great success with five teams choosing our challenge (40 of the 170 students who participated). Each team chose 'course choice' as the primary area of their digital experience where they wanted to see improvement. All solutions focused on being able to view, compare and choose courses that are available for enrolment. The winning team "404: team name not found" have been offered internships from April to July (supported through the AI task force) and will be joining colleagues in Registry Services. This aligns with both our aspirations to improve course enrolment and the University's Teaching Timetabling and Course Selection project.

27. Related events:
- Regular monthly meetings with our Students' Association Sabbatical Team.
- Monthly one-to-one meetings with the Students' Association President.
- Taught an MSc Clinical Education tutorial on the theme of leadership.
- Participated in the Students' Association 2025 Student Awards.
- Participated in a Representative Roundtable organised by the Students' Association.

Research and Innovation

28. The University's expertise in AI was showcased at events over two days in London in mid-March aimed at leveraging the University's leadership in AI to engage key UK based stakeholders, including government policymakers, industry leaders, funders, investors, and the media. There was good positive energy at the three key sessions which were an MP focused lunch hosted by Josh MacAlister OBE MP, an alumni evening reception at the British Academy and an evening reception for civil servants, industry and policymakers at Dover House on the theme of Harnessing Data, Digital and AI for public good.

29. Thirteen colleagues from the University of Edinburgh were elected as Fellows of the Royal Society of Edinburgh in March, my personal congratulations to them all including our very own Professor Kim Graham.

30. Dr Joschka Roffe, Senior Researcher in the Quantum Software Lab, was one of only 11 emerging UK researcher leaders to be awarded a prestigious UKRI EPSRC Quantum Technology Career Acceleration Fellowship.

31. Other major award news includes:
- £1M has been awarded by Advanced Research and Invention Agency (ARIA) to investigate and forecast climate tipping points, led by Professor Víctor Elvira in the School of Mathematics, plus an anticipated award from the Synthetic Plants programme, yet to be announced. These build on the £444K award for Professor Martyn Pickersgill in the Centre for Population Health Sciences from the Precision Neurotechnologies for the Human Therapeutics theme.
- Almost £4.5M from Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) to support the Longitudinal Studies Centre Scotland (LSCS) for another five years, led by Prof Chris Dibben in Geosciences.

32. Related events:

- I gave an online keynote presentation on UK research security at the Academic Security and Counter Exploitation Conference hosted in Texas, USA.
- Participated in a League of European Research Universities – CE7 Rectors' meeting hosted by the University of Tartu.
- Participated online in a Universitas21 Executive Committee meeting.
- Alongside the U.S. Consul General Edinburgh, Kathryn Porter, met with Dr Glenn Tiffert, Research Fellow at the Hoover Institution and Historian of Modern China, during his visit to the University to engage with key colleagues on topics concerning research security, the ethics of global research collaborations, and policy-making in relation to China and artificial intelligence. I then provided the opening remarks at his public lecture on the topic of, "China's Role in Artificial Intelligence, Emerging Technology, and New Energy".
- Hosted a lunch and tour of Edinburgh Futures Institute (EFI) for colleagues from the Leverhulme Trust during their day-long institutional visit which was led by Vice-Principal Christina Boswell for the University.
- Welcomed John-Arne Røttingen, Chief Executive Officer of Wellcome, to the Usher Building during his visit to meet College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine academic leads and discuss the growth of the Edinburgh BioQuarter.
- Welcomed HRH Duchess of Edinburgh, Patron of Race Against Dementia and the Rt Hon Lord Lieutenant of the City of Edinburgh, Cllr Robert Aldridge, on a visit to Race Against Dementia at Edinburgh Neuroscience.
- Participated in a Universities Scotland organised GIFT City (India) roundtable with Scottish Universities at the National Robotarium.
- Provided the opening remarks at the Universities UKi conference on research security.
- Participated in the European Network Conference on Research Security, hosted by Delft University of Technology at the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Social and Civic Responsibility

33. The university takes part in a range of activity that supports people living in Edinburgh, the region and beyond.

34. We were delighted to welcome the Chancellor back to the University to formally open the Edinburgh Futures Institute in April. The event offered an opportunity to reflect on the huge efforts that led to the beautiful restoration of the old Royal Infirmary Building, but also to celebrate the fantastic work already ongoing in the Institute. We were also pleased to be joined by the many partners already involved, and by representatives of the UK and Scottish Governments who supported the project through the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal.

35. One such project that exemplifies the innovative and collaborative approach of EFI is the Scottish Prevention Hub, a national partnership between Public Health Scotland, Police Scotland, and Edinburgh Futures Institute that aims to take a whole-system public health approach focused on primary prevention to support the reduction of health and wellbeing inequalities in Scotland. I was pleased to separately host the Chief Constable of Police Scotland in her visit to the Hub in March at its home in EFI.

36. Our Forest & Peatlands Programme is progressing well, planning for the woodland creation at Barvick Burn is now at an advanced stage and on target for work to commence in autumn 2025. Conclusion of final woodland creation and peatland partnership agreements are underway. This programme enables us to link our research with our efforts toward our climate targets in a way that supports communities to enjoy nature in the three sites. Work is taking place with our project partners to actively investigate opportunities to embed Learning, Teaching and Research as part of the activity.

37. We have launched Circular Economy Literacy training to add to our complement of Carbon Literacy and Biodiversity literacy training. We are the only University in the UK to offer this breadth of training to all staff and students, training over 5000 staff and students last year. Dedicated sustainability training for Research support staff will be launched shortly in relation to the delivery of the UKRI concordat, linked to increasingly stringent standards on achieving Net Zero by some research funders.

38. Related events local and global:

- Vice-Principal Dr. Catherine Martin and I participated in a meeting with Mary Macleod, Chief Executive of Business in the Community and Charles O'Neill, Chief Financial Officer to discuss areas of mutual interest.
- Participated in the Open University Council Dinner as a representative of the Scottish Funding Council Board.
- Participated in meetings of the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal Joint Committee.
- Welcomed attendees to the University's Regional Innovation Action Plan launch, including Cllr Jane Meagher, Leader of the Edinburgh Council; Sue Webber MSP, Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Transport; Cllr David Ross, Leader of the Fife Council; Cllr Euan Robson, Scottish Borders Council; Cllr Susan Manion, Depute Leader of the West Lothian Council.
- Provided the Vote of Thanks at the Fennell Lecture 2025, given by Professor Eve Troutt Powell on, 'Slaves in Pictures: The visual business of the trade in France, Egypt, Haiti and the Ottoman Empire'.
- Welcomed attendees of the lecture at EFI given by Dr Kathryn Sullivan, former NASA astronaut, which was part of a wider visit to Scotland.
- Welcomed His Excellency Mr Luis Ignacio Vayas Valdivieso, Ambassador of Ecuador during his visit to the University at which he participated in a Roundtable discussion Plastic Pollution with some of our researchers.
- Welcomed Ambassador Svetlozar Panov, Head of the Bulgarian Consulate, covering Scotland, Northern Ireland and Northern England, at an introductory meeting.
- Welcomed Mrs Demet Kayaoglu, Acting Consul General of the Republic of Turkiye and the newly appointed Attaché for Educational Affairs, Mr. Ahmet Onur Ak at an introductory meeting.
- Participated in an online Tsinghua Medicine Advisory Council Meeting.
- Participated in the first Annual India-Scotland Business Meet, hosted by the First Minister of Scotland at Bute House.
- Welcomed the Chief Constable of Police Scotland, Jo Farrell, and colleagues during their visit to the Scottish Prevention Hub at EFI.

- Filmed an interview with Douglas Fraser, BBC Scotland Business and Economy Editor about the University's and the wider higher education sector's finances.
- Participated in a series of U7+ meetings over two days, hosted by the University of Ottawa. Whilst there, I also met with British High Commissioner to Canada, Rob Tinline.
- Welcomed a delegation from Hong Kong Polytechnic University, visiting the University to discuss possible collaborations.

Resource implications

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

Risk Management

40. 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

41. 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

42. No specific Equality and Diversity issues are identified.

Next steps/implications

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

Consultation

44. As the content is a summary of recent news/activity no consultation is required.

Further information

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

46. *Author & Presenter*
    Professor Sir Peter Mathieson
    Principal and Vice-Chancellor
    April 2025

Freedom of Information

47. Open paper.

THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

C1

UNIVERSITY COURT

28 April 2025

Exception Committee Report

Committee Name

1. Exception Committee

Date of Meetings

2. The Committee considered business by correspondence over 3-7 April 2025.

Action Required

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

Key points

Paragraphs 4-5: closed section

Further information

6. *Author*
Daniel Wedgwood
Head of Court Services

Presenter
Janet Legrand
Convener, Exception Committee

Freedom of Information

7. Open version

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

C2

UNIVERSITY COURT

28 April 2025

Policy & Resources Committee Report

Committee Name

1. Policy & Resources Committee (PRC)

Date of Meeting

2. 31 March 2025

Action Required

3. To note the key points from the meeting.

The minutes of the PRC meeting on 31 March 2025 can be accessed at: https://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/GaSP/Governance/PolicyandResources/2024-2025/20250331-PRC-Minute-Web.pdf

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

C3

UNIVERSITY COURT

28 April 2025

Audit and Risk Committee Report

Committee Name
1. Audit & Risk Committee.

Date of Meeting
2. 3 April 2025.

Paragraphs 3-24: closed section

Action Required
Equality & Diversity
25. There are no specific equality and diversity issues associated with this report.

Further information

26. *Author*
Kirstie Graham
Deputy Head of Court Services

Presenter
Douglas Millican
Convener of the Audit & Risk Committee

Freedom of Information
27. Open version

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

C4

UNIVERSITY COURT

28 April 2025

Knowledge Strategy Committee Report

Committee Name

1. Knowledge Strategy Committee

Date of Meeting

2. 27 March 2025

Action Required

3. To note the key points from the meeting.

Key points

Paragraphs 4-17: closed section

Further information

18. *Author*
Jamie Tait
Governance Manager & Clerk to KSC

Presenter
Colm Harmon
Vice-Principal Students & Interim Convener to KSC

Freedom of Information

19. Open version

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

C5

UNIVERSITY COURT

28 April 2025

Senatus Academicus Report

Committee Name
1. Senatus Academicus ('Senate').

Dates of Meeting
2. This report relates to the Special Meeting of Senate held on 26 March 2025.

Action requested
3. Court is invited to:
- Note the report of business considered by Senate at the Special Meeting held on 26 March 2025;
- Note this meeting was arranged following receipt of a requisition, made under Senate Standing Order 2, and signed by twelve Senate members; and
- Note the full agenda, papers and minutes of Senate meetings are published on the Senate website.

