THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

University Court
Usher Institute, BioQuarter,
5-7 Little France Road, Edinburgh EH16 4UX
Monday, 23 June 2025

AGENDA

OPENING ITEMS

1	**Minute** To _approve_ the minutes of the meeting held on 28 April 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**
- Governance & Nominations Committee   **C3**
  To _approve_ appointments to committee positions and other roles and to _approve_ a package of reforms to Court and committee papers to be implemented for the academic year 2025-26
- Audit & Risk Committee   **C4**
- Knowledge Strategy Committee   **C5**
  To _approve_ updates to the University's Collections Management Policy
- Senate   **C6**

KEY ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/DECISION

5   **Finance and Planning**
- **Finance Update Report**   **D1**
  To _consider_ a paper presented by Nirmal Borkhataria, Interim Director of Finance
- **2025-26 and 2026-27 budget and strategic cost saving proposals**   **D2**
  To _approve_ the group-level budget for 2025-26 and 2026-27. Paper presented by Kim Graham, Provost, and Nirmal Borkhataria, Interim Director of Finance

6   **Students' Association and Sports Union Reports**
To _consider_ reports presented by Ash Scholz, President of the Students' Association
- **Students' Association Report**   **E1**
- **Sports Union Report**   **E2**

7   **Data-Driven Innovation (DDI) Initiative Progress Report Q2 – 2024/25**   **F**
To _consider_ a paper presented by Kim Graham, Provost

8 **Net Zero Infrastructure – Easter Bush Campus Utilities Networks Expansion**   **G**
To _approve_ the University's contribution to funding

9 **Senior Lay Member: Recruitment and Election**   **H**
To _approve_ election and appointment regulations. Paper presented by Leigh Chalmers, Vice Principal & University Secretary

10 **Amendments to Delegated Authority Schedule**   **I**
To _approve_ amendments to the Delegated Authority Schedule. Paper presented by Leigh Chalmers, Vice Principal & University Secretary

11 **Knowledge Strategy Committee Future Governance**   **J**
To _approve_ the proposal that Knowledge Strategy Committee be stood down and _note_ future process. Paper presented by Leigh Chalmers, Vice Principal & University Secretary

ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL

12 **Development Trust – Amendments to the Deed of Trust and Update on the Development Trust**   **K**
To _approve_

13 **Implementation of Ordinance No. 217 (General Council Membership and Registration)**   **L**
To _approve_

14 **Donations & Legacies and Alumni Relations Activity**   **M**
To _note_

15 **Education Act 1994 requirements in relation to the Students' Association**   **N**
To note

16 **Prevent Duty Annual Compliance**   **O**
To _note_

17 **Resolutions – Chairs**   **P1**
Resolutions – Degree Regulations   **P2**
To _approve_

18 **Court Meeting Dates 2026/27**   **Q**
To _approve_

19 **Any Other Business**
To _consider_ any other matters

20 **Date of Next Meeting**
Monday 6 October 2025

THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

UNIVERSITY COURT

23 June 2025

Usher Institute, BioQuarter, Edinburgh

Minutes

Members Present:	Janet Legrand, Senior Lay Member
	Simon Fanshawe, Rector
	Katya Amott, Students' Association Vice-President Education
	Shereen Benjamin, Senatus Assessor
	Richard Blythe, Senatus Assessor
	Alastair Dunlop, Chancellor's Assessor
	Ruth Girardet, Co-opted Member
	Tobias Kelly, Academic Staff Member
	Peter Mathieson, Principal & Vice-Chancellor
	Sarah McAllister, Professional Services Staff Member
	Douglas Millican, Co-opted Member
	Jock Millican, General Council Assessor
	Hugh Mitchell, Co-opted Member
	Kathryn Nash, Trade Union Academic Staff Member
	David Ovens, General Council Assessor
	Mark Patrizio, Trade Union Professional Services Staff Member
	Ash Scholz, Students' Association President
	Alistair Smith, Co-opted Member
Member Apologies:	Rushad Abadan, Co-opted Member
	Robert Aldridge, City of Edinburgh Council Assessor
	Frank Armstrong, Co-opted Member
	Kavi Thakrar, Co-opted Member
	Sarah Wolffe, General Council Assessor
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
	Fiona Boyd, Chief of Staff & Head of the Principal's office
	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 & Chief Information Officer, and Librarian
	Sarah Prescott, Head of College, Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences
	Rona Smith, Deputy Secretary, Governance and Strategic Planning
	Louise Kelso, General Counsel and Director of Legal Services
	Daniel Wedgwood, Head of Court Services (clerk)

OPENING ITEMS

Opening and welcome

Simon Fanshawe, Rector, opened the meeting, noted the apologies received and welcomed the two new student members of Court, Ash Scholz and Katya Amott, and the three appointees to the position of Co-opted Member, who were observing this meeting and would begin their terms of office in the new academic year, Morag Angus, Sandra Cummings and Christopher Morson.

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

1   Minutes   **Paper A1**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 April 2025 were approved, subject to one requested amendment, for which Court's approval would be sought subsequently [Note: approval was subsequently granted by correspondence.].

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

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

Action Log

The Action Log was noted. The Action Log had been updated to reflect developments related to recommendations of the 2018 and 2024 effectiveness reviews of Court, all of which were dealt with elsewhere in the agenda of this meeting:
- proposed changes to the Delegated Authority Schedule (item 10);
- proposed disbandment of Knowledge Strategy Committee (item 11); and
- proposed changes to Court and committee papers (item 4., Paper C3).

3   Principal's Report   **Paper B**

Peter Mathieson, Principal & Vice-Chancellor, introduced the report, highlighting in particular the recent confirmation that the University would host the new national Exascale supercomputer, a decision that recognised the University's world-class expertise in this area. The Principal noted the crucial contribution of Professor Mark Parsons to achieving this outcome. More generally, the University was well placed to contribute to government priorities in technology and innovation, in particular in the field of Artificial Intelligence (AI), and so to take advantage of related research and educational opportunities.

The Principal also noted the following notable developments since the paper had been written:

- The results of the national Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey had been published. The University's results had improved substantially in a number of areas, including the priority area of Assessment & Feedback. A full report on this would be provided to Court at its next meeting.
- The report of Professor Pamela Gillies' investigation into financial oversight and decision making at the University of Dundee had been published.
- The University had fallen by seven places in the QS World University Rankings. While the University's outcomes, as measured within the rankings, had generally remained strong, the international environment was increasingly competitive. It had been noted at the national level that a number of UK universities had similarly fallen in the QS rankings. The University had risen in some other rankings.
- The University had performed well in the Times Higher Education University Impact Rankings, which track performance against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This including retaining joint first ranking in the world for the contribution to SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure.

The following points were made in discussion:

- University policies relevant to the Supreme Court judgment on the interpretation of the Equality Act would be re-examined, recognising that concerns had been raised regarding their compatibility with the judgment. The University's legal advice was that the policies were legally compliant and new guidance to accompany them was in preparation.
- Efforts had been made to avert recent industrial action but it had not proved possible to reach agreement on key points. It was hoped that further strike action could be avoided. Measures would be taken to minimise the impact of any industrial action on students.
- While the situation at the University of Dundee, as discussed in the Gillies report, involved many unique elements, there were also contextual factors of relevance to all Scottish and UK universities and the situation highlighted the importance of the oversight role of a university Court.
- The University was carefully monitoring student recruitment, including any possible changes in demand and conversion resulting from policy changes in the USA. Overall, international student recruitment outturn for autumn 2025 entry remained relatively uncertain, for a variety of reasons.
- The process to recruit a Chief Financial Officer was progressing well.

4   Committee Business

Exception Committee   Paper C1,
                                                                         Paper R

Court noted Exception Committee's approval of the granting of a 99-year lease for an electricity substation, along with the cabling route serving the substation, which was necessary to progress the refurbishment project at the Edinburgh College of Art.

Court also considered and approved a similar 99-year lease (as proposed in Paper R) of ground and cable routes for a substation within the McLeod Street Student Accommodation site.

Policy & Resources Committee   **Paper C2**

Court noted the report.

Court's attention was drawn to the intention to continue the Dryden Shed Relocation project, which had previously been paused as a result of the Category C projects review. It had since been confirmed that this project would be fully funded by an external funder and that the funder expected the project to progress. Consequently, an updated business case was being prepared for consideration by the Estates Committee Exception Group.

Governance & Nominations Committee   **Paper C3**

Court noted the report and approved the following appointments, on the recommendation of Governance & Nominations Committee (GNC). The named members, attendees and observers recused themselves from the meeting while the relevant decisions were taken:

- the reappointment of Ruth Girardet as a co-opted lay member of Court for a second four-year term from 1 August 2025 and as a member of PRC for a second three-year term;
- the appointment of David Ovens and Morag Angus as members of PRC, each for a three-year term of office from 1 August 2025;
- the appointment of Hugh Mitchell as Intermediary Court Member from August 2025;
- the appointment of Christopher Morson as a member of Audit & Risk Committee, for a three-year term of office from 1 August 2025;
- re-appointment of Toby Kelly as a member of Remuneration Committee to 31 May 2025, co-extensive with the remainder of his current term as a member of Court;
- re-appointment of Iain Gordon and Sarah Prescott as Curators of Patronage, for a two-year term of office from 1 August 2025 to 31 July 2027 (co-extensive with the remainder of their current terms as Heads of College).

Court noted further appointments to committees and other groups that had been approved directly by GNC under delegated authority, as detailed in the report.

Court also approved the development of reforms to the form and content of Court and committee papers, in line with feedback received from members, and the implementation of these reforms for the academic year 2025/26, noting that changes would be reviewed after one year.

Audit & Risk Committee   **Paper C4**

Douglas Millican, Convener of Audit & Risk Committee (ARC) summarised key points from the report. He noted that revised financial metrics had been proposed for the Risk Appetite Statement. Court's approval for these revised measures was not sought at this stage: they would be subject to further consideration and, as appropriate, brought forward for approval at a future meeting. It was suggested that there may insight to be drawn from benchmarking such measures with those of other institutions.

Court approved the Internal Audit Plan 2025-26.

Court approved the External Audit Annual Plan for 2024-25 and the External Audit Fee for the 2024-25 audit. Work had been conducted to learn lessons from the previous year's audit and to prevent avoidable challenges from arising at year-end. An interim audit was being conducted.

The following points were made in discussion:
- It was noted that ARC had sought formal clarification of the status of the Curriculum Transformation Project (CTP). It was clarified that activities of the CTP had been moved from the CTP Board to the Learning & Teaching workstream of wider current change programme and that activities would be reconsidered and prioritised in the new context. It was confirmed that this change did not affect Senate's oversight of relevant activities under the CTP.
- It was noted that the Internal Audit report referred to benchmarking against good practice in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion aspects of recruitment processes. It was suggested that this should be approached with due consideration and appropriate advice, given that there was controversy over what constituted good practice in this area.

Knowledge Strategy Committee   **Paper C5**

Court noted the report and approved the updates to the University's Collections Management Policy, ahead of a major review in academic year 2029/30.

Senate   **Paper C6**

Peter Mathieson, Principal & Vice-Chancellor, introduced the report. It was noted that Senate had passed a vote of no confidence in the University Executive and that this had been communicated to the Executive.

It was observed that this vote related specifically to the current cost-saving plans and that a common concern among members of Senate had been to establish a greater understanding of the principles underlying this and the intended outcomes. It was noted that this concern was fully recognised by the University's executive leadership and that, while much relevant work was still in progress, no significant change in the academic mission, ambitions or overall nature of the University was envisaged. Rather, the aim was to enable the University to be more resilient and flexible in its approach to achieving its mission.

KEY ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/DECISION

5   Finance and Planning
5.1   Finance Update Report   **Paper D1**

Nirmal Borkhataria, Interim Director of Finance, presented the finance update report, which included the Quarter 3 (Q3) forecast for 2024-25 and management accounts for April 2025.

Court noted the report.

5.2   2025-26 and 2026-27 budget and strategic cost saving proposals   Paper D2

Janet Legrand, Senior Lay Member, noted that, in line with Court's instructions at the previous meeting, the paper on the budget and strategic cost saving proposals had been distributed to Court members before the main circulation of Court papers and a briefing session had been held, giving members additional time and opportunities to clarify and consider the proposals.

Nirmal Borkhataria, Interim Director of Finance, and Kim Graham, Provost, summarised the nature of the proposed budget, along with the proposed programme to manage the University's finances and make progress with change initiatives such that this budget could be delivered, and thanked all those who had worked to formulate the budget and related plans, noting that Court's challenge and support during this process had been very valuable.

It was noted that approval was sought for a budget spanning two financial years, as this reflected the aspiration to return to a position of surplus generation within this timescale, and this was also the period within which a programme to implement recurrent cost savings would be completed. Budget projections for the following three years had also been included, providing an overall five-year plan. It was noted that the budget as presented accounted for restructuring costs, which would contribute to a projected deficit position in the first year of the budget, but would allow for a surplus in the second. In line with these projected outcomes, cash balances were expected to continue to fall for the first year of the budget and to rebuild thereafter.

One important contextual factor was the need to manage the risk of a breach of the University's major debt covenants. Sensitivity analysis, as provided in the paper, showed the potential for covenant headroom to narrow beyond comfortable levels if appropriate budgetary measures were not taken in a suitable timescale.

It was noted that substantial cost savings had already been achieved, through measures including recruitment restraint and the recent Voluntary Severance scheme. Savings targets had been allocated to budget holders and actions to achieve significant savings had been identified within budget areas. Further work to achieve savings within budget areas would be enabled through the work of five workstreams to develop a programme of cross-institutional change.

Court's attention was drawn to a set of guiding principles for the work to achieve cost reduction, both principles applied to the programme overall and principles specific to each workstream. It was noted that an overarching principle was protection of the academic mission and reputation of the University and that one purpose of a co-ordinated and time-limited programme of change was to avoid the potentially damaging effects, in this regard, of a more piecemeal approach. Additional overarching principles included a commitment to engage openly with staff and students, including through Senate and the recognised trade unions, and a commitment to evaluate proposed actions, and respond appropriately, with regard to potential impacts on equality, diversity and inclusion.

Court engaged in extensive discussion of the budget and cost-saving proposals, within which the following points were made:

- The paper was welcomed as providing richer background than had previously been available. It was noted that the need to take action was now widely accepted, both within Court and, to a significant extent, more widely.
- Questions remained over the nature and timing of the action to be taken.
- Reservations were expressed about whether the plan was viable in terms of the relationship between academic mission and financial planning. It was also noted that working closely with staff and addressing concerns about how delivering the budget could impact the academic mission would be crucial. Correspondence from several staff on this theme, which had been relayed to Court, was noted and discussed.
- The balance of and interaction between local and cross-institutional action was discussed at length, with concerns expressed that dispersed action, effected through the University's devolved structure, could lead to less coherent outcomes. It was noted that the central workstreams had a crucial role in this respect, although there were also benefits to local decision-making, based in expert and fully contextualised knowledge. An appropriate balance of these approaches would be essential.
- Reservations were expressed over approval of the budget in the absence of a comprehensive articulation of the envisaged outcomes of the programme of change and their relation to the strategic direction of the University. In particular, it was suggested that this could elevate the risk of producing more dispersed and less coherent actions. It was noted that opportunities to create savings and improvements were both subject to active on-going work. The motivations for working at pace were also acknowledged.
- In this context, there was discussion of the potentially damaging effects of uncertainty and how best to move to a position of greater certainty and clarity. Concerns were expressed over proceeding with remaining levels of uncertainty and, in this context, it was noted that Court could consider the option of approving the first year of the budget and monitoring progress before considering the second. In response to this, it was noted that the purpose of proposing clear and decisive action was to remove uncertainty as soon as possible, and that approval of the two-year budget would empower such action and so help provide the necessary clarity.
- The proposal to enhance the monitoring and management of performance as part of the Staff workstream was welcomed. It was noted that contribution could also be measured separately from performance.

- Court's oversight would be of crucial importance, through information to be provided to Court at subsequent meetings and on an ongoing basis. It was noted that this point should not delay approval of the budget and that Court would be expected, in any case, to hold management to account for delivery of the budget according to the stated principles, with suitable information provided to enable this oversight. Reporting to Court should be regular and transparent. The University should consider appropriate levels and means of dedicated support for this.
- Good communications would continue to be vital and concerns were expressed about the current approach. It was noted that, along with impacts on staff and student morale, prospective students and those supporting them would be aware of the University's plans to effect a programme of change. It was suggested that this was a further reason to minimise the degree and duration of uncertainty around this. It was also noted that challenges were widely known to exist at the level of the higher education sector and that the University had less control over perceptions at this level.
- It was observed that, while concerns expressed in the discussion reflected Court members' thorough and thoughtful consideration of the implications of budgetary decisions, Court's role in approving the budget should be primarily to satisfy itself that the proposed budget appropriately recognised the financial context and a commensurate need for action, rather than to examine the details of specific actions, which were still in development. Nonetheless, where clarity could be provided, it should be communicated without delay.

Court approved the group-level budget for 2025-26 and 2026-27 as set out in the paper, noting the variety of views that had been expressed over the course of the discussion and the need for the provision of further information to support monitoring and evaluation of the cost-saving plans necessary for the delivery of the budget and their impacts.

6 Students' Association and Sports Union Reports
6.1 Students' Association Report   **Paper E1**
6.2 Sports Union Report   **Paper E2**

Court noted the reports.

7 Data-Driven Innovation (DDI) Initiative Progress Report Q2 – 2024/25   Paper F

Kim Graham, Provost, introduced the report, summarising the substantial progress that had been made to date within this large-scale initiative and noting that its impacts also fell within a wider context of innovation activity and regional collaboration. The focus was now on accelerating this progress to develop and deliver an ambitious regional agenda in collaboration with partners. The University's hosting of the new national supercomputer would further expand the potential impact of the initiative.

Noting the significant scale of investment by the University over the course of the 15-year programme, alongside substantial government funding, additional budgetary detail was requested. It was noted that relevant capital expenditure was largely complete, meaning that revenue investments would be the focus of future activity.

Further information was sought also on the economic impacts of the initiative, including job creation and support for companies. It was agreed that further detail would be provided to Court at a future meeting.

**8   Net Zero Infrastructure – Easter Bush Campus Utilities   Paper G
        Networks Expansion**

Janet Legrand, Senior Lay Member, summarised the nature of the requested approval of funding, noting that this project had been identified at the previous meeting of Court as one of the current estates capital projects that should progress. As part of this, Court's attention had been drawn to the need to approve the University's contribution to the project in order to enable access to the low-cost government loans that constituted the majority of the project's funding.

