# THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

**University Court**
**Institute for Regeneration and Repair, Edinburgh BioQuarter,**
**4-5 Little France Drive, Edinburgh**
**Monday, 22 April 2024**

## AGENDA

### OPENING ITEMS

**1**  **Minutes**
To *approve*
- the minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2024    **A1**
- the note of the Court seminar held on 26 February 2024    **A2**

**2**  **Matters Arising & Review of Action Log**    **A3**
To *raise* any matters arising and *review* the Action Log

**3**  **Principal's Report**    **B**
To *note* a report from Peter Mathieson, Principal

**4**  **Committee Business**
- Senior Lay Member's Overview    **Verbal**
- Policy & Resources Committee    **C1**
- Audit & Risk Committee    **C2**
- Knowledge Strategy Committee    **C3**
- Senate (Senatus Academicus)    **Verbal**

### KEY ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/DECISION

**5**  **Student Experience**    **D**
To *consider* a paper presented by Colm Harmon, Vice-Principal Students

**6**  **Students' Association and Sports Union Reports**
To *consider* the reports presented by Sharan Atwal, Students' Association President
- **Students' Association Report**    **E1**
- **Sports Union Report**    **E2**

**7**  **Finance**
- **Director of Finance's Report**    **F1**
To *consider* a paper presented by Lee Hamill, Director of Finance
- **Planning Round**    **F2**
To *consider* a paper presented by Rona Smith, Deputy Secretary, Governance and Strategic Planning

**8**  **People & Money Systems and Roadmap Update**    **G**
To *consider* a paper presented by Catherine Martin, Vice-Principal Corporate Services and *approve* the proposed response to the General Council

**9**     **Annual People Report**                                           **H**
                 To *consider* a paper presented by James Saville, Director of HR

**10**    **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Data Report 2024**                      **I**
                 To *consider* a paper presented by Sarah Cunningham-Burley, University Lead on Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

**11**    **Performance Measures to Support Strategy 2030: 2023-24 Mid-Year**     **J**
                 **Report**
                 To *consider* a paper presented by Rona Smith, Deputy Secretary, Governance and Strategic Planning

**12**    **Donations & Legacies and Alumni Relations Activity**                     **K**
                 To *note* a paper presented by Chris Cox, Vice-Principal Philanthropy and Advancement

**13**    **Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC)**                       **L**
                 To *approve* the requested funding and delegation of authority

**14**    **Managing Security Related Risks in Internationalisation:**              **M**
                 **Annual Update**
                 To *consider* a paper presented by Alan Mackay, Vice-Principal International

### ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL

**15**    **Strategic Risk Report**                                                    **N**
                 To *approve*

**16**    **Professional Services Members of Senate Election Regulations**            **O**
                 To *approve*

**17**    **Edinburgh BioQuarter**                                              **P**
                 To *note*

**18**    **Draft Resolutions: Degree Programme Regulations**                     **Q**
                 To *review* and *refer* to Senate and the General Council

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

**20**    **Date of Next Meeting**
                 Monday 17 June 2024, 14.00-17.00

# THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

## UNIVERSITY COURT

### 26 February 2024, Edinburgh Climate Change Institute, High School Yards

### Minutes

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

**OPENING ITEMS**

## 1   Minute                                                                    Paper A1

Debora Kayembe, Rector, noted apologies and welcomed members and attendees.

The minute of the meeting held on 4 December 2023 was approved, with amendment to the minute of item 10, Grade Scale Review, to add the following sentence, which reflected commitments made in the relevant paper:

> "Recognising the budgetary impact of the proposals, the Senior Leadership Team reaffirmed their collective commitment to plan and deliver performance against budgets (income and expenditure) that would collectively deliver annual EBITDA outcomes in the Court-agreed range of 7-9%."

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

The Senior Lay Member, as Convener of Exception Committee, noted that Exception Committee had completed formal approval of the University's Annual Report & Accounts following the last meeting of Court and that these had been submitted to the Scottish Funding Council before its 31 December deadline. In addition, the University's return under the US Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) had been separately approved by Exception Committee and completed in January. Exception Committee minutes for each of these approvals had been made available to Court as background documents for this meeting.

The Action Log was noted.

## 3   Principal's Report                                                        Paper B

Peter Mathieson, Principal & Vice-Chancellor, emphasised a number of recent successes for the University that were noted in his written report, including:
- record levels of philanthropic support received in the previous academic year;
- the award of Educational Partnership of the Year to The University's Zhejiang University partnership at the recent China-British Business Council awards;
- the founding of Scotland Beyond Net Zero (SBNZ), initially by the Universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow, which would bring together world-class expertise from institutions across Scotland;
- the award of the Tam Dalyell Prize for Excellence in Engaging the Public with Science to Dr James Cook;
- the announcement by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) of the new £14.25m Engineered Genetic Control Systems for Advanced Therapeutics Hub, bringing together a multidisciplinary team from the Universities of Edinburgh and Oxford, Imperial College London and the CRUK Scotland Institute, as part of a £100m UK-wide investment by UKRI in engineering biology;
- Edinburgh's lead role or involvement in more than half of the nine centres announced as part of the £80m UK-wide investment in applying AI to real-

world data and research by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC).

The Principal & Vice-Chancellor also commented on trends in student applications and university finances in the Scottish and UK higher education sectors, noting that the University was in a strong position relative to many peer institutions, but aware of financial risks under certain projections of potential future trends and actively engaged in scenario planning for these.

In discussion, it was noted that demand from potential students remained high and that careful management of the process conversion from applications to acceptances, while complex, could provide for maintenance of student recruitment levels even under conditions of falling application numbers.

## 4      Committee Business

- **Senior Lay Member's Overview**

Janet Legrand, Senior Lay Member, noted this was Debora Kayembe's final meeting as Rector and thanked her for her service in this role, noting that there would be a further opportunity to express Court's gratitude at the Court dinner in June.

The incoming Rector, Simon Fanshawe, had been elected unopposed, his being the only valid nomination received. It was noted that two letters commenting on this process, expressing opposing points of view, had recently been received. These had not been circulated to Court, on the grounds that the appointment of the Rector was not in itself a matter for Court and that it was recognised by all parties that the Court-approved election regulations had been followed correctly.

It was noted that Imran Khan had been appointed from a high-quality field of applicants as Court's Governance Apprentice for 2024. He would attend Court for the first time at Court's April meeting.

- **Policy & Resources Committee**                                      **Paper C1**

The report was noted. The Senior Lay Member, speaking as Convener of Policy & Resources Committee (PRC), noted that a detailed update had been received on work relating to the presence of Reinforced Aerated Autoclaved Concrete in some University buildings and that the committee had taken assurance from this that this issue was being handled appropriately. PRC had also thoroughly reviewed requests for allocation of funds within the Capital Plan for the small works programme and the proposed multi-year energy efficiency programme, both of which appeared later in the Court agenda, and recommended these for approval by Court.

- **Nominations Committee**                                            **Paper C2**

Court noted the report and approved the following re-appointments of Trustees of the Staff Benefits Scheme: Julia Miller for a two-year term to 31 July 2026, Doreen Davidson for a four-year term to 31 July 2028 and Ashley Shannon for a four-year term to 31 July 2028.

o **Contingency Deputising Arrangements for the Principal**. Court approved the revised document and agreed that the paper could be designated open upon approval.

o **Handling Correspondence Addressed to Court**. Court approved the proposed framework for handling correspondence. It was noted that Court might find it useful to receive an annual summary of the volume of correspondence received and topics covered.

- **Audit & Risk Committee**                                    **Paper C3**

Court noted the report. The Convener of Audit & Risk Committee noted that published results contained in the Annual Report & Accounts and the US GAAP accounts, as formally approved by Exception Committee (see item 2, above), were consistent with those presented to Court at its meeting on 4 December 2023.

- **Knowledge Strategy Committee**                              **Paper C4**

Court noted the report.

- **Senate**                                                    **Paper C5**

Court noted the report. Richard Blythe, Senate Assessor, commended the Clerk to Senate, Olivia Hayes, for preparatory work that had facilitated highly constructive outcomes from the most recent meeting of Senate, in particular from discussions of the Curriculum Transformation Project, which had in turn informed Court members' understanding of this area.

**KEY ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/DECISION**

**5    Student Experience**

- **Student Experience Update**                                 **Paper D1**
- **Quality Enhancement and Standards Review**                  **Paper D2**

Court received an overview of recent work in relation to enhancement of the student experience, including the recommendations of the Quality Enhancement and Standards Review (QESR) carried out by the Quality Assurance Agency Scotland and how the University was responding to these recommendations.

Overall, significant progress had been made, with work led by Heads of College feeding into a newly-established Student Experience Delivery and Monitoring Oversight Board, which helped to ensure consistency and to share best practice across the Colleges. Court received a more detailed overview of work within the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences to exemplify these points.

Within the overall focus on the Student Experience, the handling of assessment and feedback was the highest priority. Progress had been made both in implementing the norm of a three-week limit on receipt of feedback and in monitoring compliance with

this norm across the University. It was recognised that there was significant complexity in gathering and interpreting figures: the intention was that a focus on the normal three-week limit should help to illuminate any barriers to feedback within this limit, not impose an overly simplistic or punitive approach.

In discussion of this point, Court members encouraged consideration of other aspects of assessment, in addition to the timeliness of feedback, including the amount and types of assessment that students might face. It was noted that an exercise was underway to audit these and other aspects of assessment and that external feedback from the QESR was a helpful point of reference in this work. The Curriculum Transformation Project also provided a useful framework for consideration of these matters.

It was noted that the Student Support Model (SSM) had had a very positive impact, with input from all parts of the University. Evaluation of the SSM was on-going but the intention was to move relevant work from a project model to a business-as-usual footing. Discussion of the SSM focused on the 'cohort lead' role, which had been implemented in different ways, and with mixed success, across the University. It was noted that this had intentionally been an area in which Schools had been given flexibility to develop locally appropriate practices and that it was now an appropriate time to assess the success of different models and provide support where needed.

In further discussion, it was noted that work continued on training of postgraduate tutors and demonstrators and that significant progress was expected in this area as a result of recent recruitment to relevant leadership positions.

## 6 Students' Association and Sports Union Reports

### 6.1 Students' Association Report                                    Paper E1

The President of the Students' Association introduced the report, noting that, in addition to updates on the sabbatical officers' recent activities, it contained extended presentation of the Association's concerns regarding the impacts on students of the raised cost of living, increases in rents charged for University-owned accommodation and the handling of alleged cases of gender-based violence. It was noted that these matters were also the topic of a letter addressed to Court that was appended to the report and had been the foci of a demonstration organised by the Students' Association earlier in the day. The Association was keen to raise these matters to Court's attention, reflecting the strength of the Association's concerns, while recognising that it was not Court's role to engage in decision-making at an operational level.

Court noted the concerns raised in the report. The following points were made in discussion:
- There had been previous engagement between the University's senior management and the Students' Association on the matters raised, although disagreements remained.
- The Senior Lay Member had met recently with the President of the Students' Association to discuss these issues.

- In some cases, available support for students was not being taken up by those who would qualify for it, suggesting a need to re-assess relevant communications and potential barriers to uptake.
- The context for increases in rents included the need for the University to invest in both maintaining and expanding its residences. Both the demand for University accommodation and the overall supply of suitable accommodation in the city had changed significantly in recent years, creating new pressures.
- The Student Experience as a whole was foremost among the University's priorities and, within this, the importance of the matters raised in the report was recognised by both Court and the University's senior management.
- It was suggested that joint work might be undertaken between the University and the Students' Association on the nature of student life in Edinburgh, now and as it might evolve in the future.

Recognising that significant disagreements remained, Court encouraged further engagement between the University's executive leadership and the Students' Association. It was also agreed that there should be further consideration of the wider student experience, beyond educational aspects, at a future Court meeting or seminar.

Court agreed that Court should provide a response to the Student Association's letter, noting Court's consideration of the matters raised, and noted that the University's senior management would provide a substantive response.

## 6.2   Sports Union Report                                                            Paper E2

The report was noted. Court noted in particular the significant sporting and professional achievements of students and staff that were reported in the paper.

## 7      Finance

## 7.1   Director of Finance's Report                                                    Paper F1

The Director of Finance summarised the report. Budget holders were seeking opportunities to reduce expenditure, including through workforce planning and efficiencies arising through new applications of technology. The University was continuing to track its debt covenants.

Court noted the report.

## 7.2   Revolving Credit Facilities Renewal                                           Paper F2

Court granted approvals and delegated authority as requested, to facilitate renewal of revolving credit facilities.

## 8      People and Money System and Roadmap                                         Paper G

Court received an update on work relating to the People & Money system. Priority areas had been identified and a roadmap for further improvements had been developed. This took into account user feedback and the findings of the external

review that Court had discussed at its previous meeting, The roadmap was shortly to be discussed by the University Executive and would be shared with Court at its next meeting.

Court was also informed of new governance arrangements for the People & Money project, which would henceforth report to the University Initiatives Portfolio Board (UIPB), the Enactment Group having concluded its work. The UIPB had met twice since its inception, with a focus on preparatory work and relevant training for UIPB members.