Key points – meeting of 26 March 2025
Academic Impacts of The University's Financial Resilience Strategy
4. Senate received a paper which articulated concerns about the scale, timeline, nature and communication of the University's current and proposed financial resilience strategy. By majority vote, Senate approved nine motions as specified within paper S 24/25 4A. Further detail is included in appendix one.

5. The Convener acknowledged the concerns raised by the paper authors, and by the signatories to the open letters (included in the appendix to the paper), and confirmed the outcome of these votes would be communicated to the University Court.

6. The Convener confirmed that, from a governance perspective, Senate cannot compel the University Court to take or not take specific action, but will be made aware of any statements communicated to it by Senate. Noting the content of the motions, the Convener assured Senate that the University Court holds the University Executive to account, including on any cost saving plans developed and implemented to ensure the continued financial sustainability of the University.

Portfolio Review and Diversity of Educational Provision
7. Senate received a paper which articulated concerns about the approach taken to date on Portfolio Review, and the potential impact of such an approach. By majority vote, Senate approved five motions as specified within paper S 24/25 4B. Further detail is included in appendix two.

8. The Convener acknowledged the concerns raised by the paper authors, and confirmed the paper, and motions, would be shared with the Student Experience Delivery and Monitoring Board (SEDaMOB), which oversees Portfolio Review. Feedback on the paper will be provided to Senate in May.

Full Agenda and Papers

9. Senate Agenda, Papers, and Minutes website.

Further information

10. *Author*
Fraser Rudge
Committees and Governance Manager

Academic Quality and Standards
April 2025

Presenter
Peter Mathieson
Principal & Vice-Chancellor

Freedom of Information

11. Open paper.

Appendix One – Record of Voting for Paper S 24/25 4A: Academic Impacts of The University's Financial Resilience Strategy

Motions from Paper S 24/25 4A	Approve	Not Approve	Abstain
A. Senate is asked to approve the following as statements of Senate's collective view:			
A.1 Measures currently being taken, and proposed, to implement rapid, large-scale cuts to the University's expenditure are harmfully impacting research, teaching and the student experience, as well as staff morale and wellbeing. There is a significant risk that these measures will further harm research, teaching and the student experience in years to come. In addition, these measures risk damaging the University's future potential for income generation, including via student recruitment, staff capacity for research income generation and innovation, and external partnerships.	98	13	5
A.2 Plans for change which impact the delivery of the University's core academic mission of teaching and research should include meaningful consultation with academic and professional services staff and should include scrutiny and approval by Senate.	108	10	4
A.3 The Executive should make significant and rapid improvements to its approach to communication, consultation and engagement regarding the University's financial situation to limit further harm to internal morale and external reputation (see appendix C under 'Communication').	111	5	4
A.4 As a matter of urgency, the Executive should provide to all staff a clear demonstration that savings of the scale and pace indicated (£140 million over 18 months) are indeed the best way to ensure the University's financial resilience whilst also preserving its academic mission, or reconsider this scale and pace.	110	6	3

Motions from Paper S 24/25 4A	Approve	Not Approve	Abstain
B. Senate is asked to approve the following statement to be communicated to the University Court:			
B.1 Senate considers the scale and timetable of the Executive's currently proposed changes to be incompatible with maintaining the University's academic mission, reputation and the quality of education it provides.	90	18	10
B.2 Senate requests Court to require that the Executive provides a clear and credible account of how and why the University reached the point where large-scale, urgent and damaging cuts were unexpectedly announced, following large commitments to estates, facilities, and staff payroll expenditure that were premised on the University's sound financial position.	101	12	5
B.3 Senate requests Court to require the Executive to present a thorough analysis of the costs and benefits of its current and proposed actions, including course and programme closures, cuts to operating budgets where these impact student experience and staff capacity to undertake research and teaching, and potential staff redundancies.	104	10	7
B.4 Senate requests Court to require the Executive to develop a plan that will enable proper academic scrutiny, via Senate, College and School bodies, of any changes which are necessary to secure budget sustainability.	100	13	7

Motions from Paper S 24/25 4A	**Approve**	**Not Approve**	**Abstain**
C.1 That Senate will hold a vote at its meeting in May to evaluate the confidence of the University academic community, as represented by Senate, in the Executive's leadership, and that providing the analyses in points B.2-B.4 above is likely to be necessary to secure this confidence.	89	20	11

Appendix Two – Record of Voting for Paper S 24/25 4B: Portfolio Review and Diversity of Educational Provision

Motions from Paper S 24/25 4B	Approve	Not Approve	Abstain
D.1 The process of Portfolio Review must be developed to include both an assessment of the real financial costs of delivering courses and programmes and a holistic view of their wider costs and benefits (including in relation to student experience, specialist academic provision, student choice, widening participation and equalities).	99	13	4
D.2 When assessing enrolments of programmes that have both part-time and full-time routes, the combined FTE for both routes must be assessed, rather than the part-time route considered as a unique degree.	94	9	8
D.3 The status of any part-time degree that has been paused or closed due to the Portfolio Review must be reconsidered in view of the comprehensive and holistic criteria to be developed.	82	23	14
D.4 Schools must be encouraged to maintain and enhance access to their Programmes for students who wish to study part time.	91	15	14
D.5 The costs and benefits of joint and specialist degree programmes must be considered holistically, in light of other programmes with which they share provision.	106	10	3

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

C6

UNIVERSITY COURT

28 February 2025

Senate Motions on the University's Financial Resilience Strategy

Description of paper

1. This paper has been provided by the Senate Assessors to Court in order to give additional context on motions passed at a Special Meeting of Senate on 26 March 2025 expressing Senate's collective position on the approach announced by the University Executive to securing the long-term future of the University. It further seeks discussion of specific requests made of Court that featured in some of the approved motions.

2. This paper should be read in conjunction with the Senate Report to Court, Paper C5, which contains the relevant motions as passed by Senate.

Action requested/Recommendation

3. We, the Senate Assessors to Court, request the following of Court, in line with paragraph 6 of the Senate Report, Paper C5:

4. To note the collective view asserted by Senate at its meeting on 26 March 2025 of the measures currently being taken by the University Executive in relation to the academic mission of the university.

5. To discuss requests of Court made by Senate, set out in paragraph 11 below, the purpose of which is to improve governance and establish and maintain confidence in the approach being taken.

6. To agree actions that Court will take in response to these requests, and communicate these back to Senate.

Background and context

7. The motions and this paper should be read in the context of recent external reviews that recommended improving communication between Senate and Court.

8. Following the meeting of Court on 25 February 2025, the Principal issued a statement entitled "Securing the long-term future of our University" outlining large-scale financial and organisational changes over an eighteen-month period.

9. The proposed scale, direction and timetable of change is a topic of widespread concern across the University community.

10. This concern was formalised through the requisition of a Special Meeting of Senate, held on 26 March 2025. The basis for such a meeting derives from Senate's statutory role, defined by the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016, as "responsible for the overall planning, co-ordination, development and supervision of the academic work of the institution". Senate is made up of up to 80 ex-officio members (including Heads of Schools, Heads of College, Vice-Principals, Assistant Principals), 200 elected academic staff members and 33 elected student members.

11. Paper C5 specifies the text of the motions passed at the Special Meeting and outcomes of the votes taken. All motions were carried by a strong majority.

12. The first set of motions (A1-A4) express a lack of confidence in the direction of travel and note severe risks to student experience, teaching, research and the potential for future income generation.

13. Motions B1-B4 make specific requests of Court and read as follows:

> B1. Senate considers the scale and timetable of the Executive's currently proposed changes to be incompatible with maintaining the University's academic mission, reputation and the quality of education it provides.
>
> B2. Senate requests Court to require that the Executive provides a clear and credible account of how and why the University reached the point where large-scale, urgent and damaging cuts were unexpectedly announced, following large commitments to estates, facilities, and staff payroll expenditure that were premised on the University's sound financial position.
>
> B3. Senate requests Court to require the Executive to present a thorough analysis of the costs and benefits of its current and proposed actions, including course and programme closures, cuts to operating budgets where these impact student experience and staff capacity to undertake research and teaching, and potential staff redundancies.
>
> B4. Senate requests Court to require the Executive to develop a plan that will enable proper academic scrutiny, via Senate, College and School bodies, of any changes which are necessary to secure budget sustainability.

14. In motion C1, Senate expresses the opinion that the information requested through B2-B4 above is likely to be essential for the University community to hold confidence in the University Executive, and notifies Court of its intention to test this confidence at the meeting of Senate on 20 May 2025.

15. Further information, including a summary of comments from the University community, is publicly available in the full meeting papers on the Senate web pages.

Discussion

16. Senate's position is to be understood within its statutory role stated in paragraph 8 above. The core of this position is upholding the quality of the University's academic mission to the greatest extent possible under challenging financial circumstances.

17. Senate understands that, as charity trustees, members of Court have a range of legal obligations, including:

a. You must seek in good faith to ensure the charity operates in a manner consistent with its purposes.

b. You have to protect your charity including its beneficiaries, assets and reputation. This means understanding and assessing potential risks to make sure decisions are as robust as possible.
c. You must make sure that the charity has enough money to pay staff and other costs.
d. You must make sure that any staff are treated properly and fairly.

18. The University's charitable purposes are "the advancement of education" and "any other purpose that may reasonably be regarded as analogous to any of the preceding purposes". Court received advice at its 3 October 2024 meeting on the legal interpretation of these purposes.

19. Senate's requests of Court appear to be compatible with the above obligations on trustees. We believe that Senate's opinion on the required level of analysis required to support good governance is likely to be consistent with that held by the wider public and any external bodies that have the authority to scrutinise the University's administration.

Resource implications
20. We assume that much, if not all, of the analysis described under paragraph 11 already exists at the requested level of detail, as part of the process of informing management plans. This however goes beyond what is currently published on the University's Finance SharePoint and effort may be needed to rework the analysis into a form that is suitable for wider circulation.

Risk Management
21. Senate's motions clearly articulate the potential risks to the quality of the University's academic mission and therewith its charitable purpose, as well as its long-term capacity for income generation. These risks need to be balanced against the present financial threats. It is in principle possible that Court's governance could be the subject of public, legal and parliamentary scrutiny.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals
22. Not applicable.

Equality & Diversity
23. Not applicable.

Next steps/implications
24. In line with paragraphs 5 and 6, above, we request that Senate be informed of the outcome of Court's deliberations in response to the motions carried at the meeting of 26 March 2025.

Consultation
25. The content of this paper follows from discussions at Senate, as described above.