Court approved the University's contribution to the funding of this project.

9   Senior Lay Member: Recruitment and Election   Paper H

Hugh Mitchell, Co-opted Lay Member of Court, assumed the Chair for this item.

Leigh Chalmers, Vice-Principal & University Secretary, introduced the paper, noting that the proposals in the paper were brought forward on the recommendation of Governance & Nominations Committee. She also drew members' attention to a recently circulated amendment to the electoral regulations that Court was being asked to approve. This amendment was to clarify the conditions under which appeals against any decision of the Returning Officer could be considered, in the context of the election of a Senior Lay Member, the newly proposed material being that presented within square brackets below:

(Extract from Paragraph 18 of the proposed Regulations for the Election and Appointment of the Senior Lay Member of the University Court):

> "Appeals will only be considered on the grounds of procedure or prejudice [such as a disadvantage suffered by a candidate as a result of a decision which was ultra vires, manifestly unreasonable, tainted by apparent bias, based on an error in fact, or which should reasonably be reconsidered because new material evidence has become available]"

It discussion, it was clarified that the eligibility criteria and person specifications for the role were still to be formulated.

Court approved the proposed updates to the role description, the approach to available remuneration and the election and appointment regulations for the Senior Lay Member.

10   Amendments to Delegated Authority Schedule   Paper I

Janet Legrand, Senior Lay Member, resumed the Chair.

Leigh Chalmers, Vice-Principal & University Secretary, summarised the proposals in the paper, noting that the Delegated Authority Schedule had not been reviewed for a number of years and that the intention was to review the document annually in future.

It was noted that an increase in the Principal's approval limit had been proposed in the context of inflationary increases in spending and a desire to limit the burden on Court and its committees of granting approvals for spending of relatively low significance or risk. Adjusting the Principal's approval limit had been identified as a practical way to change the threshold for approval at the executive level, in terms of implementation within University systems, in addition to maintaining an appropriate locus of accountability. Governance & Nominations Committee had discussed this proposal and had recommended that the new limit be set at £5 million. It was observed that this level was well within the expected range for the approval limit for a Chief Executive Officer at an organisation of the University's size.

In discussion of the paper, clarification was provided regarding the nature of changes to student fees policy that would require approval at different levels.

Court approved:
- setting the delegated approval limit for the Principal at £5 million;
- increased delegation to the University Executive and the Future Students Committee for academic fee approvals, while retaining the requirement for Court to approve any major structural changes to fees;
- other, minor updates to the Delegated Authority Schedule, as listed in the paper.

11   Knowledge Strategy Committee Future Governance   Paper J

Leigh Chalmers, Vice-Principal & University Secretary, summarised the paper. Following consideration by Senate, there was widespread agreement that Knowledge Strategy Committee (KSC) should be disbanded and it was recognised that further work was required to establish the details of the future committee structure for this area, taking into account the needs of IT, libraries and collections and providing appropriate reporting lines for both operational and oversight purposes.

Court approved the disbandment of KSC.

The Senior Lay Member thanked all members of KSC, past and present, for their service.

ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL

**12   Development Trust – Amendments to the Deed of Trust   Paper K
       and Update on the Development Trust**

Court approved amendments to the Deed of Trust to include the specific power for the Trustees to:

- delegate approval and signing authority in respect of donations to the Trust; and
- make written resolutions, including by electronic means.

13 Implementation of Ordinance No. 217 (General Council Membership and Registration) **Paper L**

Court approved the implementation of Ordinance No. 217 on 1 October 2025.

14 Donations & Legacies and Alumni Relations Activity **Paper M**

Court noted the report.

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

Court noted the assurance of current compliance.

16 Prevent Duty Annual Compliance **Paper O**

Court noted the report.

17 Resolutions - Chairs **Paper P1**

Court approved the Resolutions to found professorial chairs, as listed in the paper.

Resolutions – Degree Regulations **Paper P2**

Court approved:
- Resolution No. 6/2025: Undergraduate Degree Programme Regulations; and
- Resolution No. 7/2025: Postgraduate Degree Programme Regulations.

18 Court meeting dates 2026/27 **Paper Q**

Court approved the meeting dates.

19 Any Other Business

The Senior Lay Member thanked Frank Armstrong, Mark Patrizio and Alastair Smith for their many contributions to Court and its committees, this being their final meeting as members of Court.

20 Date of Next Meeting

Monday, 6 October 2025

UNIVERSITY COURT

23 June 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.   After months of careful negotiation in which I have been centrally involved at several levels, and following disappointment in August 2024, the University of Edinburgh was confirmed as the host of the UK's new national supercomputer with a £750 million investment announced as part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Comprehensive Spending Review on 11 June. The supercomputer will vastly exceed the capacity of ARCHER2, the current national supercomputer which is also hosted at the University's Advanced Computing Facility. Professor Mark Parsons, Director of the Edinburgh Parallel Computing Centre, played a fundamental role in securing the investment for Edinburgh which will give UK scientists access to compute power on a world-leading scale and will help to drive economic growth across the UK.

5.   I agreed to give evidence to Holyrood Parliament's "Education, Children & Young People Committee" on 4 June together with colleagues from Universities Scotland in a session advertised as examining the financial sustainability of the university sector across Scotland. Unfortunately the Committee's Convener seemed more focussed on personal attacks than on the broader business under consideration, and was condemned by some of his fellow Committee members later that day and on subsequent days as well as by other Parliamentarians. Fortunately other committee members did spend time discussing the financial stability of the sector more generally and together with my fellow witnesses (Professor Sue Rigby, Principal and Vice-Chancellor, Edinburgh Napier University, Professor James Miller, Principal and Vice-Chancellor, University of the West of Scotland and Claire McPherson, Director, Universities Scotland), I was able to give evidence covering falling funding levels, international student recruitment issues and some subject-level discussion including touching on research. The week before, the Royal Society of Edinburgh hosted a timely two-day conference looking at the Funding of Tertiary Education in Scotland: the discussions were wide-ranging and productive and hopefully will bolster informed debate ahead of the Scottish Election in May 2026.

6.   Together with our Provost Kim Graham, and ably supported by colleagues in Stakeholder Engagement Stuart Tooley and Lynn McMath, I undertook two roundtable sessions with cross party local MSPs and MPs to explore the University's financial position and answer questions. The sessions felt helpful on both sides and we hope will have led to increased understanding of the actions Edinburgh is taking to secure our financial stability, and enabled those participating to have a better basis for providing information to their constituents.

7.   The student recruitment landscape remains turbulent, with global student flows influenced by a variety of factors. Overall, there remains a high level of uncertainty around outcomes, but we continue to carefully track data and to mitigate risk in relation to targets and budgeted tuition fee income by taking necessary action through the cycle.

8.   Court is likely aware of the UK Supreme Court judgement in April with a ruling setting out the definition of the terms 'woman', 'man' and 'sex' for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010. The ruling provides legal clarity on the definition of the above terms under the Act. The application of this legal clarification, in particular in relation to single-sex spaces, has generated considerable debate in our community and in universities across the UK – I have participated in two online meetings with the leadership of Universities UK and with the Equality & Human Rights Commission to assist with understanding and management of the implications for universities. At Edinburgh, we are applying the law to our internal policies and guidance in a measured way, with the aim of balancing rights and needs. Much of the debate has focused on access to facilities. While the law does not permit use of designated single-sex facilities on grounds other than biological sex, we are fortunate that many of our buildings have gender-neutral and single-occupancy provision, and we will proactively keep this under review. In practical terms, we have developed a QR code system and campaign to help members of our community identify where they can find the nearest gender-neutral toilet. We are currently finalising a short guidance document to summarise the type of provision we have, and how it should be accessed so that we remain compliant with the law.

9.   The UK Government published an Immigration White Paper on 11 May motivated by a desire to reduce net migration figures. The paper proposes an international student fee levy in England (a figure of 6 per cent has been mooted), increased salary thresholds, a change to the qualifying period for indefinite leave to remain from five to ten years, raising the sponsor requirements for international students to ensure compliance and a reduction in international post-study work entitlement from 2 years to 18 months. Following confirmation that the fee levy would be a devolved matter, the Scottish Government have indicated that they would not seek to introduce such a fee in Scotland. Professor Harmon, Vice-Principal Students, wrote to our student body to inform, but also to reassure, about the importance that we place on the contribution of our international student body.

10. The Scottish Government published their programme for Government 2025-2026 on 6 May, which focussed on existing priority areas – eradicating child poverty, the economy, climate emergency, and ensuring high quality and sustainable public services. The programme captures a broad range of government commitments ahead of the election in Spring 2026. Regarding the HE Sector, existing commitments were restated with regard to: maintaining the commitment to 'free tuition' and 'keeping university tuition free'; reinforced the commitment to 'widening access to higher education for students

from the most socio-economically disadvantaged communities – towards our goal of 20% of all entrants being from the 20% most deprived communities by 2030'; commitment to 'creating a University Proof of Concept Fund focused on supporting research projects with significant economic potential to progress towards the formation of new companies by building prototypes, achieving market validation and attracting investment'.

11. Following from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) indicative funding allocations in April, SFC issued final funding allocations for 2025-26 on 29 May. In aggregate our uplifts and reductions result in a net positive year-on-year movement on total SFC funding for 2025-26 (£+5.8M, +3.2%), comparing favourably to a sector uplift of +2.5%. There is movement from indicative funding in our Main Teaching Grant, mainly relating to our funded student places for controlled subjects and funding for Expensive Strategically Important subjects.

12. In February, Court approved our Knowledge Exchange and Innovation Fund (KEIF) Strategy for the SFC. Since then, we have received feedback from the SFC's expert panel and we have made amendments accordingly. The document remains largely intact and has been reviewed by our Vice-Principal Research & Enterprise and CEO of Edinburgh Innovations. SFC plan to publish KEIF documents on their website over the summer.

13. Recruitment for two key posts, the Vice-Principal Research & Innovation and the Chief Financial Officer, will take place during week commencing 23 June, Court will be kept updated on the outcomes.

14. Related events:
   - Participated in several online UUK discussions on the Supreme Court judgement.
   - Participated as Board member in several Scottish Funding Council Board meetings.
   - Joined a Universities Scotland meeting of the Corporate Governance Group.
   - Participated in a Russell Group Board away Day, hosted by Newcastle University.
   - Participated in a Universities Scotland Main Committee and Strategy session.
   - Hosted a roundtable meeting with local MSPS, Jeremy Balfour, Miles Briggs, Sarah Boyack, Foysol Choudhury, Alex Cole-Hamilton, Gordon MacDonald, Ben McPherson, and Lorna Slater to discuss the University's finances. I also similarly spoke with local MPs Christine Jardine, Chris Murray, and Tracy Gilbert, in a separate online roundtable.
   - Welcomed Anas Sarwar MSP, Leader of the Scottish Labour Party, to the Edinburgh Futures Institute (EFI) prior to him participating in a Business School organised event 'Question Time with Anas Sarwar MSP and Scotland's Industry Leaders'.
   - Welcomed guests attending the Royal Society of Edinburgh Conference on Funding of Tertiary Education in Scotland at a dinner hosted by the University at EFI. I also participated in the second day of events of the conference, which included 'In conversation with 'Lord David Willetts and Professor Sir Anton Muscatelli'.
   - Hosted Lord Willetts and other guests at a well-attended meeting of the Foundation for Science & Technology at our Bayes Institute, with a focus on supercomputing, and at a dinner thereafter in Old College.

- Gave evidence at the Education, Children and Young People Committee.
- Participated in a working dinner with the Edinburgh Principals.

Strategy 2030 Themes
Our People
15. In early June the Leaders Forum met in person for the second time this year with c.125 of the University's extended leadership coming together to hear the latest information on the budget proposals that had been discussed at Policy & Resources Committee; reflections on leading through change from three members of the Forum, Marion Thain, Matthias Schwannauer and Willem Hollman, and headlines and actions from the staff survey. Discussions centred around various aspects of leading change. There was good engagement at the meeting and at an hour-long online session the following day which gave more time to answer questions and continue the discussion.

16. The Senior Team visited the School of Biological Sciences at the very end of April and heard about current activities and challenges from the Head of School Thorunn Helgason plus updates on research activity and the approach to learning and teaching.

17. Since the first communication of the financial challenges in summer 2024, colleagues from HR, Finance and SLT have been meeting regularly with the joint trade unions to provide updates and context to decisions being taken. Trade Union representatives have received financial data in the form of tables and charts, depicting the emerging Q1 and Q2 positions, and have had early sight of Q3. Since January, the Interim Director of Finance, Provost and Director of HR have held three formal meetings to talk through the details of the finances and answer questions and on 12 June I met, together with Dr Catherine Martin and Jo Roger, with the leadership of UCU Edinburgh and UCU Scotland to seek an agreement that could avert industrial action.

18. UCU have submitted an extensive list of sensitive financial data to which they seek access. This has been responded to and all appropriate information was provided, with explanations for why other commercially sensitive data cannot be shared. UCU branches in many other universities across England and Scotland have used the same "lack of provision of clear financial data" approach to reject the need for job losses.

19. UCU have balloted for action and gained a mandate, calling discontinuous strike action for 20 June (Open Day) and 8-12 September (Welcome Week) and continuous action short of strike from 20 June onwards. As mentioned above, we still hope that the industrial action can be averted. A verbal update will be provided to Court because the discussions are continuing.

20. Unite and Unison branches in Edinburgh have confirmed they are not balloting for Industrial Action at this time, citing a preference to understand the scale of the changes proposed.

21. Related events:
- Participated in an online meeting with the Secretary of State about immigration.
- Delighted to welcome attendees and award winners of the People of the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Awards Ceremony.
- Participated in the Leaders' Forum.

Learning, Teaching and Students

22. As reported in the Student Experience Report at the last Court meeting, the majority of our related work has been extended and incorporated into the Learning and Teaching workstream of the programme to deliver financial savings and reshape the University. This workstream concentrates on the necessary changes to our curriculum, teaching, assessment, feedback, and student services support. It will focus on four core areas: 1) Implementation of the Learning and Teaching Strategy, including ongoing work on assessment and feedback and curriculum development; 2) Future Students; 3) Portfolio Review, developing institutional-wide principles for extending our portfolio review in the current context; 4) Enabling Initiatives, to review and implement consistent and standard policies and standard processes in student and academic administration for taught and research students, supported by appropriate organisational structures.

23. The groups are working on a set of objectives and actions to be prioritised and sequenced over the coming months and years to deliver to the overall workstream expectations.

24. Our philanthropically-funded Insights Programme helps our Widening Participation second year undergraduate students develop the confidence, skills and connections to consider a range of careers through introductions to Edinburgh alumni working in an exciting range of sectors and environments locally and globally. The 2025 host cities are Boston, New York or Washington DC in the United States and Brussels in Belgium. The immersion week for these students took place last week and featured remarks from Vice-Principal Leigh Chalmers and Provost Kim Graham, which were especially welcomed.

25. Along with colleagues I attended the 2025 University Sports Union Blues and Colours Awards Evening on Thursday 5 June 2025 in McEwan Hall. The evening celebrated 137 students receiving Colours, Half Blues, and Blues, as well as presenting seven prestigious awards and announcing the 2025 Hall of Fame inductees: Oliver Wilkes, Stephen Clegg and Aleksandra Kalucka. The event wonderfully showcased the exceptional talent and dedication of those involved in sport at Edinburgh. You can read more about the awards here: Blues and Colours Awards Evening 2025 | Sport

26. Our Summer graduations are just around the corner taking place 1-15 July. The occasions are one of the highlights of the year and I hope many of you will be able to join us to celebrate the achievements of our wonderful students with their supporters. We have careful contingency and disruption planning by the relevant teams. We do allow for peaceful protests but we will do all we can to keep disruption to a minimum.

27. Related events:
- Regular monthly meetings with our Students' Association Sabbatical Team, including a farewell to the outgoing Sabbaticals Dora Herndon, Ruth Elliott, Dylan Walch and Indigo Williams, and a welcome to the incoming Sabbaticals Ash Scholz, Akrit Ghimire, Katya Amott, Syjil Ramjuthan plus John Rappa who is continuing for a second year.
- Monthly, one to one, meetings with the Students' Association President.
- Welcomed attendees of the Aligning Curriculum Conference, organised for and by the further and higher education institutions who are involved in delivering the skills agenda of the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal.

Research and Innovation

28. As noted above, the University was announced as the home of the UK's next national supercomputer. The significant investment represents a huge vote of confidence in the University and its future and endorses our status as a world-leader in supercomputing and AI, recognising the strength and value of Edinburgh's expertise. Once installed, the supercomputer will allow Edinburgh academics and others from across the UK to undertake large-scale complex modelling, test scientific theories and improve products and public services in areas including medicine, climate change and national security.

29. In addition to the Supercomputer the CSR announcement confirmed:
   - £22.6 billion per year for research and development by 2029-30 (a total £86 billion commitment across the Spending Review period); DSIT's research funding settlement will reach £15.2bn per year by 2029/30.
   - £2 billion investment to deliver the AI Action Plan, as well as funding at least a 20-fold expansion of the UK's AI Research Resource

30. We launched our Innovation Career Pathway, the first of its kind in the UK, which will boost development for academics wishing to focus on commercialisation and engagement with industry. One of the key features of the Research & Innovation Strategy, the Pathway elevates innovation alongside traditional research metrics such as research output and teaching contributions. It includes a new UK-first Competency Framework that sets out the skills, knowledge and behaviours required to support advancement. The Pathway has been very well received by the sector, including via a briefing with Lord Patrick Vallance where TenU discussed innovation and academic careers.