An integrated communications plan was in development, taking into account feedback from recent all-staff 'town hall' meetings.

In discussion, the costs of the ongoing work were raised. It was noted that costs were carefully monitored and controlled, with an awareness of previous expenditure in relation to the system, but also that the planned work included a number of essential matters.

It was noted that certain changes were to be made to the system independently, as Oracle was changing aspects of the user interface in all such systems. Information Services were preparing for this.

Court noted the update.

**9      Forest and Peatlands Programme First Annual Report 2022-23          Paper H**

Court received a summary of the First Annual Report of the Forest and Peatlands Programme, the University's in-house carbon off-setting scheme, which also brought multiple opportunities for educational, research and community benefits. Good progress had been made, with land purchases completed and partnerships with other landowners in development.

Court noted the report.

**10     Development and Alumni Annual Report                                          Paper I**

Court noted the report.

**ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL**

**11     Small Works Programme and Statutory Compliance Budget          Paper J
         Allocation**

Court approved the allocation of funds included within the current capital plan for the Small Works and Statutory Compliance Programme 2024/25, noting that further work was underway to establish the additional funding required to meet the demand for small projects and essential works.

**12 Proposed Multiyear Energy Efficiency Programme** **Paper K**

Court approved funds from within an allocation in the current Capital Plan to establish a multiyear project pipeline for the Energy Efficiency Programme.

**13 Update on arrangements for Senate and Senate Standing Committee** **Paper L**
**Elections, and proposed amendments to Senate Election**
**Regulations**

Court approved the proposed amendments to the Senate Election Regulations, noting that this would include the Professional Services Staff Member of Court becoming an *ex officio* member of Senate, and approved a minor consequential amendment to Court's Standing Orders.

**14 Professional Services Staff Member Election Regulations 2024** **Paper M**

Sarah McAllister, Professional Services Staff Member, recused herself from discussion and decision-making on this item.

Court approved the regulations for a Professional Services Staff Member Election.

**15 General Council Membership & Registration Ordinance** **Paper N**

Court approved the draft Ordinances, as presented in the paper, for submission to the Privy Council Office and delegated authority to the University Secretary to agree any further nonmaterial changes to the Ordinances as might be requested by the Scottish Government or Privy Council.

**16 Donations & Legacies and Alumni Relations Activity** **Paper O**

Court noted legacies and donations received and the reported alumni relations activities.

**17 Court Meeting Dates 2024/25 and 2025/26** **Paper P**

Court approved the proposed meeting dates for 2024/25 and 2025/26.

**18 Resolutions** **Paper Q**

Court approved the following Resolutions:
- No. 1/2024: alteration of the Personal Chair of Sociology of Emotions and Relationships to be designated Personal Chair of Sociology;
- No. 2/2024: alteration of the Personal Chair of European Politics to be designated Personal Chair of Neuropolitics; and
- No. 3/2024: Foundation of a Chair of Generative AI.

**19 Any Other Business** **Paper R**

The Rector recused herself from the meeting. The Rector's Assessor proposed that Court should consider remunerating future Rectors, on the grounds that this could

open the position to a wider range of potential candidates, including those who might otherwise find it difficult to support themselves financially while devoting time to the role. It was agreed that Nominations Committee would consider this matter at a future meeting.

The Rector returned to the meeting. Noting that this was her final meeting in the role, and therefore her final meeting as a member of Court, the Rector thanked all the members of Court. She offered reflections on her time in this position, her background and experiences prior to this and her hopes and priorities for the future, stressing the importance of tolerance, respect and courage in all endeavours, both for the University and in other contexts.

**20 Date of Next Meeting**
Monday, 22 April 2024, 14.00-17.00

# THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

## UNIVERSITY COURT

### 22 April 2024

### Principal's Report

**Description of paper**
1.   The paper provides a summary of the Principal's main activities since the last meeting of the University Court.

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

**Action requested/Recommendation**
3.   In general, Court is asked to note the information presented. Members' observations or comment on any of the items would be welcome.

**Background and context**
4.   The report summarises key issues for the University and the Principal's engagement with regard to local, national, international and sector-wide developments and activity.

**Discussion**
5.   I undertook to include in my future reports to Court a brief regular update on People & Money and the response to the PA Consulting report thereon. Court will receive regular papers on People & Money but from my viewpoint I offer the following: the People & Money 'roadmap', which outlines work scheduled over the next two years to improve users' experience of the system, is on the agenda of today's meeting. The roadmap is focused largely on processes, rather than on the system itself. Enactment Group commended the roadmap to University Initiatives Portfolio Board and to University Executive in February, when Executive approved it. An all-staff communication in April will summarise scheduled actions and will direct colleagues to webpages where timetable and progress will be updated monthly.

6.   As of the start of April 2024, priority is being given to the following areas of work:
- Increase capacity to support the work required to set up research grants in People & Money and support key related processes;
- Set up the project which will deliver improvements to the allocation of salaries to research projects;
- Set up the first three end-to-end processes where we will develop and deliver standard operating procedures for purchase to pay, academic promotions and research collaborator payments; and
- Set up the work to improve the goods-receipting process by giving specific colleagues access to receipt transactions other than their own Purchase Orders (POs), supported by appropriate training and support."

7.   In terms of communications, the open meetings that I and senior team colleagues held in February were well-attended (three 'face-to-face', one online) and included some information on People & Money with the opportunity for attendees to ask questions or raise issues. Some did so, especially in the meeting held at BioQuarter, but the other

meetings were more dominated by questions/discussion about pay and conditions including grade scale review. Regular communications form a key part of the ongoing plan for People & Money, with the opportunity for bidirectional communications being a key part of that plan.

8.   2024 continues to be dominated by discussion of the financial challenges facing the Higher Education Sector, with headlines in Scotland and across the wider UK, some of which talk of existential threats. The potential repercussions for us are at the forefront of our minds as the Senior Leadership Team's Planning Round discussions progress, the latest position on which will feature later on the Court agenda.

9.   One pertinent development has been a delay to the publication of the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) indicative funding allocations for 2024/25, which had been expected on 28 March. The SFC wrote to Principals on 19 March to confirm that there would be a delay, necessitated to allow SFC to revise its approach to indicative allocations of the Teaching grant, ensuring alignment with Ministerial priorities. SFC have indicated they remain committed to prioritising protection of the unit of resource (the amount of funding per student) and will consider the impact of funding distribution options on 'sustainability, opportunity and fair access'. They additionally noted that indicative funding will not now be confirmed until 'after the Easter recess' (at the time of writing expected to be on 18th April so I should be able to give a further verbal update to the Court meeting on 22nd). Taking a steer from the Scottish Government budget for 2024-25 (and noting Scottish Government and institutional financial years are off-set), we can see that SFC are modelling based on:

- A 'capital' line, which was uplifted by c£16M for 2024-25, and which is used to fund the Research Excellence Grant, Research Postgraduate Grant and Innovation Funding. This is expected to flow through to uplifts for Edinburgh in aggregate, predominantly through the Research Excellence Grant.
- A 'resource' line, which was reduced by £28.5M (from an adjusted baseline) for 2024-25, and which is used to fund all Teaching and related grants. The scale of reduction which will flow through to Edinburgh is not yet known as this will depend on how much SFC adjusts funded places, the unit of resource, and associated grants including various premiums and the grant for expensive strategically important subjects.

10. As Court members are aware, the challenges do not only come from the funding bodies. The precariousness of HE funding after years of inadequate government investment is increasingly evident, the reliance on tuition fee income from overseas students to cross-subsidise home students and research being the prime example of the risks inherent in our funding system. It seems that UK government policy is likely to have further negative impact here as the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) has now been formally asked by the Home Secretary to conduct a 'rapid review' of the Graduate visa route by 14 May. This accelerated timetable means that the MAC will not be able to fully consult with members and stakeholders, a fact that the MAC themselves have also noted. The Graduate Route allows international students to work in the UK for two years after graduation (or three years for those with a PhD). The government called this review in light of government and public concern around possible abuse of this visa route by some students.

11.  Universities UK (UUK) and Universities Scotland continue to lobby and have pulled together a series of roundtable meetings with MAC representatives where the University will be represented. At the first of these, the Chair of the Migration Advisory Committee Graduate Route Review, Prof. Brian Bell, led the discussion. Our feedback to the Review emphasised the importance of the Graduate Route and the vast majority of genuine international students and graduates to UK universities, to the UK economy, and to our international diversity objectives. We await the outcome of the Review and any subsequent government decision on the Graduate Route in the months ahead.

12.  Regardless of outcome we believe that rhetoric and policy changes are having a negative impact on the UK's attractiveness as study destination for international students. The University of Edinburgh's current recruitment position is strong in this context and relative to the sector, but we maintain a watching brief in relation to offer-holder conversion and demand in future years, and continue to plan mitigation to maintain the volume and quality of future intakes.

13.  UUK are also continuing to engage with politicians and officials, including from the Labour Party, to make the case for the Graduate visa as part of a competitive offer for international students.

14.  The positive changes to the University's grade pay scale, agreed by Court in December 2023, have been implemented during early April, ahead of payroll cut-off on 16 April. At the time of writing, no major new issues have been identified and all processes are progressing as planned. As Court is aware, the improvements are part of our commitment to improve the staff experience, and the not unrelated student experience, in addition to the longer-term objectives of shaping our University to ensure that we are best placed to meet the challenges ahead and emerge as an even better place to work and study.

*Paragraph 15: closed section*

16.  On student engagement, Vice-Principals Argyle, Harmon and Martin, with Deputy Secretary Students Lucy Evans, led on the second Student Voice Forum of this academic year organised by the Students' Association. A small number of students attended, and cost of living and housing featured high on the agenda, along with a number of individual concerns and experiences relayed by attendees. We have also recently navigated two student occupations: of the Gordon Aikman Lecture Theatre at the end of February into early March and of 40 George Square in early April. Both occupations were apparently primarily motivated by concerns about Palestine. Both impacted seriously on planned delivery of teaching for other students and significant effort was made to move this teaching to other locations with minimal disruption to students and staff where possible (around 12,000 individual student education events were affected by the Aikman occupation, and 4,500 at 40 George Square). There has been useful engagement with the student societies involved in the occupations since they ended. The situation in Palestine remains a matter of significant concern in our student body and we hope to continue to engage with students particularly under the auspices of the Students' Association and other representative groups. Many colleagues were involved to manage both occupations safely to conclusion, my thanks to them as always.

17. We were pleased to welcome US-based alumna Lauren Vicary, Senior Vice President at an influential Washington DC-based thinktank, for a four-day campus visit. The visit programme was designed to engage and inspire various sets of students and foster collaboration with campus colleagues including: teaching contributions to the Edinburgh Futures Institute's (EFI) Digital Influence fusion course; a gathering with a group of 2023 Insights Programme students; discussions over dinner with senior staff; key colleagues and alumni guests; a careers talk for EFI students; meetings with key contacts; and culminating in Lauren delivering an inspiring talk on current US politics to a range of students as part of the Politics in Contested Times seminar series, run by Social and Political Science.

18. My recent trip to New York and Toronto, organised by colleagues in Development and Alumni, was a great success, and I thoroughly enjoyed interacting with our alumni, supporters, plus prospective students and their families. Our visit began with our participation in the Tartan Day Parade in New York. It was a hectic day and great to experience the warm welcome of the crowd and to see so many notable people out in support of Scotland. We had an excellent alumni reception after that. We also spent productive time with alumni and supporters at the Senior Supporters dinner in New York and at the Edinburgh University Club of Toronto Board annual dinner. I also participated in a recruitment event for offer holders, and several meetings with individual supporters and partners.

19. I end with a short positive note for Court on recent research activity, which continues to perform very strongly, and a flavour of recent University activity:
- Court will be pleased to hear that the University's partnership with Gujarat Biotechnological University (GBU) has formally launched. The 10-year strategic partnership with India's first biotechnology university will strengthen biotechnology research across the institutions, with a focus on entrepreneurship. As part of the partnership, Edinburgh academics have designed a bespoke curriculum for GBU's first Masters in Biotechnology programme, which focuses on using tech solutions to tackle urgent global issues, including climate change, cancer therapy, anti-microbial resistance and crop resilience.
- The University's Business School, in partnership with the John Smith Trust, and part-funded by the Scottish Government, have launched the Ukrainian Women's Leadership Programme. The programme will offer 15 fully-funded places to Ukrainian women living in Scotland to equip women in conflict resolution, communications and management. Organisers hope that the course will foster hope among participants, create powerful connections between like-minded women living locally and give them an opportunity to develop their careers.
- Our congratulations and admiration go to Dr Jasmin Paris, a vet at the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, who has become the first woman to complete the Barkley Marathons, one of the world's toughest sporting challenges. The ultra-marathon runner cemented her place in the history books by finishing the so-called 'Race that eats its young' within the scheduled 60 hours, with a mere 99 seconds to spare. She was one of only five finishers of the 100 mile plus course in Tennessee this year.