Further information

26. *Authors & Presenters*
    Dr Shereen Benjamin
    Professor Richard Blythe

    Senate Assessors to Court

    April 2025

Freedom of Information

27. Open paper

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

D

UNIVERSITY COURT

28 April 2025

Student Experience Update

Description of paper

1. This paper provides University Court with an overview of activities related to improving the student experience.

Action requested/Recommendation

2. We ask Court members to note the update and provide comment on the activities underway.

Background and context

3. Improving our student experience is a core priority for the University, directly referenced in the University Strategy 2030: "*Our teaching will match the excellence of our research. We will improve and sustain student satisfaction and wellbeing."* Our research excellence, as demonstrated in the results of the last REF, places us firmly in the top tier for research in our community of UK dual-intensive institutions. We have made the commitment to match this excellence in our teaching and student experience.

4. As Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) we measure progress in responding to this priority by student feedback in the National Student Survey (NSS), Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) and Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES).

5. A wide range of activities is underway to respond to the current position with regard to the satisfaction of our students, which does not meet our strategic ambitions.

Discussion

6. The University has a wide landscape of student experience activities. To better capture the main projects and improvement work we have introduced clearer, joined-up governance and reporting mechanisms. This report continues the format presented to University Court in December 2024. We have summarised the portfolio of work across student experience, with the focus on major projects approved by the University Initiatives Portfolio Board (UIPB), the Student Experience Delivery & Monitoring Oversight Board (SEDaMOB) and University Executive.

7. The majority of our work will be extended and incorporated as part of the University's programme of "Reimagining our size, shape and ways of working to secure the long-term future of our University". One of five workstreams, Learning and Teaching, will consider necessary changes to our curriculum, teaching, assessment, feedback, and student services support. It aims to ensure consistency of practice, processes, and data collection across the university, helping us take more agile decisions and provide a consistent and improved experience for our students. We will continue ongoing work to refine our current programme and course portfolio,

which remains considerably larger than other comparable universities, contributing to poorer student experience and high staff workloads.

8. The various projects and activities overseen by this workstream are presented in our report to University Court. The work, time and investment in these activities will be prioritised in line with the University objectives of realising our strategic ambitions, to deliver our KPIs (outlined above) and to deliver changes to our size, shape, and ways of working, restoring the university to a more sustainable financial footing and ensuring that we remain a leading global institution.

Risk Management

9. Failure to address student experience is our highest rated risk on the University Risk Register. This would mean we have not met our strategic ambitions as set out in Strategy 2030, nor fulfilled the related QAA recommendation. It carries reputational risk and continues to affect the University's standing in national league tables. This has risk is further heightened based on the financial challenges impacting the UK higher education sector.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

10. 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

11. Relevant Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) have been and will be completed as plans are developed. The work undertaken will support greater equality, diversity and inclusion for students within our community.

Next steps/implications

12. We will continue to take forward our initiatives as outlined in the report.

Further information

13. <u>*Authors*</u>
Colm Harmon, Vice Principal Students
Lucy Evans, Deputy Secretary Students

<u>*Presenter*</u>
Colm Harmon, Vice Principal Students

Freedom of Information

14. Open.

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

E1

UNIVERSITY COURT

28 April 2025

Finance and Planning Update Report

Description of paper

1. This paper presents an update to University Court in relation to the:
   - 2025-2030 Planning Round;
   - University Group Quarter Two forecast for 2024-25; and
   - University's management accounts for the month of February 2025.

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 3-24: closed section

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

25. The Interim 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. Our ability to invest in this strategic priority remains fragile until such time that we are generating a sufficient annual operating surplus to fund the required levels of investment. The same can be said for all of our cross-cutting strategies.

Equality & Diversity

26. The University's ability to deliver on the ambitions of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy, and indeed all cross-cutting strategies, is dependent upon our capacity to fund it at sufficient levels. The programmes of work discussed in this paper aimed at improving the University's financial sustainability will support our ability to invest in our strategic priorities. Equality impact assessments will continue to be carried out as we develop and implement change activities across the University, as evidenced through the Voluntary Severance scheme.

Paragraph 27: closed section

Consultation

27. This paper has been reviewed by Nirmal Borkhataria, Interim Director of Finance.

Further information

28. <u>*Author*</u>
Rona Smith
Deputy Secretary, Governance & Strategic Planning
Ricky O'Kane
Head of Group Finance
18 April 2025

<u>*Presenter*</u>
Nirmal Borkhataria
Interim Director of Finance

Kim Graham, Provost

Freedom of Information

29. Open version.

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

E2

UNIVERSITY COURT

28 April 2025

2026-27 tuition fee structures

Description of paper

1. Any strategic changes to fee structures should be approved by University Court, according to the Schedule of Delegated Authority. Routine changes, and annual uplifts to unregulated fees, are agreed through University Executive. Structural changes to fees for 2026-27, requiring Court approval, are proposed via this paper.

Paragraphs 2-15: closed section

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

16. These proposals contribute to SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all and SDG 8: Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all.

17. Ensuring that there is clear information on the financial costs of embarking on a programme of study is an important part of allowing students to take part in lifelong learning at the University.

18. Student travel is a significant contributor to carbon emissions. By providing routes for study that do not require students to travel this potentially mitigates against carbon emissions.

19. Given the costs of decarbonising our estate and wider business, minimising the risk to the income from student fees, as a key unrestricted income source, will be critical to wider climate strategy aims.

20. In themselves, the changes proposed have no direct climate impact. However, if our policies lead to active recruitment of students from more geographically diverse parts of the UK or the world, the travel implications of the individuals could differ, bringing positive or negative impact in terms of associated emissions.

Paragraphs 21-25: closed section

Consultation

26. Extensive consultation has taken place across the University, including with Policy and Resources Committee, University Executive, Student Recruitment and Fee Strategy Group (which includes student representation), College Registrars, College Heads of Finance, Registry; and specifically in relation to PhD fees, with Edinburgh Research Office, the Doctoral College, Directors of large Doctoral Training Programmes, and external peer institutions.

Further information

27. *Author*
    Pauline Manchester
    Deputy Director, Planning and Policy

    10 April 2025

    Presenter
    Rona Smith
    Deputy Secretary, Governance & Strategic Planning

Freedom of Information

28. Open version

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

E3

UNIVERSITY COURT

28 April 2025

Performance measures to support Strategy 2030: 2024-25 mid-year report

Description of paper

1. This paper provides Court with an update on performance for our Strategy 2030 KPIs, providing a 2024-25 mid-year position on our agreed measures showing data on the direction of travel, alongside historical and benchmarking data, where available. The attached annexes present the whole suite of Strategic Performance Framework Court measures, developed in consultation with colleagues from across the University.

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

Paragraphs 3-22: closed section

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

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

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

Equality & Diversity

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

Paragraphs 26-30: closed section

Further information

26. <u>*Author*</u>
Jennifer McGregor
Senior Strategic Planner
Governance and Strategic Planning

<u>*Presenter*</u>
Rona Smith
Deputy Secretary of Governance and Strategic Planning

April 2025

Freedom of Information

27. Open version

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

F1

UNIVERSITY COURT

28 April 2025

Capital Plan Category C Uncommitted Projects

Paragraphs 1-21: closed section

Consultation

22. The risk assessment has been discussed within the Estates department. The paper was discussed, and the proposals supported, by Estates Committee on 12 March 2025 and PRC on 31 March 2025.

Further information

23. *Authors*
Anna Stamp
Head of Strategic Planning & Innovation, Estates Development

Presenter
Catherine Martin
Vice-Principal Corporate Services

Freedom of Information

24. Open version

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

F2

UNIVERSITY COURT

28 April 2025

Small Works Programme and Statutory Compliance Budget Allocation

Description of paper

1. This paper sets out the initial proposal for funding for the 2025/26 Small Works Programme and Statutory Compliance (SWPSC) programme. It seeks approval of funding to proceed.

2. The proposals in this paper will contribute to the following outcome set out in Strategy 2030:
   - Our estate will be fit for purpose, sustainable and accessible. We will support learning, research and collaboration with our neighbours, businesses and partners.

Paragraphs 3-22: closed section

Further information

23. *Author*
    Steven Goodall
    Interim Head of Small Projects and Minor Works

    Jane Johnston
    Director of Estates Development

    Tommy Angus
    Director of Estates Operations

    Presenter
    Catherine Martin
    Vice-Principal
    Corporate Services

Freedom of Information

24. Open version

UNIVERSITY COURT

28 April 2025

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, and outlines the organisation's financial and strategic developments. It is a regular standing item on the Court agenda.

Discussion

Introduction

5. It has been a busy two months since February! As we're coming to the end of our terms, we're focused on wrapping up our objectives and preparing to hand over to the incoming officers. This will be Ruth and I's final Court meeting, but only our penultimate report, so expect a summary of the year in June.

6. This time of year is always filled with celebration – with events like the election results night, Student Awards, and Teaching awards – and equal parts stress due to exam season! We're looking to support students through the end of year stress via services like our Advice Place, as well as giving them a break from studying when we can.

7. Our venues are beginning to calm down as students finish and leave throughout April and May, but with events like Pride and Fringe to plan for over the summer, our work is never done!

8. Between the move towards summer working and Sabbatical handover prep, it is an interesting time of transition at the Students' Association, but one we're both prepared and excited for.

Sabbatical Updates

Housing

9. As mentioned in previous papers, Ruth has been hard at work with sabbatical officers from across Scotland to lobby MSPs for amendments to be added to the Housing Bill. We can now confirm some major amendments have been submitted that would better regulate PBSAs and abolish or reform guarantor requirements. Now, Ruth is focused on getting those amendments passed.

10. I've been making progress with Sarah McAllister on improving our local guarantor scheme, as well. One proposed amendment to the Housing Bill could potentially make it easier for institutions to act as guarantors, which would have huge implications for the effectiveness of our local scheme.

Student Voice

11. Dylan, VP Education, has been leading a revamp of the Student Partnership Agreement (SPA). The SPA is an explicit statement of the ways in which the University and the student body are working, and will continue to work, in partnership. For example, the agreement has historically formalized the representative structure and Student-Staff Liaison Committees (SSLCs) as a joint venture in uplifting student voice. The SPA hasn't seen much use in the past, beyond the funding attached which enables individual students to pursue projects to improve student experience. This year, we've worked on making the document more functional and student friendly. We have also set it up so that incoming sabbatical officers get to agree priority areas with the University to work in partnership on at the start of the year.

12. This March, I hosted a Representative Roundtable, where student representatives of varying positions got to come together with members of senior leadership to discuss the issues on students' minds. This has been part of an effort to re-work the old student voice forums, which could be quite hostile and unproductive. I find it really important to give our representatives the opportunity to speak with senior colleagues, as it strengthens their personal development and because they see things that sabbatical officers can't, due to our full-time status. The format allowed for a really productive conversation, and we look forward to hosting more events like this in the future.