31. Breakthroughs and discoveries:
- Scientists using living human brain tissue have shown for the first time how a toxic form of a protein linked to Alzheimer's can stick to and damage the connections between brain cells. https://www.ed.ac.uk/news/live-brain-cell-test-reveals-protein-link-to-alzheimers
- The Amazon rainforest may be able to survive long-term drought caused by climate change, but adjusting to a drier, warmer world would exact a heavy toll, a study suggests. https://www.ed.ac.uk/news/amazon-could-survive-long-term-drought-but-at-a-high-cost
- Scientists have created the first soft robots that can walk straight out of the machines that make them. The flexible, four-legged devices were developed using a new 3D printing system, which could pave the way for the use of intelligent soft robotic systems with no electronic parts. https://www.ed.ac.uk/news/world-first-soft-robots-walk-off-machine-that-makes-them
- Having a dog at home could help to prevent eczema in children who are genetically prone to the condition, a study suggests. https://www.ed.ac.uk/news/pet-dogs-could-combat-genetic-eczema-risk-in-children
- Lowering the legal tackle height in women's rugby is proving effective in reducing head contacts between players, a world-first study suggests. https://www.ed.ac.uk/news/lower-tackle-height-changing-face-of-womens-rugby

32. Major award news includes:

- Dr Alex Serb from Engineering awarded £3.3M from Defence Science and Technology Laboratory for "Scaling, exploiting, and demonstrating ACAN for Defence".
- £1.8M from the ARIA Synthetic Plants programme for Dr Robert Smith in the School of Social and Political Science.
- Hilary Richardson, Philosophy Psychology and Language Sciences, has a BBSC New Investigator award for £1.3M "Clarifying the neurocognitive mechanisms of emotion reasoning and development in school-aged children".
- Nehal Bhuta, School of Law, is part of the Centre for Algorithmic Life (led by the University of Durham), one of only 4 new £10M Leverhulme Trust Centres funded for 10 years.
- Professor Susan McVie is part of a new Policing Academic Centre of Excellence (P-ACE) led by Edinburgh Napier.

33. Related events:
- Participated in a meeting of the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology Research Security Independent Advisory Board.
- Participated in two days of Universitas21 meetings hosted by the University of California, Davis.
- Welcomed a senior delegation from Rice University during their visit to the University, led by their Provost, Professor Amy Dittmar.
- Welcomed attendees of the EIE25 investors reception in Edinburgh to celebrate the synergy between academia and industry in Scotland.
- Participated in a conference on 'Unlocking Innovation: Research-Intensive Universities as Drivers of Competitiveness and Societal Impact', and various League of European Research Universities meetings over three days in Brussels.
- Participated in a 'Frontier AI and scholarships' round table at 10 Downing Street.

Social and Civic Responsibility
34. In May we published our Responsible Investment Policy Statement (2025), which includes commitments to social investment, decarbonising our investment portfolios, and nature-positive investment strategies. A new Responsible Investment Advisory Group has been created to further examine the role of human rights in the context of the University's investments and to establish a representations process for students and staff to express views on investment issues.

35. This has been a busy period engaging with local partners including developing a new community planning model with the city council and other key agencies in the city. We've also been delivering ongoing work with local politicians including hosting a debate on Assisted Dying Bill led by Daniel Johnston MSP.

36. The "Edinburgh Pathway", our approach to developing sustainable supply chains, has been developed to help guide our buying community in how purchasing can contribute to the "Regen" strategy targets. The pathway also signals our expectations on sustainability to our supply chains over the next five years. There has been strong public sector and UK-HE interest in signing up to this pathway, which would strengthen our position as perceived sector leaders, and our negotiating position with supply chains. We expect to launch in the coming months.

37. We will shortly enter into agreement with training partner organisations to roll out our first-in-sector Biodiversity Literacy Training to be available to all UK HE and FE institutions. Over the past few years we have increased the number of staff and students trained within the University from c.500 per year to c.5000 per year and we hope that this cross-sector approach will take our impact in this area to the next order of magnitude.

38. We are pleased to share news of the appointment of Professor Margaret Graham as Director of the Edinburgh Earth Initiative (EEI). This follows the University Executive's approval of the revised EEI Strategy in November 2024. Margaret is a globally recognised Environmental Geochemist with extensive senior leadership experience. She has served most recently as Director of Internationalisation in the School of GeoSciences, and co-directs the International Institute for Environmental Studies. She will start the appointment in July.

39. Related events local and global:
- Participated in the installation of the Governor of Edinburgh Castle.
- Participated in a panel discussion at a working dinner hosted by Lloyds Banking Group in Edinburgh.
- Participated in a reception to celebrate Norwegian National Day at the Norwegian Consulate General in Edinburgh.
- Participated in a meeting of the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal Joint Committee, and chaired a meeting of the HE/FE Strategy Group.
- Participated in a Civil Service Leadership Group Scotland Dinner at Dynamic Earth.
- Attended the Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2025 Programme launch.
- Participated in the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh Triennial dinner.
- Welcomed a delegation from Huazhong University of Science and Technology University during their visit to the College of Science and Engineering.
- Participated in a working dinner hosted by Prosper on 'Unleashing the Power of Scotland's City Regions'.
- Spoke online at a seminar hosted by Lund University on global developments in the HE sector.
- Attended the Trooping the Colour event in London as a guest of the Scotland Office.

Resource implications
40. There are no specific resource implications associated with the paper.

Risk Management
41. 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
42. 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
43. No specific Equality and Diversity issues are identified.

Next steps/implications

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

Consultation

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

Further information

46. I will take questions on any item at Court.

47. *Author & Presenter*
    Professor Sir Peter Mathieson
    Principal and Vice-Chancellor
    June 2025

Freedom of Information

48. Open version

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

UNIVERSITY COURT

23 June 2025

Exception Committee Report

Committee Name

1.   Exception Committee

Date of Meeting

2.   The Committee considered business by correspondence over 5-6 June 2025.

Action Required

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

Key points

Paragraphs 4-5: closed section

Further information

4.   <u>*Author*</u>   <u>*Presenter*</u>
     Lewis Allan   Janet Legrand
     Governance & Court Services   Convener, Exception Committee

Freedom of Information

5.   Open version

UNIVERSITY COURT

23 June 2025

Policy & Resources Committee Report

Committee Name
1.   Policy & Resources Committee (PRC)

Date of Meeting
2.   2 June 2025

The minutes of meetings of Policy & Resources Committee can be found at:
https://governance-strategic-planning.ed.ac.uk/governance/university-committees/court-committees/policy-and-resources-committee/minutes

C3

UNIVERSITY COURT

23 June 2024

Governance & Nominations Committee Report

Committee Name

1. Governance & Nominations Committee

Date of Meeting

2. 19 May 2025

Paragraphs 3-14: closed section

The membership of Court and its committees can be found on the University website:
https://governance-strategic-planning.ed.ac.uk/governance/university-committees

Equality & Diversity

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

Further information

16. *Author*   *Presenter*
    Daniel Wedgwood   Janet Legrand
    Head of Court Services   Convener, Nominations Committee

Freedom of Information

17. Open version

UNIVERSITY COURT

23 June 2025

Audit and Risk Committee Report

Committee Name

1.   Audit & Risk Committee.

Date of Meeting

2.   5 June 2025

Paragraphs 3-18: closed section

Equality & Diversity

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

Further information

20. *Author*
     Kirstie Graham
     Court Services

     Presenter
     Douglas Millican
     Convener, Audit and Risk Committee

Freedom of Information

21. Open version

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

UNIVERSITY COURT

23 June 2025

Knowledge Strategy Committee Report

Committee Name

1.   Knowledge Strategy Committee

Date of Meeting

2.   29 May 2025

Paragraphs 3-30: closed section

Further information

31. *Author*   *Presenter*
    Jamie Tait   Colm Harmon
    Governance Manager & Clerk to KSC   Vice-Principal Students & Interim
                                                        Convener to KSC

Freedom of Information

32. Open version

UNIVERSITY COURT

23 June 2025

Senatus Academicus Report

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

Dates of Meeting
2. This report relates to the following meetings of Senate:
   - the ordinary meetings of Senate held on 5 February and 20 May 2025;
   - the special meetings of Senate held on 26 March and 24 April 2025; and
   - the e-Senate of 23 April to 7 May 2025

Action requested
3. Court is invited to note:
   - the confirmed minutes of the Senate meetings held on 5 February and 26 March 2025, and the confirmed e-Senate report of 23 April to 7 May 2025;
   - the report of business considered by Senate at its meetings of 24 April and 20 May 2025;
   - that the special meeting of 24 April 2025 was called by the Principal and Provost, as provided for under Senate Standing Order 2; and
   - that the full agenda, papers and minutes of Senate meetings are published on the Senate website.

Key points – meeting of 24 April 2025
University Finance Update
4. The Interim Director of Finance, Nirmal Borkhataria, provided Senate with an update on the University's finances.

Workstreams Update
5. The Provost, Professor Kim Graham, provided Senate with an update on the workstreams associated with "Reimagine our size, shape and ways of working to secure the long-term future of our University".

Open Q&A
6. An open Q&A session was held to provide Senate members with an opportunity to ask questions on the University's finances and on the workstreams. The University Finances SharePoint was updated following consideration of questions arising during the meeting and of questions which had been submitted in advance of the meeting.

Key points – meeting of 20 May 2025
Minutes and e-Senate Reports
7. Senate approved the minutes of the meetings held on 5 February 2025 and 26 March 2025. Senate approved the e-Senate report of 23 April to 7 May 2025.

Convener's Communications

8. Following Senate's special meeting of 26 March 2025, it was reported that Court had received a report on Senate's meeting which had included the outcome of voting and the associated statements. The Convener updated Senate on discussion at Court's meeting of 28 April 2025, and drew members' attention to the Court Communications paper (S 24/25 6P).

9. The Vice Principal Students, Professor Colm Harmon, updated Senate on initial consideration of the motions arising from the Portfolio Review and Diversity of Educational Provision paper (S 24/25 4B), which had been considered at the special meeting of Senate held on 26 March 2025.

10. In advance of agenda item 7.2, 'Financial Resilience Strategy Update and Confidence in the University Executive', the Convener provided an update to Senate on the University's financial situation.

Report from the Honorary Degrees Committee

11. With the exception of one nomination, Senate approved the nominations for the award of Honorary Degrees and Fellowships as detailed within the paper (S 24/25 6E CLOSED).

Insights into student use of Artificial Intelligence

12. Senate noted the student perspective on AI in education as detailed within the paper (S 24/25 6F).

Knowledge Strategy Committee – Future Governance

13. By a majority vote, Senate approved an amendment to the paper (S 24/25 6G) to include an additional option for consideration. 83 members approved, 37 members did not approve, and 7 members abstained. Senate were informed that, following approval of the amendment, the associated action for Senate to consider a replacement for Knowledge Strategy Committee had been withdrawn. Members were informed that the implications of the amendment would be considered, and that a revised paper would be presented to Senate for consideration at a future meeting.

14. By majority votes, Senate approved:
  *   the standing down of the Knowledge Strategy Committee on 1 August 2025. 109 members approved, 11 members did not approve, and 7 members abstained.
  *   additions to the terms of reference of the Senate standing committees, as specified within the paper (S 24/25 6G). 74 members approved, 39 members did not approve, and 15 members abstained.

Senate Standing Committee Membership

15. By a majority vote, Senate approved the Senate standing committee membership for 2025/26 as specified within the paper (S 24/25 6H). 117 members approved, 8 members did not approve, and 13 members abstained.

Senate Annual Internal Effectiveness Review

16. Senate approved the plans for the 2024-25 Senate Annual Internal Effectiveness Review as set out in the paper (S 24/25 6I).

Senate Exception Committee Membership
17. Senate approved the Senate Exception Committee membership for the 2025-26 academic year as set out in the paper (S 24/25 6J).

Senate External Review Task and Finish Group
18. Senate noted the update on progress made against the AdvanceHE external review report recommendations and suggestions as detailed within the paper (S 24/25 6K). In addition, Senate noted the Group's recommendation that the Senate External Review Task and Finish Group conclude on 31 July 2025.

Budget Working Group
19. Senate noted the report from the Budget Working Group and, by a majority vote, approved the recommendations as specified within the paper (S 24/25 6L). 96 members approved, 35 members did not approve, and 11 members abstained.

Financial Resilience Strategy Update and Confidence in the University Executive
20. Senate discussed and, by a majority vote, approved the following motion as set out in the paper (S 24/25 6M): "Senate has no confidence in the University Executive's leadership in relation to the University's financial situation." 91 members approved, 43 members did not approve, and 13 members abstained. Senate was informed that the result would be recorded within the minutes, would be communicated to the University Executive, and would be communicated the University Court at its June 2025 meeting.

Recommendations for enhancing Senate oversight of research
21. Senate noted the draft proposals for enhancing Senate oversight of, and engagement with, research matters as set out in the paper (S 24/25 6N).

Research Ethics and Defence and Security
22. Senate noted the update on progress made in enhancing the ethics policies and processes governing University research on defence and security; and discussed the recommendations of the Working Group on Research Ethics and Defence as set out in the paper (S 24/25 6O).

Full Agenda and Papers
23. [Senate Agenda, Papers, and Minutes website](#).

Further information
24. *Author*   *Presenter*
     Fraser Rudge   Peter Mathieson
     Committees and Governance   Principal & Vice-Chancellor
     Manager

     Academic Quality and Standards
     June 2025

Freedom of Information
25. Open paper.

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

UNIVERSITY COURT

23 June 2025

Finance and Planning Update Report

Paragraphs 1-12: closed section

Resource implications
13. There are no specific requests for resource in this paper.

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

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals
15. The Director of Finance and the Finance Team fully support the outcomes of Strategy 2030 and the UN Sustainable Development Goals by working to secure the ongoing financial sustainability of the University.

Equality & Diversity
16. Specific issues of equality and diversity are not relevant to this paper as the content focusses primarily on financial strategy and/or financial project considerations.

Next steps/implications
17. We would welcome feedback as outlined in the discussion above

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

Further information
19. *Author*   *Presenter*
    Stuart Graham   Nirmal Borkhataria
    Head of FIRST   Interim Director of Finance

    10 June 2025

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20. Open version

UNIVERSITY COURT

23 June 2025

2025-26 and 2026-27 Budget and Strategic Cost Saving Proposals

Paragraphs 1-64: closed section

Further information

65. *Authors*

   Kim Graham, Provost

   Nirmal Borkhataria, Interim Director of Finance

   Rona Smith, Pauline Manchester, Governance and Strategic Planning

   Stuart Graham, Callum Smith
   FIRST team leads

   Gillian Richardson, Strategic Change

Presenters

   Kim Graham, Provost

   Nirmal Borkhataria, Interim Director of Finance

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UNIVERSITY COURT

23 June 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.

5.   It is specifically highlighted that, due to timings of paper submission and the Court meeting, this paper was written by Dora Herndon, the 2024/25 President of the Association, and reflects on the outgoing team's activity. It is presented by Ash Scholz, the 2025/26 President, and also looks forward to the incoming team's aspirations.

Discussion
Sabbatical Officers Update
6.   I'm incredibly proud of my team and what we've accomplished this year, and so I wanted to dedicate this report to becoming a high-level wrap-up of all of our successes this year.

7.   Some headline figures:
- ~10 Parliamentarians engaged with
- ~10 MSPs engaged with
- ~15 Edinburgh Councillors engaged with
- ~10 breakfast clubs created
- 10+ cities visited
- 35+ student groups directly supported
- 130+ University Committees or Groups served on by at least one Sabbatical Officer this year. *(This doesn't include all of the various one to one meetings*

we have with people in the University, or the many things we do within the Students' Association, as well.)

8.   And more! It was impossible to tally the students we've met, the meetings we've done, the hours of overtime, the tears shed, and the lives improved. It's no easy task trying to calculate the impact of a sabbatical year, but I hope these numbers begin to give you a glimpse into everything we've done this year.

Team Highlights
9.   Our team has done a lot this year, but there are two things we are most proud of:

10. First, the relationship we've built with the University. We inherited generations of sabbatical officers' growing frustrations with the University and made a conscious decision to put that aside and make the most productive year we could. To be clear: I am leaving with plenty of frustrations, but I have also resolved plenty of frustrations by working through them with University staff and finding practical solutions to benefit students. I think we reached a level of partnership this year that hasn't been seen in a while, if ever. There is still work to be done, but I hope we have laid the foundation for our successors to have an even more successful year.

11. Second, we're proud of the Student Experience Framework. We're proud that we really sat down to think through what Student Experience is so early in our terms, and we're proud that our thinking resonated with so many others, as well. I hope that even after we're gone, people continue to interrogate what student experience actually is, and especially in a space like Court, ask *how* something is going to benefit student experience, not just if it will.

12. We also have had several individual successes, and so I'll be sharing three per sabbatical officer.

Individual Successes
Dora Herndon, President
13. My first success would have to be my contributions in meetings. It's a simple answer, and hard to describe, but I know that I have altered the course of important conversations at this University and I'm incredibly proud of that. Serving on as many committees as I do, it's hard to be able to achieve the same level of impressive, manifesto-driven work as, for example, a VP Community. However, I know that those interjections were also important for students, and I'm proud of the impact I have had this year, even if a lot of it was from within the committee cycle rather than outside it.

14. Second, I'm proud of my work to represent international students at the national level. I was able to be a part of crafting a nationwide consultation of international students which culminated in a report on international student experience. I then got to speak at and compère a launch event for the report held at Westminster. At the event I got to speak to MP's and other relevant stakeholders. Everyone I spoke to really engaged with the report and wanted to know what they could do to improve things for international students. This was especially well-timed because the event was right after the Immigration White Paper dropped. It was great to get to engage with so many high-level people on an issue that is so personal to both me and many students I know.

15. Finally, I've done work to improve how we help students engage with senior University staff. Previously, the Students' Association has run 'Student Voice Forums,' but I didn't feel they were effectively achieving their purpose anymore. That being said, I think it's really important for senior staff to meet students other than just the sabbatical officers, especially since we aren't currently sitting in classrooms. There are some issues that current students are much better placed to bring up and address. So, I tried a couple different formats, such as setting up a table in high-traffic areas with Lucy Evans to talk to students where they are or running up a table discussion with some of our elected representatives and SLT. I think it was a good way to elevate current students' voices, make senior staff seem like real people (rather than just a name on an email), and facilitate conversations that wouldn't have otherwise happened.

John Rappa, VP Activities and Services
16. John's year has been characterized by providing material support for students. They're passionate about making sure students are fed, whether we feed them or support them to feed themselves.

17. First, they've worked to improve our Students' Association run free breakfast club. They've grown average weekly attendance from ~80 to ~250 students per week. Additionally, they've supported school representatives to get their schools to start free breakfast clubs, with ~10 being started this year. Free breakfast doesn't just support students with the cost-of-living, it is a great way to build community, particularly in schools. A lot of the students that come are regulars; it has helped them meet new friends and has become a weekly hangout event.

18. Second, they've worked to improve the accessibility of the participation grant and hardship fund. The participation grant offers money to help students participate in sports, societies, and other activities. The hardship fund helps student experiencing unexpected financial difficulty to cover basic living costs. John worked to get the application window of the participation grant expanded, as well as ensuring funding would cover international students experiencing hardship, as well.

