THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

University Court
Wolfson Hall, The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh
Wednesday, 6 October 2021

AGENDA

OPENING ITEMS

1   Minute   **A1**
To _approve_ the minute of the meeting held on 14 June 2021

2   Matters Arising & Review of Action Log
  • Lease for Secondary Substation, Advanced Computing Facility   **A2**
To _raise_ any other matters arising and _review_ the Action Log   **A3**

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

4   Senior Leadership Recruitment   **C**
To _note_ an update from Peter Mathieson, Principal

5   Committee Business
  • Senior Lay Member's Overview   **Verbal**
  • Exception Committee   **D1**
  • Policy & Resources Committee   **D2**
  • Nominations Committee   **D3**
  • Court USS Sub-Group   **D4**
  • Audit & Risk Committee   **D5**
  • Senate   **D6**

KEY ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/DECISION

6   National Student Survey Results   **E**
To _comment_ on a paper presented by Colm Harmon, Vice-Principal
Students

7   Enhancement-led Institutional Review Response Action Plan   **F**
To _comment_ on a paper presented by Tina Harrison, Assistant Principal
Academic Standards and Quality Assurance

8   Preventing and Responding to Gender-Based Violence and Sexual   **G**
Violence
To _comment_ on a paper presented by Gavin Douglas, Deputy Secretary
Student Experience

9   Students' Association and Sports Union Reports
To _note_ the reports presented by Ellen MacRae, EUSA President
  • **Students' Association Report**   **H1**
  • **Sports Union Report**   **H2**

10 Director of Finance's Report   I
To *note* a report presented by Lee Hamill, Director of Finance

11 Performance Measures to Support Strategy 2030   J
To *approve* a paper presented by Rona Smith, Director of Strategic
Planning & Insight

12 People & Money System
  - **People & Money Implementation**   **K1**
  - **People & Money: Governance & Assurance Changes**   **K2**
To *approve* paper K1 presented by Dave Robertson, Vice-Principal and
Head of College of Science & Engineering and to *consider* paper K2
presented by Peter Mathieson, Principal

13 Edinburgh BioQuarter: Update on Formalising Partnership   L
Arrangements and Procurement of a Private Sector Partner
To *approve* a paper by Ashley Shannon, Director of Operations,
Corporate Services Group

14 Carbon Sequestration through Forests and Peatland   M
To *approve* a paper presented by Sandy Tudhope, University Lead for
Climate Responsibility and Sustainability

ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL

15 Annual Report to the Scottish Funding Council on Institution-led   N
Review and Enhancement Activity 2020/21
To *approve*