*Selected meetings and events from the end of February to mid-April*

20. *University*
- Participated in a meeting with Matt Hutnell, Director of Santander Universities Division.
- Met with delegates of the Global Collaborative for the Liberal Arts Convening, hosted by the University, and which involved representatives from Vassar College (New York, USA), the University of Global Health Equity (Butaro, Rwanda), and IIT Bombay (Mumbai, India).
- Welcomed guests to the Professorial Roll signing reception.
- Participated in a reception for undergraduate scholarship holders.
- Participated in regular meetings with the Student Association sabbaticals.

21. *Edinburgh and Scotland*
- Participated in a reception in honour of H.E. Guðni Th. Jóhannesson, President of Iceland and the First Lady Mrs Eliza Reid at the Consulate of Iceland in Edinburgh.
- Participated in an Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal Executive Board meeting.

22. *Sector and Public Affairs*
- Participated a Scottish Funding Council Board meeting and an SFC call with all Scottish university Principals looking at sector finances in Scotland.
- Participated in a Senior Medical and Public Health Advisory Forum.
- Spoke on 'Collaboration in Research' at the Council of Deans of Health conference on Research and Innovation at Woburn House, London.
- Participated in a roundtable meeting on attracting and nurturing STEM talent in the UK, co-chaired by Rt Hon Michelle Donelan MP, the Secretary of State for the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology and Saqib Bhatti MP, the Minister for Tech and the Digital Economy.
- Participated in a roundtable meeting at the Policy Institute London, chaired by Baroness Wolf of Dulwich, Alison Wolf, on Higher Education Funding and Regulation.
- Participated in a UK National Academies roundtable on Research Security and Trusted Research Practices and Approaches.
- Along with Vice-Principal Research and Innovation Professor Christina Boswell met with Peter Kyle MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology during his fact finding visit to Edinburgh.
- Participated in networking event on the 'Future challenges and opportunities for biomedicine in Scotland', hosted by the Scottish Academy of Medical Sciences.

23. *International*
- Participated in various Board meetings of League of European Research Universities (LERU) in both Brussels and Warsaw.
- Participated as a panel member, on an international panel, in a discussion on research security in our respective countries, at the Academic Security and Counter-Exploitation Conference on Research Security in Texas. Also attended a variety of other sessions during the 3-day conference.
- Participated in an online meeting of the Tsinghua Medicine Advisory Committee.

- Participated in various meetings and Alumni events over the course of a week in New York and Toronto, as noted earlier.

**Resource implications**

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

**Risk Management**

25. 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**

26. 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**

27. No specific Equality and Diversity issues are identified.

**Next steps/implications**

28. Any action required will be taken forward by appropriate members of University staff.

**Consultation**

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

**Further information**

30. _Author & Presenter_
    Professor Sir Peter Mathieson
    Principal and Vice-Chancellor
    April 2024

**Freedom of Information**

**31.** Open paper.

**UNIVERSITY COURT**

**22 April 2024**

**Policy & Resources Committee Report**

**Committee Name**
1.   Policy & Resources Committee (PRC)

**Date of Meeting**
2.   25 March 2024

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

*The minutes of the PRC meeting on 25 March 2024 can be viewed at*
*https://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/GaSP/Governance/PolicyandResources/2023-2024/20240325-PRC-Minute-Web.pdf*

**Further information**
25. *Author*                                    *Presenter*
     Daniel Wedgwood                    Janet Legrand
     Head of Court Services            Convener, Policy & Resources Committee

**Freedom of Information**
26.  Open version

**UNIVERSITY COURT**

**22 April 2024**

**Audit and Risk Committee Report**

**Committee Name**

1. Audit & Risk Committee.

**Date of Meeting**

2. 28 March 2024.

**Action Required**

3. To note the key points from the meeting.

*Paragraphs 4-16: closed section*

**Equality & Diversity**

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

**Further information**

18. *Author*                                      *Presenter*
Kirstie Graham                          Douglas Millican
Deputy Head of Court Services     Convener of the Audit & Risk Committee

**Freedom of Information**

19. Open version

**UNIVERSITY COURT**

**22 April 2024**

**Knowledge Strategy Committee Report**

**Committee Name**

1.   Knowledge Strategy Committee

**Date of Meeting**

2.   21 March 2024

**Action Required**

3.   To note the key points from the meeting.

**Key points**

*Presentation – Main Library Design Team*

4.   Jeremy Upton, Director of Library and University Collections, gave a presentation on a current review of the Main Library. It was noted that a design team (Hawkins\Brown) had been appointed and tasked with rethinking how the Main Library was being used, bringing forward ideas on how to make improvements for students, staff and the wider community. A full presentation from Hawkins\Brown on their work to date, including user feedback and design proposals, was available on the KSC wiki.

5.   The following was covered in the presentation to KSC:

- The importance of the vision statement and issues of connectedness, particularly with regards to the Main Library being open for all ("The Library helps people to grow their knowledge and create new connections through open services, collections and environments, sparking ideas that change the world").
- The last major investment programme was completed in 2013, and there is an opportunity for incremental change through regular smaller scale interventions using Small Capital Funds.
- Visitor numbers are up since COVID-19 with a footfall of over 5 million a year, making it not only the busiest building on campus, but the busiest in the city of Edinburgh.
- Whilst there is a need for change to support future learning and teaching, the traditional elements of a library are still highly relevant.

6.   The Committee welcomed the presentation and the following points were raised in discussion:

- The amount of physical space that would be required for books, journals etc. going forward. It was noted that a comprehensive review of print collections would be taking place, however reducing the amount of print materials was not quick or cheap to do.
- Some collections may be better suited in a storage facility, with a separate library storage strategy being developed.

- Student study spaces are a University challenge, with noted impact of current Teviot closure, and the Main Library wouldn't provide a single solution to the demand required. Campus-wide thinking was the right approach to take, taken forward through a study space review group, including representatives from across the University. The University's Head of Space was also involved in the discussions around the Main Library review.

*Presentation - Learn Ultra Accessibility Review*

7.   Melissa Highton, Director of Learning, Teaching and Web Services & Assistant Principal Online Learning, gave a presentation on the 2023 Learn Ultra Accessibility Reviews. It was noted that 20 student interns were employed for 4 months, helping migrate over 5,000 Learn courses and performing accessibility audits on a minimum of 30% of courses for each participating School. Key insights of the review were highlighted, including overall compliance of 77% against the accessibility matrix.

8.   The Committee welcomed the presentation and discussed in detail issues around captioning, including working with artificial intelligence (AI) to develop 'confidence' scores, a reduction of the number of critical errors, the desired level of accuracy, and ensuring the confidence levels of both staff and students. Discussions on improvements to alt text and the involvement of equality, diversity and inclusion colleagues to undertake impact assessments were also noted.

9.   KSC agreed to the following recommendations:

- All Schools should be included in the annual audit of accessibility, subject to clarification as to any reasons that have precluded some Schools from previously doing so.
- Relevant training should be offered to target areas in which scores are low.
- Subtitles should now be switched on by default in the lecture recording system.

10. The Committee also agreed it would be helpful to have a follow-up item on the ISG Captioning Service at a future KSC meeting.

*Chief Information Officer Update*

11. Key activities and updates since the last meeting were reported, including:

- **Artificial Intelligence**. The recommendations from the short-life working group convened by Michael Rovatsos, Professor of Artificial Intelligence, would come back to the KSC meeting in May 2023.
- **Digital Communications and Engagements platform strategy.** A group including representations from Communications and Marketing are currently discussing this, noting that similar platform strategies are used by other universities.
- **Digital Estates Project**. The project on room and desk booking has been accelerated, with a full business case in development. Following a technical assessment, the University's new timetabling platform supplier (EventMap) would be used for classroom, meeting room, event space and desk bookings, therefore no additional cost would be incurred. The Committee were supportive of the piloting of this work, but noted that behavioural change

should be considered alongside technical change, with learning put in place as this work is progressed.

- **IT Hosting Environment.** Estates and ISG are working on a paper proposing a future University datacentre to host University IT. The paper will come through KSC and Estates Committee.

*Paragraphs 12-20: closed section*

**Further information**

21. *Author*

Jamie Tait
Governance Manager & Clerk to
Knowledge Strategy Committee

*Presenter*

Colm Harmon, Vice-Principal Students

**Freedom of Information**

22. Open version

# THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

**UNIVERSITY COURT**

**22 April 2024**

**Student Experience Update**

**Description of paper**

1.   This paper provides an update on activities underway related to the student experience during the current academic year 2023/24. The updates are on five areas: (1) Student Support Model; (2) Assessment and Feedback; (3) Portfolio Review; (4) Getting the Basics Right; and (5) EUSA letter to Court.

**Action requested/Recommendation**

2.   University Court is asked to note the updates and to continue to provide active support for prioritisation of work to improve the student experience across the University.

**Background and context**

3.   Improvements to the student experience continue to be a key priority for the University.

4.   Our student experience portfolio sets out our priorities:
   - Focus on three significant areas of work that are genuinely transformational initiatives: Student Support, Assessment & Feedback and Curriculum Transformation;
   - A series of continuous improvement initiatives to address various pain-points for students; and,
   - Focus on greater alignment, prioritisation, co-ordination, resource planning, and communication and engagement to enable the delivery of this work.

5.   The overall measurement of these priorities is through the outcomes set in our strategic KPIs. The National Student Survey (NSS) is open for completion, with results due in July/August. At the time of writing the current response rate is 56.73% which is higher than the rate at this time last year (51.76%).

6.   While progress is being made, there needs to continue to be an ongoing active prioritisation of student experience improvements across all areas of the University to be able to effectively implement the work of the Boards and Groups overseeing this work.

**Discussion**

*Student Support Model*

7.   Since our last update we have:
   - achieved Senate Education Committee approval of the new Student Support Framework;
   - updated and agreed the Student Adviser job description and task list; and
   - agreed revised guidance for implementing Peer Support and are rolling this out to Schools via College Implementation Committees

8.   Feedback remains vital in understanding how Student Support is being adopted by Schools across the University and in identifying work to improve the model for our students and staff. We have commenced our evaluation process this year through focus

groups with students, academic staff and staff working to deliver the model (i.e., Student and Wellbeing Advisers and Cohort Leads). Beyond this year, we are working with Professor John Devaney, Head of SPS, to develop a long term and academically rigorous logic model which we will embed as an ongoing feedback mechanism.

9.    Our new Case Management System is on track for agreed go-live on 3 June for the Student Wellbeing Service and Residence Life teams in the first instance. Technical work integrating with student records is on track, as is data migration from existing systems. The next steps will be to roll this out to other areas, especially to Student Advisers. This is expected to form part of future digital estates prioritisation work.

10.  The Project Board is focussed on the embedding of the model but also the planning for post-implementation roles, responsibilities, and oversight from 2024/25 academic year to help ensure that the principles of the model continue to be adhered to and the benefits realised for our students and colleagues. We will be reporting on this matter particularly at the University Initiatives Portfolio Board (UIPB) to ensure fidelity to the model post-project closure.

*Assessment and Feedback*
11.  The Student Experience Delivery and Monitoring Oversight Board (SEDaMOB) has met on four occasions since its creation and has received regular updates on the work to respond to the Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities, with an initial focus on provision of high-quality feedback in expected turnaround times for feedback. Since our last update, we can report progress on awareness-raising with staff across Colleges about the importance of this work, processes to monitor and escalate issues, and how we will capture data to report on turnaround times going forwards, with a combined set of actions for Student Experience Services, College and Schools teaching offices.

12.  All Colleges are implementing plans to ensure that, for every course, students will receive feedback on assessment within the three-week turnaround time for assessments.

13.  All Colleges have actioned, or are in the process of setting, agreed escalation processes and actions to be taken should feedback timings and rubrics setting not be actioned according to agreed policy. The processes being put in place will allow us to understand where turnaround times are not being met, what issues underpin delays to feedback and what supportive conversations/mechanisms can be put in place for staff to make sure assessment and feedback is delivered on time. Aligned to our commitment that provision of high-quality and timely assessment and feedback is core to improving student experience, consideration is also being given to how to utilise annual reviews consistently across Schools to address systemic issues impacting on our students.

*Paragraphs 14-22: closed section*

*Student Services Improvements: Getting the basics right*
23.  In response to many of the concerns raised by our students, we are working to ensure we are 'getting the basics right', through a series of task and finish groups overseen by the Student Lifecycle Management Group. The deliverables for each group are for smaller continuous improvement, many leading to a need for policy and process review, systematisation, and organisational design.

24. Since our last update, we continue to make incremental changes on our agreed key areas of the work of the task and finish groups, as outlined below.

*Timetabling and course enrolments*
25. A series of small changes are underway to processes related to exam timetables. Degree Regulations and Programmes pages clean up (making processes easier for students and staff to navigate) is due to take place for next academic year. These steps are important, but to achieve fundamental improvements in the students' experience of their timetable and course choices, significant changes in working culture and practices across the organisation will be required. As a result, we will be making a proposal for a dedicated project in this area to be taken to the UIPB in April.