19. Finally, they've worked to ensure that all University study spaces should have heat and eat facilities nearby. A standard heat and eat would have at least one microwave and a hot water point. This supports students to pack their own lunches, addressing cost-of-living concerns. It especially helps our commuter students who can't simply go home to make lunch. And, most importantly, students shouldn't be studying for too many hours without eating! It encourages students to follow healthier lifestyles during exam season. Like the showers on campus for cyclists, it's a facility that the modern student needs and they should be the standard for our spaces.

Ruth Elliott, VP Community
20. Ruth has seen a lot of success this year in her external work, whether she is liaising with the Council, MSPs, or other Students' Unions. That being said, she has also managed to achieve successes within the University, as well.

21. Ruth's first success has been her lobbying work, particularly her national lobbying work on the Scottish Housing Bill. The first draft of the bill had no mention of students. Through the work of her and other student representatives, student

housing is now a priority in Scottish Parliament. Not only that, but it is a priority backed by Greens, Liberal Democrats, and Conservatives, a coalition no one could have expected. Ruth's hard work and dedication this year has altered legislation. The fight isn't over until the bill becomes a law, but she has most certainly had an impact.

22. Ruth's second success is connected to the first and is her work to unite sabbatical officers and students' unions across the UK to better lobby collectively on national issues. She and a handful of other officers built a national housing campaign from scratch. A lot of officers have joined and contributed, but Ruth's organizational skills undeniably kept the group on track and enabled the success they were able to have.

23. Finally, she has managed to get a couple other, smaller projects over the line, some of which have had VPs Community working on them for years. First, Ruth has gotten a commitment to put something more 'canteen style' in the Appleton Tower Cafe, such as a salad bar or something similar. Students have been asking for a canteen on campus for years, and this is an exciting start. Second, she has progressed the long-standing desire for a 'Green Hub' on campus. With Edinburgh Innovations leaving their space in Appleton Tower and a question of what the space should be used for now, Ruth submitted a proposal for a space for sustainability-related student activities, such as society space, a heat and eat, and a community fridge. Finally, she has convinced the University to trial a 'Borrow Cup Scheme,' which would have cafes serve coffee in reusable cups with a deposit charged, with the deposit being refundable from any University Cafe. They're being trialled at ECA for now but are an exciting opportunity to cut down on waste.

Dylan Walch, VP Education
24. Dylan has made a lot of progress this year in promoting partnership between students and the University and ensuring certain standards of teaching quality are met.

25. Dylan is proud to have cosigned the Self Evaluation & Action Plan (SEAP) with the Principal and co-produced the actions the institution has set itself. The SEAP is a new institutional annual quality reporting process to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), more information here. Dylan's involvement helped make sure the University is working in partnership with students to make positive changes aligned with students' interests.

26. He also revamped the Student Partnership Agreement between the Students' Association (on behalf of students) and the University so that the relationship can have additional structure and reflect best practice within the sector. The previous document was not used or referenced much, and the revamp was intended to make the agreement both more functional and known. The new Student Partnership Agreement will help coordinate our shared objectives on an annual basis and create space for reflection within the year to feed into the following agreement leading to continuous improvement of our working relationship.

27. Finally, and most importantly, Dylan has been a strong voice in advocating for the University to create and enforce a standard assessment information package. This would ensure all students have all the information they need to perform well at

an assessment, by standardizing the level of information they are required to have been given beforehand, i.e. marking guidelines/rubrics, exemplar answers, and clear guidance on the marker's expectations. The goal is to make sure every student understands both the technicalities of an assessment, as well as what their specific marker wants from them.

Indigo Williams, VP Welfare
28. A priority for Indigo has been better prioritizing and responding to the needs of minority groups, particularly BME and transgender individuals.

29. First, she authored a staff training proposal to deepen awareness of the issues faced by BME and trans students, respectively, for frontline staff members in roles where they're expected to support students. This is following on from issues where students have felt staff didn't truly understand themselves or their situation.

30. Second, she collaborated with Sport & Exercise to devote a space once per week in the pleasance gym solely for trans and non-binary students and staff to workout out in, for free, so that they have an emotionally, socially, and physically safe space to engage in physical exercise. The goal is to get more trans and non-binary individuals interested in exercise and comfortable going to the gym even without a designated space, supporting Sport & Exercise's goal of promoting active wellbeing is all students regardless of background, and our goal of ensuring trans and non-binary students feel safe in campus spaces.

31. Finally, she successfully lobbied for a DEI audit of the University's Grade 8-10 hiring practices. This started following her serving on a high-level recruitment panel and feeling concern about the capacity for unconscious bias to influence the hiring process at pre-interview stages. The new University Head of EDI will be involved in examining this, as well.

Parting thoughts
32. I'm honoured to have been able to serve on such a high-level board, particularly so early on. Upon reflection, I do believe there is room for Court to improve, though, especially given the level of change the University will be undertaking shortly.

33. First, I believe there could be a better process of Court considering staff concerns. The letter from Senate at the last meeting and the vote of no-confidence against the Executive need to be taken seriously. These are the people who will be doing the bulk of the change required in the coming years, and their positive engagement is essential for success. I do believe that trust is earned, and accept it's likely that some staff will never be truly bought in until they see proof that change has worked and that leadership knew what they were doing all along. However, that cannot be a reason to discount the concerns our staff have been expressing.

34. I'm also concerned about how staff members on Court are sometimes treated for raising that discontent. They know first-hand exactly how difficult it is going to be to achieve this scale of change because they're deeply familiar with the people who will be experiencing and actioning it, and we should reflect on their experience and perspective and consider these more carefully than I think I've experienced.

35. Second, one part of getting staff to trust that the Executive knows what they're doing, is getting staff to trust that Court can effectively manage the performance of the Senior Leadership. At an extreme, would this Court act to remove somebody if they felt that was required? I'm not sure the measures in place right now would allow us to react effectively. Especially if that person was the Principal; what metrics do we have to check the Principal's effectiveness that aren't given to us internally? We do need to give the Executive space to do their job and run the organization, but how we both support them in doing so, whilst holding them to account feels nebulous.

36. One further reflection is that Court hasn't rejected a single paper in my entire year. Yes, the purpose of the governance steps beforehand is to scrutinize and develop papers, but it sometimes feels like we rely on that too much and then don't play our part in fully scrutinizing items. Additionally, sometimes Court members do try to scrutinize items and get pushback for not trusting the subcommittees or the Executive. I don't feel it's a governing bodies job just to trust what is presented; it's their job to ask the hard questions. Subcommittees do serve a purpose, but I think Court should be allowed to sometimes come to a different conclusion than a subcommittee.

37. I hope these comments are taken on board as constructive, and coming from the genuine place they do. Thank you to my fellow Court members for a memorable and formative year, and I wish you all the best with the next one!

New Team
38. By the time Court meets, the new team will have been in post for almost 3 weeks. This year's team are:

President:	Ash Scholz (they/them)
Vice President Activities and Services:	John Rappa (they/them)
	- continuing 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)

39. You can see more about the sabbatical officer roles, as well as the names of our other elected officers, in the attached appendix.

40. They are a really good team. They are about as experienced as an incoming team could be, but it's going to be a lot for them getting up to speed with the finances as they are. I fully believe they can do it, but please take care of them for me in the meantime!

41. The sabbatical changeover took place formally on 6 June, following a 2-week initial induction period including a handover programme led by the outgoing team, a residential induction, training, team building and initial planning with the senior management team, and introductory meetings with Association colleagues and key University contacts. The programme of summer training continues over the coming weeks, focussing on building the team, introducing the new officers to the organisation and the University, as well as significant time focussed on planning and setting objectives for the coming year. This forms part of our annual approach to

sabbatical support and development, which also includes regular contact with an SMT buddy, a portfolio-based staff support colleague, and our programme of sabbatical and SMT quarterly review and planning sessions.

Operational Updates
End of year activity
42. Having trailed our Annual Teaching awards in our last report, we can now share the list of winners who joined us as we rolled out the red carpet at our annual Teaching Awards celebration at the end of April, in Pleasance theatre. The event showcases the range of inspiring people and activity within our community. We were particularly pleased to hear University colleagues on the night highlight and appreciate the role of the Association's awards, now in their 16th year, in shining a light on work that can otherwise go unrecognised, and, more generally, in raising the profile of great teaching and student support work in the University. You can now see and read about the event and the brilliant people shortlisted here: Teaching Awards

43. We've been welcoming and inducting our new student representatives (elected in March), as well as supporting outgoing representatives to leave behind handover information to enable a smooth transition and ensure that, for example, School Reps are up to speed with local issues as they start their role. Having seen growing demand for a return to more comprehensive in person training and community building for student leaders, we have reinstated a day long Rep Conference which took place on 23 May, bringing new reps together for core training on their roles. In addition, we've supported over 400 student societies to undertake their annual re-registration process, including electing new committee members, and booking and planning their 2025-26 activity, including booking of Welcome Week events. During 2024-25 we've supported around 5500 student-led events, meetings, workshops, rehearsals, classes delivered through student groups and are anticipating similar for the coming year.

Postgraduate Events Programme
44. Recognising the year-round nature of our PG cohort, a specific programme of PG social and community-building activities, extending across the summer, is now well under the way. The programme includes mixers, Board game evenings, summer picnics, See the City tours and activities, and so far take-up has been very positive with the city tours and activities, and picnic events in particular filling their booking quotas. We will use insights from this summer programme to continue this bespoke programme into the 2025-26 academic year.

Festival Activity
45. The Association is preparing for delivery of numerous hospitality outlets across our spaces, supporting our Festival programme partners, Pleasance Theatre Trust, and Gilded Balloon. There have been some additional challenges this year (as for other providers) with the City Council's planning process placing more substantial requirements, and the need to navigate neighbourhood objections in some cases.

46. As well as providing employment for around 100 of our current student staff over the summer, we also recruit an additional 100 staff to for the Festival period. Open recruitment for the remaining positions saw c1000 applications for 100 positions. We've also worked with Pleasance Theatre Trust (PTT) to promote the industry-

standard creative volunteering opportunities with PTT during Festival. This year, University of Edinburgh students volunteering in this way will also be accredited by us for their volunteering activity and secure recognition through the Saltire Scottish Government Scheme for volunteering.

47. We also contributed this year to the Careers Service Creative Cultures and Careers Event, providing students with information and advice on our festivals and events opportunities and also shared insight for students looking at this route for a career. As a result, we generated further interest in our festival summer job opportunities. Prior to Festival, our team also have significant activity supporting University Graduations, and the city's Pride Celebrations in June.

Teviot Row House – project update
48. We have been providing regular updates to Court members through this report on the progress of the Teviot Row House estates project. The work began in October 2024 and the original completion date was March 2025. Obviously, this date has passed. Delays to the completion of the project are mainly due to the discovery of further works that are required, in addition to the original scope and specification, to ensure the end building is safe and fit for future use.

49. Main delays have been caused by the need to rewire the building, and the associated builders work, some structural issues, and additional works to the domestic water systems and drainage. Further issues more recently discovered include unstable chimneys which require remedy.

50. The new completion date is still unknown although we are in close contact with the project team and are working towards a date in early 2026 for reopening.

Strategy and Finance Update
51. We ran our Annual Staff survey during April, and will use the results to drive enhancements to staff facing activity over the coming year. Detailed analysis will be fed back to us by our external research and insight partner later in the year but having undertaken substantial strategic staff-facing work during our current strategic plan, now in its final year, we are pleased that initial review of results confirmed that:

52. 92% of salaried staff would recommend us as a place to work (+2% on last year, which had been the first time we achieved our Strategic Plan KPI in relation to salaried staff).

53. 90% of hourly staff would recommend us as a place to work (+19% on last year, and means we have achieved our Strategic Plan KPI across both staff groups – 90% recommendation).

54. Identifying work streams based on the outcomes will happen once we have had the opportunity to see the full results and discuss these internally, although it's worth noting that our initial review suggests work this year to embed our appraisal process for salaried staff has seen some benefit with more staff feeling confident about their own objectives and 1-2-1 management support and feedback (and our latest appraisal around seeing a 95% completion rate).

55. Areas for development remain similar to last year – including increasing/enhancing learning and development opportunities, and particularly for hourly staff, increasing performance management/feedback. Helpfully we have an hourly-focussed current project working with relevant teams building resources and support for that, with new induction materials, a new hourly staff recognition scheme ('Gem of the Month') introduced last month, and performance management/development support approaches being developed for use from September.

56. At the same time, a project to develop our strategic approach to learning and development as an organisation is starting now with staff and manager focus groups and consultation during June. We are hosting our regular summer Staff Event on 12 June, bringing all salaried staff together for information sharing, networking, and planning – including an initial Strategic Plan review and planning session.

57. Our Strategic Development Subcommittee has agreed a plan and timeline for Strategic review, and development of a new strategic plan from April 2026, which will see the lion's share of this work being done between now and December, in order to give shape to 2025-26 budgeting and operational planning submissions early in the new year.

Paragraphs 58-60: closed section

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

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

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

Equality & Diversity
64. 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
65. We would welcome feedback from Court in relation to any of the issues outlined.

Consultation
66. Consultation on this paper was not required.

Further information
67. *Author*   *Presenter*
    Dora Herndon   Ash Scholz
    EUSA President 2024-25   EUSA President 2025-26
Freedom of Information
68. Open version

UNIVERSITY COURT

23 June 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.   The Sports Union is currently in a period of notable transition, with several staff changes underway and the upcoming change in student leadership. Philine Rouwers' term as EUSU President ends on 27 June, with Liv Stevens beginning the handover period from 19 June. The new Executive Committee will officially come into post from 1 July. We recently held our annual Blues & Colours Awards, celebrating the achievements of our students, volunteers, coaches, and alumni. As we look ahead to the 2025/26 season, we remain focussed on strengthening our services, supporting student development, and promoting wellbeing across the University community. It is an exciting time for the Sports Union as we build on recent progress and prepare for the year ahead.

Discussion
Staff Changes

Paragraphs 5-10: closed section

11. We hope this transitional period will allow us to review and evolve the EUSU staff structure to ensure it remains as effective and sustainable as possible going forward.

Blues & Colours Awards

12. On 5 June, we held our annual Blues & Colours Awards in McEwan Hall, celebrating the achievements of students, staff, and alumni across the sporting community.

13. Hall of Fame Inductees:
- Stephen Clegg was inducted into the Hall of Fame in recognition of his outstanding success as a para-swimmer. A three-time Paralympian and world-record holder, Stephen has won 17 medals across World, Paralympic, European, and Commonwealth competitions, including two golds at Paris 2024. He was recently awarded an MBE for Services to Swimming.
- Aleksandra Kalucka, a world-class speed climber, was inducted following a rapid rise in the international climbing world. After winning World Cup gold and securing silver at the World Championships, Aleksandra went on to win bronze at the Paris 2024 Olympics.
- Oliver Wilkes earned his place in the Hall of Fame through a remarkable journey from novice rower to Olympic medallist. Oli completed for GB in the men's four, winning European and World titles before capturing Olympic bronze in Paris.

14. Award Winners:
- McTernan Colour of the Year: Florence Guest (Women's Lacrosse Club) – for her exceptional contribution as president, coach, captain, umpire and leader within the club.
- Student Official of the Year: Ben Burton (Men's Hockey Club) – first-year student who has already umpired over 40 matches during his first six months at the University.
- Ewan Malcolm Student Coach of the Year: Yasmin Hengster (Sub-Aqua Club) – a qualified Open Water Instructor who has led the club's diving programme with expertise, care and enthusiasm.
- Coach of the Year: Neil Allan (Men's Hockey Club) – guided the squad to an undefeated BUCS Premier North season, third place in the Scottish Premiership, and a historic Scottish Cup victory, the first by a university men's team.
- Alan Chainey Award: Samantha Judge – recognised for 13 years of dedicated service to university sport, transforming the Women's Hockey programme into one of the most respected in the UK.
- Alex Currie Award: Fiona Bunn (Orienteering Club) – for an inspiring performance at the World University Orienteering Championships, where she secured an unexpected gold medal for Team GB in the final leg of the sprint relay.
- Cameron Blue of the Year: Archie Goodburn (Swimming & Water Polo Club) – a standout athlete who has represented GB and Scotland at major international competitions, holds the Scottish 50m breaststroke record, and is a seven-time BUCS gold medallist.

Resource implications
15. N/A

Risk Management
16. No major risks.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals
17. This paper contributes to the following SDGs;
  3 – Good Health and Wellbeing. All the work we do at EUSU is focussed on enhancing the health and wellbeing of our university community.
  4 – Quality Education. We believe our student/volunteer development efforts contribute to a more complete and expanded education for students.

Equality & Diversity
18. This paper does not require an Equality Impact Assessment.

Next steps/implications
19. The Sports Union President and Executive Committee oversee the strategic direction of the Sports Union.

Consultation
20. Consultation for this paper was sought from Millie Doherty (Head of Sports Development Programmes).

Further information
21. *Author*   *Presenter*
  Philine Rouwers   Ash Scholz
  Sports Union President   EUSA President

  5 June 2025

Freedom of Information
22. Open version

UNIVERSITY COURT

23 June 2025

Data-Driven Innovation (DDI) Initiative Progress Report
Q2 – 2024/25

Description of paper
1.   This paper provides a summary update of progress on the Data-Driven Innovation (DDI) Initiative, part of the Edinburgh and South-East Scotland City Region Deal for the period covering FY2023/24 and the first half of FY2024/25. It notes significant progress against the key performance indicators (KPIs) of Talent, Research, Adoption, and Entrepreneurship, outlines effectiveness work on governance and risk management, and engagement with regional, Scottish and UK priorities and opportunities.

Paragraph 2: closed section

Action requested/Recommendation
3.   Court is requested to note the information presented and, as appropriate, comment on developments and provide insights on any areas for the attention of the DDI Programme Strategy Board.

Background and context
4.   The DDI initiative is a 15-year, £661 million investment and innovation programme launched in August 2018. It secured a total of £270 million in capital funding from the UK and Scottish Governments, part of the £1.3 billion Edinburgh and South-East Scotland City Region Deal. The DDI initiative continues to be one of the most significant innovation investments made by both governments in UK academic institutions.

Discussion
Key progress
Investment Phase Completion
5.   The DDI Programme has now completed its investment phase, including transforming the former Royal Infirmary into the Edinburgh Futures Institute (EFI) and opening the Usher Building at the BioQuarter.