Food

13. Ruth has spent a lot of her time this year trying to expand affordable hot food provision on campuses. Most importantly, she has been trying to get the University to re-introduce a canteen-style venue to its catering options. After surveying students on campus and writing a petition, Ruth has been having very productive conversations with the new Head of Catering about how to adapt the food offering on campus to better suit students' needs. They have even gone around George Square together at lunchtime to ask students about their eating habits and preferences.

14. John, VP Activities and Services, has worked hard this year to expand free breakfast provision. They've grown average attendance at our weekly free breakfast in Potterrow from around 80 to 250. Additionally, they've supported school representatives to get their schools to start free breakfast clubs. Free breakfast isn't

just a cost-of-living response, it is a great way to build community, particularly in schools. John has helped ~10 breakfast clubs get started this year.

15. Finally, as the space in Appleton tower where Edinburgh Innovations used to be based opens up, Ruth is working to get a ‘Green Hub,’ or dedicated space to sustainable activities, in. VP Communities have been asking for this for years, and the University reached out mentioning this could be a suitable space. It isn’t finalized, but Ruth has also written a proposal for the space to include a community fridge/pantry, which collects food from supermarkets and cafes that is about to go off and distributes it for free, helping reduce food waste and support students struggling to buy food.

International Students

16. One of my priorities this year has been lobbying for international students, particularly around visa legislation. Through our involvement with the Russell Group Students’ Unions, I’ve been able to support a nationwide coalition of international students, in partnership with UKCISA, with a final report that will be launched in Parliament in May. I’ve been inviting local MPs to the launch, and have two confirmed, so far! The report will include data about international students' experience of the visa process, belonging, mental health, racism and xenophobia, cost of living, and more. It will also outline some of the benefits international students bring to the UK. We hope to get media pick-up surrounding the launch to highlight the benefits of international students and combat certain negative narratives.

Key Organisational Activity

Elections

17. Our Student Elections took place during March, including elections for the new sabbatical officer team. We saw a significant increase in student engagement this year – a 51% uplift in voter turnout, and a 111% increase in the number of individual votes cast.

18. 6950 students cast a total of 44,700 votes. We had 16 students stand for a sabbatical officer position. It’s likely that a combination of factors all helped boost numbers – including a number of experienced activists and campaigners running for positions, a high level of interest in School Rep positions with multiple candidates creating more local interest, widespread publicity from student societies endorsing a range of candidates, plus an Association incentive to vote. Turnout this year reached the highest level since pre-pandemic elections.

19. The new sabbatical officer team for 2025-26 will be:

- **President: Ash Scholz (they/them)**
- **Vice President Activities and Services: John Rappa (they/them) - for a 2nd year**
- **Vice President Community: Akrit Ghimire (he/him)**
- **Vice President Education: Katya Amott (she/her)**
- **Vice President Welfare: Syjil Ramjuthan (she/her)**

20. The new team start their employment with the Association on Monday 26 May, starting with a 2-week handover and initial induction prior to formally taking over from the current team on 6 June and continuing with our summer training programme.

21. In line with our regulations, we did handle some elections complaints this year, including one related to sabbatical candidate conduct that warranted us delaying announcing a result in order to enable a thorough investigation and ruling to take place. That process concluded, and we were able to announce final election results on Friday 14 March. Our Governance Subcommittee will, as usual, review the 2024--25 Elections cycle, and make any recommendations for change.

Awards Season

22. Our **Student Awards** celebration event took place on Thursday 20 March at Pleasance Theatre. These Awards recognise the outstanding achievements of students and student groups at the University and celebrate the hard work, dedication, and leadership of our student body. This year we celebrated individual and group achievements across these categories:

- Student Group of the Year
- Outstanding Leadership
- Event of the Year
- Outstanding Community Impact
- Student Representative of the Year
- Collaboration of the Year
- Volunteer of the Year
- Outstanding International or Multicultural Initiative
- Campaigning for change
- Heart of Edinburgh

23. We were delighted that interest in the Awards has really increased this year, with 470 nominations received, compared to c.300 last year. You can read more about our winners here and the range of nominated people and activity is inspiring! From student groups volunteering with children and young people in the local community, to individual students taking the initiative to address gaps in community and belonging, to students creating social and cultural showcase events and enriching campus life for all, the Awards enable us to shine a spotlight on a wide range of student initiatives. A full summary of all the shortlisted projects, groups and individuals is also available here.

24. Attention now turns to our annual **Teaching Awards**, which take place on 23 April. Our annual Teaching Awards provide students with an opportunity to thank staff for their hard work and celebrate the very best of teaching and support at the University, something that's just as important as ever. This will be the 16th year of the first student-led Teaching Awards in the UK, with students submitting more than 30,000 nominations since the very first year. This year students have submitted 1800 nominations (recognising almost 1000 staff) across this year's categories:

- Teacher of the Year
- Support Staff of the Year
- Supervisor of the Year
- Cohort Lead of the Year
- Student Adviser of the Year
- Student Tutor of the Year
- Outstanding Course

- Sabbatical Officers’ Special Recognition Award

25. This year’s nominations span every School, Deanery, and 4 professional services. A team of 100 student volunteer panellists review and score nominations, with a smaller student panel then determining the final shortlist and winners. Aside from putting a smile on staff members’ faces, the Awards highlight and reward best practice in teaching and student support, reminding us all of the value of investing in the student experience.

26. Shortlisted staff are invited to our Teaching Awards celebration on 23 April at Pleasance Theatre, along with the students who nominated them. All nominated staff receive a pin badge and see their nomination. We’ve already had a fantastic reaction from staff who value the student recognition, as well as the thoughtful and comprehensive feedback the nominations can provide.

Student-led Activity Support

27. In addition to our regular ongoing support for 430 societies and student groups, including the formation of over 30 new societies during this academic year, we have this month completed distribution of our Development Fund and Global Fund to support student-led activity. This year we have been able to support 50 student-led projects and initiatives with £20,000 of funding. The fund has enabled diverse community-building projects including: environmental conservation weekends, a Christmas celebration in Greyfriars Kirk for 300 students, a student-led Queer Ceilidh in Potterrow for the LGBTQ+ community, meet the Ponies on Campus event led by the Exmoor Pony Trekking Society, a series of webinars on climate change ran by and for students, student-led conferences on topics as diverse as paleontology and oncology, and cultural events such as Ramadan Iftars and Czech and Slovak socials.

Governance Development

28. We have 2 significant workstrands currently under very live consideration although at different stages of delivery. The first is a review of societies and student groups governance, which will ultimately support effective delivery of the plan agreed by our Trustee Board to enhance student group and student leadership engagement. We have a working group and a set of workstrands underway – with some of these having been prioritised – including Risk Management and safeguarding, and Complaints and Conduct. We are then moving on to review the offer/benefits, and rules and requirements for affiliated groups – and to develop new regulations to articulate these more clearly and to take account of the growth in both variety and volume of activity. The review will see some processes and guidance brought forward to our Governance Subcommittee later this semester, with further changes phased into the 2025-26 academic year.

29. The second is a Democracy Review, prompted by a range of challenges and opportunities we are seeking to address, and where we now believe a comprehensive review rather than piecemeal change is necessary. Our Governance Working Group has begun to consider the range of issues the review must incorporate, and we are exploring options for external consultancy to support effective and timely delivery of this review for maximum impact. This is work that also

aligns with the University's commitment to listen and embed Student Voice within its own priorities.

Students' Association Code of Conduct, Discipline, and Complaints procedures.
30. We have had external professional support to develop a new Code of Conduct for members, a revised Complaints Procedure and Guidance, and Disciplinary Procedure. We are aiming to transition to these prior to the start of the next academic year and are currently working through some points of articulation with the University's own Code of Conduct and processes around it (primarily around instances where it may be appropriate for there to be Association outcomes in light of information arising from a University investigation). We are also investing in staff training to broaden our pool of staff who can confidently investigate alleged breaches of the Code (as well as investigate staff conduct issues). The new processes and guidance aim to strengthen our approach to difficult situations, including those arising within student groups.

Paragraphs 31-36: closed section

Strategic Planning
37. This is the last year of our current strategic plan and we will be starting work in June to review and develop a new plan for the organisation from April 2026. The majority of plan development will take place from September – December, to enable it to shape business planning and budgeting (December – February 2026), and will involve a range of stakeholders as well as extensive student insight. The timeline includes some work with the outgoing sabbatical team before we finish, and we will use our June Staff Event as a key consultation point with our staff.

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

Risk Management
39. Financial risks are highlighted in the report.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals
40. Several of the activities outlined support a wide variety of the SDGs.

Equality & Diversity
41. 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
42. We would welcome feedback from Court in relation to any of the issues outlined.

Consultation
43. Consultation on this paper was not required.

Further information

44. *Author*
Dora Herndon
EUSA President 2024-25

Presenter
Dora Herndon
EUSA President 2024-25

Freedom of Information

45. Open version

THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

UNIVERSITY COURT

28 April 2025

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.

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. As we move into the final weeks of Semester 2, the Sports Union reflects on a highly active and successful period across competition, events, governance, and strategic initiatives. The BUCS (British Universities and Colleges Sport) season has concluded for most of our clubs, with Edinburgh teams earning strong results so far. Alongside competitive achievements, efforts to build community and a sense of belonging have seen positive outcomes, including the reimagined Edinburgh Games and the return of Intramural All Stars (see below).

5. Governance and volunteer development remain key priorities, with over 400 club committee members taking part in this year's Learning & Development Week. The recent AGM confirming the incoming Executive Committee for 2025/26 and several constitutional updates were passed, aiming to increase clarity and flexibility.

6. Externally, UoE Sport has secured new valuable partnerships for the coming years which reflect our values and commitments. The developments detailed in this paper reflect a strong and evolving student sport community.

Discussion

BUCS and Events

7. The competitive BUCS season has now wrapped up for most sports, with major fixtures and finals completed. We were represented at Big BUCS Wednesday by Men's Hockey 1s and Women's Football 1s – Men's Hockey secured a win in the National Vase against Nottingham, whilst Women's Football narrowly lost to

Loughborough on penalties in the National Trophy final. Sixteen teams finished as league winners, and 3 teams have earned promotion to the top tier of BUCS competition so far. We are currently sitting comfortably in 5th place in the overall BUCS points table, with a number of leagues and competitions yet to conclude.

8. The Edinburgh Games ran for the first time in its new format, in partnership with EUSA, and was aimed at increasing international student engagement in sport whilst fostering a greater sense of belonging to the University. The event welcomed 210 students (full capacity) for an indoor sports day at Pleasance, with international societies providing food stalls. Feedback reflected the success of these aims, with strong engagement and positive responses. Many thanks noted to the Sense of Belonging group for funding and supporting the event.

