

## **Professional Services Staff Member Election 2024**

### **Derek MacLeod**

Having worked at the University for almost 16 years, I have built up significant experience working across the breadth of the institution and I'm keen to utilise this as the Professional Services Staff Member on University Court.

I've held a number of roles in Edinburgh Global – initially working in the International Office Recruitment and Development team across Africa, the Middle East and North America, before becoming the Regional Director for Africa. It was during this time that I also served as the Secretary and then Chair of the Scottish Universities International Group (SUIG), a group that brings all Scottish universities together to work collectively and collaboratively on the global stage.

At the end of 2019 I moved into my current role as Head of the Global Partnerships and Community team. This involves working across the University to support and oversee our portfolio of global partners, as well as working with colleagues internally to ensure appropriate governance and that the University engages responsibly – mitigating risks of our global engagement. Achieving this would not be possible without engaging with colleagues across all three Colleges as well as with colleagues across a range of services in USG, CSG, ISG and the Finance Directorate. The interdependency between internal partners is crucial in delivering impactful partnerships for the University, and it is one of the areas of my role that I enjoy working on most.

I was brought up in Edinburgh before moving away for 8 years to study in both the University of St Andrews and at Emory University in Atlanta, before living and working in Liberia and London. After spending many years telling everyone how great Edinburgh was, I then moved back to Edinburgh in 2008 to work at the University and promote the University and City internationally. I'm very passionate about Edinburgh as a place to live and work, and I recognise the significant role that the University plays in the city – and as a result I particularly enjoy currently sitting on the University's Community Board and the City of Edinburgh's International Group.

As well as working at the University, I also completed an MSc in Africa and International Development in the School of Social and Political Science in 2011 – which helped me to see the University from a completely different perspective.

Many years ago, I was also fortunate to sit on the University Court of the University of St Andrews, as a Sabbatical Officer in the Students' Association. I feel that this experience will also stand me in good stead for a similar role here in Edinburgh too.

I believe that I'm approachable and level-headed and would be a good representative of diverse views from across different professional services at the University. While there is a wide range of complex issues that the University currently faces – within our institution, within the Higher Education sector, and also internationally – I'm optimistic that by working constructively together we can improve the institution for all.