26. The work to improve timetabling and course enrolments, to be considered by UIPB, will be underpinned by recent improvements to a new timetabling and room-booking platform that has been successfully rolled out this month. This allows us to move away from a legacy system which was failing to achieve stability to a core service for students and enhanced functionality from which we hope to realise further benefits as the more significant project work takes place.

*Student Voice*
27. In collaboration with EUSA and with support from academic colleagues in Psychology, we have launched our new internal Student Life Survey. This survey includes focused questions linked to our strategic priorities of the student experience, such as feedback on assessment to help us to sense check progress with our student body. This has been launched with findings expected in mid/end-April.

28. We supported EUSA in an initiative to survey undergraduate students in receipt of an Access bursary which are important to our widening access strategy. The survey received a high response rate and, to accompany the data, responses included a rich set of freeform comments. These will be used to inform proposals for the future Access Edinburgh offering and a wider package of support to consider the entire student journey, thereby ensuring we continue to set up students up for success at Edinburgh.

29. EUSA hosted a recent second Student Voice Forum, comprising a panel of Senior Leaders to answer student queries. The topics were focused on housing and cost of living and extended to matters such as support for gender-based violence, support for members of the trans community, and matters raised by the University Justice for Palestine Society.

30. The task and finish group on Student Voice are creating a communications plan to respond to matters raised in surveys and focus groups, so that we can improve perceptions of how we are listening to and acting on feedback.

*Sense of belonging*
31. Plans are underway for targeted caring messages leading up to exam time in the summer, through a communications campaign and merchandise. A wider set of plans is being created about how we can better create a sense of pride and identity (i.e. the #WeareEdinburgh currently used by EUSU), including bringing this more to life through regular sharing of stories, day-to-day successes and experiences of students' time at Edinburgh.

32.  The Student Lifecycle Management Group has held a workshop to reflect on achievements so far and to discuss next steps in 2024. The main outcome of this work was confirmation that we are continuing to focus on areas that matter most to students but we need to better publicise the work of the group to staff and students, including the successes / changes to date. This is being followed up with Communications and Marketing colleagues.

*Response to EUSA's Letter to Court*
33.  At the February meeting of the University Court, the President of Edinburgh University Students' Association included, as an appendix to the regular EUSA report, a letter to Court members. The three key areas of focus were: the student housing crisis, the impact of the wider cost-of-living crisis and gender-based violence on-campus.

34.  Responses to this letter have been provided to EUSA on behalf of Court and by members of the University Executive.

35.  We are grateful to EUSA for continuing to represent our large and diverse student community and look forward to working in partnership to improve every student's experience with us.

**Resource implications**
36.  There are no specific resource requests in this paper. We note the ongoing work of colleagues in Schools and central services towards the delivery of the major initiatives discussed.

**Risk Management**
37.  Failure to address student experience would mean we have not met our strategic ambitions as set out in Strategy 2030. It also caries reputational risk and continues to affect the University's standing in national league tables.

**Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals**
38.  This paper would support the SDG "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" as part the strategic objective to improve student experience. The proposals would not hinder the achievement of any other UN SDGs or exacerbate the Climate Emergency.

**Equality & Diversity**
39.  An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) will be required as plans are developed. The work undertaken will support greater equality, diversity and inclusion for students within our community.

**Next steps/implications**
40.  This paper presents an update to note the progress made on student experience improvements. University Court is asked for feedback on the work underway and to consider how members can actively and proactively support this work to ensure these improvements are prioritised and successfully implemented.

**Consultation**

41. The work outlined above is being undertaken and overseen by a large number of colleagues and EUSA/EUSU student representatives.

**Further information**

42. *Authors*                           *Presenters*
    Lucy Evans                          Colm Harmon
    Deputy Secretary Students           Vice-Principal Students

    Kim Graham
    Provost

    Colm Harmon
    Vice-Principal Students

**Freedom of Information**

43. Open version.

**UNIVERSITY COURT**

**22 April 2024**

**Edinburgh University Students' Association President's Report**

**Description of paper**

1.  This paper is to note developments at Edinburgh University Students' Association since the last Court meeting, and to provide an update on current work and initiatives.

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

- 'We will be a destination of choice, based on our clear "Edinburgh Offer". All of our staff and students will develop here, whether they are from Leith, Lisbon, Lahore or Lilongwe'.

**Action requested/Recommendation**

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

**Background and context**

4.  This paper outlines current activity, notes current issues for students being worked on by our student representatives and outlines the organisation's financial and strategic developments. It is a regular standing item on the Court agenda. Court members are invited to note the appendix which outlines our new student sabbatical officers and part-time representatives for 2024-25.

**Discussion**

5.  Firstly, I would like to thank Court members for their engagement and the thorough discussion at our February meeting on the key concerns we raised surrounding the student experience. Whilst distinguishing clearly the line between Court and Executive responsibilities, it remains important for members to be aware of the reality of the student experience, and our related 'on-the-ground' activity, especially when understanding broader student sentiment and survey data. The student experience is clearly a strategic risk and a strategic priority for Court to consider, and the translation of strategy into action, or not, is as critical to our success as the development of those strategies.

6.  As a team we have continued actively lobbying and campaigning on the aforementioned issues with an increased sense of urgency and ambition. In the process we have also strengthened our relationships, support and transparency with students in addressing their concerns. As we sadly near the end of our terms, we are looking forward to handing over to the incoming Sabbatical team and best preparing them to hit the ground running on their priorities. This includes ensuring they are in a good position to be involved in following up on the issues raised and ensuring actions are followed up.

7.   We have recently received the Court and Senior Management responses to our letter and will be working through the detail of these.

*Sharan Atwal, President, 2023/24*
8.   Following the 8% rent increase in University-owned student accommodation, Alma and I have been continuing to explore avenues to protect and advocate for students in their medium to long term housing needs. In March, I chaired our Student Voice Forum where housing was a significant area of concern, especially in terms of data capturing and affordability in the short term. The forum itself was attended by student representatives and members of student groups such as Slurp action on homelessness, with those present sharing insights and examples of specific issues being encountered in practice by students, demonstrating instances where university ambitions in relation to student experience are not being met in practice. We're keen to continue to share those examples and feedback via mechanisms like the forum, and complemented by qualitative and quantitative data from Association surveys and Advice Place usage.

9.   We have been feeding into recent iterations of the University ResLife strategy, lobbying for a clear commitment regarding how the balance is struck between being a surplus generator and a service provider. We will continue to lobby for increased attention on students' financial needs given the housing crisis in Edinburgh against the backdrop of the cost-of-living crisis. We are also exploring ways to improve data collection by including a housing-related question in students' matriculation process, something which student groups have raised on several occasions to ensure clearer data on student homelessness.

10. I am continuing working with colleagues following the outcomes of the Access Edinburgh Bursary survey. Results have been incredibly informative, helping us to identify areas for attention and ensuring lived student experiences are directly incorporated into decision making and proposals. The survey (circa 800 respondents) noted that 97% of students believe the Scholarship played an important role in their ability to financially continue with their studies.

11. I have also been working closely with student activists and campaigning groups calling for the University to divest in companies with ties to Israel, in particular a recent student council motion was passed with high numbers of engagement on this topic. I am supporting students in their demands including addressing concerns on research collaborations and reviewing the current Investment Policy. Alongside the team we will be feeding into discussions on the University's Responsible Investment Policy ensuring there is clear transparency and accountability and that these concerns are addressed.

*Katie Hardwick, Vice-President Activities and Services, 2023/24*
12. Katie and I have been working with colleagues to identify how students' needs change as they transition from pre-student through to final-year student and beyond. With this work, we hope to ensure support is tailored to each stage of a student's journey as opposed to the more blanket approach style currently adopted.

13. Katie had the opportunity to represent the University at the National Union of Students (NUS) Scotland and NUS UK conference. She raised improvements to key

issues impacting students such as housing and transport to take forward as NUS policy.

14. Katie was part of the Good Food policy panel discussion organised by colleagues as part of the undergraduate course, Sustainable Development Goals: History, Progress and Beyond 2030. The panel provided an opportunity to learn more about current work and how we can improve food sustainability in Edinburgh and beyond. It allowed her to collect student feedback on current food provisions for students across the campuses and how it could be improved. Feedback Katie received and is following up on included community gardens, cafeteria provision and local produce.

15. Katie and I have continued to be heavily involved with the Teviot redevelopment project as work progresses, ensuring work is focused on catering to the continually changing needs of students. This included presenting together on our Planning Round submission at the EUSA Forum, including looking ahead to the resources required to re-open successfully and bring students back into this essential space for a range of activities and experiences of relevance to them, leveraging some benefits of the compliance investment into student experience benefit, we hope.

16. Katie was also involved in the planning for our annual Student Awards and was on the finalist panel for the Awards. She had the honour of reading the more than 300 nominations put forward by our students covering a range of categories including Championing Activism and Outstanding International or Multicultural Initiative. We all thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to celebrate and highlight our students' leadership, activism and local community work through the annual event.

*Alma Kalina Rießler, VP Community 2023/24*
17. Alma's focus has continued to be on various elements relating to the current housing climate in Edinburgh and nationally. The National Union of Students Scotland released their [Broke Students, Broken System](#) report earlier this semester, which noted that:
- 12% of all students have experienced homelessness during their studies.
- 16% of Edinburgh University students could not find accommodation by the start of term.
- 29% have considered dropping out of their course due to financial difficulties. (Chiming also with our own annual members survey data which told us that 37% of respondents are worried about being able to afford to stay at university for the duration of their degree).

18. As noted, due to the limited data available we have relied on insight from Slurp, a student campaigning group, and worked closely with them to identify students struggling with homelessness. Whilst we are working on getting a housing related question in the matriculation process, they are continuing to work with colleagues to look at targeted support for students with specific housing needs or those struggling to find accommodation early in the semester.

19. Furthermore, Alma has been lobbying Edinburgh Council to reconsider a recent change in their approach to PhD council tax policy which has led to PhD students

facing sudden and unexpected charges of often thousands of pounds in council tax. They have reached out to several key stakeholders about this issue encouraging colleagues to raise concern in other spaces – we note that our Advice Place, colleagues in Student Administration, and the Doctoral College in particular remain concerned about this issue and we're now keen to see a strategic university approach.

20.  Alma is also working to explore ways to embed and advocate for student housing cooperatives to be part of the University's approach to solving the student housing crisis. They are working closely with relevant colleagues for their expertise to improve their understanding on the feasibility and potential process. They plan to put forward a detailed paper outlining the benefits and practicalities of such a model by also drawing heavily from the current successful model set up and lessons learnt. This comes after students continue to ask for more affordable and community-focused accommodation, something student housing cooperatives could deliver.

*Carl Harper, Vice-President Education, 2023/24*
21.  Carl and Lauren have been working on the new Exceptional Circumstances Policy which was brought to Senate Academic Policy and Regulation Committee (APRC) earlier this month. The Policy was approved by the majority but with disapproval from EUSA representatives. Both Carl and Lauren have actively lobbied for changes to the policy since the initial proposal in July. This has helped result in some positive improvements to the policy including the length of extensions being four days instead of three, and relaxed evidential requirements, among other changes.

22.  Carl is also platforming ways to make students feel more comfortable engaging with senior University staff by drawing from successful College Staff Student Liaison Committees (CSSLCs) strategies. This strategy aims to tackle the obstacles presented by perceived student-staff power imbalances by encouraging organizers to allow students to set the agendas, arranging pre-meetings with the chair, and seating staff members in amongst students where feasible.

23.  Carl worked collaboratively with student representatives at Edinburgh College of Art (ECA) and University staff to tackle hidden course costs. As ECA has some of the highest reported hidden course costs this was a primary area of focus. Upon consultation with representatives and reviewing data from our hidden course costs survey conducted last year, Carl prepared a presentation asking to redirect unused printing credits from previous years to current ECA Undergraduate students' printing allowance.

24.  While all students across the University get approximately the same printing allowance, students from many schools do not exhaust theirs whereas ECA students are often forced to add printing credits using personal funds, particularly when printing is a prerequisite for learning and assessment submission. Carl is grateful for the collaboration of colleagues from ISG as they managed to secure £50 for each ECA student this semester. This has been overwhelmingly well-received by ECA students.

*Lauren Byrne, Vice-President Welfare, 2023/24*

25. We have been continuing to see increased activism and dialogue on gender-based violence. Lauren has been leading work collaboratively with students and the University and working to facilitate dialogue to advocate for improved university support for survivors and review of key policy areas and the experience of complaints and conduct processes, to improve these for the students involved.

26. At the Students' Association we have created and released a Widening Participation consultation survey to shape the direction of the Association's work to support and advocate for WP students. Insight from students will directly shape the lobbying work, representation structures and priorities of the Association. Lauren attended the first meeting of the Widening Participation Strategy Group under its restructured format and gave input on key areas that the committee should prioritise, including non-continuation rates and the experience of BAME WP students.

27. Lauren has been supporting the launch of our Let's Talk Fund as part of our Let's Talk Mental Health and Wellbeing campaign. This fund allows student groups to request a small grant to help them organise an event or campaign on a mental health and wellbeing related issue. Lauren also collected feedback on the new Student Support model through a thematic discussion at our Student Council which she will share with the project board and team working on evaluation and monitoring of the model.