9. Intramural All Stars saw top intramural players take on club teams in a day of fixtures across Pleasance, Peffermill, and on UoESport.tv. The All Stars claimed 3 wins from 9 fixtures. The event brought together intramural and club communities, with great spectator turnout and energy throughout the day.

Committee Training and Election Results

10. The week commencing 24 March saw over 400 incoming club committee volunteers take part in Learning & Development Week. This included a programme of 20 sessions covering role-specific responsibilities, leadership, and creating an inclusive club culture. Sessions were delivered by EUSU staff and Executive Committee members, and the strong attendance reflects the dedication and enthusiasm of next year’s committee members.

11. The EUSU AGM took place on 6 March, with elections held for the 2025/26 Executive Committee. All positions were filled with the exception of the Honorary Secretary role, for which we intend to re-open nominations ahead of the new academic year. The new elected committee reflects a broad range of experiences and perspectives, and we’re confident that they will contribute positively to the continued development of sport at the University.

12. The incoming Sports Union President is Liv Stevens, a fourth-year student in the School of Social and Political Science. She currently serves as Netball Club President and competes for the club’s 8th team. She will begin a two-week handover with the outgoing President on 16 June before officially starting the role on 30 June.

13. Parkour has been removed as a EUSU club from 2025/26, due to ongoing inactivity and a lack of engagement.

Constitutional Changes

14. As per the Sports Union Constitution, any alterations or amendments to the Constitution must be reported to the University Court. All changes, which were voted on and approved at the SU AGM, are discussed below.

15. **Changes to SU Membership.** Previously, the membership fee was stated in the Constitution, requiring regular amendments that needed approval at the AGM. We have changed to a model where an annual increase up to the CPIH rate can be approved by the Executive Committee.

16. **Changes to Executive and Finance Committee quoracy.** Quoracy for these committees was previously stated as 7, but this did not allow for flexibility if members of the committee stepped down during the year. Quoracy has been amended to 70% of voting members rounded to the nearest whole number, or five, whichever is greater. In practice, quoracy will remain as 7 when operating with a complete committee.

17. **Policy references.** Details of various SU policies, such as the Code of Conduct, were included in the Constitution. These have been removed to prevent duplicate information, and potential discrepancies between the Constitution and the policies. The updated Constitution now refers to the relevant policy for detail.

18. **Formatting and accuracy.** The formatting and language used throughout the Constitution is now consistent, and job titles have been updated. Committees and practices that were deemed no longer fit-for-purpose have been removed.

Partnerships and Initiatives

19. PlayerLayer will be our sports kit provider for the next three years, with the option to extend for a further three. We are now in the process of finalising designs and kit items for our re-launch, in conjunction with the student population.

20. University of Edinburgh Sport & Active Wellbeing and Scottish Action for Mental Health charity (SAMH) came together to launch a recent partnership by signing Scotland's Mental Health Charter for Physical Activity and Sport. By committing to the co-created action plan, UoE Sport take strides to embed mental health considerations into all aspects of our sport and physical activity services.

21. This year's Big Dig tree planting initiative saw over 60 volunteers from across the University plant 630 trees out at the University's Easter Bush Campus. In partnership with Sustainability and Estates teams at the University, Active Lives have now planted 3200 across the University estate as part of a 5-year tree planting programme.

Resource implications

22. N/A

Risk Management

23. No major risks.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

24. 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

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

Next steps/implications

26. The Sports Union President and Executive Committee oversee the strategic direction of the Sports Union.

Consultation

27. Consultation for this paper was sought from Millie Doherty (Head of Sports Development Programmes) and Mark Munro (Director of Sport & Active Health).

Further information

28. *Author*
Philine Rouwers
Sports Union President

Presenter
Dora Herndon
EUSA President

11 April 2025

Freedom of Information

29. Open Paper

THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

H1

UNIVERSITY COURT

28 April 2025

Responsible Investment Advisory Group – Terms of Reference

Description of paper

1. The paper provides a draft Terms of Reference for a new Responsible Investment Advisory Group to report into Policy & Resources Committee. The new group would be positioned alongside and work closely with the Investment Committee.

Action requested/Recommendation

2. To *approve* the draft Terms of Reference and the establishment of a Responsible Investment Advisory Group.

Paragraphs 3-12: closed section

The Terms of Reference of the Responsible Investment Advisory Group can be viewed at:
https://www.committees.ed.ac.uk/responsible-investment-advisory-group

Consultation

13. The draft terms of reference have been informed by:
- The output of the two working groups and responses to these from the relevant committees;
- Initial review from Alastair Laing (Investment Committee Convener), Kim Graham (Provost and Convener of both working groups), Leigh Chalmers (Vice-Principal & University Secretary), Dave Gorman (Director of Social Responsibility and Sustainability), Catherine Martin (Vice-Principal Corporate Services) and Ruth Girardet (University Court and Policy & Resources Committee member); and,
- Discussion at meetings of Investment Committee, University Executive and Policy & Resources Committee.

Further information

14. *Author*
Lewis Allan
Senior Governance Advisor to the Vice-Principal & University Secretary

18 April 2025

Presenter
Leigh Chalmers
Vice-Principal & University Secretary

Freedom of Information

15. Open version

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

H2

UNIVERSITY COURT

28 April 2025

University of Edinburgh Revised Responsible Investment Policy

Description of paper

1. This paper provides information on the process of reviewing the Responsible Investment (RI) Policy and the work undertaken since spring 2023, and seeks approval for the revised RI Policy.

Action requested/Recommendation

2. Court is asked to note the work completed as part of the review since spring 2023 and *approve* the proposed updates and subsequent public launch by summer 2025.

Paragraphs 3-34: closed section

The revised Responsible Investment Policy can be viewed at:
https://sustainability.ed.ac.uk/sustainability-in-operations-and-estates/responsible-investment

Consultation

35. As noted above, the revised policy follows significant consultation undertaken May to September 2024 to inform the revised Responsible Investment Policy and numerous discussions involving senior leadership, Investment Committee, University Executive, PRC and Court.

Further information

36. *Authors*
Dave Gorman
Director of Social Responsibility and Sustainability

Terry Fox
Director of Finance Specialist Services

Presenter
Dave Gorman
Director of Social Responsibility and Sustainability

Freedom of Information

37. Open version

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

UNIVERSITY COURT

28 April 2025

Beyond Sustainability: Our Pathway to a Regenerative University

Description of paper

1. This paper seeks Court approval for the successor to our current (2016) climate strategy and to note the proposed next steps.

2. The proposal would primarily support the following Strategy 2030 outcomes:
   - The University will be a destination of choice, based on our clear "Edinburgh Offer". All our staff and students will develop here, whether they are from Leith, Lisbon, Lahore or Lilongwe.
   - We will strive to make our research even more interdisciplinary and international, to address social and global challenges including the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.
   - Our estate will be fit for purpose, sustainable and accessible.
   - The University will be on track to be a Carbon-Zero University by 2040.

Paragraphs 3-63: closed section

Further information

64. <u>*Authors*</u>
Scott Davidson
Deputy Director, SRS

Dave Gorman
Director, SRS

<u>*Presenter*</u>
Dave Gorman
Director, SRS

Freedom of Information

65. Open version

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

J

UNIVERSITY COURT

28 April 2025

Court Member Recruitment

Description of paper

1. The paper proposes the appointment of three new University Court members, on the recommendation of Governance & Nominations Committee (GNC), following a competitive recruitment process.

Paragraphs 2-18: closed section

The membership of Court is published at:
https://governance-strategic-planning.ed.ac.uk/governance/university-court/membership-of-court

Further information

19. *Authors*
Jamie Tait
Dan Wedgwood

Governance & Court Services
April 2025

Presenter
Leigh Chalmers
Vice-Principal & University Secretary

Freedom of Information

20. Open version

THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

K

UNIVERSITY COURT

28 April 2025

Development & Alumni Annual Report for 2023/24

Paragraphs 1-29: closed section

Further information

30. *Author & Presenter*
    Chris Cox
    VP Philanthropy & Advancement

    April 2025

Freedom of Information

31. Closed paper

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

L

UNIVERSITY COURT

28 April 2025

Award of University Benefactor

Paragraphs 1-14: closed section

Further information

15. <u>*Author*</u>
Katie Littlefair
Head of Donor Engagement and University Events & Protocol/USG
March 2025

<u>*Presenter*</u>
Peter Mathieson
Principal & Vice-Chancellor

Freedom of Information

16. Closed paper

THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

M1

UNIVERSITY COURT

28 April 2025

Equality Outcomes 2025-2029 and Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Progress Report 2025

Description of paper

1. This paper presents the post-consultation drafts of the Equality Outcomes 2025--2029 and the Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Progress Report 2025, both required under the Scottish Specific Duties of the Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) for publication by 30 April 2025.

2. The content of the reports supports delivery of Strategy 2030 and the People Strategy.

Paragraphs 3-18: closed section

The University's Equality 2025-2029 and Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Progress Report 2025 can be viewed here:
https://equality-diversity.ed.ac.uk/about/outcomes

Further information

19. *Author*
Caroline Wallace
Head of HR, EDI
31 March 2025

Presenter
Fiona McClement
University Lead for Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Freedom of Information

20. Open version

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

M2

UNIVERSITY COURT

28 April 2025

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Data Report 2025

Description of paper

1. This is the public report on the University's staff and student population with respect to protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. It provides high level descriptive data and forms a part of our overall approach to equality data.

2. Equality, diversity and inclusion are fundamental to all our values and vision in Strategy 2030. This report helps identify areas of inequality and lack of diversity that require further action in order to reflect our values and vision.

Action requested/Recommendation

3. Court is invited to provide comments and to approve this reporting ahead of publication on our website by the end of April.

Background and context

4. The University has a statutory duty to gather and report on the protected characteristics of our staff population under the Public Sector equality duty. We are also required to report annually to our Court on equality monitoring under the Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance.

5. From 2011 onwards, we have combined our reporting on staff and student protected characteristics in the publicly available reports. These were titled EDMARC up to 2021, after the overseeing committee Equality and Diversity Monitoring and Research Committee, and EDI Public Data Report in the 2023 report which covered academic year 2021/22.

The data reports referred to in this paper can be viewed at:
https://equality-diversity.ed.ac.uk/about/reports/edmarc

Paragraphs 6-24: closed section

Resource implications

25. There are no specific resource implications from this paper in itself, though the data generated in the report suggests areas for further action which would have their own resource implications. EDIC members have noted some existing uses of this data in local areas, though further consideration of appropriate actions would be welcomed.

26. The process of developing the approach and iterating public and internal reporting will have resource implications for Governance and Strategic Planning and the BI teams in ISG.