Performance Against KPIs in FY2023/24
6.   The DDI Initiative has been successful in driving engagement and positive outcomes at scale across its educational, research, innovation and wider economic aims, often exceeding expectations, as demonstrated by the following measures.

Talent
- University students completed 31,493 data-focused courses, bringing the total to 122,550 since FY2017/18; 89% of the end-of-programme target.
- There were 68,599 Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) completions, making a cumulative total of 77,348 completions since FY2017/18, surpassing the end-of-programme target by 23%.

<u>Research</u>
- DDI-tagged research activities amounted to £158.1 million from 279 unique grants, bringing the total research expenditure since FY2017/18 to £556.8 million. This is 61% of the overall research target; approximately 200% ahead of the expected delivery schedule.

<u>Adoption</u>
- The Programme delivered 122 projects with external partners, making a cumulative total of 409 projects since FY17/18; 46% of the overall volume target.
- The value of project activities was £16.3 million, and tenancies and memberships £1.9m, bringing the cumulative project value to £47.6 million. The total value of adoption activities is 93% of the end-of-programme target.

<u>Entrepreneurship</u>
- The Programme supported 108 startups, making a cumulative total of 541 since FY2017/18. This figure exceeds the end-of-programme target by 23%. The combined follow-on funding raised by these companies now stands at £203 million; 306% above the target, with approximately £100 million of this secured by companies located in the city region.

Governance and leadership

7. Governance structures have continued to be strengthened, guided by the 2023 DDI Governance Review. To date, 14 of 18 of the Review's actions have been closed, with the remainder anticipated to close shortly.

8. Interim leadership is in place following the departure of the DDI Programme Director in February 2025.

Forward View

9. Early success in Horizon Europe Innovation Pillar awards (ACCEND, REHEAL) is boosting international recognition of the DDI programme, as well as the University's ambitions to enhance our international innovation agenda.

10. The Programme is now strategically positioned to accelerate work with regional partners advancing the city region's artificial intelligence ambitions to establish the University and the region as a leading national and global hub for AI, which we hope will include designation of an AI Growth Zone.

11. In addition, the newly launched Regional Innovation Action Plan provides a framework for major innovation hubs in sustainable manufacturing, health innovation, and financial services clusters, building on the success of the DDI programme. Sustaining funding through a clear pipeline of ambitious large-scale bids, and collaborations with external partners, remains the main future priority, with the DDI Programme looking to further strengthen partnerships with the UK and Scottish governments to boost innovation and prosperity over the long term.

Resource implications

12. This paper has no immediate resource implications. It will be necessary for the University to ensure that funding requests aligned to the opportunities outlined in this update go through appropriate channels and assessment at the University, mitigating

the risk of funding shortfalls that require unanticipated contributions from the University.

Paragraph 13: closed section

Risk Management
14. A comprehensive risk register is regularly reviewed, with key risks adequately mitigated and monitored. The Programme Strategy Board is working on refining this risk register to ensure robust oversight of resource allocation, stakeholder engagement, and data ethics concerns.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals
15. As a large-scale, multi-disciplinary partnership activity with five TRADE themes and ten industry sectors, delivered as part of the City Region Deal, the Data-Driven Innovation initiative contributes towards several of the UN SDGs:

- SDG1. No poverty: The Edinburgh & South-East Scotland CRD emphasises inclusive growth.
- SDG 2. Zero Hunger: The agritech sector focuses on improving the productivity and sustainability of agriculture and the food supply chain.
- SDG 3. Health and well-being: Health is one of DDI's early success areas, with large-scale programmes such as Data Loch and the Advanced Care Research Centre.
- SDG 4. Quality education: The DDI Talent theme contributes directly to this goal; the DDI Skills Gateway programme has proven to increase the data skills of the population regardless of background, gender, or location.
- SDG8. Decent work and economic growth: The Regional Prosperity framework forms the foundation for economic growth in the region. The DDI Skills Gateway's reskilling and upskilling programmes also contribute to this goal.
- SDG 9. Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure: The six DDI Innovation Hubs are long-term investments in innovation infrastructure. DDI is helping to bring further regional investments, with the Exascale supercomputer as the prime example.
- SDG10: Reduced Inequalities: CRD seeks to deliver equalities rebalancing across the region. Edinburgh Futures Institute places particular emphasis on using data to tackle inequality.
- SDG11. Sustainable Cities and Communities; SDG12. Climate action: Net Zero is the main goal of the Regional Prosperity Framework, with Green Regeneration as one of the four action programmes.
- SDG14. Life on land: Projects in the Agritech and Space and Satellite sectors develop competencies needed to support this goal.
- SDG15. Peace, justice, and strong institutions: The "Doing Data Right" mission underpins DDI, with the Centre for Technomoral Futures focusing on the ethical implications of data analytics and artificial intelligence.
- SDG16. Partnerships: As the "Data Capital of Europe," DDI partners pursue global partnerships through various collaborations, such as the ChildLight initiative.

Equality & Diversity

16. Since the approval of the DDI Governance Review, there have been significant changes in the DDI Hub leadership and membership of the DDI Programme Strategy Board. The changes have significantly improved the diversity of DDI Hub leadership, which is now more representative of our University. We aim to continue to build on this progress, ensuring we properly harness diversity in viewpoints, thoughts, and ideas to improve the quality of debate, dialogue, and decision-making in all DDI management and governance arenas.

Next steps/implications

17. Work under the DDI initiative will be taken forward as described in the report.

Consultation

18. A draft of this paper was presented and discussed at the DDI Programme Strategy Board meeting on 4 March 2025, the University Executive meeting on 8 April 2025 and the Policy & Resources Committee meeting on 2 June.

Further information

19. _Authors_   _Presenter_
     Kim Graham, Provost   Kim Graham, Provost
     John Scott, Head of DDI Delivery

Presented on behalf of the DDI Programme Strategy Board and DDI Programme Office

Freedom of Information

20. Open version

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

UNIVERSITY COURT

23 June 2025

Net Zero Infrastructure - Easter Bush Campus Utilities Networks Expansion

Description of paper
1. This paper requests funding from the Capital Plan, as previously notified to Court, to supplement and so enable the use of loan funding received from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) to begin the development and expansion of the Easter Bush Campus utilities networks. The paper formally seeks approval from University Court for funding to proceed.

2. The proposals detailed within this paper contribute to the outcomes set out in Strategy 2030:
     - We will be on track to be a Carbon-Zero University by 2040.

Paragraphs 3-26: closed section

Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals
27. The proposals in this paper directly contribute to supporting the University's Net Zero by 2040 climate strategy and commitments to the SDGs. Proposals particularly contribute to SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), SDG 12 (Sustainable Consumption and Production) and SDG 13 (Climate Action).

Equality & Diversity
28. Equality and Diversity will be considered at each stage of the design process.

Consultation
29. Consultation has been undertaken with Capital Projects Group, Estates Net Zero Programme Board, University Finance, University Estates Building Services Group, Energy and Net Zero Group, Maintenance Services, School/College representatives from the Easter Bush Estate, and the Director of Social Responsibility and Sustainability. On 14 May 2025 Estates Committee agreed to recommend approval of the funding, as did Policy & Resources Committee on 2 June 2025.

Further information
30. *Authors*   *Presenter*
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    Head of Energy and Utilities   Director of Estates

    Anne Johnstone
    Estate Development Manager

Freedom of Information
31. Open version
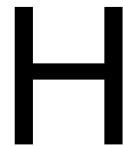
UNIVERSITY COURT

23 June 2025

Senior Lay Member: Recruitment and Election

Description of paper
1. The paper proposes arrangements for the recruitment and election of the next Senior Lay Member of the University Court, to take office on 1 August 2026.

Action requested/Recommendation
2. Court is invited to review the proposed timeline and approve proposed updates to the role description, remuneration and the election and appointment regulations for the Senior Lay Member.

Background and context
3. The role of Senior Lay Member was created by the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 (hereafter, the 'Governance Act'). Janet Legrand is the first postholder at the University of Edinburgh, elected in April 2020 and taking office in August 2020. As Janet Legrand's second and final term concludes on 31 July 2026 and with a long lead time given a required two stage recruitment and election process, Governance & Nominations Committee have reviewed the arrangements and Court's approval is now sought.

The role of the Governance & Nominations Committee
4. Nominations Committee, now Governance & Nominations Committee, has delegated responsibility from Court within its Terms of Reference to 'make recommendations to Court and manage the process for the appointment of the Senior Lay Member'.[1] The Governance Act specifies that Court must delegate to a committee responsibility for 'devising the relevant criteria with respect to the position' and 'ensuring the efficiency and fairness of the process for filling the position'[2] and in the Court-approved regulations for the position there is a standing delegation to Nominations Committee to fulfil these responsibilities.

5. The Governance Act allows the Committee to establish a Selection Panel and this is included in the current regulations. As with the recruitment of other lay (independent, external) members of Court the Selection Panel for the Senior Lay Member can consider applicants against the criteria set by the Committee and can shortlist and interview candidates. However, unlike other Selection Panels, the Governance Act requires that the Panel simply assesses whether candidates have met the criteria, with those candidates who have met the criteria proceeding to an election. There must be at least two candidates for an election to be called, otherwise the position will be re-advertised.

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[1] Governance & Nominations Committee Terms of Reference, section 1
[2] Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016, section 3 (1)

Discussion

Role description for the Senior Lay Member
6.   Court has previously approved a document called 'The Roles of the Rector and Senior Lay Member' (included in Appendix 1) and the elements relating to the Senior Lay Member should be reviewed before the post is advertised. One amendment is recommended by Governance & Nominations Committee: ***that the term of office be increased from three years to four years***. This is in the context of standard terms of office for most lay members of Court increasing from three to four years for those appointed from 2019 onwards, meaning that all Court members now hold four-year terms of office with the exceptions of:
1) The Rector: a three-year term is specified in primary legislation
2) Student Members and the City of Edinburgh Council Assessor: terms match their elected terms of office in their substantive roles as student sabbatical officers (one year) and the Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh (up to five years) respectively. Four years is also the standard term for the Senior Lay Member or equivalent at both the University of Glasgow and the University of St Andrews.

7.   A further area to highlight in the role description is committee memberships. In line with the Governance Act and Governance Code these are set at a minimum of:
- Convener of Exception Committee
- Member of Governance & Nominations Committee
- Member of Remuneration Committee.

8.   After an initial transition period Janet Legrand was subsequently also appointed Convener of Policy & Resources Committee, Convener of Governance & Nominations Committee and Convener of the Court USS (pensions) Sub-Group. A similarly expanded set of committee responsibilities remains open for the next Senior Lay Member, either with immediate effect or after a transition period. The intention is to maintain flexibility on some committee responsibilities for the Senior Lay Member dependent on the skills and experience of the postholder and their level of knowledge of the University and Court.

Paragraphs 9-11: closed section

Election and Appointment Regulations
12. The proposed updates to the election and appointment regulations for the Senior Lay Member are:
   - Loosening an unduly tight restriction on those who have previously served as a Court member so that those who have left the Court are not automatically disbarred from applying if they had served for six or more years in the past. This restriction does not feature in the Governance Act or Governance Code and was included at the discretion of the Court in 2019, at a time when the standard maximum time served for many lay members was six years rather than standard maximum of eight years today;
   - Changing the standard term of office for the Senior Lay Member from three years to four years (as discussed above), while continuing to include in the reappointment criteria that total time served as a Court member will be one factor in informing a recommendation on whether a Senior Lay Member might be reappointed for a second term (expected under the Governance Code);

- Including the now standard text for Court elections that:
  i) candidates must confirm that they will abide by the Code of Conduct and other University policies and regulations while a candidate and if elected
  ii) clarifying that all usual University codes, policies and regulations apply to members of the University community engaging in the election (i.e. there is no special dispensation from expected codes of behaviour because of an election);
- Moving the requirement for a candidate to declare that they are not disqualified from being a charity trustee from after the election to before the election (the same as the Rectorial election) and a declaration that they are not aware of any other impediment to their appointment (broadening a similar requirement for the Rectorial election);
- Making the election an online-only election. Elections for the Rector and the Senior Lay Member have previously allowed for voters to register in advance for a postal vote but:
  - there has been limited (a handful) to zero requests for postal votes in these elections in recent years
  - staff member and student member elections, including elections to staff member positions on Court and Senate elections, are online only and this has been widely accepted. A longer voting period (one week) can also be set to mitigate any risk of disenfranchisement from withdrawing the postal voting option. A mobile phone with an internet or data connection can be used for voting so the risk of disenfranchisement is now very low given their ubiquity as well as the availability of computers on campus;
- In the event of a significant delay meaning that there is not a Senior Lay Member-elect ready to take office on 1 August 2026, widening those eligible to be appointed as Interim Senior Lay Member from the Convener of Policy & Resources Committee alone to also include the options of appointing the Convener of Audit & Risk Committee or the Intermediary Court Member (a lay member appointed to act as an intermediary for other members who might raise concerns about the conduct of Court or the Senior Lay Member and who also leads the annual appraisal of the Senior Lay Member). In any instance, this would be on a temporary basis until the position is re-advertised and filled;
- Specifying that Open Meeting(s) with voters and candidates are online events, as these now typically attract more interest;
- Clarifying that the existing prohibition on receiving endorsements from organisations includes staff and student networks, societies and associations;
- An inflation-linked uplift in the maximum campaign expenditure allowed by candidates and a change in the means in which this can be reimbursed; and,
- A widening of an existing prohibition on the provision by candidates of some potential inducements to voters to cover all potential inducements.

Court is invited to approve these proposed updates on the recommendation of Governance & Nominations Committee

Resource implications

13. Costs of the appointment and election process and ongoing costs will depend upon:

- Whether a search agency is used, and the cost involved should that be the case, noting that this can range widely (this will be considered further by Governance & Nominations Committee);
- Costs for the external voting platform – Civica Election Services has been procured for University elections;
- Whether paid advertisements are used (e.g. in newspapers or websites – this will be considered further by Governance & Nominations Committee);
- Candidate expenses for interviews and the election; and,
- The honorarium set and whether the postholder requests this, plus any subsequent expenses they may incur and claim for.

Risk Management

14. The position of Senior Lay Member or equivalent is a statutory requirement. It is also expected under the Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance, compliance with which is a condition of grant funding from the Scottish Funding Council. The proposals are compliant with statutory and regulatory requirements and are in line with those of peer institutions. With risk mitigation in mind and given the importance of the position, a rapid procedure to appoint an Interim Senior Lay Member in the event of a vacancy is included.

Equality & Diversity

15. The Governance Act requires the University to produce a public report at the conclusion of the appointment process including anonymised information on the protected characteristics (if disclosed) of all applicants, those shortlisted and those entitled to stand for election after interview. Equality and diversity aspects will be considered within the composition of any Selection Panel and the interview process.

Next steps/implications

16. If approved, Governance & Nominations Committee will meet to consider the first stage advertisement and application process in more detail, including reviewing the criteria for the role, whether a search agency should be procured, means of advertising and the timeline.

Consultation

17. The proposals are relatively minor revisions to the previously agreed regulations and other decisions made by Court in 2019. Equivalent recruitment and election processes at Scottish peer institutions have been reviewed and are comparable. Governance & Nominations Committee (aside from the Senior Lay Member, who recused herself from discussion and decision-making on the item) have considered the proposals and their recommendations are included in the paper.

Further information

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Freedom of Information

19. Open version

UNIVERSITY COURT

23 June 2025

Amendments to Delegated Authority Schedule

Description of paper

1.   This paper proposes some amendments to the Delegated Authority Schedule, a document, which, in its own words: 'lists those Committees or individuals to whom authority has been delegated by the University Court to commit the University to a contractual or quasi-contractual arrangement that may result in a liability to the University.'[1]

Action requested/Recommendation

2.   To consider the effect of inflation upon the current delegated authority approval limits and whether to approve any increase as a result. To consider and approve the other proposed changes set out below.

Background and context

3.   The last major revision to the Delegated Authority Schedule took place in 2015. Since then minor updates have been made as appropriate, the most recent being in 2022. The 2022 update made changes to incorporate the expanded remit of the Estates Committee to include the digital estate and all capital equipment and infrastructure, as well as to include the financial approval limits and human resources-related approvals built into the new People & Money system.

4.   With three years having elapsed since the last changes, a number of updates are now proposed to reflect changes in the University and address issues that have emerged. In future, it is proposed to review the Delegated Authority Schedule on an annual basis for good governance reasons.

Discussion

5.   The proposed updates are set out below.

Considering the effect of inflation upon the approval limits within the Delegated Authority Schedule

6.   Court is invited to reflect upon the following points:

- The financial approval limits for senior staff were last updated in 2015. UK inflation from 2015 to March 2025 (latest date available for comparison) has been 36%, effectively eroding the financial approval levels in the Delegated Authority Schedule by 36%.[2] The size of the University in financial terms has increased by 42% since 2015, another metric for considering the relative decrease in the proportional size of the financial approval levels in the Delegated Authority Schedule in recent years.
- However, financial approval levels for staff of all levels are also built into the People & Money system and changing these would incur an additional system change cost and take time. Given this, colleagues involved in managing the

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[1] Delegated Authority Schedule, page 2
[2] Source used: https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/monetary-policy/inflation/inflation-calculator

People & Money system have advised against making changes to the Delegated Authority Schedule that would impact upon the People & Money system at this time.

- Given this, **one option open to Court is to make an inflation-linked adjustment to the delegated approval limit for the Principal**. For technical reasons this would not require a system change in People & Money so would not incur cost or other resource to implement. An inflation-linked adjustment to the Principal's approval limit would be from £2m to £2.7m. If made to £3m this could remain in place for the next few years without the need for an annual review. A £3m limit has been marked up in the full document to illustrate this.
- A practical effect upon the Court and its committees of not increasing financial approval limits to match inflation in recent years has been an increased number of approval requests. This has generated committee papers on topics that the Court and its committees have found more routine and might feel could be delegated.
- The issue of relatively routine approvals being escalated to Court and its committees was also raised within the recent external effectiveness review of Court. An inflation-linked rise in approval limits would help address this.

7. **An alternative suggestion made at Policy & Resources Committee is to increase the delegated approval limit for the Principal to £5m to further reduce approval requests to Court and committees for purchases, contracts or other expenditure that are relatively low in value (0.35% of annual turnover) in the context of the University as a whole**. Having compared approval limits and approval routes at similarly sized UK universities, the University of Edinburgh is on the lower side of the approval limit range presently, with between £1m to £10m typical. An increase to either £3m or £5m would therefore still be comfortably within the range seen at peers.