16 Singapore Office Bank Account   O
To *approve*

17 Donations and Legacies; Alumni Events   P
To *note*

18 Any Other Business
To *consider* any other matters

19 Date of Next Meeting
Monday, 29 November 2021, 14.00-17.00

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

UNIVERSITY COURT

14 June 2021 (Videoconference)

[DRAFT] Minute

Members Present:	Debora Kayembe, Rector (in Chair)
	Janet Legrand, Senior Lay Member
	Joyce Anderson, Trade Union Professional Services Staff Member
	Frank Armstrong, Co-opted Member
	Sarah Cooper, Senatus Assessor
	Doreen Davidson, General Council Assessor
	Alastair Dunlop, Chancellor's Assessor
	Perdita Fraser, Co-opted Member
	Caroline Gardner, Co-opted Member
	Alan Johnston, Co-opted Member
	David Law, Co-opted Member
	Fiona Mackay, Senatus Assessor & Academic Staff Member
	Ellen MacRae, Students' Association President
	Peter Mathieson, Principal & Vice-Chancellor
	Sarah McAllister, Professional Services Staff Member
	Jock Millican, General Council Assessor
	Hugh Mitchell, Co-opted Member
	Kathryn Nash, Trade Union Academic Staff Member
	Claire Phillips, Senatus Assessor
	Clare Reid, Co-opted Member
	Frank Ross, City of Edinburgh Council Assessor
	Réka Siró, Students' Association Vice-President Activities & Services
	Sarah Wolffe, General Council Assessor
Apologies:	None
In attendance:	Sophia Lycouris, Rector's Assessor
	Sarah Smith, Vice-Principal Strategic Change and Governance; and University Secretary
Presenters & Observers:	Lewis Allan, Head of Court Services
	Leigh Chalmers, Deputy Secretary Governance & Legal
	Gavin Douglas, Deputy Secretary Student Experience
	Lee Hamill, Director of Finance
	Colm Harmon, Vice-Principal Students
	Gary Jebb, Director of Place
	Pauline Manchester, Interim Director of Strategic Planning
	Catherine Martin, Vice-Principal (Interim) Corporate Services
	Gavin McLachlan, Vice-Principal, Chief Information Officer & Librarian to the University
	Theresa Merrick, Director of Communications & Marketing
	Dorothy Miell, Vice-Principal & Head of College
	Dave Robertson, Vice-Principal & Head of College
	James Saville, Director of Human Resources
	Moira Whyte, Vice-Principal & Head of College

Barry Neilson, Director of Strategic Change (for Item 7)
James Smith, Vice-Principal International (for Item 10)

OPENING ITEMS

1   Minute   **Paper A1**

Debora Kayembe, Rector, welcomed members and attendees and shared a statement marking Refugee Week (14-20 June), which has been published on the University's website. A series of events have also been organised by Edinburgh Global to showcase the University's support of refugee projects. Réka Siró, Students' Association Vice-President Activities & Services, was welcomed as a new member of Court and Alan Johnston, Doreen Davidson and Clare Reid were thanked for their service to the University on the occasion of their last meeting as Court members.

The Minute of the meeting held on 26 April 2021 was approved. Points raised at the previous meeting on improving the speed of offer making to prospective students and on financial sustainability were re-emphasised, with a request to consider these within the Strategic Performance Framework document – noting that this is intended for submission to Court early in the next academic year following consideration by the incoming Director of Strategic Planning & Insight.

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

The action log was reviewed and actions relating to topics for forthcoming Court seminars and how to log requests for future topics was raised – it was noted that Janet Legrand, Senior Lay Member, will discuss future Court seminars later in the agenda and is open to receiving suggestions for topics.

3   Principal's Report   **Paper B**

Peter Mathieson, Principal & Vice-Chancellor, supplemented the written report with the following points:
- Freedom of expression and academic freedom and autonomy are of great importance to the University – as shown by the University being one of the first in the sector to publish a statement on freedom of expression and taking a sector leading role on the topic. This was also discussed at a recent meeting involving Heads of School and the importance to all of upholding freedom of expression and academic freedom was evident;
- The overall financial position is positive and the year-end outcome should show a surplus. Action taken in response to the pandemic including the pausing of the capital plan, wage restraint and the voluntary severance scheme have all contributed to improving financial sustainability over the year;
- The latest QS World University Rankings place the University at 16th in the world, with increases in key measures underpinning the rankings;
- Student application figures are strong and have increased in almost all categories;
- This has been a record year for entrepreneurship and innovation at the University, including the award of £71 million in grants for translational

research, 100 new company launches, £36 million in funding gained by spin-out companies and the £20 million award for the Advanced Care Research Centre – the largest single industrial research award ever made to the University, amongst other successes;

- As planned, the Adaptation & Renewal Team process concluded at the end of May and has been re-incorporated into the management bodies of the Senior Leadership Team and the University Executive; and,
- There will be a series of senior recruitment campaigns launched over the coming months for the appointment of: a Vice-Principal Corporate Services on a permanent basis; a Provost – a new role for the University rather than the traditional Senior Vice-Principal role; a Vice-Principal Research & Enterprise; and, two Heads of College as the terms of office of the two current postholders conclude next year. All appointments are subject to Court approval and will involve Court input in the selection process.