Risk Management

27. Through publishing this report, we manage risks of failure to comply with our reporting duties, which would have legal implications.

28. We will also be better able to assess and manage our risks in relation to advancing equality of opportunity.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals
29. In seeking to support the advancement of equality, actions arising from this work contribute to Sustainable Development Goals 5 (Gender Equality) and 10 (Reducing Inequalities).

30. In itself, the topic of the paper has no climate impact; however if the discussion was to lead to active recruitment of students or staff from more diverse parts of the UK or world, the travel implications of these individuals could differ, bringing a positive or negative impact in terms of associated emissions.

Equality & Diversity
31. In seeking to support the advancement of equality, this report has positive implications for equality, diversity and inclusion matters: it identifies areas where we need to concentrate actions in order to ensure equity, increase diversity and ensure all staff and students can flourish.

Next steps/implications
32. After discussion and approval from Court, the final version of the reporting will be published on our website as required by 30 April 2025.

Consultation
33. This reporting represents a continuation of the reporting approach agreed by EDIC in December 2022. EDIC, PRC and University Executive received a draft version of the report in February and March 2025 respectively. Draft reporting has also been circulated with members of the EDMARC sub-committee for comment.

Further information
34. *Author*
Jessica Armstrong
Jim Galbraith
Pauline Manchester
Chris Sim
Roy Woolley

Governance & Strategic Planning
11 April 2025

Presenter
Rona Smith
Deputy Secretary, Governance & Strategic Planning

Freedom of Information
35. Open version.

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

N

UNIVERSITY COURT

28 April 2025

Learning and Teaching Strategy 2030

Description of paper

1. This paper presents the Learning and Teaching Strategy 2030, approved by Senate Education Committee at its meeting on 27 February 2025.

Action requested/Recommendation

2. Court is invited to note the Strategy.

The Learning and Teaching Strategy can be viewed at:
https://strategy-2030.ed.ac.uk/our-focus/teaching-and-learning

Background and context

3. The Learning and Teaching Strategy has been developed to provide strategic direction, coherence and institutional oversight of current and ongoing developments to learning and teaching.

4. The Strategy builds on the Learning and Teaching Strategy 2017 and responds to recommendations from the Quality Assurance Agency's (QAA) Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) in 2021 and the Quality Enhancement and Standards Review (QESR) in 2023, that asked us to:
   a. *"…provide institutional oversight, and ensure clarity for staff, on the strategic direction underpinning current learning and teaching developments."* (QAA ELIR 2021)
   b. "….*expedite the final drafting, approval and implementation of the Learning and Teaching Strategy to help staff and students understand how major strategic projects work together and provide clarity on the strategic approach to enhancing learning and teaching"* (QAA QESR 2023)

5. The Strategy has been developed following extensive consultation that began in November 2023 comprising multiple workshops and meetings including, but not limited to, Directors of Teaching, College Committees, Heads of Schools, Service Heads, Senate Education Committee and Senate. A Sharepoint page was established providing an opportunity for all staff and students to feedback comments.

6. A Learning and Teaching Strategy implementation plan is in development. Events are planned in March and April 2025 for members of Senate and the Standing Committees to further discuss the implementation plan. Outcomes from those discussions will be reported to the May 2025 meeting of Senate.

Discussion

7. The Learning and Teaching Strategy 2030 has been developed to provide a roadmap to achieve the learning and teaching focused purpose of Strategy 2030, specifically that: **our teaching will match the excellence of our research. We will improve and sustain student satisfaction and wellbeing**.

8. The Learning and Teaching Strategy has three core purposes:
    a. To stimulate developments to our educational offer ensuring it remains fit to equip our students for the futures they will be entering;
    b. To promote and support inspiring teaching and supervising;
    c. To engage and empower our students to become lifelong learners and make a meaningful impact in the world.

9. There is necessarily a degree of overlap between the 'curriculum for the future' and the Curriculum Transformation Programme. However, the 'curriculum for the future' is not entirely dependent on CTP. As requested by staff during the consultation, 'the curriculum' does not equate to CTP and there is considerable scope for Schools to demonstrate their alignment to the Strategy at a local level independent of CTP.

Resource implications

10. The main purpose of the Learning and Teaching Strategy is to provide strategic direction and focus to the utilisation of existing resource rather than requiring significant additional resource. A number of the key enablers (e.g., CTP, SLMG, estates, student support etc.) that already have resources allocated to them are aligned with the Strategy.

Risk Management

11. There is a risk to learning and teaching and the student experience in not having a Learning and Teaching Strategy in place. Without a Strategy the University would lack a unified direction in its education goals and we might fail to achieve our ambition set out in Strategy 2030. A lack of a Strategy might also result in ineffective resource allocation. There is a further risk that without a Strategy we would fail to meet the recommendations from the QESR, leading to consequences in our next external review.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

12. The Learning and Teaching Strategy 2030 contributes to the following SDGs:

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

Equality & Diversity

13. Equality, diversity and inclusion have been, and continue to be, major considerations of the Learning and Teaching Strategy. EDI is a core value underpinning Strategy 2030 and the Learning and Teaching Strategy. An EqIA will be conducted prior to implementation.

Next steps/implications

14. Workshops have been scheduled (March and April) to develop an implementation plan in partnership with Schools, Colleges, the Students' Association, Services and other departments. We are working with Communications and Marketing to develop a professional digital version of the Strategy and

communicate it effectively to students and staff. Evaluation of the Strategy is to be agreed by Senate Education Committee, comprising a light-touch interim evaluation ahead of our next institutional review (scheduled for AY 2027/28), and fuller evaluation nearer the end of the Strategy period (2030).

Consultation

15. See paragraph 5 for details of extensive consultation in the course of creating the Strategy.

Further information

16. *Authors*

    Professor Tina Harrison, Deputy Vice-Principal Students (Enhancement)

    Professor Colm Harmon, Vice-Principal Students

    Lauren Harrison, Senior Projects Officer

    March 2025

    Presenter

    Professor Colm Harmon, Vice-Principal Students

Freedom of Information

17. Open paper

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

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UNIVERSITY COURT

28 April 2025

Development & Alumni: Donations and Legacies and Alumni Relations Activity

Description of paper

1. The paper provides a report on legacies and donations received by the University of Edinburgh Development Trust or directly by the University of Edinburgh from 1 January 2025 to 28 February 2025 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 received and current alumni relations activities.

Discussion

Paragraphs 4-5: closed section

Global Alumni Events

6. Upcoming global alumni events:

New York, USA Annual New York City Tartan Day Parade and post-parade alumni reception	April 2025
Toronto, Canada The Edinburgh University Club of Toronto Annual Dinner featuring Professor Frank Cogliano, Dean International and Professor of American History as guest speaker	April 2025
San Francisco, USA Inaugural event of the new San Francisco alumni network	April 2025
Edinburgh and Online UEBS Global Alumni Day	May 2025
Scotland and London, UK / Brussels, Belgium / New York, Boston and Washington DC, USA Insights Programme Immersion Week	June 2025

Recent Global Events

7. We were delighted to see a number of Burns Night events taking place in January. The alumni clubs of New York and Toronto, and the Chicago alumni group, hosted their annual Burns events, with celebrations also taking place in Connecticut and Boston.

8. The Business School hosted a number of alumni events throughout January and February including in Mexico City, Bogota, and Lima during a student recruitment visit to Latin America. The School also held a small gathering in Berlin and a small dinner in London for engaged UEBS alumni hosted by Dean of the Business School, Gavin Jack.

9. We were pleased to organise a visit for Gabriel Goldberg and Victor Loewenstein, Co-Presidents of the Edinburgh University Brussels Society (EUBS) and longstanding supporters of the University, in February. The visit featured a small dinner bringing together key colleagues reflective of their connections and interests across the University, including Gavin Jack, Professor Ben Rosamond, Head of Politics and International Relations, and Ann Cormack, Chair of the General Council's International Standing Committee. Our guests also attended the General Council meeting and lunch the following day and met with colleagues from Politics and International Relations to discuss the annual EUBS Careers Day event, which connects current MSc International and European Politics students with alumni and friends working in institutions and companies in Brussels. The trip wrapped up with a visit to the Business School, where Gabriel gave a talk to MBA students on his career as an international entrepreneur.

10. Edinburgh College of Art hosted an alumni and networking reception in New York in February as part of the College Arts Association (CAA) conference. Prospective students and offer holders were invited to meet with alumni and staff including Principal Juan Cruz, ECA Marketing and Recruitment Manager, Ysabelle Graham-Smith, and ECA Alumni Officer, Vivienne Clark.

11. Edinburgh alumni in Qatar were invited to join alumni of other Scottish universities for a reception in Doha hosted by the Cultural Attache and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education which took place during a two-day Study in Scotland event.

12. The Edinburgh University Club of Toronto hosted Dr Johanna Hoekstra and Dr Luis Felipe Yanes from the Law School for a virtual talk exploring the how privatisation affects the state's compliance with the human right to health.

13. The recently reinvigorated Paris alumni group hosted an informal alumni gathering in collaboration with other Scottish universities. This was a great opportunity for local alumni to come together to socialise and make new connections.

14. Leigh Chalmers, Vice-Principal & University Secretary, hosted a small dinner in New York City for senior alumni volunteers from the North American Office Board and the USA Development Trust Board. This was an opportunity for Leigh to hear first-hand about the important roles our alumni play in enabling the University to carry out its critical work in the US.

15. We hosted a very successful event at the British Academy London in March for alumni, supporters and friends, titled 'Shaping the future: Edinburgh's role in the AI revolution'. The event took place during a three-day University delegation visit to showcase Edinburgh's expertise and leadership in AI to a range of stakeholders and

audiences. Our event kicked off with remarks from Ian Murray MP, Secretary of State for Scotland and UoE alumnus, and the Principal, before Prof Michael Rovatsos led our panellists, Prof Shannon Vallor and Prof Kenny Baillie, into a discussion about the breadth and depth of work occurring in AI at Edinburgh. A recording of the panel will be available to share soon. The evening concluded with a Q&A and a drinks reception. We had a great turnout of almost 100 in the room, and 28% of our external guests were alumni attending one of our events for the first time.

16. Another key event in the London series was a lunch hosted by the Principal and the Provost at Westminster for a select group of current MPs and former elected officials who are Edinburgh alumni.

Alumni support for Widening Participation: Insights Programme
17. This year's Insights Programme student cohort have completed their Spring Semester development workshops in preparation for their Insights Immersion Week trips. They will visit alumni at their workplaces in host cities – Edinburgh and local area, London, Brussels, Boston, New York and Washington DC – during 2-6 June 2025.