Increasing delegation to the University Executive and the Future Students Committee for academic fee approvals

8. Presently, academic fee approvals are delegated to the University Executive and what was the Student Recruitment and Fees Strategy Group (now Future Students Committee), aside from:

- proposed rises above 5% or 2% above the UK Retail Price Index (RPI), whichever is higher; and/or,
- any 'major changes above this level or any strategic changes to fee structures',

either of which necessitate Court approval.

9. This wording led to proposed changes to tuition fee structures for PhD students and online/distance learning taught postgraduate students being submitted to Policy & Resources Committee and then Court for approval at its last meeting. To help streamline this in future while still ensuring that the most significant changes are still considered by Court (for example, the University's response to the UK Government's major funding and fee changes for English domiciled undergraduate students in 2012), it is proposed to continue to require that major structural changes be approved by Court and to remove the other elements.

Other minor updates
10. Other minor updates include:
   - Removal of Knowledge Strategy Committee – subject to consideration by Court at this meeting – and additional text for clarity on the expanded remit of Estates Committee for digital estate and infrastructure projects;
   - Referencing the £250 self-requisition level added to the People & Money system in 2023;
   - An inflation-linked adjustment to the delegated approval level to the Vice-Principal & University Secretary to settle court actions or other disputes
   - Reflecting changes in senior staffing, responsibilities and job titles, e.g. Provost, Vice-Principal International, General Counsel & Director of Legal Services;
   - Removing a small section on the City Deal Executive Governance Group, which is no longer relevant for its successor body;
   - Removing some duplicative text on admissions that already cross-refers to admission policies; and,
   - Updating the text on Vice-Principal/Senior Leadership Team expense approvals to reflect that the Expenses Policy applies, i.e. sign off by the relevant line manager, with the Principal's expenses approved by the Vice-Principal & University Secretary on behalf of the Senior Lay Member of Court.

Resource implications
11. None in implementation. If Court does opt to make an adjustment to the Principal's approval level this would likely lead to a modest reduction in the number of more routine approval requests submitted to Court and its committees, a saving for committee members and those preparing papers.

Risk Management
12. The Delegated Authority Schedule is a key financial, contractual and reputational control mechanism. All amendments have been proposed with this in mind.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals
13. Not applicable given scope of proposed amendments.

Equality & Diversity
14. Not applicable given scope of proposed amendments.

Next steps/implications
15. If supported, the proposed updates will be made in the Delegated Authority Schedule.

Consultation
16. The proposed amendments follow discussion with colleagues involved in the relevant areas and were reviewed and supported by the University Executive at its meeting on 13 May 2025 and by Policy & Resources Committee at its meeting on 2 June 2025.

Further information

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     Vice-Principal & University Secretary

Freedom of Information

18. Open version

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

UNIVERSITY COURT

23 June 2025

Knowledge Strategy Committee Future Governance

Description of paper
1.   Following agreement from Senate and Knowledge Strategy Committee (KSC), this paper submits a proposal to disband KSC at the start of the next academic year, on 1 August.

Action requested/Recommendation
2.   To approve the proposal that KSC be stood down on 1 August 2025.

3.   To note that, given a motion approved by Senate at its last meeting (in paragraph 10 below), further work is required to determine the most appropriate committee structure for Libraries and Collections. It is proposed that the three thematic committees (sub-committees) that presently report to KSC should report to the University Executive from 1 August 2025, with a further proposal on the future committee structure for Libraries and Collections to be submitted to a future Senate and Court meeting.

4.   To note that all business considered by these three thematic committees requiring Senate or Court oversight or approval will continue to be escalated to Senate, Court and/or their committees as appropriate to their remits, terms of reference and approval levels.

Background and context
Development of Knowledge Strategy Committee and its committees
5.   Knowledge Strategy Committee is a joint standing committee of Court and Senate. It has oversight of three thematic committees: IT Committee, Library Committee, University Collections Advisory Committee (covering what is known as the heritage collections, such as holdings in the University's museums, art collections, rare books, manuscripts).

6.   Their varied development is summarised below:

A Knowledge Management Steering Group was created within the Information Services Group in the early 2000s, becoming the Knowledge Management Committee then the Knowledge Management Strategy Advisory Committee in 2004. In 2006 it was reconfigured to become a University-wide management committee reporting to the Central Management Group (the precursor to today's University Executive) and renamed Knowledge Strategy Committee. The Library Committee and the University Collections Advisory Committee had both been in existence as committees of the University Court long before the creation of Knowledge Strategy Committee but came under the oversight of KSC in 2006, with KSC then moving in 2010 from a management committee to a committee of the University Court, with Library Committee, University Collections Advisory Committee and IT Committee (the latter previously a management committee) moving with KSC and reporting to KSC. The most recent change to KSC and its

committees took place in 2014 when Court agreed that KSC should become a joint standing committee of both the Court and the Senate. This arrangement has continued since 2014.

Wider changes and impact on KSC and its committees

7. While the structure of KSC and its committees has remained unchanged for the last decade there have notable other changes in this period, namely:

- The continued rapid development of digital learning, research and administration to the extent that using digital tools/technologies is a normal feature for much of the activity of the University rather than the more specialised niche it had been, e.g. the commonplace use of computers by staff and students for learning, research and administration – including lecture recording, accessing e-journals and fully online learning and teaching for some. As in many other sectors, information technology has been 'mainstreamed' in higher education in the last twenty years

- The wider 'mainstreaming' of digital/information technology has been seen in University committees, leading to overlap and duplication in places with KSC. From an educational regulation and oversight perspective Senate standing committees have reviewed 'edtech' (educational technologies) items or policies, such as learning analytics projects and the lecture recording policy. From a Court committee perspective, in 2022 Estates Committee was given a widened remit to include digital estate projects, 'mainstreaming' information technology by seeking greater parity between the physical and digital estate within Court's committee structure. However, with KSC remaining in place overlap and duplication of committee oversight of digital estate projects has resulted. A recent review by Internal Audit has recommended streamlining of the approval routes, noting the larger number of committees and groups, including KSC, involved in digital estate items than in physical estate items. The externally facilitated effectiveness review of Court and its committees in June 2024 also considered this point, noting that: 'Considerable attention has been given to the [committee] structure in recent years and an innovative approach taken to the Estates Committee in particular, with the remit now covering the physical estate and the digital estate. This is working well, although it has been acknowledged that the approach to considering the digital estate is not yet optimal. The committee is addressing this. The opportunity should be taken to consider and reflect upon the role and remit of the Knowledge Strategy Committee and whether it is needed in the context of the new Estates Committee and approach to digital transformation. In doing so, care should be taken to ensure clear delegation and avoid duplication', with a recommendation: 'That the opportunity should be taken to consider and reflect upon the role and remit of the Knowledge Strategy Committee and whether it is needed in the context of the new Estates Committee.'[1]

Present situation

8. Throughout its various iterations KSC has always been envisaged as a committee that would engender strategic discussion of what has been termed the

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[1] V. O'Halloran, Report of the Externally-Facilitated Effectiveness Review of the University of Edinburgh's University Court and Committees (2024), pp.7-8, https://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/GaSP/Governance/Court/ExternalEffectivenessReport.pdf

'information space'. In practice, this has tended to be dominated by discussions on IT matters brought forward by Information Services Group but these discussions have been duplicated at other committees (e.g. educational aspects at Senate Education Committee, technical aspects at IT Committee, financial/business case aspects of digital estates projects at Estates Committee) and Library and University Collections matters rarely feature.

9.   Given this duplication, committee members have queried the value added by the committee and are conscious of the time taken by members, attendees, presenters, secretariat support and all those involved in preparing papers and presentations. KSC therefore agreed to a proposal at its 29 October 2024 meeting that:

- KSC be stood down with effect from 1 August 2025 and succeeded in the University governance structure by a new Library and Collections Committee as a joint standing committee of the Court and the Senate – with additional work to be undertaken on the proposal for a new Library and Collections Committee, including consultation with the present members of the Library Committee and the University Collections Advisory Committee
- IT Committee to return to its historic norm as a management/operational committee, reporting into the University Executive, but with digital estate projects progressing from IT Committee to Court's Estates Committee (as presently but without KSC as an intermediary committee) and topics within Senate's educational regulation and oversight remit to continue to be considered by the relevant Senate standing committee from this perspective.

10. This was reported to Court on 2 December 2024 (Paper C4, paragraphs 12-15). Consultative workshops were then held with members of IT Committee on 16 January 2025 and with members of Library Committee and University Collections Advisory Committee on 26 February 2025. Key points from the workshops were:

- <u>IT Committee workshop</u>: support for a simplified governance structure; greater separation of strategic and operational oversight work, which could be done with a portfolio subgroup structure; management groups in this area could also be rationalised, such as reconciliation of the management Digital Estate Prioritisation Group structure with IT Committee portfolio sub-groups
- <u>Library Committee and University Collections Advisory Committee (UCAC) workshop</u>: varying experiences – UCAC felt to be very successful in current form (albeit noting limited interaction with KSC, Senate or Court) with Library Committee often struggling to balance strategic and operational oversight work; neither have active sub-groups so both mainly deal with operational oversight matters; proposed solution emerged of a strategic joint Library and Collections Committee with a Library Operations Advisory sub-group and a Collections Advisory sub-group

11. KSC reviewed a summary of the outputs from the two workshops at its meeting on 27 March and, noting the many demands upon Court and Senate members and difficulties in staffing committees, requested that the paper to Senate give a strong

rationale for a proposed new joint Library and Collections Committee for review by Senate and Court and also include alternative options such as not establishing a new joint Library and Collections Committee. This was reported to Court on 28 April (Paper C4, paragraphs 8-9).

Discussion
Proposal made to Senate
12. The proposal was further developed with KSC's feedback and submitted to the Senate meeting of 20 May. This included:

i) disbanding KSC;

ii) returning IT Committee to its historic norm as a management/operational committee but with digital estate projects progressing from IT Committee to Court's Estates Committee (as presently but without KSC as an intermediary committee) and topics within Senate's educational regulation and oversight remit to continue to be considered by the relevant Senate standing committee from this perspective. Amendments would be made to the Senate standing committees' terms of reference to make this existing role explicit; and,

iii) three options for a future committee structure for Libraries and Collections:

Option A (recommended option) – establish a new joint Court and Senate committee, a University Library and Collections Strategic Committee, with two operationally focused sub-groups: a University Library Operations Group and a University Collection Advisory Group

Option B – if Senate is not supportive of a new University Library and Collections Strategic Committee, establish this solely as a committee of Court if Court is supportive (the pre-2006 situation but with Library and Collections combined)

Option C – if there is not support from either Senate or Court for a new University Library and Collections Strategic Committee, the proposed operational sub-groups for Libraries and Collections could instead report into the main management committee of the University, the University Executive, with strategic matters/any reserved matters for Court approval in the Library and Collections areas being considered by the Court's Policy & Resources Committee prior to submission to Court.

13. Senate considered the proposal and voted as follows:

- The disbanding of KSC was approved (109 in favour, 11 against, 7 abstained)
- Additions to the terms of reference to Senate standing committees to make explicit their existing role of oversight of IT matters within Senate's remit (e.g. Senate Education Committee's role in the regulation and oversight of educational information technology ('edtech')) were approved (74 in favour, 39 against, 15 abstained)
- A motion to amend the paper to include a fourth option (an 'Option D') was approved (83 in favour, 37 against, 7 abstained), this being: "the IT Committee, Library Committee, University Collections Advisory Committee, and any other university-wide management committees of remit relating to the disbanded Knowledge Strategy Committee will report to the University

Executive as well as (when applicable) to the University Court Estates Committee and University Academic Senate when proposing actions within the Court or Senate remits. These committees may, at their discretion, consult with Senate and/or its Standing Committees on the development of strategy and proposals."

14. With the motion to amend the paper having passed, Senate was informed that the implications would be considered and a revised paper on the options would be presented to a future Senate meeting. The recommended option had been constructed with the assumption that Senate would wish to retain direct oversight of Library and Collections matters, given their importance for teaching, research and knowledge-exchange. Although the fourth option was unexpected it became apparent as the proposal developed that, while there was clear support for disbanding KSC, there was limited enthusiasm for establishing a new strategic Library and Collections Committee.

15. Given the Senate motion, it is proposed that the three sub-committees that presently report to KSC report to the University Executive from 1 August 2025. A revised paper on the future committee structure for Libraries and Collections will be submitted to Senate and Court early in the next academic year. Regardless of the future location of the sub-committees, all business they consider requiring Senate or Court oversight or approval will continue to be escalated to Senate, Court and/or their committees as appropriate to their remits, terms of reference and approval authority.

Resource implications
16. No direct financial implications but disbanding KSC will reduce duplication and reduce time demands on those serving on and supporting committees.

Risk Management
17. An Internal Audit review and the external effectiveness review of Court and its committees have highlighted duplication in digital estate approvals and oversight. Duplication of oversight of 'edtech' items between Senate's standing committees and KSC is also apparent. The proposal to disband KSC has been crafted to address these areas of duplication, and included evaluation to ensure that it does not inadvertently create governance gaps in other areas.

18. KSC's three areas of remit in IT, Libraries and Collections are fully covered by its sub-committees, which will continue. For matters that are presently escalated upwards or outwards by KSC (e.g. digital estate projects to Estates Committee, IT use policy to University Executive, Digital Strategy to Court), these can instead be escalated upwards or outwards by the three sub-committees. The remits, terms of reference and approval authority for Court and its committees, Senate and its committees and the University Executive are sufficiently broad to encompass the areas covered.

19. For additional reassurance, amendments to the terms of reference to Senate's standing committees to make explicit their roles relating to IT have been approved by Senate. No amendments are proposed to the terms of reference for Court's committees as these have been already been incorporated into Estates Committee's

terms of reference for digital estate items; and Policy & Resources Committee and Audit & Risk Committee have whole University coverage built into their terms of reference. The next external effectiveness reviews for Court and Senate could be tasked with conducting a post-implementation evaluation of this change if approved, including from a risk management perspective.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals
20. The work of KSC will continue within other committees, including aspects relating to climate and sustainable development goals.

Equality & Diversity
21. The work of KSC will continue within other committees, including any equality and diversity aspects of proposals in the areas of IT, Libraries and Collections.

Next steps/implications
22. If approved, KSC will be stood down on 1 August. Senate and Court will be invited to consider a revised paper on the future committee structure for Libraries and Collections early in the next academic year.

Consultation
23. There has been consultation with members of Knowledge Strategy Committee, IT Committee, University Collections Advisory Committee and Library Committee. Court and Senate were notified of the proposal and KSC's support for it in December and January respectively and received updates as it progressed. Senate reviewed the proposal on 20 May and approved the disbanding of KSC and related amendments to the terms of reference of Senate's standing committees.

Further information
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Freedom of Information
25. Open paper

UNIVERSITY COURT

23 June 2025

**Development Trust – Amendments to the Deed of Trust
and Update on the Development Trust**

Description of paper
1.   This paper seeks Court approval to amend the Deed of Trust for the University of Edinburgh Development Trust (the "Trust") to (i) enable approval of donations to be delegated; (ii) allow agreements relating to such donations to be signed on behalf of the Trust under delegated authority; and (iii) grant the ability for trustees to make decisions in writing, including by email.

2.   These amendments enhance the governance of the Trust, providing greater clarity for both Trustees and non-Trustee members of University staff.

3.   Court's approval is required because the Trust was created by a Resolution of Court and a further Resolution of Court is required to amend its Deed of Trust.[1]

4.   The paper also provides an update on the status of the Trust and plans for a future review.

Action requested/Recommendation
5.   Court is invited to _approve_ amendments to the Deed of Trust to include the specific power for the Trustees to:
- delegate approval and signing authority in respect of donations to the Trust; and
- make written resolutions, including by electronic means.

6.   Court is also invited to _note_ updates on the status of the Trust.

Background and context
7.   The Trust was created by a Resolution of Court in 1990 (see Appendix 1). Court appoints a number of its trustees. Current trustees include a member of Court, Ruth Girardet, in addition to the Principal and the University Secretary, who are trustees _ex officio_.

8.   In recognition of the Trust's changing status and uses over time, aspects of the Trust's governance arrangements have recently been reviewed (and, as noted below, review of other aspects is planned).

9.   In February 2024, Legal Services provided advice to the trustees on what steps might be taken to strengthen the governance of the Trust, in particular in relation to the existing practice of University staff who are not trustees signing donation agreements on the Trust's behalf (e.g. donation agreements for funds being sent to the Trust before being disbursed to the University), and how that interacts with the trustees' obligations in respect of the Trust.

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[1] The specific form of the Development Trust's legal Deed of Trust is a 'Declaration of Trust', as may be seen in Appendix 1. For current purposes, these terms may be considered equivalent.

10. This advice flagged that the current Deed of Trust has no power for the trustees to delegate approval or signing authority, raising a governance risk for both the Trust and the University whereby agreements may be signed on the Trust's behalf without: (i) the knowledge or agreement of the trustees; or (ii) signing authority being in place for the member of staff signing the relevant agreements on the Trust's behalf.

Discussion

11. In February 2025, the trustees considered options for delegation, alongside further advice by Legal Services on those options[2]. The trustees supported the recommended approach that both (i) power to approve donations into the Trust, and (ii) signing authority in relation to the associated agreements, should be delegated. Accordingly, the trustees agreed to seek new powers of delegation by way of amendment to the Deed of Trust. It was also recommended that the trustees have power to approve acceptance of donations in writing, including by email.

12. A draft of the amended Deed of Trust has been prepared by Brodies LLP. This permits the trustees to delegate in any way and to any extent to any person or persons, committee or committees, company or other body whatsoever the exercise of any of the powers conferred on the trustees herein or by law. This amended Deed of Trust would also incorporate the changes to the Deed of Trust made via a 2018 Resolution agreed at the December 2018 Court meeting. These are reflected at section two of the Deed of Trust.

13. Once the Deed of Trust is amended to include the power to delegate, the trustees will enter into a scheme of delegation, setting out the limits of delegated authority, including the extent of what decision-making powers are delegated to whom, and any reporting requirements related to this. Any such delegation will be proportionate to the size and activities of the Trust. Please note that the nature and levels of delegations in place from time to time would be a matter for the trustees and would not require Court's approval.