Members raised the following points:
- Whether the outlook for future government research funding has improved in recent months – it was noted that there has been some improvement given a recent announcement on UK government funding to help mitigate the loss of EU research funding but this is only a temporary measure. The medium term outlook will not be known until a UK government spending review expected in the autumn; and,
- A request for a written briefing on freedom of expression in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion matters in the context of a recent report at the University of Essex. It was noted that a Court briefing or seminar on freedom of expression is planned and this can be included as part of the session.

4   Committee Business
- **Senior Lay Member's Overview**

Janet Legrand, Senior Lay Member, noted that the structure of the Court agenda has been modified with a section on committee business placed before rather than after the main agenda items. This is to enable Committee Conveners to provide any useful context from the committee discussions of key items before they are considered.

Since the last meeting, the Senior Lay Member has participated in the Court Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) Sub-Group and in the recruitment of new Court members and has continued to meet a number of current members. Over the summer and autumn period all Court members will be invited to individual meetings with the Senior Lay Member and University Secretary. Informal briefing meetings for Court members will be held over the summer period and topics that have been proposed for these or for future Court seminars include the University's racial equality action plan, freedom of expression, USS, commercialisation and staff workloads. It is hoped that there will be more opportunities to meet continuing and new members in person and also to thank departing Court members for their service.

Court's congratulations were recorded to Anne Richards, former Vice-Convener of Court, on the award of a damehood in the Queen's Birthday Honours.

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

Alan Johnston, Convener of Policy & Resources Committee, noted the committee's recognition that the financial environment remains challenging, with a continuing need for cost control to maintain sustainability, as shown in the Planning Round proposals later in the agenda. The Committee continues to receive regular progress updates on the People & Money System, a major project for the University, with the Head of Internal Audit also providing oversight.

- **Audit & Risk Committee**   **Paper C2**

Caroline Gardner, Convener of Audit & Risk Committee, highlighted the four recommendations in the report, with approval requested for:
- The External Audit Annual Plan 2020/21
- The External Audit Fee for the 2020/21 audit (subject to two caveats set out in the paper);
- The Internal Audit Plan 2021/22; and,
- A minor update to the Committee's Terms of Reference.

The four recommendations were approved as set out in the paper.

- **Court Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) Sub-Group**   **Paper C3**

Alan Johnston, Convener of the USS Sub-Group, noted that the topic remains an on-going and vital issue, with the consultation response appended to the report stating the University's position that ensuring a financially sustainable scheme with good value for all members is key. It was queried whether the Sub-Group is considering the various points of view taken on the 2020 valuation – the intention is to take a wide view, including considering complex issues such as intergenerational fairness, and taking input from Court members on the institutional position.

- **Nominations Committee**   **Paper C4**

Alan Johnston, Convener of Nominations Committee, introduced the report. On the recommendation of Nominations Committee, Court:
   i) approved the following appointments with effect from 1 August 2021:

University Court
- Douglas Alexander to be appointed as a General Council Assessor for a four year term of office
- Ruth Girardet to be appointed as a Co-opted Member for a four year term of office
- Alistair Smith to be appointed as a Co-opted Member for a four year term of office

Nominations Committee
- Janet Legrand to be appointed as Convener for a two year term of office
- Caroline Gardner to be re-appointed for a two year term of office
- David Law to be appointed for a two year term of office

- Sarah Wolffe to be appointed for a two year term of office

Audit & Risk Committee
- Caroline Gardner to be reappointed as Convener for a two year term of office
- Alastair Dunlop to be appointed for a two year term of office

Policy & Resources Committee
- Janet Legrand to be appointed as Convener for a two year term of office
- Sarah Cooper to be reappointed for a one year term of office

Remuneration Committee
- Caroline Gardner to be reappointed as Convener for a two year term of office
- David Law to be appointed for a two year term of office
- Hugh Mitchell to be appointed for a three year term of office