Paragraph 18: closed section

Alumni support for Student Employability
19. We continue to develop alumni engagement within careers and employability activities, working on a range of tailored alumni engagement opportunities with selected Schools. All events are in collaboration with the Careers Service and key academic and professional services staff within relevant Schools.

20. Recent projects include 'Life After LLC', an annual careers event from the School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures. The event was open to all LLC undergraduate and Masters students, and was supported by five alumni volunteers.

21. The School of Biological Sciences and the Deanery of Biomedical Sciences hosted their annual joint event series, 'Undergraduate to Employment' and 'Undergraduate to Postgraduate to Employment', designed to give undergraduate and postgraduate students the opportunity to gain insight and inspiration from School and Deanery alumni. In total, nine alumni volunteers from the School and Deanery joined these events.

22. A pilot event with the School of History, Classics & Archaeology, 'Life After HCA', saw four selected alumni volunteers return to campus, sharing their journey since graduation and their top tips for navigating the professional world.

Alumni support for Student Recruitment
23. Our support for recruitment activities continues with alumni volunteers participating in panel sessions for the Postgraduate Discovery Day in February and the Postgraduate Online Learning Essentials Day in March, with another session scheduled in April. In these sessions, prospective students can put their questions directly to our alumni panellists to help them inform their decision-making in relation to studying at the university, both online and on campus. These PG online events

feature an average of two speakers each, and we prioritise having a mix of alumni representation from all three Colleges across the event series.

24. We have been actively promoting the Alumni Ambassador Programme as part of a targeted recruitment drive for new volunteers to support upcoming international offer holder events. This has resulted in in 59 recent graduates, primarily from the Class of 2024, registering as Alumni Ambassadors. Many are confirmed as speakers and panellists for events in the coming months. Alumni Ambassadors are some of our most recent graduates who support a range of student recruitment activities in-person and online by sharing insights into their experience of studying at Edinburgh. The first event took place in March with six alumni volunteers supporting an event in Tokyo hosted by Michelle Terrell, Student Recruitment Manager for SPS, and Michael Chambers, Student Recruitment Manager for UEBS.

25. Work to support School and College student recruitment and conversion activity continues, with a recent collaboration with School of School of History, Classics & Archaeology on an alumni profile series. Throughout the spring, 12 alumni profiles will be published, highlighting the diverse paths our HCA alumni have pursued. Profile series in wider Schools are being planned for semester 2 and semester 1 of the new academic year.

26. A pilot Alumni Ambassador programme with the School of Informatics has launched, collaborating with key professional service colleagues in the School. Selected School alumni volunteers were invited to register for this pilot programme, expected to run until late summer 2025, and will support various recruitment and conversion initiatives through the spring and summer.

27. In addition to this, work to support School of Mathematics recruitment priorities has been progressing, with alumni supporting an on-campus widening participation event for UG School of Mathematics offer holders. Further offer holder activity is planned for April and May.

28. At College level, there has been a range of activities to support offer holders, including a series of regional events led by the CAHSS Admissions Office. The first event, held in London, was open to widening participation and state school offer holders. Two alumni volunteers joined the evening to share their experiences with offer holders and their supporters. Additional events are planned for Manchester and Belfast in the coming weeks. The alumni team also hosted two CAHSS offer holder "Linking Students with Alumni" events in February, which aimed to educate prospective students on how they can engage with the alumni network during their studies and beyond. In April, the alumni team will take part in the CAHSS offer holder Information Fair in McEwan Hall, where offer holders will be able to directly meet the team and have their questions answered

Student Engagement

29. This year, 39 MasterCard Foundation Scholars are participating in the Mastercard Scholars Career Mentoring Programme, in which they will be paired with alumni mentors for up to six months. The team is busy finding potential mentors, who we will match with the students beginning in April.

Alumni Communications

30. Recent alumni communications include Enlightened Issue 09, which was sent to around 75,000 alumni in early April. This issue focussed on AI at Edinburgh and a digest of supporter impact stories.

31. Issue 04 of 2024/2025 Multi Story Edinburgh newsletter was sent to nearly 6,000 new graduates in January. Issue 05 was sent to that same group in March.

32. The Spring 2025 edition of the Events and Opportunities newsletter was sent to around 190,000 alumni in February, featuring a round-up of forthcoming events and activities in Edinburgh, around the world and online. The newsletter had a 47% open rate (88,011 emails opened) and 5,412 link clicks.

33. We continue to develop our presence on social media. In February, we developed a two-part story series for Instagram and Facebook, focussed on the theme of 'friendship' to coincide with Palentine's and Valentine's Day: Forever Friends PART ONE and Forever Friends PART TWO. We crowdsourced 15 alumni stories and our subsequent Instagram collaboration with the central Communications and Marketing Team received excellent engagement; we gained just over 100 new followers on the platform, reached over 47,500 accounts and the campaign received over 97,600 views.

Philanthropic Communications

34. We worked with the Supporter Engagement Team on the spring edition of ‘Your Impact’. The print copy was sent to just under 4,000 recipients across the globe at the start of March 2025. The digital version is available on Your Impact campaign page.

35. Work is ongoing to develop the content for the Spring Appeal 2025 in collaboration with the Supporter Engagement Team. We are also working on a donor stewardship campaign for the School of Geosciences fieldwork fund which will include a direct mail letter, postcard, email campaign and thank you video from Head of School, Professor Bryne Ngwenya.

36. In the run up to the Edinburgh Marathon Festival 2025 we are supporting all participants running to raise funds for the Euan MacDonald Centre with website profiles and social media posts.

Resource implications

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

Risk Management

38. 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

39. 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

40. 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.

41. 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

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

Consultation

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

Further information

44. *Authors*

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9 April 2025

Presenter

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Vice-Principal Philanthropy & Advancement

Freedom of Information

45. Open version

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

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UNIVERSITY COURT

28 April 2025

Draft Resolutions: Degree Programme Regulations

Description of paper

1. This paper invites Court to consider two draft Resolutions containing annual updates for the degree programme regulations and to refer them to the General Council, Senate and any other interested party for comment before they return to Court for approval.

2. These Resolutions contribute to the following University Strategy 2030 outcomes:
- 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.
- We will have more user-friendly processes and efficient systems to support our work.
- Multidisciplinary postgraduate education pathways will support flexible whole-life learning.

Action requested/Recommendation

3. Court is invited to consider the following draft Resolutions and to refer them to Senate and the General Council for observations:
- Draft Resolution No. 6/2025: Undergraduate Degree Programme Regulations
- Draft Resolution No. 7/2025: Postgraduate Degree Programme Regulations.

Background and context

4. The Universities (Scotland) Act 1966 enables the Court to exercise by Resolution approval for 'any additions or amendment to regulations for existing degrees' on the recommendation of the Senate, with Senate having delegated responsibility for detailed work on the academic regulatory framework to its Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC). APRC has undertaken its annual review of the undergraduate and postgraduate degree regulations and has recommended some amendments following consultation with Colleges and Schools. Draft Resolutions have been formulated to incorporate the recommended changes and attached to these draft Resolutions are a list of degrees to which these regulations apply.

Discussion

5. The key changes proposed to the Undergraduate Degree Programme Regulations 2025/26 are as indicated in the table below. Links within the regulations to other information have been updated as necessary.

Regulation Updated	What has changed
9 Commencing studies	Amended to state that students cannot resume study following an interruption of study more than two weeks after the beginning of a Semester. Schools encounter situations where students request to return to study late in a Semester, where they had been planned to return at the beginning of the Semester. It is not in a student's interest to seek to reintegrate into study – often following a year away – in the middle of a Semester. Preventing late returns therefore mitigates the increased risk of students struggling, both academically and potentially in terms of their wellbeing, on their return to study. The revised Authorised Interruption of Study Policy (for use from September 2025) sets an expectation that students should, wherever possible, agree a return to study plan before they take an interruption, and that Schools must contact the student to confirm that they are ready to return before their return to study date.
26 Leave of absence	Clarification has been added that leave of absence is not appropriate for long-term study at a distance from Edinburgh, which should only be offered as part of a specific online or distance-learning programme.
28 Optional Study Abroad	Amended to remove reference to students being required to pass Year 2 courses at the first attempt. This avoids appearing to exclude from consideration students who may have repeated assessment (including repeating Year 2) due to Exceptional Circumstances. The revised regulation clarifies that the required credits must have been awarded before the normal publication date for continuing student results, i.e. before the resit diet.
33 Withdrawal and Exclusion	Amended to add reference to the fact that a former student who has withdrawn from study may apply for admission to the same programme of study, provided that they had not failed to meet the requirements for their programme at the point they withdrew. The regulation sets a time limit of three years for readmission on this basis, which is line with the requirements of regulation 58, and based on Admissions requirements regarding recency of qualifications.

	This seeks to offer a clearer alternative option for students who may be struggling with health or personal issues (including affordability of study) which are preventing them from studying, leading to successive periods of interruption of study, with no obvious sign of improvement. For some students, withdrawal, with the potential to return to study when their health or personal circumstances improve, may offer a more beneficial option than successive periods of interruption. Readmission will remain at the discretion of the relevant College, since it must be contingent on factors such as whether a programme is still running, specific considerations regarding professional programmes, and significant changes in admissions requirements. As such, when students are considering this option, they will need to be given advice that readmission cannot be guaranteed. In most cases, students may need to reapply via UCAS, but Academic Quality and Standards will be holding discussions with Admissions colleagues regarding providing a simpler route for students to apply for readmission. Applications for readmission from former students are considered alongside those from new applicants, so there is no risk of the proposed amendment leading to over-recruitment of students in certain subject areas.
42 Addressing credit deficits	Wording clarified to indicate that students who have not progressed due to a credit deficit in pre-Honours years are entitled to return (usually on an assessment-only basis) to complete reassessment, where they have remaining assessment attempts available to them.
58 Returning to complete an Honours degree	We have removed the expectation that students returning on this basis would “normally be required to achieve a further 240 credit points”, amending this to state that students will be required subsequently to meet the requirements of the Degree Programme Table for the relevant Honours degree. In most cases, students would have exited with 360 credits, and therefore require to complete only a further 120 credits, provided that the structure of the programme has not changed.