28. We were also delighted to see that Lauren was shortlisted and recognised for her work in the NUS Scotland Awards in two categories. She was shortlisted for the Campaign Award, for her work in actively engaging students and improving visibility and understanding of the Association. Especially in her second sabbatical term, she has powerfully committed to representing student interests in at all levels of the University. She was also shortlisted alongside Carl for the Education Award for their joint work on protecting students throughout the proposed changes to Extensions and Special Circumstances.

*Association Elections*

29. Last month saw voting take place in our March elections, which included the election of our new Sabbatical Officers, as well as undergraduate School reps, campaign reps, liberation officers and section reps (who represent student cohorts such as International, Mature, Student Parents). We saw an uplift in turnout – 4595 students voted compare to 4456 last year (+3%) – and they cast 21,144 votes compared to 20,268 last year. We had hoped to reach our strategic target of a 5% uplift. With Teviot closed that did mean reduced direct engagement opportunity during the election period in that space for this year, and this may have had an impact. We announced the results at an elections celebration in Potterrow on Friday 11 March.

30. The new sabbatical team for 2024-25 will be

- President: Dora Herndon (she/her)
- Vice President Activities and Services: John Rappa (he/they)
- Vice President Community: Ruth Elliott (she/her)
- Vice President Education: Dylan Walch (he/him)
- Vice President Welfare: Indigo Williams (she/her)

31. The current team Sharan, Katie, Alma, Carl and Lauren still have 3 months to go, the formal handover being Friday 7 June. The new Officers will join us on 27 May for a handover week with the current team, and early induction, including residential training prior to them formally taking up the role. This will then be followed by a wider programme of summer training and development including meeting key university contacts and teams, as well as objectives planning, alongside knowledge and skills development.

32. An overview of the Sabbatical roles and all elected representative for 2024-25 is supplied in the appendix. We will soon be planning for our October elections, which include our 44 School Postgraduate representative roles.

*Student Awards*
33. The Association celebrated the achievements and contribution to student life made by Student Groups and Student Leaders at our Student Awards ceremony on 4 April. The Student Awards were introduced in 2018 to celebrate passionate students who go above and beyond. The Awards recognise individuals and groups who dedicate their time to a cause, stand up for others, foster supportive student communities, overcome personal challenges and much more. From programme reps, society office-bearers, peer supporters, students volunteering within and beyond the university, students are doing so much to make other's lives and experience better. Students and staff came together to celebrate everyone and announce the winners. Our Awards scheme saw over 300 individuals and groups nominated for community-building, supporting their peers, showing leadership in their activity/community, campaigning for their fellow students, volunteering in the wider community, collaborating with others. You can see the shortlisted students/groups/projects, and the named winners here.

34. Just some examples of Student Award nominees' activities include: running ground-breaking artistic events; ensuring student groups continue to develop to be inclusive, welcoming and provide amazing experiences and opportunities for students; demonstrating kindness and care for others' wellbeing; and showing the wider community that students care and contribute across a range of causes in the city. The Awards really shone a spotlight on the wide range of ways in which students give their time and personal commitment to provide core, essential community and friendship, support others' personal and professional development and all of these are in fact integral to student experience at the University of Edinburgh.

*Teaching Awards*
35. Later this month we turn our attention to celebrating university staff who have been nominated by students for the work they do in teaching and supporting

students in a range of ways. Our Teaching Awards are now 15 years old and were established to highlight and reward best practice in teaching and student support, reminding us all of the value of investing in student experience. This year we've received over 2000 nominations. We share the feedback to all nominated staff as an important way of providing everyday recognition, and we'll be celebrating our shortlisted staff and announcing the winners at a ceremony in the Pleasance Theatre on 24 April.

*Association recognition*
36. Association activity in supporting student voice on campus was recognized in the sector through the NUS Scotland Awards, as outlined in the officers' reports. In addition, we have also been shortlisted in the Scottish Hospitality and Entertainment awards in the categories of Best Multiple Operator; Best Late Night Venue; Best Events Venue, of the Scottish Hospitality and Entertainment awards – with these awards being voted on by customers, and results announced next month.

*Paragraphs 37-46: closed section*

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

**Risk Management**
48. Financial risks are highlighted in the report.

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

**Equality & Diversity**
50. 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**
51. We would welcome feedback from Court in relation to any of the issues outlined.

**Consultation**
52. Consultation on this paper was not required.

**Further information**
53. *Author*                                          *Presenter*
    Sharan Atwal                                   Sharan Atwal
    EUSA President 2023-24              EUSA President 2023-24
    April 2024

**Freedom of Information**
54. Open version

# Sabbatical Officers

**Edinburgh University Students' Association**

## PRESIDENT

**DORA HERNDON** — SHE/HER

- Leads on the Students' Association's work on finances, including higher education funding and student fees
- Acts as the University's key contact with the Association
- Attends University Executive on behalf of the Association
- Chair of the Association's Trustee Board and Association Executive
- Represents the Association at key University events, such as the Welcome Ceremony

## VICE PRESIDENT ACTIVITIES & SERVICES

**JOHN RAPPA** — HE/THEY

- Leads the Students' Association's work on student opportunities (societies, volunteering groups, Peer Learning schemes and and Support schemes, and social enterprises), as well as the Association's commercial services, spaces and facilities
- Acts as the key contact for University services focused on students' personal and professional development, including the Careers Service and Edinburgh Innovations, as well as the Sports Union (EUSU) and Edinburgh Students' Charities Appeal (ESCA)
- Supports the work of the Student Opportunities Representatives
- Chair of the Association's Strategic Development Subcommittee

## VICE PRESIDENT COMMUNITY

**RUTH ELLIOTT** — SHE/HER

- Leads the Students' Association's work on issues that affect students outside the University, including housing, transport, access to healthcare, sustainability and involvement in the local community.
- Acts as the key contact for the University's Social Responsibility and Sustainability (SRS) department
- Chair of the Association's Finance, Risk and Audit Subcommittee
- Leads the Association's engagement with external stakeholders, including political leaders and local community groups

## VICE PRESIDENT EDUCATION

**DYLAN WALCH** — HE/HIM

- Leads the Students' Association's work on issues impacting students' academic experience, including learning and teaching, academic support, and quality assurance and enhancement
- Acts as the key contact for the University's Academic Services department, the Institute for Academic Development (IAD), the Doctoral College and the three Colleges
- Supports the work of the Programme and School Representatives
- Chair of the Association's Governance Subcommittee

## VICE PRESIDENT WELFARE

**INDIGO WILLIAMS** — SHE/HER

- Leads the Students' Association's work on issues impacting students' welfare and wellbeing including student support, mental health and wellbeing, gender-based violence and issues of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)
- Acts as the key contact for the University's wellbeing services including the Disability and Learning Support Service, the Student Counselling Service and the Chaplaincy
- Supports the work of the Liberation Officers
- Chair of the Association's People and Culture Subcommittee

**2024/25**

# ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

## Liberation Officers

**BLACK AND MINORITY ETHNIC (BME) OFFICER**

Maryam Yusuf

**DISABLED STUDENTS' OFFICER**

Kate Wilson

**LGBTQ+ OFFICER**

Ash Scholz

**TRANS AND NON-BINARY OFFICER**

Vacant

**WOMEN'S OFFICER**

Syjil Ramjuthan

## Section Representatives

**COMMUTER STUDENTS' REPRESENTATIVE**

Izzy Drago Ferrante

**INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' REPRESENTATIVE**

Aarrnesh Kapoor

**MATURE STUDENTS' REPRESENTATIVE**

Hayley McCormack

**PART-TIME STUDENTS' REPRESENTATIVE**

Yue Teng

**STUDENT CARERS' REPRESENTATIVE**

Vacant

**STUDENT PARENTS' REPRESENTATIVE**

Ayesha Bibi

## Undergraduate School Representatives

**BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE**

Steffie Mathews

**BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE**

Ethan Sharkey

**BUSINESS SCHOOL UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE**

Tianyi Ren

**CHEMISTRY UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE**

Jessica Thackeray

**DIVINITY UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE**

Charlotte Brook

**ECONOMICS UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE**

Kamal Sharma

**EDINBURGH COLLEGE OF ART UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE**

Emily Lee

**EDUCATION AND SPORT UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE**

Olina Lyu

**ENGINEERING UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE**

Arlo Yang

**GEOSCIENCES UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE**

Lexie Done

**HEALTH IN SOCIAL SCIENCES UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE**

Keely Washington

**HISTORY, CLASSICS AND ARCHAEOLOGY UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE**

Ethan Mansfield

**INFORMATICS UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE**

Akrit Ghimire

**LAW UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE**

Hannah Dong

**LITERATURES, LANGUAGES AND CULTURES UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE**

Kat Amott

**MATHEMATICS UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE**

Ziyun Ding

**MEDICAL UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE**

Natasha Vijendren

**PHILOSOPHY, PSYCHOLOGY AND LANGUAGE SCIENCES UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE**

Lex Shackley

**PHYSICS AND ASTRONOMY UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE**

Christopher Campbell

**SOCIAL AND POLITICAL SCIENCE UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE**

James Andrew

**VETERINARY STUDIES UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE**

Hannah Crocombe

## Student Opportunities Representatives

Sommer Lugert
**(INCLUSION AND ACCESS)**

Nina Courtney
**(MEDIA)**

Nabeel Ahmad
**(PARTICIPATION)**

Mahika Bhojani
**(WELLBEING)**

## Campaign Representative

Juliet de Banzie
**(SUSTAINABILITY)**

Michael Heffernan
**(STUDENT FUNDING)**

Robyn Woof
**(STUDENT HOMELESSNESS)**

## 2024/25

Edinburgh University Students' Association

**UNIVERSITY COURT**

**22 April 2024**

**Edinburgh University Sports Union Report**

**Description of paper**
1.   This paper is to note developments at Edinburgh University Sports Union (EUSU) since the last Court meeting, providing updates on current work and strategic progress.

2.   EUSU's activity and direction contribute to these aspects of Strategy 2030:
iv)  We will be leading Scotland's commitment to widening participation.
v)   We will be a destination of choice, based on our clear "Edinburgh Offer". All of our staff and students will develop here, whether they are from Leith, Lisbon, Lahore or Lilongwe.
vi)  We will have created opportunities for partners, friends, neighbours and supporters to co-create, engage with the world and amplify our impacts.

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

**Background and context**
4.   EUSU has just finished our busiest period of delivery for the year. 69 club AGMs successfully took place alongside the EUSU elections and AGM, our planning submission and the end of our BUCS leagues and knockout tournaments. The staff team are now looking towards summer and September planning as well as supporting club committees with their handovers before the summer break.

**Discussion**
*Planning Round*
5.   We have presented our planning submission for 2024 and are grateful to all members of university planning and finance who supported through the process so far.

6.   Our request is for an increased core grant in line with our increased overhead costs, growing membership base and expanding programme delivery. We believe we are in a strong position to effectively utilise additional funding to enhance our core programmes and delivery to make sport through EUSU more enriching and accessible for students.

*Committee Training*
7.   The week commencing 25 March saw over 600 new club committee volunteers take part in 16 training sessions facilitated by EUSU Executive Committee students and staff. This valuable work ensures our club committees of next year are well informed before the summer break and encourages good planning in the quiet summer months for a strong start to all our clubs in September.

*EUSU AGM and Elections*

8.   The EUSU AGM took place on 7 March. A full Executive Committee has been voted in for 2024/25. The Committee are the Trustees of the charity and lead on the implementation of EUSU strategy and developments.

9.   The new EUSU President will be Philine Rouwers. Philine is a fifth year in the school of Biological Sciences. She brings a wealth of knowledge and experience into the role. She works as a Duty Manager at Sport & Exercise, sat as EUSU Vice President Inclusion in 2022/23 and has been Women's Football President for two years, alongside competing in the football and futsal first teams. Philine will begin a two-week handover period on 17 June before taking over the role from Peter on 1 July.

10. Two new clubs, Brazilian Jiu Jitsu and Padel, were voted into EUSU, expanding the opportunities available to students.

11. One club, Roller Hockey, was relegated from membership of EUSU due to lack of engagement and operation.

*BUCS (British Universities & Colleges Sport) Roundup*

12.  2023/24 has been another strong year of BUCS for UoE. We have maintained our position of 5$^{th}$ in the BUCS table (out of 145) continuing to display our strength and depth of sporting opportunities at Edinburgh. 17 Edinburgh teams placed as league winners, so far 10 teams have become cup champions, and over 1,150 fixtures were played by our teams. This volume is brilliant to see as it encompasses not only elite sport, but also beginners and intermediates who can gain huge value from engaging in competitive sport whilst at University.

*Staffing Changes*

13.  Our Head of Sport, Ross Simpson, left the University in the middle of February. We are incredibly grateful for his commitment to and impact on EUSU and Sport at Edinburgh over his 10 years working here.

14.  With a small staff team of 8 FTE, additional work has been spread throughout our staff and I am incredibly grateful for their hard work, positivity and quality delivery through this busy period with increased workload.