Knowledge Strategy Committee
- Colm Harmon to be appointed as interim Convener while a review of the Committee's terms of reference take place next year, to include considering lifting the current restriction that only lay members of Court can serve as the permanent Convener to enable Senate appointees and any category of Court member to serve as a future Convener;
- Claire Phillips to be reappointed for a one year term of office
- Kathryn Nash to be appointed for a three year term of office

Exception Committee
- Sarah Cooper to be reappointed for a one year term of office
- Jock Millican to be appointed for a two year term of office
- David Law to be appointed for a two year term of office

Court USS Sub-Group
- David Law to be appointed as Convener for a two year term of office
- Hugh Mitchell to be appointed for a three year term of office
- Doreen Davidson to be appointed as an external member for a three year term of office

Intermediary Court member
- David Law to be appointed for a two year term of office

Curators of Patronage
- Janet Legrand to be appointed for a two year term of office

Ethical Fundraising Advisory Group
- Sarah Wolffe to be appointed for a two year term of office

ii) approved a minor amendment to Exception's Committee Terms of Reference:

Exception Committee Terms of Reference – Extract
2 Composition
2.1 The Committee shall consist of at least six members.

2.2 The Principal, the Senior Lay Member, the University Secretary, and the Convener (if a Court member) of each of the other Standing Committees of Court shall be ex officio members of the Committee.

iii) noted the following appointments to Court's Thematic Committees approved by Nominations Committee with effect from 1 August 2021:

<u>Investment Committee</u>
- Doreen Davidson to be appointed as an external member for a three year term of office
- Jock Millican to be appointed for a two year term of office
- Jim Roth (external member) to be reappointed for a three year term of office
- Henry Cobbe (external member) to be reappointed for a three year term of office

- **Knowledge Strategy Committee**   **Paper C5**

Doreen Davidson, Convener of Knowledge Strategy Committee, highlighted key points from the report. Members commented on:
- The inclusion of an information security update within the report was welcomed;
- What improvements can be made to bolster information security at an individual staff member level, noting that the new People & Money System will help improve information security; multi-factor authentication is being explored but there are complexities in implementation and it should not be regarded as a panacea if introduced; and, continuing to raise awareness amongst staff of information security threats is vital.

- **Senate**   **Paper C6**

The report of the e-Senate meeting by correspondence from 11-19 May 2021 was noted, with a report from the Senate meeting on 2 June 2021 to be submitted to the next Court meeting.

KEY ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/DECISION

5   Curriculum Transformation Update   **Paper D**

A progress summary of the Curriculum Transformation Programme since the last update in February 2021 was reviewed. The programme was formally launched in April 2021, with an online Curriculum Transformation Hub established with briefing papers, videos and feedback tools to encourage a University-wide discussion on the topic. The following points were raised:
- What the initial response has been from staff and any emerging themes – there has been a sense of openness to discussing the topic, with particular interest in the concept of what might be an "Edinburgh student" in a curriculum sense and how this might be a differentiator with other universities;
- The feasibility of the timescales given the impact of the pandemic on workloads and potential difficulty in engaging with all stakeholders – while the

timescales are ambitious, the programme is intended to build in intensity over time, with the current phase being a more gradual conversation-initiating phase to give time for as many contributions as possible. Some who are more engaged are keen to move to later phases now, e.g. curriculum redesign, but the programme will keep to its timings to encourage more contributions;

- The decision-making process once inputs have been received – there is a Curriculum Transformation Board that reports to the University Executive but the primary body will be the Senate, with University Executive and Court involvement as appropriate;

- Whether there is a risk of fatigue impacting on engagement in some groups, especially at the end of the academic year – levels of engagement and fatigue may come in waves as the academic year cycle progresses and this will have to be managed. Timing phases to best attract student engagement will also be critical. The subject matter tends to galvanise academic staff and students and the Hub can be useful in identifying any areas which might be less engaged;

- The current spectrum of opinion and whether a "Town Hall" style event might be organised – a wide range of opinion has been expressed, with the trend towards responses that are ambitious and positive. In-person engagement is something the team are keen to do and hopefully circumstances will allow this in due course; and,

- The vision for co-creation, establishing an iterative mechanism and whether the programme is concerned with skills and employability more generally or with subject knowledge. On co-creation, the Institute for Academic Development is currently considering this and plans to bring forward suggestions for discussion by the end of the calendar year. On general or discipline-specific skills and knowledge, the programme is concerned with generic rather than discipline-specific skills.