14. To further strengthen the governance of the Trust, in due course, Legal Services, in consultation with the trustees and Development & Alumni, will undertake a review of the number and nature of trustees, including consideration of the balance of University of Edinburgh staff vs. non staff. This review will also include consideration of whether any change to the University's Delegated Authority Schedule in respect of the acceptance of donations into the University is required.

Resource implications

15. There are no immediate resource implications arising from this paper.

Risk Management

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

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[2] The options considered were:
   a) Approval and signature of all donations to the Trust and relevant donation agreements by Trustees.
   b) Approval of all donations to the Trust by Trustees and the relevant donation agreements signed under delegated authority.
   c) Approval of donations below a certain level delegated and agreements relating to such donations signed under delegated authority.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals
17. There are no relevant factors.

Equality & Diversity
18. It is considered that the proposal does not impact on equality and diversity.

Next steps/implications
19. Further to Court approval, the trustees will consent formally to the terms of the Resolution amending the terms of the Deed of Trust. Once the Deed of Trust is amended, the trustees will sign a Scheme of Delegation, setting out the relevant limits of delegated authority.

Consultation
20. There has been consultation with the trustees of the Trust, Legal Services and external solicitors.

Further information
21. _Author_

Kate Brook,
Director of Advancement
Operations, Development & Alumni, and
Secretary to the Development Trust

Presenter

Leigh Chalmers,
Vice-Principal & University Secretary
and Development Trust trustee

Freedom of Information
22. Open version

UNIVERSITY COURT

23 June 2025

Implementation of Ordinance No. 217
(General Council Membership & Registration)

Description of paper
1.   This paper seeks approval for a proposed implementation date for Ordinance No. 217 (General Council Membership & Registration) on 1 October 2025.

Action requested/Recommendation
2.   To approve the implementation of Ordinance No. 217 on 1 October 2025.

Background and context
3.   Court approved in February 2024 a new Ordinance updating the membership and registration rules for the General Council. This expands the offer of membership of the General Council to those with academic awards other than degrees, such as postgraduate diplomas. It also expands the offer of membership to professional services staff in equivalent grades to those academic staff already eligible for membership, along with some administrative simplification and tidying-up.

4.   The new Ordinance received final approval from the Privy Council in February 2025 and this was reported to the Court meeting in the same month. It was also noted that Court has discretion over the implementation date and that the Development & Alumni Office would work with the Secretary to the General Council and other colleagues on a plan for implementation and then recommend to Court a date for the new Ordinance to take effect.

Discussion
5.   As a result of this change, an additional 23,700 graduate members and 1,200 staff members will become eligible for General Council membership, based on the data at the time of writing this paper. The Working Group has received support from Student Systems and HR Systems to identify the graduate and staff members that will be impacted and worked with Communications & Marketing and the Development & Alumni Communications team to develop a communication plan for each of these cohorts. The email communication will be sent 2 weeks in advance of the 1 October 2025 implementation date.

6.   In addition, the Working Group has reviewed and will develop updated procedures and processes in order to continue to accurately maintain the General Council Register of members based on the new criteria for graduate and staff members. The 1 October 2025 implementation has been proposed to ensure that the data flows from the Student and HR Systems have been thoroughly tested and checked for accuracy and enough time allocated to resolve any identified issues.

Resource implications
7.   The cost of communicating with General Council members has been factored into existing budgets, both for the one-off communication and ongoing communications. The implementation date of 1 October rather than 1 August (the

first day of the new academic year) is proposed to better manage staff workloads for those involved.

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

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

Equality & Diversity
10. An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out by the Working Party leading the review which led to the new Ordinance and has been published. Current criteria for General Council membership discriminate in favour of academic staff to the exclusion of other staff groups. The new Ordinance has a more equitable basis for staff membership and hence a General Council membership which better reflects the diversity of the University's community.

Next steps/implications
11. Those who will become newly eligible for membership of the General Council and have contact details known by the University will be notified 2 weeks in advance of the implementation date of 1 October.

Consultation
12. The proposed implementation date has been developed in consultation with the Secretary to the General Council, Development & Alumni Office, Student Systems, HR Systems and Communications & Marketing.

Further information
13. *Author*   *Presenter*
    Jenny Shaw   Leigh Chalmers
    Head of Business Enhancement   Vice-Principal & University Secretary
    Development & Alumni   Registrar to General Council

    4 June 2025

Freedom of Information
14. Open paper

THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

UNIVERSITY COURT

23 June 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 March 2025 to 31 March 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.

Paragraphs 4-6: closed section

Global Alumni Events
7.   Upcoming global alumni events:

Scotland and London, UK / Brussels, Belgium / New York, Boston and DC, USA Insights Programme Immersion Week	June 2025
Reykjavik, Iceland Business School alumni event during student employability trek	June 2025
London, UK Edinburgh University Club of London (EUCL) Annual Dinner with guest speaker Professor Shannon Vallor	July 2025

Recent Global Events
8.   Colleagues from Development and Alumni, Student Recruitment and Admissions, and Edinburgh Global, joined by Prof Colm Harmon, and alumni and friends, marched in the New York City Tartan Day Parade in April. Our Edinburgh group included reps from the alumni clubs of New York, Washington DC and Boston. This event has been a pillar in our US engagement for many years and continues to grow in popularity with nearly 100 registered to attend and nearly 70 taking part in the parade and/or post-parade alumni reception. A range of wider engagement opportunities took place during the visit to the East Coast including the USA Development Trust Board meeting and informal Board dinner, several philanthropy and volunteer engagement meetings, as well as some of the International Recruitment Team's offer holder events.

9.   The Edinburgh University Club of Toronto Annual Dinner took place the following week and the club were delighted to welcome Prof Frank Cogliano, Professor of American History, as guest speaker.

10. The newly formed San Francisco alumni group were delighted with the turnout for their first event in the Bay Area in April. The group are keen to keep momentum with another get-together this summer and have also created new LinkedIn and WhatsApp groups for local alumni to connect online.

11. Prof Juan Cruz, ECA Principal, and Prof Juliette MacDonald, Director of Faculty, welcomed nearly 150 guests to an ECA reception in Shanghai at the end of April, where alumni and current offer holders were able to connect.

12. In April, the Alumni Club of Washington DC took part in a collaborative UK Universities Trivia Night, and the Paris alumni group co-hosted an informal gathering with the universities of Stirling and Aberdeen.

13. In May, the Business School hosted its annual Global Alumni Day event for alumni, students and staff of the school. This was the biggest yet, with over 220 registered to attend in person, and 180 attending on the day. All of the sessions were also streamed online, with over 200 registered from 54 countries. The theme this year was Mastering Change, and academic and alumni speakers focused on Leading Change in 2025, Digital Transformation, the Backlash to EDI, ESG in Tumultuous Times, and finally a closing keynote from MBA alum Judith Everett on Leading a Sustainable Business. Alumni were offered an exclusive tour of EFI in the morning and there were several networking opportunities throughout the day starting with lunch and ending with an evening reception. The Business School also hosted alumni events in London and Dublin in May during student treks to the cities.

14. The Zurich alumni group hosted an after work meet-up in May. Our lead contact commented that despite the cold and rain, which reminded many of Edinburgh's unpredictable weather, the event was a success and 15 alumni attended, with a mix of different age groups and programmes represented.

15. Also in May, a Scottish university alumni reception took place in Los Angeles, hosted by the Scottish Government and Edinburgh alumnus Paul Rennie OBE, Consul General Los Angeles.

Alumni support for Widening Participation: Insights Programme
16. This year just under 130 second-year undergraduate students are taking part in the University's Insights Programme. During the Insights Immersion Week (2-6 June) the students will meet alumni in host cities – Edinburgh and the local area, London, Brussels, New York and Washington, DC – through workplace visits, cultural activities and informal networking events being hosted by the local Alumni Clubs. For some students, this is the first time they have been out of the UK. For others, it is the first time they have travelled independently. The Insights Programme team look forward to sharing highlights with you later in the year.

Alumni support for Student Employability
17. Following on from the success of careers events in Semester 2, project planning for the next academic year is underway, with plans to continue working closely with the School of History, Classics & Archaeology and School of Literatures, Languages & Cultures.

18. In academic year 2025/2026, our joint-collaborations with School of Biological and Deanery of Biomedical Sciences colleagues and with the School of Mathematics will see us celebrate ten years of alumni impact through these event series. Plans on how to mark this are in discussion.

Alumni support for Student Recruitment
19. 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. Since April, this has resulted in 117 new recent graduates, primarily from the Classes of 2023 and 2024, registering as alumni ambassadors. Many are confirmed as speakers and panellists for events that have taken place already this spring or are scheduled in the coming weeks.

20. Our support for recruitment activities continues with alumni volunteers participating in panel sessions for Postgraduate Discovery Day in April, Postgraduate Online Learning Open Days in May and Postgraduate Online Offer Holder Days in June.

21. At the Postgraduate Online Offer Holder Days, we will also be delivering two information sessions on 'Developing your Career' in conjunction with the Careers service, highlighting to our offer holders what alumni and career services students can utilise throughout their studies.

Student Engagement
22. The disbursement of all 55 successful Student Experience Grants from the Autumn 2024 round is now complete, with 1 project no longer going ahead.

23. We now have 49 Scholars participating in the Mastercard Scholars Career Mentoring Programme, in which the scholars will be paired with an alumni mentor for up to six months. Almost all scholars have been matched and the majority of pairings have now started their relationships.

24. The annual PhD Horizons Conference, which offers career insights to PhD students, will take place on 11 June in McEwan Hall and will feature a series of alumni panel discussions throughout the afternoon.

25. We have been working with the Wellbeing Service at Kings Buildings on a PhD Mental Health Awareness Event on 12 June, whereby a panel including three alumni will discuss the challenges of a PhD with a mental health perspective to help our current students navigate their studies.

Alumni Communications
26. We set up a new 'Edinburgh Alumni' page on LinkedIn to increase our offering on the platform. An extension of the University's main LinkedIn page, the content

shared on the page will be public, and anyone can tag the page in their posts. We'll use this new platform to keep our audience in the loop with the latest news, updates, opportunities, and stories from our global alumni community and the University, this includes sharing content posted by other relevant accounts and pages.

27. Issue 06 of 2024/2025 Multi Story Edinburgh newsletter was sent to just over 5,700 new graduates in May.

28. In June the Communications team will be welcoming a new Podcast Intern to work with us on producing the next season of the Multi Story Edinburgh podcast, including testing new ideas and marketing it to the wider University community.

29. We're relaunching Enlightened, our alumni newsletter. This refreshed version of Enlightened will be a digital-first, community-driven publication, published quarterly.

Philanthropic Communications
30. This year's Spring Appeal launched on 26 May and focuses on three key areas where donor support can make a meaningful impact: Access Edinburgh Scholarships, EUSA Sports Union and School of GeoSciences. As part of the campaign, we're reaching out to donors through targeted emails and printed letters providing more detailed information about each area of focus.

Resource implications
31. There are no specific resource implications associated with this paper.

Risk Management
32. 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
33. 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
34. 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 Mastercard Foundation programme highlighted above, the Black British Scholarships programme, the Nyerere Scholarship and specific PhD scholarships to attract candidates from under-represented groups.

35. 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

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

Consultation

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

Further information

38. *Authors*
Emily Gwiazda, Alumni Relations Project
Officer
Lipa Hussain, Projects Administrator
Loukia Koutsoventi, Finance Manager
Taraneh Latifi Seresht, Finance Assistant
Development & Alumni

9 April 2025

Freedom of Information

39. Open version

THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

UNIVERSITY COURT

23 June 2025

Education Act 1994 requirements in relation to the Students' Association

Description of paper
1.   This paper introduces the annual Certificate of Assurance supplied by the Edinburgh University Students' Association to demonstrate University compliance with the requirements of The Education Act 1994 (the Act). This is attached as Appendix 1.

Action requested/Recommendation
2.   To note the Certificate of Assurance and be assured of current compliance.

Background and context
3.   Section 22 of the Education Act (1994) requires that the Governing Body of every establishment shall take such steps as are reasonably practicable to secure that any students' union operates in a fair and democratic manner and is accountable for its finances. Governing Bodies are also required to ensure that there is adequate publicity for the requirements of the Act, through the issuing of a Code of Practice which sets out how arrangements are made to both secure its observance, and through the provision of information to intending and matriculated students about the right to opt out of student membership.

4.   Within this requirement it is determined that any students' union should have a written constitution and the provisions of that constitution should be subject to the approval of the governing body at intervals of not more than five years

Discussion
5.   Court is provided with assurance each year that the University is compliant with the provisions of the Education Act in relation to the activities of the Students' Association.

6.   The Association last reviewed its written constitution in the form of the Articles of Association and the associated regulations in June 2021, with that review being reported to, and approved by, Court at the time. The next formal review will be due in June 2026.

7.   Some changes have been made to the Code of Practice. These changes are merely clarificatory or are updates to ensure that the Code of Practice accurately reflects other documents or procedures.

8.   No matters have arisen which require to be specifically raised, and Court can be assured of current compliance with the Act.

Resource implications
9.   There are no specific or additional resource implications associated with this paper.

Risk Management

10. There are no specific risk implications associated with the paper.

Equality & Diversity

11. Due consideration to equality and diversity has been given to ensure compliance with the Act.

Next steps/implications

12. The completion of the Certificate of Assurance at the end of each academic year will be supported by a review of actions/processes in place to fulfil the key requirements of the Act.

Consultation

13. This paper has been reviewed by Students' Association colleagues and the Deputy Secretary Students.

Further information

14. *Authors*   *Presenter*
Stephen Hubbard   Lucy Evans
CEO, Edinburgh University Students'   Deputy Secretary, Students
Association

Lucy Evans
Deputy Secretary, Students

Freedom of Information

15. Open paper.

Code of Practice relating to the

Edinburgh University Students' Association

THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

Purpose of Code of Practice

The 1994 Education Act (Section 22) requires University Court, the governing body of the University, to ensure that the Edinburgh University Students' Association (EUSA) operates in a fair and democratic manner and is accountable for its finances. This Code of Practice sets out how the University will carry out its responsibilities under the Act.

Overview

The Code of Practice covers areas such as:

- The right of students to opt out of membership;
- EUSA's democratic processes;
- EUSA's financial and resource allocation mechanisms;
- Affiliations by EUSA to external organisations; and
- The implications of Charity Law on the activities that EUSA can undertake.

Scope: Mandatory Code of Practice

This Code of Practice applies to all University of Edinburgh students, and is brought to their attention annually by publication on the EUSA and the University website.

Contact Officer	Lucy Evans	Deputy Secretary, Students	

Document control

Dates	Approved: 23 June 2025	Starts: 23 June 2025	Equality impact assessment: N/A	Amendments: N/A	Next Review: June 2026
Approving authority		University Court			
Consultation undertaken		EUSA, Deputy Secretary Students			
Section responsible for Code of Practice maintenance & review		EUSA, Deputy Secretary Students			
Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations		N/A			

Code of Practice relating to the Edinburgh University Students' Association

Part II of the Education Act 1994 places a range of responsibilities on the governing bodies of university institutions in regard to the organisation of students' unions. In particular the governing body shall prepare and issue, and when necessary revise, a code of practice as to the manner in which certain requirements of the act are carried into effect.

1.	Edinburgh University Students' Association qualifies as a students' union within section 20 of the Act.

2	This Code of Practice, approved by University Court with the agreement of the Students' Association, sets out how the University will carry out its responsibilities under the Act. The specific responsibilities to be included in the code are highlighted in bold italics below:-

Constitution

The students' union should have a written constitution and the provisions of that constitution should be subject to the approval of the governing body at intervals of not more than five years.

3.	The Students' Association is governed by its Articles of Association approved by the University Court. The Articles of Association make provision for detailed regulations to be published which shall be approved by the Association Trustee Board and /or the student body as defined by the Articles of Association.

4.	Copies of the Articles of Association and Regulations are freely available in the 'About Us' section of the Students' Association website, and can also be provided on request to any student."

5.	The Articles of Association are to be reviewed by the University Court at intervals of not more than five years. This need not mean a special quinquennial review of the Articles of Association. The Court may take the opportunity to review the terms of the Articles of Association should the Students' Association at any time bring forward proposed amendments.

Membership

Students should have the right not to be members of the students' union. Students who exercise that right should not be unfairly disadvantaged, with regard to the provision of services or otherwise, by reason of their having done so.

6.   All students of the University of Edinburgh, whether full-time, part-time or online distance learning; undergraduate or postgraduate, including, students on an interruption of study, visiting students or students on exchange; and all sabbatical trustees during their period of sabbatical office shall be entitled to membership of the Students' Association. Any student who wishes not to be a member, or who decides to withdraw from membership of the Students' Association, should inform the President of the Students' Association and the Secretary of the University in writing.

7.   Any student not in membership of the Students' Association is not entitled:

(a)   To participate in the government of the Students' Association and, in particular, to propose or vote in referenda, attend meetings, stand or vote in the election of Students' Association Officers, Students' Council, Standing Committees and Representative Committees, or play any part in any other comparable bodies that may be established.

(b)   To hold office in any Students' Association Committee or Society.

(c)   To benefit from any concessionary rates for membership of Societies, or for attendance at entertainments events, that may be offered exclusively to Students' Association members.

8.   Any such student shall cease to be a member immediately and may not re-apply for membership until the following academic session.

9.   Students who are eligible for full membership, but have exercised the right not to be a member, shall have access to all services and activities provided by the Students' Association other than those outlined in paragraph 7, and shall be subject to the same disciplinary procedures in relation to their use of these services and participation in these activities.

10.   The University has made no special arrangements for the provision of services or facilities for non-members of the Students' Association, since it is satisfied that the provision made by the University and the Students' Association for all students, whether they are members of the Students' Association or not, is sufficient to ensure that those who have exercised the right of non-membership under the Act are not unfairly disadvantaged. There will be no financial compensation to students who have exercised their right of non-membership.

Elections

Appointment to major students' union offices should be by election in a secret ballot in which all members are entitled to vote. The governing body is required to satisfy

itself that the students' union elections are fairly and properly conducted. A person should not hold paid elected students' union office for more than two years in total.

11.   Major students' union offices shall be defined as full time sabbatical Students' Association Executive Officers who have been granted a Laigh year by the University.

12.   All elections in the Students' Association shall be conducted in accordance with regulations laid down in accordance with the Articles of Association and approved by the Governance Subcommittee of the Trustee Board. These regulations shall ensure that appointment to major students' union offices, as defined in 11 above, is by election in a secret ballot in which all full members are entitled to vote.