15. We are looking at staffing changes to redistribute work and create opportunities for development in EUSU at this transitionary time. This plan includes regrading two positions to ensure appropriate management and strategic focus within EUSU.

16. In addition, we are looking to introduce a new Grade 6 Club Development Manager, who would support clubs to create development plans along with streamlining and condensing Sports Union processes to aid club volunteers. Club development is an area we want to support further through our staff team, however, this is often challenged by capacity. This transitionary period is an ideal time to explore the opportunity of enhancing the support available to clubs and volunteers in this space.

17. These suggested changes will have a limited impact on EUSU expenditure with an estimated staff cost increase of approximately £10,000.

*Good News!*
18. Athletics
Megan Keith recently ran the 4th fastest female 10,000m ever by a UK athlete with an Olympic Qualifying time (yet to secure selection). She is only behind Paula Radcliffe, Eilish McColgan and Jess Judd on the UK all-time list, incredible company to be with!

19. Swimming - British Championships and Olympic Trials
a. Kara Hanlon – Gold 200m Breaststroke; Silver 100m Breaststroke
b. Archie Goodburn – Bronze 100m Breaststroke
c. Stephen Clegg – Gold S12 100m Backstroke (Paralympic Nomination Time); Gold S12 100m Freestyle (Paralympic Nomination Time); Gold S12 100m Butterfly (Paralympic Nomination Time)

20. Rugby – Six Nations
Two current student and nine UoE alumnae have been selected for Scotland in the Women's Six Nations Championships which are ongoing.

21. Hockey
Our women's 1st team have qualified for the European Club Championships, which will take place in Turkey in May.

**Resource implications**
22. The resource implications noted in point 17 have been reflected in the annual planning round submission.

**Risk Management**
23. No major risks.

**Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals**
24. This paper contributes to the following SDGs:
SDG3 – Good Health and Wellbeing
All the work we do at EUSU is focussed on enhancing the health and wellbeing of our university community.
SDG4 – Quality Education
We believe our student/volunteer development efforts contribute to a more complete and expanded education for students.

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

**Next steps/implications**
26. The sports union president and executive committee oversee the strategic direction of the sports union. Please reach out to sports.president@ed.ac.uk if you have any follow up questions or would like to explore collaborative opportunities.

**Consultation**

27. Consultation for this paper was sought from Millie Doherty (Sports Programme Manager).

**Further information**

28. *Author*                                    *Presenter*
    Peter Sawkins                              Sharan Atwal
    Sports Union President            EUSA President
    sports.president@ed.ac.uk

    09 April 2024

**Freedom of Information**

29. Open Paper

**UNIVERSITY COURT**

**22 April 2024**

**Director of Finance Report**

**Description of paper**

*Paragraph 1: closed section*

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

**Action requested/Recommendation**
3. University Court is asked to *note* and comment on the latest update.

**Background and context**
4. This paper provides the Director of Finance's regular update on finance related issues for University Court.

*Paragraphs 5-19: closed section*

**Resource Implications**
20. There are no specific requests for resource in the paper.

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

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

**Equality & Diversity**
23. 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**
24. We would welcome feedback as outlined in the discussion above.

**Consultation**
25. The paper has been reviewed by Lee Hamill, Director of Finance.

**Further information**

26. *Author*                              *Presenter*
    Ricky O'Kane                        Lee Hamill
    Head of Group Finance          Director of Finance

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

    8 April 2024

**Freedom of Information**

27. Open version

**UNIVERSITY COURT**

**22 April 2024**

**Planning Round 2024-29: Update**

**Description of paper**
1.   This paper provides Court with a high-level update on progress with the planning and budget-setting process for 2024-29; this will be supported by commentary at the meeting on 22 April.

2.   The planning round supports delivery of the University's Strategy 2030. Narrative plan submissions are structured around the Strategic Performance Framework, the set of 16 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) designed to drive and enable reporting on progress against key objectives in Strategy 2030.

**Action requested/Recommendation**
3.   Court is asked to note and comment on this interim update, ahead of proposals being brought forward in the next Court committee cycle.

*Paragraphs 4-17: closed section*

**Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals**
18.  Delivery of Net Zero is a clear commitment in Strategy 2030 and is reflected in the Strategic Performance Measurement Framework which is underpinning the planning and budgeting process. Performance Measures are mapped onto the UN SDGs. Narrative plans reflect in places on the contributions of the budget areas to SDGs; one key focus point is around contribution towards KPI16: net zero (SDG13).

**Equality & Diversity**
19.  Achieving change where required in terms of equality, diversity and inclusion is a clear commitment in Strategy 2030 and is reflected in the Strategic Performance Framework which underpins the planning and budgeting process. Equality considerations are embedded in the planning process at budget holder level.

**Next steps/implications**
20.  Per the agreed timetable, a summary plan and proposed budget for 2024-29 will be finalised and brought to PRC on 3 June and Court on 17 June.

**Consultation**
21.  University Executive and PRC were provided with a precursor version of this update on 12 March and 25 March, respectively. Senior Leadership Team is regularly discussing progress with the Planning Round and with implementation of agreed actions following approval of the Grade Scale Review.

**Further information**

22. *Author*                                        *Presenter*
Rona Smith, Deputy Secretary,         Rona Smith, Deputy Secretary,
Governance and Strategic Planning    Governance and Strategic Planning

Kim Graham, Provost

Lee Hamill, Director of Finance

**Freedom of Information**

23. Open version

**UNIVERSITY COURT**

**22 April 2024**

**People and Money Systems and Roadmap Update**

**Description of paper**

1. This paper provides Court with an update on the People and Money systems and processes which underpin our Finance, HR, Payroll and Procurement services.

*Paragraphs 2-41: closed section*

[*Note: Court received and considered a letter from the General Council Business Committee on the report from the external review of People and Money implementation. This letter has been published, alongside responses from Court and the University's senior management:* https://general-council.ed.ac.uk/news/general-council-correspondence-with-the-university]

**Further information**

*Author*
Barry Neilson
Director of Strategic Change

*Presenter*
Catherine Martin
Vice-Principal Corporate Services
Co-Chair Enactment Group

**Freedom of Information**

42. Closed paper

**UNIVERSITY COURT**

**22 April 2024**

**Annual People Report 2023**

*This item was deferred to the next meeting of Court.*

**THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH**

**UNIVERSITY COURT**

**22 April 2024**

**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Data Report 2024**

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

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

3.   This reporting aligns with our commitments to the staff and student experience, including as expressed in 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*.'

*Paragraphs 4-33: closed section*

[*Note: The reports referred to in this paper have been published at:* https://equality-diversity.ed.ac.uk/about/reports]

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

**Next steps/implications**
35. Following discussion and approval from Court we will proceed to finalise the staff and student reporting together with the overarching narrative ahead of publication by 30 April 2024.

**Consultation**
36. This reporting represents a continuation of the reporting approach agreed by EDIC in December 2022, who also received a draft version of the report in February 2024. It has also been reviewed by the reconvened EDMARC sub-committee, of which the inaugural meeting was held on 27 February 2024. Additionally, colleagues across the University have been consulted by Governance and Strategic Planning during the process, including HR, College representatives and Academic Registry.

37. We have relaunched EDMARC to take advantage of the wide expertise across the University in relation to statistics and data in general; equality, diversity and inclusion data in particular; and in relation to the various communities with interests in this space. Under the new name of Equality, Diversity and inclusion Monitoring And Reporting sub-Committee of EDIC (EDMARC), the inaugural meeting took place

on 27 February 2024, with draft Terms of Reference and draft versions of this reporting presented for consideration.

**Further information**

38. *Author*

    Governance and Strategic Planning team:
    Jessica Armstrong
    Jim Galbraith
    Pauline Manchester
    Chris Sim
    Roy Woolley

    strategic.planning@ed.ac.uk
    08 April 2024

    *Presenter*

    Sarah Cunningham-Burley
    University lead, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

**Freedom of Information**

39. Open version

**UNIVERSITY COURT**

**22 April 2024**

**Performance measures to support Strategy 2030: 2023-24 mid-year report**

**Description of paper**
1.   This paper provides Court with an update on performance for our agreed Strategy 2030 KPIs, providing an in-year position on measures where we can provide data showing the direction of travel, alongside historical and benchmarking data, where available.

*Paragraphs 2-27: closed section*

**Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals**
28. In developing our performance measures, we have worked with Social Responsibility and Sustainability (SRS) colleagues and our relevant activities reflected in the SPF are in line with those of SRS and tackling the climate emergency.

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

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

*Paragraphs 31-34: closed section*

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

**Further information**
36. *Author*                                    *Presenter*
    Jennifer McGregor                   Rona Smith
    Senior Strategic Planner          Deputy Secretary, Governance and
    Governance and Strategic Planning    Strategic Planning
    March 2024

**Freedom of Information**
37. Open version

**THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH**

**UNIVERSITY COURT**

**22 April 2024**

**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 20 January to 23 March 2024 and an update on current alumni relations activities.

2.   All gifts contribute to different aspects of the University's goals under Strategy 2030 and due diligence procedures ensure there is no conflict with the values summarised in the strategy.

**Action requested/Recommendation**
3.   Court members are asked to note the legacies and donations received and current alumni relations activities.

*Paragraphs 4-6: closed section*

**Global Alumni Events**

*Upcoming global alumni events*

| | |
|---|---|
| **New York, North America**<br>New York Tartan Day Parade, followed by a post-parade gathering for networking. Attended by the Principal. | April 2024 |
| **Toronto, Canada**<br>Edinburgh University Club of Toronto will host their Annual Dinner | April 2024 |
| **Hong Kong**<br>Alumni reception hosted by the Principal and Chris Cox. | April 2024 |

*Recent Global Events*
7.   In February, alumni in Paris gathered for the monthly UK Alumni Network (UKAN) informal get-together.

8.   In March, Louise Tracey, International Recruitment Manager (South East Asia) hosted a second alumni gathering in Manila, on a visit to the Philippines.

9.   We received excellent feedback from alumni in London who attended a special event at the V&A on International Women's Day in March for the world premiere of the spectacular tapestry celebrating the Edinburgh Seven. Dovecot Studios led on the event with support from D&A and CMVM. The tapestry is a triptych designed by artist Christine Borland and woven by Dovecot Studios using traditional techniques and innovative materials. This masterpiece will move to the new Edinburgh Futures Institute – its forever home – this summer.

10.  The British Council Germany hosted an Alumni UK networking evening in Cologne in March. A similar event took place in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, hosted by the British Embassy.

11.  Alumni in Santiago, including many of our alumni volunteers, attended a special reception celebrating Scotland in Chile at the British Residence hosted by Ambassador Louise de Souza during a visit by Scottish Government Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands, Mairi Gougeon, taking place in March.

*Student Engagement*

12.  This year, 62 MasterCard Scholars will participate in the Mastercard Scholars Career Mentoring Programme and will be paired with alumni mentors for six months starting in April.

13.  We are working with the Earth Fellows Programme to create an alumni mentoring programme for this year's cohort of 16 earth fellows, pairing them with an alumni mentor for a 3 month programme.

*Alumni support for Student Recruitment*

14.  Alumni participated in panel sessions for Postgraduate Online Learning Essentials Day in March and Postgraduate Discovery Day in February, with another session scheduled for April. In the sessions prospective students can put their questions directly to our alumni panellists to help them inform their decision-making.

15.  In April, the alumni team will host two CAHSS Offer-holder "Linking Students with Alumni" events to educate prospective students on how they can engage with the alumni network during their studies and beyond. We are also taking part in the CAHSS Offer-holder Information Fair in McEwan Hall where we can meet offer holders directly and answer their questions.

16.  Also in April, 34 alumni ambassadors are confirmed to support 12 offer holder sessions across North America in Houston, New York, Washington DC, Boston, Chicago, San Francisco, San Diego, Toronto and Vancouver. Recruitment events will also take place in South East Asia and Europe in the coming months.

*Digital Communications*

17.  A new digital newsletter 'Events and Opportunities' was launched in March 2024 and the first edition was opened by an impressive 75,000 alumni.

18.  Issue 6 of digital [Enlightened](#) magazine was published in February featuring more alumni impact stories; work on Issue 7 is currently underway.

19.  Multi Story Edinburgh newsletter continues to be sent monthly to all new graduates in collaboration with the Careers Service. The latest edition was opened by nearly 60% of its recipients.

20.  The Communications team ran a successful Valentine's Day social media campaign, sharing stories of alumni who met on campus. Supported by the central Digital Marketing Team, the campaign received over 186K impressions across

Edinburgh alumni and corporate channels. Support for alumni events promotion on social media continues, including bespoke communications for Tartan Day 2024.

*Print Communications*

21. The Communications team continues to produce the Multi Story Edinburgh graduation handbook. The publication contains advice, insight and signposts to further support, together with features on recent graduates and experiences they can pass on. Over 3,000 copies of will be mailed this spring to alumni who could not attend their ceremony in winter 2023.

*Podcasts*

22. We continue to develop the [Multi Story Edinburgh podcast](#) which has had over 9,000 downloads to date. Planning for season six has commenced, with recruitment underway for our student intern host who will work on the podcast during summer 2024.