6   Students' Association and Sports Union Reports   Papers E1,E2

Ellen MacRae, Students' Association President, presented reports from the Students' Association and the Sports Union and highlighted the Student Awards and Teaching Awards ceremonies held online in May and the new student sabbatical officer team, who took up their roles earlier this month. As the University plans for the next academic year, the Association hopes that positive aspects of the current period can be maintained, such as increased accessibility (e.g. with online exams) and speed of decision-making, while making improvements in other areas, such as closer engagement with the student voice. Members discussed points raised in the reports, including: providing University IT assistance where requested – with a secondment from the University to the Association's IT team recently made; maintaining regular communications to postgraduate students over the summer; the buddy scheme for first year students was welcomed; and, improving resources, including staff resources, dedicated to tackling sexual violence and harassment, with a request for Court to be updated on progress in this area – noting that funding for this area will increase.

Réka Siró, Students' Association Vice-President Activities & Services, noted that a priority will be to help bring students back to campus and keep spaces open and available as much as possible while maintaining and expanding help for those who

may still feel isolated through the meet up and catch-up scheme and a global buddy scheme.

7   Academic Year 2021/22 Planning Group Report   Paper F

An update on the work of the Academic Year 2021/22 Planning Group was reviewed. Helping students and staff feel confident in the approach taken to a greater return to campus life next year is a key priority, as the physical campus increasingly becomes the centre of gravity again. Government public health guidance for the sector is expected over the summer period but given lead-in times internal planning is needed before the guidance is published. In tandem with other Scottish universities, the planning assumption being taken is for in-person teaching with 1 metre physical distancing plus other risk mitigations. Other areas of focus include arrangements for testing, vaccination, managed isolation for students travelling from red and amber list countries and providing as much clarity as possible in communications to new and returning students. The following points were raised in discussion:

- Whether there will be a proportion of staff that will continue to work remotely as a default in the 'level 0 and beyond' scenario – this will depend on more detailed guidance from the Scottish Government. It is anticipated that there will be a staged return with those using on-campus research facilities, teaching in-person or providing in-person support services returning at an earlier stage;
- The rationale for the expected in-person teaching limit of approximately 50 students in one venue – this has been made in expectation of public health measures (such as 1 metre distancing) given the need to make timetabling decisions and room allocations as soon as possible and to give students more certainty about which activities will take place in-person or online; and,
- Whether the University intends to guarantee a certain minimum level of in-person teaching to every student as some other institutions have done – timetabling planning is still underway so the impact on individual programmes and students is not yet known in terms of the in-person/online mix and will likely vary depending on the particular course choices of each student. The expectation at this stage is that seminars and class will typically be delivered in-person and lectures will typically be delivered online.

8   Director of Finance's Report   Paper G

The indicative Quarter Three forecast position for 2020-21 and a draft (unaudited) Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure for 2020-21 was reviewed. Indications are that a positive underlying operating surplus will be recorded for 2020-21, with a larger positive figure for the Statement of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure as it includes a positive accounting adjustment for pensions provision and gains on investments and one-off activities that are distinct from on-going 'business as usual' activities. The likely positive financial outcome for the year was welcomed and it was noted that discussions have taken place on holding internal financial briefings beyond the Court membership, with the outcome that quarterly financial updates will now be scheduled with the joint staff unions and with the Academic Strategy Group. How to address staff workloads in the context of measures taken to achieve a positive financial outcome was raised, with the financial

focus for next year being on controlling expenditure while being carefully considering appropriate resourcing in all areas of the University.