13   Any complaint regarding the conduct of elections shall be decided upon by the Returning Officers appointed by the Governance Subcommittee of the Trustee Board, subject to appeal to the Governance Subcommittee of the Trustee Board whose decision shall be final.

14.   The University Secretary (or their nominee) may observe any part of the election process and an annual report will be made to the University Secretary on the conduct and outcome of the elections to the major students' union offices.

15.   Paid students' union offices shall be defined as full time sabbatical Students' Association Executive Officers. No person shall hold such office for more than two terms of one academic year each term and this is provided for in the regulations.

Finance

The financial affairs of the students' union should be properly conducted and appropriate arrangements should exist for the approval of the students' union's budget and the monitoring of its expenditure by the governing body.

The Students' Association is to publish a financial report annually or more frequently. The report is to be made available to the governing body and to all students and will contain, in particular, a list of external organisations to which the Students' Association has made donations during the period to which the report refers and details of those donations.

16.   The Students' Association Finance, Risk & Audit Subcommittee shall prepare an annual budget and forward business plan prior to the commencement of each financial year, which shall be submitted to the Students' Association Trustee Board for approval. The annual budget shall be presented for ratification to the University Policy & Resources Committee acting on behalf of the governing body.

17.   The Students Council shall receive the annual audited accounts of the Students' Association for information and the Students' Association Trustee Board shall receive the annual audited accounts of the Students' Association for approval. The annual audited accounts shall be presented for information to the University Policy & Resources Committee acting on behalf of the governing body.

18. The Students' Association will provide Financial and Management Information to the University Secretary and Director of Finance in line with the requirements set out in the

University's annual letter of grant. The Director of Finance will report any points of note to the University Policy and Resources Committee.

18.   The accounts shall contain details of any donations made to external organisations during the financial year.

The procedure for allocating resources to groups or clubs should be fair and should be set down in writing and be freely accessible to all students.

19.   The allocation of resources to groups and societies affiliated to the Students' Association are managed by the Finance, Risk & Audit Subcommittee of the Trustee Board. The procedures are included in the Regulations which are available to any student, on request, from the President of the Students' Association. The procedures and opportunities for funding are also available on the Students' Association website under the Student Opportunities / Resources section.

Affiliations and Donations

If the student union decides to affiliate to an external organisation it must publish notice of its decision, stating the name of the organisation and details of any subscription or similar fee paid or proposed to be paid and of any donation made or proposed to be made to the organisation and such notice is to be made available to the governing body and to all students.

20.   All affiliations and donations made by decision of a Referendum, Students' Council, Standing Committees, Representative Committees or Students' Association Executive Officers shall be published in the annual accounts of the Students' Association.

When a student union is affiliated to any external organisation there are to be procedures for the review of affiliations under which the current list of affiliations is submitted for approval by members annually or more frequently, and at such intervals of not more than a year as the governing body may determine, a requisition may be made by such proportion of members (not exceeding 5 per cent) as the governing body may determine, that the question of continued affiliation to any particular organisation be decided upon by a secret ballot in which all members are entitled to vote.

21.   An annual vote, by secret ballot, at a general meeting of the Students' Council open to all members, will be held to consider the affiliation of the Students' Association to any continuing affiliations previously agreed.

22.   Any affiliation made by the Students' Association may be rescinded by a decision of students made in accordance with the procedure for referenda outlined in the regulations which provide for a call for referenda being made by not more than 5% of members.

Complaints Procedure

There should be a complaints procedure available to all students or groups of students who are dissatisfied in their dealings with the students' union, or claim to have been unfairly disadvantaged by reason of having exercised the right to not be a member. This procedure should include the provision for an independent person appointed by the governing body to investigate and report on complaints.

24.   Any student or students who are dissatisfied in their dealings with the Students' Association, or claim to be disadvantaged by reason of their having exercised the right to withdraw from membership, shall be entitled to have their complaint considered in accordance with the Students' Association complaints procedure and this is available to all students. This procedure includes the right of appeal to an independent person appointed by University Court.

The following aspects are not required to be referenced in the code of practice, but it is an obligation for the governing body to bring these matters to the attention of students at least once a year. These will be published alongside this code on the Students' Association website.

Charity Law

The activities of the Students' Association are restricted by the law relating to charities. Consequently the Students' Association cannot have a political purpose and must not seek to advance the interest of a political party, but it may seek to influence opinion on issues relating directly to its own stated purposes, provided such activity is within its powers. The ways in which charities may or may not legitimately engage in political activities is the subject of advice and legislation from time to time by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator, courts of law, Parliament and government departments.

Code of Practice

This Code of Practice is brought to the attention of students annually by publication on the Students' Association and the University website.

Information for prospective students

The right of a student to not be a member of the Students' Association, and the arrangements for students to still access those services provided by the Students' Association for all students whether members or not, is made available to prospective students via inclusion in this code of practice which is published on the Students' Association website and on the University's website.

Approved by University Court, 23 June 2025
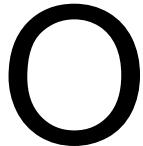
UNIVERSITY COURT

23 June 2025

Prevent Duty Annual Update

Description of paper
1.   The paper provides an update to Court on the University's obligations under the Prevent duty for 2024/25.

Action requested/Recommendation
2.   To note this update and the ongoing work in response to approaches set out by the UK and Scottish governments regarding the Prevent Duty.

Background and context
3.   The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015) imposes a duty on universities and other public bodies to have due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism. This duty is commonly referred to as "the Prevent duty".

4.   The aim of Prevent is to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. Prevent also extends to supporting the rehabilitation and disengagement of those already involved in terrorism.

5.   The Prevent duty applies to specified authorities in England and Wales, and Scotland. The Prevent duty guidance for Scotland (2015) was updated and published in May 2024. This [Updated guidance for Scotland] took effect from 19 August 2024.

6.   Under the guidance published for Scottish universities, "Monitoring and Enforcement" is understood to be the responsibility of each institution's governing body. This guidance sets out high level expectations for the University in the areas of: external speakers and events, leadership, engagement with local Prevent or CONTEST[1] multiagency groups, staff training, safety online and welfare and pastoral care.

Discussion
7.   The University continues to approach application of the Prevent duty in a proportionate manner. The updated government guidance referenced above, states that: "We do not envisage the new duty creating large new burdens on institutions and intend it to be implemented in a proportionate and risk-based way."

8.   Further to last year's updated Prevent Duty Guidance, we continue to work with Universities Scotland to focus on training and information sharing.

9.   Our front-line student-facing staff teams are required to complete the current Home Office Prevent duty training on an annual basis. This includes Residential Life and Wellbeing teams, as well as representatives from EUSA, Legal Services, Registry Services and Security. This ensures that our staff know how to recognise signs of radicalisation and how to respond to concerns. We seek to promote awareness so we can intervene early and support students and staff.

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[1] [Counter-terrorism strategy (CONTEST) 2023 - GOV.UK]

10. The University of Edinburgh's Prevent Lead, Deputy Secretary Students, is a member of the Universities Scotland HE Prevent Working Group. This Group is working to formalise information-sharing protocols with Police Scotland, to replace more informal current arrangements. Progress in developing this and other external information-sharing protocols is being kept under review by the Group, with a view to mitigating associated risks.

11. The University Compliance Group was originally set up to ensure the University's compliance with the Prevent duty. Following a review, this Group's Terms of Reference were updated and approved by University Executive to more accurately reflect the primary work of the Group which is to consider potentially controversial events which are hosted on University premises, reviewing these events and applying conditions where applicable to ensure that any event taking place on University property can do so safely and lawfully. The changes were also in recognition of the formation of a University CONTEST Delivery Board. The Group, now called the University Speakers and Events Oversight Group, still has regard for our Prevent duty in relation to its remit around considering speakers and events.

12. The purpose of the University CONTEST Delivery Board is to support and oversee the delivery of the University's duties under the UK's Counter Terrorism Strategy CONTEST and the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, concentrating mainly on three of the four "P's": Prevent, Protect and Prepare, Pursue (the last of these being largely a law enforcement duty). This Board is now in operation.

13. The Deputy Secretary Students, as Prevent Lead for the University, reports on all Prevent matters through the CONTEST Delivery Board. In line with existing practice, the Prevent lead will continue to report any pertinent matters to the University Secretary.

Paragraph 14: closed section

15. National matters of focus related to Prevent discussed at the Universities Scotland HE Prevent Working Group and reported by the Deputy Secretary Students to the University's CONTEST Board are noted below. We will continue to act in accordance with any outcomes as a result of these matters when further information is reported by government.

- The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, also known as Martyn's law, received Royal Assent in April 2024, with the expected implementation phase at least two years. This will include establishing the regulator function within the Security Industry Authority (SIA), as well as ensuring there is time for businesses, premises and events to prepare for the legislation coming into force. We await details about this from the Home Office.
- There is currently no permanent independent review or oversight function of Prevent to ensure its effectiveness. Review functions have been covered by timebound, case-specific Prevent Learning Reviews, and the Prevent Standards and Compliance Unit, which handles complaints about Prevent. Earlier this year, the UK Home Secretary announced a comprehensive review of Prevent anti-terrorism, appointing Lord David Anderson KC as interim Prevent commissioner, a new role to provide independent functions for

Prevent. The Interim Commissioner's primary responsibilities will be (1) reviewing; (2) oversight; and (3) investigating concerns about Prevent. These responsibilities will apply in England, Wales and Scotland.

Resource implications

16. Not applicable.

Risk Management

17. The University has a legal duty to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism." Failure to comply with the duty may lead to the UK Government Prevent Oversight Board recommending that the Secretary of State use the power of direction under section 30 of the Counter-Terrorism Act (2015). This power would only be used when other options for engagement and improvement had been exhausted.

Equality & Diversity

18. Equality and diversity are taken into consideration on a case-by-case basis by the University Prevent Lead and University Secretary.

Next steps/implications

19. We will continue to engage with the training and other implementation activities related to the Prevent Guidance.

Consultation

20. Updates on Prevent Duty are regularly shared with members of the University CONTEST Board and the Speakers and Events Oversight Group, and other relevant staff as required.

Further information

21. *Author*
   Lucy Evans
   Deputy Secretary Students

Freedom of Information

22. Open version

UNIVERSITY COURT

23 June 2025

Resolutions – Chairs

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

Action requested/Recommendation
2. To approve the following Resolutions presented in final format:

 No. 3/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Neural Development and Behaviour
 No. 4/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Translational Vascular Neuroscience
 No. 5/2025: Alteration of the title of Personal Chair of Foundations of Quantum Informatics
 No.8/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Philosophy, Religion and Culture
 No.9/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of General Veterinary Practice
 No.10/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Tropical Livestock Genetics
 No.11/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Management & Organisation Studies
 No.12/2025: Foundation of a Chair of Accounting
 No.13/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Global Mental Health
 No.14/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Natural Capital Accounting
 No.15/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Religion, Society and Ethics
 No.16/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Neural Development and Behaviour
 No.17/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Linguistics
 No.18/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Organic Chemistry
 No.19/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Cellular Immunology
 No.20/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Education
 No.21/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Rheumatology
 No.22/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Infection Immunology
 No.23/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Work and Organisation
 No.24/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Finance
 No.25/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Work and Organisational Psychology
 No.26/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Management and Organisation Studies
 No.27/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Sustainable Architecture
 No.28/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Film Theory, History and Criticism
 No.29/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Critical Theory
 No.30/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Student Learning Nursing

No.31/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Modern Social and Economic History
No.32/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Prehistory and Archaeometry
No.33/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Zooarchaeology and Eurasian Prehistory
No.34/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Medieval Latin
No.35/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of the History of the Ancient Mediterranean World
No.36/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of International Law and Human Rights
No.37/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Transnational Trade Law
No.38/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Sports Physiology
No.39/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Literacies and Multilingual Education
No.40/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Cognitive Science of Language and Multilingualism
No.41/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Developmental Psychology of Mental Health
No.42/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Child Health and Developmental Science
No.43/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Brain and Language
No.44/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Moral and Political Philosophy
No.45/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Moral Philosophy and Epistemology
No.46/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Vision Science
No.47/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Global Politics
No.48/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Global Studies and International Development
No.49/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Sustainable Energy
No.50/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Media and Communications
No.51/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of the History of Medicine
No.52/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Developmental Biology and Psychology
No.53/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Developmental Neuropsychology
No.54/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Cardiovascular Regeneration
No.55/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Global Sexual and Reproductive Health
No.56/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Environment and Health
No.57/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Pulmonary Immunity and Regeneration
No.58/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Experimental Cancer Medicine
No.59/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Psychometrics
No.60/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Trauma and Orthopaedics
No.61/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Infectious Disease Epidemiology
No.62/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Infectious Diseases and Education
No.63/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Small Animal Cardiology
No.64/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Comparative Statistics
No.65/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Veterinary Anaesthesia and Analgesia

No.66/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of High Performance Computing
Technologies
No.67/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Immunology and Experimental
Medicine
No.68/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of RNA and Chromatin Biology
No.69/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Main Group Chemistry
No.70/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Circular Chemical Engineering
No.71/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Neurotechnology and Medical
Electronics
No.72/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Ecology and Biogeography
No.73/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Land-based Carbon
No.74/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Children's Geography
No.75/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Geochemistry
No.76/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Multilingual Natural Language
Processing
No.77/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Computational Biology
No.78/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Computational Social Science
No.79/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Computing Education
No.80/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Mathematics Education
No.81/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Holography
No.82/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of X-ray Astronomy
No.83/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Theoretical and Computational
Physics
No.84/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Biomaterials
No.85/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Global Respiratory Medicine
No.86/2025: Foundation of a Personal AXA Chair of Vaccinology and Global
Health
No.87/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Data Infrastructure and Analytics

Background and context
3. The Universities (Scotland) Act 1966 enabled Court to exercise by Resolution a wide range of powers, including the creation of Chairs. The Act sets out the procedure for making Resolutions. This includes a period of consultation with the Senate, the General Council and any other body or person having an interest.

Discussion
4. The draft Resolutions were circulated to General Council and Senate for observations, with no observations received.

5. Resolutions establishing Chairs all follow the same format, with Resolution No. 3/2025 attached as an example. The majority of the Chairs requiring a Resolution are personal Chairs as a result of the annual academic promotions process (63 of the 83) and come into force from 1 August 2025. The remainder (Chair Resolutions Nos. 3 to 21/2025 and Nos. 85 and 86/2025) are backdated as improved records available through the People & Money System brought to light Chairs created without a Court Resolution, so these individuals are already in post.

Resource implications

6. The academic promotions process involves confirmation of the funding in place to support posts. The Principal has confirmed that academic promotions will be paused in the next academic year (2025-26).

Risk Management

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

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

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

Equality & Diversity

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

Next steps/implications

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

Consultation

11. Senate and the General Council are asked for observations on draft Resolutions. Draft Resolutions are available on the University website: Notices and Draft Resolutions | Governance and Strategic Planning to enable any other body or person having an interest to express observations.

Further information

12. *Author*
    Kirstie Graham
    Court Services Office
    June 2025

Freedom of Information

13. Open paper.

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

Resolution of the University Court No. 3/2025

Foundation of a Personal Chair of Neural Development and Behaviour

At Edinburgh, the Twenty third day of June, Two thousand and twenty five.

WHEREAS the University Court deems it expedient to found a Personal Chair of Neural Development and Behaviour:

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

1. There shall be a Personal Chair of Neural Development and Behaviour in the University of Edinburgh.

2. The patronage of the Chair shall be vested in and exercised by the University Court of the University of Edinburgh.

3. Notwithstanding the personal nature of this Chair, the terms and conditions of appointment and tenure which by Statute, Ordinance and otherwise apply to other Chairs in the University shall be deemed to apply in like manner to the Personal Chair of Neural Development and Behaviour together with all other rights, privileges and duties attaching to the office of Professor.

4. This Resolution shall come into force with effect from 1 September Two thousand and twenty four.

For and on behalf of the University Court

LEIGH CHALMERS

University Secretary

UNIVERSITY COURT

23 June 2025

Resolutions – Degree Programme Regulations

Description of paper

1.   This paper invites Court to approve two Resolutions presented in final form, containing annual updates to the degree programme regulations.

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.   To approve the following Resolutions presented in final format:

- Resolution No. 6/2025: Undergraduate Degree Programme Regulations
- 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. |
| **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 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
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. Senate and the General Council will be informed of the approval of the final Resolutions and the degree regulations will come into effect on 1 August 2025. The list of approved Resolutions is annually reviewed and published on the University's website.

Consultation

14. Academic Services consulted widely on the revisions to the degree regulations and these have been reviewed and recommended for approval by Senate's Academic Policy & Regulations Committee. Court reviewed them in draft form at the April meeting, following which they were circulated to Senate (meeting on 20 May 2025) and the General Council, with no observations received. Draft Resolutions are available on the University [website](#) to enable any other body or person having an interest to express observations before they are referred to Court for approval.

Further information

15. *Authors*
    Sarah Barnard and Dr Adam Bunni, Academic Quality and Standards

Freedom of Information

16. Open paper.

THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

UNIVERSITY COURT

23 June 2025

Court Meeting Dates 2026/27

Description of paper
1. This paper proposes Court meeting dates for the 2026/27 academic year.

Action requested/Recommendation
2. Court is invited to approve the dates.

Background and context
3.   The proposed meeting dates follow a similar pattern to those scheduled in recent years. These are two meetings in Semester 1 and three meetings in Semester 2. Meeting dates for 2025/26 were previously approved by Court in February 2024.

Discussion
4. The proposed meeting dates for 2026/27 are as follows:
  • Monday 5 October 2026 (Seminar and Meeting)
  • Monday 7 December 2026 (Meeting)
  • Monday 1 March 2027 (Seminar and Meeting)
  • Monday 26 April 2027 (Meeting)
  • Monday 21 June 2027 (Meeting)

Resource implications
5. Court's servicing costs are met from existing budgets.

Risk Management
6.   Regular scheduling of Court meetings contributes to the good governance of the University.

Equality & Diversity
7. No equality and diversity issues are anticipated.

Next steps/implications
8. If agreed, calendar invitations will be issued to Court members and attendees.

Consultation
9.   The Principal's Office and Convener of Remuneration Committee have been consulted, to ensure proposed Court dates allow for practicable cycles of prior committee meetings.

Further information
10. *Author*
    Daniel Wedgwood
    Head of Court Services

Freedom of Information
11. Open paper.