23. A new podcast '[Enlightened Conversations](#)' launched in summer 2023. The second episode 'AI: past, present and future' was recorded in Palo Alto (California) and published on YouTube and Media Hopper in January. The podcast provides dedicated space to cultivating meaningful conversations and its second episode has received over 600 views to date.

**Resource implications**

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

**Risk Management**

25. 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**

26. 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**

27. There are no specific equality and diversity issues associated with the paper. However, cognisance is taken of the wishes of donors to ensure these reflect the University's approach to equality and diversity and that these comply with legal requirements. We also actively promote a range of EDI-related scholarships and wider programmes to donors, including the MCF programme highlighted above, the Black British Scholarships programme, the Nyerere Scholarship and specific PhD scholarships to attract candidates from under-represented groups.

28. 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**

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

**Consultation**

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

**Further information**

31. _Authors_                  _Presenter_
    Gregor Hall                    Chris Cox
    Finance Manager            Vice-Principal Philanthropy &
    Emily Gwiazda               Advancement
    Alumni Relations Project Officer
    Development & Alumni

**Freedom of Information**

32. Open version

**UNIVERSITY COURT**

**22 April 2024**

**Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC)**

**Description of paper**
1.  The purpose of this paper is to:
    *   update Court on progress made to date in relation to the programme of works within buildings impacted by Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC); and
    *   request funding and delegation of authority to progress the remediation works associated with all impacted University buildings.

2.   The proposals in this paper contribute to keeping our estate fit for purpose, sustainable and accessible as set out in Strategy 2030, noting that some betterment opportunities may arise during RAAC repair works which will support some small progress towards Carbon-Zero University by 2040.

*Paragraphs 3-32: closed section*

**Risk Management**
33. Weekly RAAC control meetings are taking place with all Estates colleagues involved in taking forward the programme of works, with the Directors of Estates, Estates Operations and Estate Development all attending to ensure a joined-up approach to managing the risks involved in the RAAC programme of works.

34. Each individual project is maintaining a live risk register which will be monitored continuously. As well as typical project risks, this will include detailed risks around decant arrangements and critical path items to ensure all interdependencies are clearly understood by all stakeholders.

35. The RAAC works themselves are being progressed to mitigate the risk profile which has been attributed to each space in accordance with the Institution of Structural Engineers guidance.

**Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals**
36. This paper does not directly contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals. However, each project which will be delivered as a result of the RAAC remediation programme will have its own specific targets and will extend the anticipated existing building lifespan mitigating against the requirement to build alternative new buildings.

**Equality & Diversity**
37. There are no specific equality and diversity issues associated with the recommendations contained within this paper.

**Next steps/implications**

38. The Main Contractors and Design Teams will progress and complete the pre-construction design phases, which will inform the market testing and tendering stages. This will allow contract awards to be agreed in line with anticipated timelines.

**Consultation**

39. Close collaboration with Estates Department, Business Continuity team, Communications and Marketing team (CAM), impacted Schools, Colleges and Support Groups is on-going and vital to minimising the impact of these works.

**Further information**

40. *Author*

Helen Wood
Head of University Space

Jane Johnston
Director of Estate Development

Aislinn Wood
Head of Estates Operations
Programme Delivery

*Presenter*

Gary Jebb
Director of Place

**Freedom of Information**

41. Open version

**UNIVERSITY COURT**

**22 April 2024**

**Managing Security Related Risks in Internationalisation: Annual Update**

**Description of paper**
1.   Annual update on management and mitigation of security related risks across the University's international agenda.

*Paragraphs 2-25: closed section*

**Next steps**
26. There is an annual update on the management and mitigation of security related risks across the University's international agenda to Risk Management Committee, Audit & Risk Committee and Court.

**Consultation**
27. Views have been sought from Vice-Principal International and members of the University's Security and Risks in International Partnerships Group (SRIPG). This paper was reviewed by Risk Management Committeee at its meeting on 29 February 2024 and Audit & Risk Committee on 28 March 2024.

28. **Further information**
    _Author and Presenter_
    Alan Mackay
    Deputy Vice-Principal International

**Freedom of Information**
29. Open version

**UNIVERSITY COURT**

**22 April 2024**

**Strategic Risk Report**

**Description of paper**

1.   The purpose of this paper is to present Court with the Annual Strategic Risk Report. It has been presented at Risk Management Committee (RMC) and Audit and Risk Committee (ARC), and edited based on their comments and feedback.

*Paragraphs 2-15: closed section*

**Equality & Diversity**

15.  There are no major equality and diversity impacts associated with this report.

**Next steps/implications**

16.  Court is invited to review and comment on the risk information in this report.

**Consultation**

17.  Preparation of this report involved consultation with all Strategic Risk owners, as well as all Colleges, PSGs, and the Finance Group of Teams. The report was reviewed and edited by RMC, submitted to ARC, and further refined based on their comments.

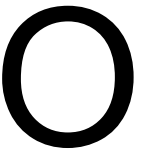**Further information**

18. *Author*                                          *Presenter*
     Chris MacLean                          Catherine Martin
     Risk Manager                            Vice Principal,
     8 April 2024                               Corporate Services

**Freedom of Information**

19.  Open version

**UNIVERSITY COURT**

**22 April 2024**

**Senate College Professional Services Election Regulations**

**Description of paper**
1.   The paper seeks Court approval for the Senate College Professional Services Election Regulations.

**Action requested/Recommendation**
2.   Court is invited to approve the Senate College Professional Services Senate Election Regulations. The Regulations are closely modelled on the Senate Election Regulations approved by Court at its meeting on 26 February 2024.

**Background and context**
3.   University Ordinance 212 (Composition of the Senatus Academicus) stipulates a total of 200 academic elected members of the Senatus Academicus. The Ordinance does not allow for any of the 200 positions to be filled by elected non-academic staff.

4.   Court received a routine Senate paper at its 26 February 2024 meeting which provided an update on the arrangements for the Senate Elections as approved by Senate at its 7 February 2024 meeting. The paper outlined the arrangements for the operation of the 2024 elections for academic staff to Senate, and for election of elected Senate academic staff members to Senate Standing Committees.

5.   This paper also outlined two proposed changes to the membership of Senate, which arose from the Senate External Review. The two recommendations which relate to the membership of Senate, are referred to R1 and R2 in the Senate External Review Report. A paper presented to the 11 October 2023 meeting of Senate (Paper S23/24 1I) committed to adopting these recommendations with a proposal outlining the practical means to adopt these approved by Senate at its 7 February 2024 meeting.

6.   Recommendation 1 was adopted by Senate and was included in the Senate Election Regulations approved by Court at its 26 February 2024 meeting.

7.   Recommendation R.2 states: *We recommend that Senate has 3 non-executive professional staff members on Senate.*

8.   By way of reminder, the following arrangements for the addition of professional services staff were endorsed by Senate at its 7 February meeting and notified to Court via the routine Senate Elections paper received at its 26 February 2024 meeting:

   o   A total of four (4) ex officio positions will be reserved for elected professional services staff. The four positions will be comprised of the Professional Services staff member on Court, and three elected Professional Services staff members with one position for each College.

o The four professional services staff must be considered ex officio members to allow professional services staff to join Senate and for the membership to remain compliant with Ordinance 212. The Ordinance allows for a maximum of 80 ex officio members, a total of 69 of these positions are currently filled.

o The total number of College-level office holders contained within the ex officio category would be increased from 5 to 6 staff, with one position reserved for a professional services staff member elected to that role by their peers. This revision is reflected within Appendix 1 of the Senate Elections Regulations.

o A term of three years will be allocated to the successful candidates, with the term of office to commence on 1 August 2024. Academic Services agreed to consult with Colleges for support in taking forward the election and on the appropriate timing of the elections. It is expected that the election of professional services staff will take place on a different timescale to Senate Elections for 2024 only, with the elections to take place on the same timeline as the Senate Elections in future years.

9.    Senate members indicated their support for adopting the recommendation in feedback and indicated a preference for a number higher than the three stated in the recommendation. This change does not require approval from Senate or Court, however as the proposal arises from a recommendation contained within the External Review Senate's support was sought to take this forward and Court's approval is being sought for the Senate College Professional Services Staff Election Regulations.

**Discussion**
10.    Senate endorsed the proposal to adopt the recommendation that 'A total of four (4) ex officio positions will be reserved for elected professional services staff, with the four positions will be comprised of the Professional Services staff member on Court, and three elected Professional Services staff members with one position for each College'.

11.    The Senate Support office has drafted the attached Senatus Academicus (Senate) College Professional Services Election Regulations (Appendix 1) for the purposes of conducting the Professional Services Election. Court is invited to approve the regulations provided in Appendix 1.

12.    The election of the Professional Services Staff Member to Court takes place under separate election regulations approved by Court on 26 February 2024.

*Election of College Professional services staff members to Senate – Returning Officer, process, allocation of terms and timelines*
13. Senate appointed Lisa Dawson, Academic Registrar as the Returning Officer of the Senate Elections and Olivia Hayes, Academic Policy Officer, as the Deputy Returning Officer. The same arrangements will be applied to the Senate College Professional Services staff election.

14. Following consultation with Colleges, the following timeline for the nomination and election period is proposed for 2024:

| Wednesday 24 April 2024 | Nominations formally declared open |
|---|---|
| Wednesday 15 May 2024 (12 noon) | Nominations close |
| Wednesday 29 May 2024 (9am) to Wednesday 12 June 2024 (12 noon) | Voting open online |
| By Friday 21 June | Results announced |

15. It is anticipated the elections will take place on the same timeline as the Senate academic staff elections in future years.

**Risk Management**

16. The University's Risk Policy and Risk Appetite statement refers to the University holding 'no appetite for any breaches in statute, regulation.' Senate elections are mandated by University Ordinance 212.

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

17. Not applicable

**Equality & Diversity**

18. An Equality Impact Assessment has been conducted on the overall approach to Senate membership and is available on the Equality and Diversity webpages. This assessment assumes a regular rotation/refreshment of members and the filling of most elected vacancies. Senate election advertising materials highlight the University's commitment to improving the diversity of key University committees, and encourage all eligible staff to consider standing.

**Next steps/implications**

19. Senate College Professional Services staff elections will be coordinated by staff within the Academic Services team and run by external election specialists Civica Election Services. Information on the elections will be published on Senate webpages and communicated through multiple channels including the Senate website, targeted email communications, and social media.

**Consultation**

20. Senate supported the proposal that a total of four (4) ex-officio positions be reserved for professional services staff. These will be comprised of the Professional Services staff member on Court, and three elected Professional Services staff members with one drawn from each College. Colleges have been consulted on the timing of the elections in 2024 as outlined in paragraphs 12 and 13.

**Further information**

21. *Author*
    Olivia Hayes (Academic Policy Officer & Clerk to Senate)
    4 April 2024

**Freedom of Information**

22. Open paper

# Senatus Academicus (Senate) College Professional Services Election Regulations

1. The composition of the Senatus Academicus (Senate) is outlined in Ordinance 212, Paragraphs 1-3 and 5.

2. The election of academic staff to the Senatus Academicus (Senate) operate under separate Election regulations. Elected academic staff are elected for a term of up to three years, and hold membership as an elected member for the duration of their term of Senate.

3. The Senatus Academics (Senate) Election Regulations are the referencing authority for detail on the composition of Senate, including ex-officio and elected staff, information regarding student membership, and the election of academic staff to Senate.

4. College professional services staff will be considered *ex officio* for the duration of their term on Senate, in line with Appendix 1 of the Senatus Academicus (Senate) Election Regulations.

## Term of Office

5. Elected College professional services staff will stand for a term of office which will not exceed three years from the first day of August of the year of election. Elected College professional services staff will demit office on 31 July of their final year in office.

6. There is no cap on the number of terms of office for which College professional services staff members may stand; College professional services staff members will be eligible for re-election for the same term of office provided they demit office on ceasing to hold a contract of employment with the University.

7. Elected College professional services staff members may resign membership at any time. Their membership will remain vacant until the next scheduled Senate election.

## The Electoral Roll

8. College professional services staff members who are eligible to stand for *ex officio* membership of Senate and elect members from their own number will hold appointments from the University Court, as attested by a contract of employment issued by the University. In practice, 'Professional services staff' will apply to all members of staff who are categorised as 'Professional, Administration and Operational' in the University's Human Resources records and who hold a contract of employment for the relevant College.

9. Members of professional services staff who do not hold a contract of employment for the relevant College will not be eligible to stand and vote in the relevant College Professional services staff election. The electoral roll will be compiled from Human Resources' records on 31 March preceding the call for nominations meaning that nominees for the elected College professional services staff places will need to have been in post from this date in order to be eligible for nomination.

10. Professional services staff will be eligible to stand for the place within the College of which they are a member.  If a professional services staff member is a member of multiple Colleges, they will stand in the College where they work a greater proportion of their time (based on full-time equivalent).  If a professional services staff member works for equal amounts of time across multiple Colleges, they will be permitted to select the College in which they intend to stand, on condition that they only stand for election in one College, and that they declare in writing to the Senate Support Team in which College they intend to stand.