9   Planning Round 2021-22 Proposals   **Paper H**

Proposed budgets and plans following the conclusion of the 2021-22 Planning Round process were considered. It was noted that the process has been slowed by external factors, particularly delays in the allocations of funded student places by the Scottish Funding Council, with the internal context being a focus on improving financial sustainability through greater cost control. Following review by the Senior Leadership Team, the proposed income and expenditure budgets are intended to deliver an underlying operating surplus equivalent to 3% of total income, within the Court agreed range of 3-5%. The following points were raised in discussion:

- The importance of ensuring sustainable workloads for staff and high quality teaching for students and carefully reflecting on this when making decisions on cost controls;
- Whether there are pinch points in improving the student experience that may be affected by a focus on cost control;
- The impact of a potential reduction in tuition fees for English-domiciled students if this element of the Augar Review is implemented – approximately 30% of undergraduate students are English-domiciled but it remains to be seen whether the Augar Review will be implemented in partial, full or modified form and this will be closely monitored;
- When the Planning Round will revert to a longer time horizon rather than the current one-year plans – the intention is to move to a five year planning horizon with a ten year capital plan. Work is underway to develop a prioritised capital plan encompassing estates, digital infrastructure and other capital demands; and,
- More generally, the University is in a strong financial position and the budget holders (the Heads of College and Heads of Professional Services Groups) and those in individual areas who also make budgeting decisions will all recognise the importance of improving the student and staff experience when prioritising activities.

The Planning Round 2021-22 proposals were approved.

10   China Collaborations
- **Update on current and pipeline partnerships in China**   **Paper I1**

An update on current and planned partnerships in China was noted.

- **Low Carbon College Joint Institute**   **Paper I2**

Proposed arrangements for a Joint Institute to enhance an existing partnership with Shanghai Jiao Tong University in the Low Carbon College in Lingang, Shanghai, were noted.

11   Usher Institute for Population Health Sciences   **Paper J**

An update on the Usher Institute for Population Health Sciences construction project at the Edinburgh BioQuarter was reviewed. Approval to increase the overall capital cost is sought given changes to the intended car parking model at the site. It was also noted the business case has been revised given: changes to the building design in response to the pandemic; changes in the construction market with cost implications; and, planning considerations. The reduced design footprint for the building but with overall construction costs remaining at a similar level was queried – the increase in construction costs given the effects of the pandemic has meant a redesign is needed but the new design will accommodate the same number of occupants as originally envisaged (900 to 950 people).

It was agreed to approve an increase in the overall capital project cost resulting from the return of £850k to the Usher project budget which was previously allocated towards construction of a shared University of Edinburgh car park at the BioQuarter site.

12   University Pharmacy   **Paper K**

Noting the review of the provision of pharmacy services on campus and the recommendation that the contract to deliver a pharmacy function in the Health and Wellbeing Centre at Bristo Square be sold to a specialist pharmacy provider that can deliver a high-quality pharmacy function for students and staff, it was agreed to:
- approve the proposed sale of the University Pharmacy; and,
- delegate to the University Secretary, acting in consultation with the Deputy Secretary, Governance and Legal and Director of Legal Services, the authority to conclude and execute the legal documentation relating to the sale of the Pharmacy (including the lease of the premises), in line with the principles outlined in the paper.

13   Institutional Position on Scottish Independence   **Paper L**

The current neutral stance position taken by the University on Scottish independence was reviewed and reaffirmed.

ITEMS FOR NOTING OR FORMAL APPROVAL

14   Court Internal Effectiveness Review   **Paper M**

The annual internal effectiveness review for 2019/20 was approved and proposed arrangements for a review of the 2020/21 year noted.

15   Prevent Duty Implementation Update   **Paper N**

An annual update on the University's implementation of the Prevent duty was noted.

16   Education Act 1994 Compliance/EUSA Democracy Regulations   Paper O1-O2

The Students' Association Certificate of Assurance was noted and the Articles of Association (remaining as previously) was given a renewed approval. Proposed changes to the Students' Association Democracy Regulations to improve postgraduate representation were approved as set out in the paper.