Changes to Degree Specific Regulations	
64 BA Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences	Amended to remove the requirement that students must not only have a substantial volume of credits in a major subject of study at the relevant SCQF levels, but also have at least 40 credits in each of two other subjects. This requirement has proven unreasonably restrictive especially for students who have been exiting from combined degrees, which often do not have sufficient space in the curriculum to allow for multiple courses in outside subject areas. Removing this requirement would not reduce the academic requirements for these degrees, either in terms of depth of study in a subject area, or credit attained at specific SCQF levels.
College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine specific regulations	
77, 80, 82	Amended to reflect removal of the Progression Review Committee.
78	Amended to clarify that students in Year 1 of the MBChB (Medicine) programme may have up to four attempts to pass the year, in line with the standard entitlement under the Taught Assessment Regulations.
80	Amended to reflect the expectation that students should pass all components for a relevant year in a single year, i.e. students cannot carry forward passed components from a previous attempt at a year.
95, 97	Amended to remove reference to the previous, 5-year MBChB programme.
99	Minor stylistic amendments.
100	Removed as duplicates 102.
104	Redrafted to align with regulation 97 relating to the MBChB. Addition of an Honours exit award for students who have completed an appropriate amount of study at SCQF level 10 at the point that they exit the programme. A new regulation has been added, copied directly from regulation 98, specifying compliance, attendance, and participation requirements for the Honours exit award programme.

6. The key changes proposed to the Postgraduate Degree Programme Regulations 2024/25 are as indicated in the table below. Links within the regulations to other information have been updated as necessary.

Regulation Updated	**What has changed**
5 Code of practice	The wording has been amended to emphasise the importance of the Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students as an accompaniment to the regulations.
9 Late admission	Amended to state that students cannot resume study on a taught course following an interruption of study more than two weeks after the beginning of a Semester. Schools encounter situations where students request to return to study late in a Semester, where they had been planned to return at the beginning of the Semester. It is not in a student's interest to seek to reintegrate into study on a taught programme – often following a year away – in the middle of a Semester. Preventing late returns therefore mitigates the increased risk of students struggling, both academically and potentially in terms of their wellbeing, on their return to study. The revised Authorised Interruption of Study Policy sets an expectation that students should, wherever possible, agree a return to study plan before they take an interruption, and that Schools must confirm with the student that they are ready to return before their return to study date.
12 Conflicting studies	Amended to state that the regulation does not apply to visiting or non-graduating students. Visiting students are by definition students who are undertaking study at another institution, while non-graduating students may undertake study at several institutions simultaneously.

20 Permissible credit loads	Amended to state that the Head of College may give permission for a student to take more than 40 additional credits' worth of courses on a class-only basis, i.e. not for credit (sometimes referred to as "auditing"). It is common for postgraduate research students in particular to attend courses on a class-only basis, where this may be of benefit to their research. Where a student attends a course on a class-only basis, they do not submit assessment for the course, and may or may not attend all classes. Attendance of courses on a class-only basis requires the approval both of the relevant supervisor or Programme Director, and the Course Organiser for the relevant course. As such, there are sufficient safeguards in place to prevent a student being overloaded with courses, or a course having an excessive number of students in attendance.
23 Transfer to another programme	Clarification added that Colleges will confirm the remaining time permitted to complete a programme, following a transfer by a student. This allows Colleges to set an appropriate deadline for completion of a programme, for example when a student on a doctoral programme is transferred to an MPhil or MSc by Research programme.
24 Attendance and participation	Clarification added that in-person attendance may not be required for periods of extension for submission or resubmission of dissertations or research projects. This reflects existing guidance that resubmission of postgraduate taught dissertations under the Taught Assessment Regulations (58) will not normally require in-person attendance.
30 Leave of absence	Clarification has been added that leave of absence is not appropriate for long-term study at a distance from Edinburgh, which should only be offered as part of a specific online or distance-learning programme.

33 Authorised Interruption of Study	Amended to clarify that, on doctoral programmes, the total permitted period of interruption is 36 months, with the exception of PhD with Integrated Study programmes, for which the total permitted period of interruption is 48 months. This reflects the existing position, but seeks to prevent an unfair disparity arising between most doctoral programmes, which consist of a 36-month prescribed period of study, followed by a 12-month submission period, and some new programmes which consist of a 48-month prescribed period of study with no submission period. Without this additional clarification, students on the latter type of programme with a prescribed period of study of 48 months would be entitled to 48 – rather than the usual 36 – months' interruption.
36 Supervision	Amended to remove statement that the arrangement of Principal Supervisor plus Assistant Supervisor is the "usual arrangement" at the University, since this is not the prevailing approach in the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine. The existing wording does not entail a mandatory requirement, so its removal poses no risk.
37 Supervision – training	Amended to state that supervisors who are staff at Associated Institutions may be exempted from mandatory supervisor training at the University, provided that they have undertaken equivalent training at their institution within the relevant period. In line with the existing regulation, supervisors who are members of staff of other higher education institutions may be exempted from UoE supervisor training, where they have undertaken equivalent training locally. Some Associated Institutions also offer comparable training, so it is appropriate to extend this regulation to cover their staff. Schools remain responsible for ensuring that any such training is sufficiently comparable to training provided by the University.

39 Supervision – Eligibility	Amended to clarify that the existing requirement that supervisors should be “salaried” members of academic or non-academic staff means that they must not be on Guaranteed Hours or other casual contracts. This does not reflect a change in policy. It is appropriate to restrict eligibility to act as a supervisor to staff on salaried contracts as it is desirable to ensure as far as possible that students have consistent, stable supervision during the period of their research.
45 Request for Reinstatement on Doctoral and MPhil degrees	Amended to remove statement that “students are not eligible to be considered for reinstatement where they have been excluded from the University for any reason other than lapse of time”. There may be other circumstances where students have been excluded and may reasonably be allowed to be reinstated, for example where they have been excluded for fee debt and have subsequently resolved this. A link to the Withdrawal and Exclusion Procedure has been added, which will clarify which categories of exclusion make a student ineligible to apply for reinstatement. Reinstatement remains at the discretion of the relevant College, so the amendment does not pose a risk of students being reinstated where this would not be academically appropriate. A further amendment has been made to clarify that, where students are reinstated following exclusion for lapse of time, their reinstatement is for a period of one month. This reflects existing practice within the Colleges. Clarification has also been added that, where a student does not submit their thesis within this one-month period, they will be excluded for lapse of time, and not permitted to apply for reinstatement again. This is an appropriate limit to avoid setting an expectation that students may be able to be reinstated multiple times, where this would not be in the interest either of the student or the University.

46 Vacation Leave for Research Students	Amended to clarify that the period of eight weeks' vacation leave applies to students on MSc by Research programmes which are examined by the relevant College Postgraduate Committee (see Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees 46). These MSc by Research programmes are structurally similar to doctoral and MPhil programmes, and it is therefore appropriate that students should have the same entitlement to annual leave. By contrast, MSc by Research degrees which follow the structure of taught programmes include vacation periods at specific points in the calendar.
52 PhD (by Research Publications)	Amended to clarify that Honorary staff are eligible to apply for the degree of PhD by Research Publications. Existing eligibility covers University staff and staff at Associated Institutions, so it is appropriate that it should also include Honorary University staff. Honorary staff are, for example, also regarded as Internal Examiners on research degrees. It is not anticipated that the proposed amendment should lead to a significant increase in applications for PhD by Research Publications.
60 Application for Associated Postgraduate Diploma or Masters	Amended to clarify that students who have exited the University with a Postgraduate Certificate or Diploma due to failure to meet the requirements for the associated award for which they are applying are not eligible to apply for readmission on this basis. This amendment mitigates the risk that students who have exited from a Master's programme with a Certificate or Diploma due to failure to meet progression requirements will consider themselves eligible to apply for readmission to the same programme.

Changes to Degree Specific Regulations	
65 Doctor of Education (EdD)	Regulation removed as this programme is no longer offered.
69 MPhil - Submission by Portfolio in Art, Design and Landscape Architecture	Amended to change the word limit for the MPhil by Portfolio in Art, Design and Landscape Architecture to 30,000 words instead of 20,000. This brings the MPhil by Portfolio word limit to half of the 60,000 word MPhil limit, in line with the PhD by Portfolio limit, which is 50,000 instead of the 100,000 word PhD limit.
77 Postgraduate Certificate in Democracy and Public Policy	Regulation removed as this programme is no longer offered.
84 Master of Public Policy; PG Dip and PG Cert of Public Policy	Regulation removed as these programmes are no longer offered.
85 Diploma in Professional Legal Practice	Amended to reflect changes approved within the Law School. The amendments remove “elevated hurdle” pass marks for specific courses on the Diploma, and increase the allowance for resit assessment from two to three attempts for each course.
87 Doctor of Clinical Dentistry (DClinDent)	Regulation removed as this programme is closing and is no longer admitting new students. The information in the regulation is available to remaining students in programme handbooks.
88 Master of Surgery (ChM)	Regulation removed as these programmes are being restructured. Information for current students is provided in programme handbooks.
89, 90, 93, 94 Doctor of Medicine (MD)	Substantial content removed as this information is now either redundant or provided in the Degree Finder.
95-99 Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS)	Regulation removed as this programme is closing and has no remaining students.

7. As the draft degree regulations are lengthy and are mainly unchanged, with the key changes summarised above, these are not appended to this paper but are instead included in full under the ‘Additional Information’ section of the Court site should members wish to review these.

Resource implications
8. APRC has given due consideration to any potential resource implications and there are none to be raised to Court.

Risk Management

9. The University accepts some risk in relation to education and student experience. The proposed amendments contribute to a supportive framework designed to mitigate risks associated with academic struggles and well-being concerns.

10. The University has no appetite for risks relating to compliance. Enhancements to the degree regulations aimed at clarifying attendance, participation, and leave of absence requirements help minimise risk to the University's compliance with Home Office sponsorship regulations.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

11. The proposals in the paper are expected to have no direct impact on the University's 2040 target. The paper contributes primarily to SDG 4: Quality education, as the proposed changes are designed to enhance both the quality and inclusiveness of higher education. It also contributes to SDG 3: Good health and well-being, by enhancing regulations which provide a supportive framework for students returning to study after an interruption, and SDG 5: Gender equality, acknowledging that women are more likely to need periods of interruption of study for pregnancy and maternity.

Equality & Diversity

12. APRC has given due consideration to equality and diversity issues, and considered that the proposed amendments include enhancements and clarifications that will have some positive effects for students, e.g., by offering the option of withdrawal and readmission for students as an alternative to repeated interruptions of study. APRC noted no negative implications for equality and diversity from the proposed amendments.

Next steps/implications

13. Court will invite Senate and the General Council to comment on these draft Resolutions and notice of these will be published on the website. Final Resolutions will be referred to Court on 23 June 2025 for consideration and approval.

Consultation

14. The proposed revisions are based on wide consultation with Schools and Colleges and these have been reviewed and recommended for approval by Senate's Academic Policy and Regulations Committee at its meeting in March 2025. Senate and the General Council will then be asked for observations, and the draft resolutions will also be published online to enable any other body or person having an interest to express observations before returning to Court for approval.

Further information

15. *Authors*

Sarah Barnard and Dr Adam Bunni
Academic Quality and Standards

11 April 2025

Freedom of Information

16. Open paper