### Election of College professional services staff members to Senate
11. Elections for College professional services staff members will be held on a triennial basis, or where a vacancy has arisen due to a member demitting office before their term of office was due to conclude. The election will be run by the Senate Support team.

### Election Dates
12. The call for nominations for each election will be made after 31 January, normally at the next Senate meeting.  No nominations will be accepted before this date.  At this meeting, Senate will agree a deadline for the submission of nomination forms.

13. The elections will be conducted on a date which will be determined by the Senate and all elections to Senate will usually take place on the same date in a given year.  The elections will usually take place in time to communicate the results to Senate before its final meeting of the academic session, and the results must be communicated to Senate no later than 30 June each year.

### Role of the Returning and Deputy Returning Officers
14. On an annual basis, Senate will appoint a Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer, who will be responsible for the management of the academic staff elections and the declaration of the results of the elections. The Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer for the academic staff elections will be the same for the College professional staff elections.

15. The Deputy Returning Officer will provide nomination forms calling for nominations and will draw attention to the correct procedure for making nominations.  The call for nominations will be published by the Deputy Returning Officer and advertised via agreed channels.

### Nomination and Validation of Candidates
16. Only members of the electorate in each category, as defined in paragraph 8, will be eligible to stand for election in that category.  Eligible individuals will be entitled to nominate themselves as a candidate using the process specified in the call for nominations.

17. All nominations must be received by the deadline agreed.  No nominations will be accepted after this date and time.

18. If the Deputy Returning Officer receives a nomination from an individual who is not eligible to stand for election under the terms defined in these regulations, the Deputy Returning Officer will contact the individual to inform them that their nomination will not be accepted. Where the individual whose nomination has not been accepted wishes to challenge the rejection of their nomination, they may do so by contacting the Returning Officer. The decision of the Returning Officer is final.

19. In the event of there being only one valid candidate for each vacancy and therefore an uncontested election, the Deputy Returning Officer will declare and publicise as soon as practicable the name of the valid candidate elected for each vacancy.

## Conduct of election process

20. Each candidate will receive from the Deputy Returning Officer a copy of these Regulations.

21. If the Deputy Returning Officer has reason to believe that a candidate may have breached these Regulations, the Deputy Returning Officer will request a written explanation or clarification from the candidate. If the Deputy Returning Officer concludes that a material breach has occurred, the Deputy Returning Officer will inform the Returning Officer. The Returning Officer has the authority to disqualify a candidate, subject to the right of appeal by the candidate to the University Secretary (or specified delegated authority) within two working days of receiving written notification of the disqualification. The decision of the University Secretary (or delegated authority) will be final.

22. The validity of the elections will not be affected in the event that a candidate is unavailable to continue for any reason prior to the results of the election being announced and, where there is a greater number of candidates remaining than vacancies in any category, the election will proceed as planned. In the event of there being only one remaining candidate for each vacancy in any category and therefore an uncontested election in that category, the Deputy Returning Officer will declare and publicise as soon as practicable, and no later than two working days after confirmation of the uncontested election status, the names of the valid candidates elected.

23. The Deputy Returning Officer will distribute to each member of the electorate via email a link to the voting system along with a link to the relevant web page to view information about the candidates.

## Voting arrangements

24. The elections will be conducted by means of the Single Transferrable Vote, Weighted Inclusive Gregory Method (STV WIGM).  The candidates with the greatest share of the vote will automatically be elected.

25. Voting will be conducted by staff online. All those on the electoral roll will be permitted access and will be able to vote on the online voting system on the election date(s).

26. Members of staff who are formally employed in more than one College will be entitled to vote in all Colleges in which they are employed.

## Counting

27. All votes cast online will be counted together using an electronic counting system.

28. In the event of a tie, the successful candidate or candidates will be determined by the drawing of lots.  The Returning Officer will draw lots from the pool of candidates whose votes are tied until the available vacancies are filled.

## Declaration

29. The Deputy Returning Officer will ensure that the result of the election is posted to the Senate webpages as soon as is practicable after the result or results have been declared. The result of the election will be communicated to Senate at the first meeting following the elections.

**22 April 2024**

Document control

| Date of approval / amendment | Details |
| --- | --- |
| 22/04/24 | Subject to approval by University Court |

# Senate Ex Officio membership, as provided in Appendix 1 of the Senatus Academicus (Senate) Election Regulations

| Position | Membership | Membership Breakdown |
|---|---|---|
| Principal | 1 | **(Required under Ordinance 212)** |
| *Ex officio* appointments | Approximately 70, with a maximum 80 *ex officio* members in total. | Heads of Schools **(Required under Ordinance 212)** and Heads (Deans) of the Deaneries of the Edinburgh Medical School. |
| | | Heads of College **(Required under Ordinance 212)** |
| | | Provost |
| | | Vice-Principals |
| | | Assistant Principals |
| | | Director of Library and University Collections |
| | | Director of the Institute for Academic Development |
| | | University Leads on Climate Responsibility and Sustainability; Equality, Diversity and Inclusion |
| | | Up to 6 College-level office holders per College nominated by that College. 5 office holders must hold academic posts (for example, Deans and Associate Deans) 1 office-holder will be a professional services staff member elected to that role by their peers. |
| | | Office-holders who are specifically entitled to Senate membership under the terms of collaborative agreements. |
| | | 2 Senate Assessors on the University Court if not serving a term as an elected member. |
| | | 1 Academic Staff member on the University Court if not already a Senate member. |
| | | 1 Professional Services member on the University Court |

**THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH**

**UNIVERSITY COURT**

**22 April 2024**

**Edinburgh BioQuarter**

*Paragraphs 1-33: closed section*

**Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals**
34. BioQuarter responds positively to several of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, as set out in the Court Paper dated 6 October 2021.

*Paragraphs 35-37: closed section*

**Consultation**
38. Updates have been provided as follows:
PRC Commercialisation Sub-Group      7 March 2024
University Executive                           12 March 2024
Policy & Resources Committee          25 March 2024

39. Regular engagement is ongoing across key areas within Corporate Services Group, senior academic colleagues, Legal Services and the Senior Leadership Team as appropriate.

40. Consultation through University Executive and Court Committees has included the University Secretary, Vice-Principal, Corporate Services, the Director of Place, the Director of Legal Services, the Director of Procurement, the Head of the College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine and the Registrar for the College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine.

**Further information**
41. *Authors*                                    *Presenter*
Ashley Shannon                        Ashley Shannon
Director of Operations               Director of Operations
Corporate Services Group          Corporate Services Group

Esther Duncan                          Professor David Argyle
Legal Services                          Vice Principal and Head of College
                                               College of Medicine & Veterinary
8 April 2024                             Medicine

**Freedom of Information**
42. Open version

**UNIVERSITY COURT**

**22 April 2024**

**Draft Resolutions: Degree Programme Regulations**

**Description of paper**

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

2.   These Resolutions contribute to the following University Strategy 2030 outcomes:

- 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 refer the following draft Resolutions to Senate and the General Council for observations:

- Draft Resolution No. 4/2024: Undergraduate Degree Programme Regulations
- Draft Resolution No. 5/2024: 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 2024/25 are as indicated in the table below. Links within the regulations to other information have been updated as necessary.

| Regulation Updated | What has changed |
|---|---|
| **22 and 23 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)** | 22 - This regulation has been amended to more closely reflect the wording relating to RPL in the Postgraduate Degree Regulations. A clarification has also been added to state that credit limits relating to RPL do not apply in cases where a student is transferring between degree programmes within the University.<br><br>23 – The link has been updated to the latest RPL policy for admissions. |
| **29 Optional Study Abroad** | Reference to Erasmus exchange has been removed, since students from the University are no longer eligible for this scheme. |
| **88 Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine & Surgery (BVM&S) Progression** | The requirements relating to progression on this programme have been amended, based on updated information from the Veterinary School. |

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

| Regulation Updated | What has changed |
|---|---|
| **24 Attendance and Participation** | A clarification has been added to state that students on on-campus programmes are expected to continue in-person attendance during the dissertation or research project component of taught postgraduate Master's programmes. This has been added following concerns raised by the Student Immigration Service about visa-holding taught postgraduate students leaving the UK during the summer period to complete their dissertation or research project. In-person attendance is expected by UK Visas & Immigration for the entirety of programmes, so there is a risk to the University's status as a visa sponsor if students leave during this period. |
| **28 Reductions to the Prescribed Period of Study** | Amended to refer to regulation 18 of the Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees for information about early submission on doctoral or MPhil degrees. An additional process for reduction to the prescribed period of study is not required in cases where early submission is supported by the relevant College. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **33 Authorised Interruption of Study** | A clause has been added stating that, on programmes with a prescribed period of full-time study of 9 months, the total permitted period of Authorised Interruption of Study is 12 months. This was approved by APRC on 21 September 2023.<br><br>A further clause has been added to state that, on part-time continuous Masters programmes with a prescribed period of study of 36 months, the total permitted period of Authorised Interruption of Study is 24 months. This replaces the existing provision of 12 months for these students, and is based on experience of concessions cases from the College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine in particular. On a programme of three years' duration, it is not uncommon for students to have more than one period where they need to take an extended break from study, for example due to ill health or maternity leave. As such, this proposed change offers potential benefits to all students, and especially those in protected groups, especially women and students with disabilities. The proposed change also reduces the administrative burden currently presented by needing to escalate concessions cases to APRC for decisions. We do not foresee any risks or resource implications presented by this change. |
| **34 Extensions of Study** | We have added a statement that additional periods of study offered for the completion of corrections or resubmission of a thesis following examination on a PhD or MPhil programme do not count towards the total maximum period of permitted extensions. Currently, where students who have exhausted the maximum allowable period for extensions are offered a period of corrections or resubmission following examination, this requires approval of a concession by APRC to allow a further extension. This is an additional administrative hurdle which serves no purpose, since the APRC Convener would not reject a request of this nature, where the examiners have indicated that the student has a clear path to successful completion of the thesis. This change will save staff time and reduce uncertainty for students. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **43 Termination of supervision** | This regulation has been amended to refer to a separate document, which outlines the process for consideration of termination of supervision. This process was approved by APRC's predecessor Committee, the Curriculum & Student Progression Committee, in April 2017. |
| **45 Request for Reinstatement on Doctoral and MPhil degrees** | This regulation has been amended to include coverage of students who withdraw before the end of their programme, who may also be permitted to apply for reinstatement. While students who have been excluded for lapse of time will be permitted only to return to submit a completed thesis, students who withdrew with time remaining in their programme may be offered this time to complete their thesis before submission. The proposed change carries minimal risk, since Colleges retain the right to refuse reinstatement for any reason, but especially where they are not satisfied that the student will successfully complete a passable thesis, or where appropriate supervision is not available. Students who have been excluded for any reason other than lapse of time (e.g. due to failure to progress following an annual review) will not be permitted to apply for reinstatement.<br><br>The amended regulation advises that students who require a Student Visa to study must contact the Student Immigration Service for advice before applying for reinstatement. |
| **46 Vacation Leave for Research Students** | Clarification has been added that the allowance of eight weeks' vacation leave applies to each year of study, and that this is included in the prescribed period of study. |
| **48 PhD Thesis Length – Word Count** | Clarification has been added regarding what constitutes "preface material": table of contents, acknowledgements, list of abbreviations, list of illustrations. |
| **68 PhD – Submission by Portfolio in Art, Design and Landscape Architecture** | Amended to state that the bibliography is not included in the word count for the thesis. This reflects the position for other PhD degrees. |

**Resource implications**

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

**Risk Management**

8.    The proposed amendments include clarification regarding in-person attendance for students on campus-based programmes, which helps to reduce the risk of non-compliance with visa sponsor regulations from the UK Home Office. APRC did not consider that there were other risk implications to be raised to Court.

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

9.    The proposals relating to extending the interruption of study period support SDG3 regarding good health and wellbeing; SDG4 by offering more inclusive and equitable opportunities for education, particularly for students experiencing mental ill health, who are more likely to need interruptions of study; and SDG5 regarding gender equality given that women are more likely to need periods of interruption of study for pregnancy and maternity.

**Equality & Diversity**

10.  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 providing more generous concessions to students who would benefit from an interruption of study period. APRC noted no negative implications for equality and diversity from the proposed amendments. The proposed amendments are minor and do not therefore require an Equality Impact Assessment.

**Next steps/implications**

11.  Court will invite Senate and the General Council to comment on these draft Resolutions and notice of these will be published on the website. Final Resolutions will be referred to Court on 17 June 2024 for consideration and approval.

**Consultation**

12.  Academic Services have consulted widely on the revisions to the degree regulations and these have been reviewed and recommended for approval by Senate's Academic Policy and Regulations Committee at its meeting in March 2024. Senate and the General Council will then be asked for observations, and the draft resolutions will also be published online to enable any other body or person having an interest to express observations before returning to Court for approval.

**Further information**

13. *Authors*
      Cristina Matthews and Dr Adam Bunni
      Academic Services
      academicpolicy@ed.ac.uk
      April 2024

**Freedom of Information**

14.  Open paper.