17   Awards of University Benefactor   Paper P

Court approved the bestowal of the distinction of University Benefactor on the organisations set out in the paper.

18   Annual Recognition of Alumni Clubs   Paper Q

The formal recognition of the nine University of Edinburgh alumni clubs currently recognised was renewed and activity of the clubs over the past 12 months noted.

19   Donations and Legacies; Alumni Events   Paper R

Court noted legacies and donations received since the last meeting and an update on current alumni relations activities. The plans for "Class of 2021" communications were welcomed.

20   Resolutions   Paper S

The following resolutions were approved:
Resolution No. 2/2021: Undergraduate Degree Programme Regulations
Resolution No. 3/2021: Postgraduate Degree Programme Regulations

21   Any Other Business

The Senior Lay Member recorded her thanks to Alan Johnston, Doreen Davidson and Clare Reid for their service as Court members.

The Rector noted a recent visit to New College to mark its 175th anniversary and whether there are plans to improve the garden area. The Principal responded that discussions are ongoing for plans to improve the garden, including seeking philanthropic support to fund improvements.

22   Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday, 6 October 2021

UNIVERSITY COURT

6 October 2021

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. Court is asked to note the information presented. No specific action is required of Court, although 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 would like to start my report to Court with two particularly positive points. The first is to recall the Graduation Celebrations at Edinburgh Castle which meant that 5,000 of our students were able to celebrate their achievement in obtaining their degrees in the company of loved ones, fellow students, University staff and guests. These special celebrations provided a moment of much needed joy which was shared across the city during four beautiful late August evenings. Many staff were involved in the planning and execution of the celebrations and they all deserve our thanks.

6. Secondly in the last few weeks it has been so heartening to see our campus come to life again as our students arrive to a warm welcome from staff and their fellow students. Some are joining us for the first time, even as second years, and some are returning to the city for what we all very much hope will be a year that will be closer to one that we would all like to see.

7. As Court members will already be aware, our approach this Semester must still take account of the Scottish Government guidelines and we have asked our Schools to prioritise face to face activity for class sizes of less than 50 people, in line with much of the sector. Many of our facilities and services are fully open and operating in a more "normal" manner such as our libraries and study spaces. Planning for Semester 2 is now well under way and we continue to refine and build our plans in consultation with staff, taking account of our experiences during Semester 1.

8. Many staff across the whole University are working hard to ensure that the University continues to strive to be the best it can be, ready to welcome both students and staff back to campus in safety and confidence. We remain mindful that some of

us will adapt to the transitions we are going through more quickly than others and we need to be consciously aware of that, remaining supportive of one another as we negotiate the various challenges to come. We are being clear with our students and staff about our expectations of the part that we must all play with regard to testing, vaccination, self-isolation, and general behaviours and have testing and vaccination facilities across campus to support this approach.

9. We have had another very challenging summer for our admissions staff, some of the challenge comes from the volume of well qualified applicants that wish to come to study at Edinburgh and of course we are delighted to see the continuing popularity of our University. The process for confirming qualifications this year, and the resulting very high pass rates, has meant that we have more students than our target level. Our Widening Participation intake has increased and both our Postgraduate Taught and Postgraduate Research figures are on target. We expect the overall figures to settle down further into October as some students, particularly overseas, are still arriving up to three weeks late. Of course, once through admissions these challenging numbers filter through to all parts of the University including colleagues in accommodation services who have worked exceptionally hard to house the intake; teaching staff in Schools and Departments who will of course be working at full capacity in most areas as too will student support and Information Services staff.

10. I am aware that we have separate agenda items on the latest National Student Survey (NSS) results and the Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR) report, both of which make sobering reading. We have a clear and urgent challenge that is well articulated in the ELIR feedback which requires decisive initial action and evidence of change in the next 12 months. Both reports have been discussed by senior staff who remain resolute with regard to the action needed.

11. Further afield we have had some significant developments in both Scotland and the wider United Kingdom. The Scottish Government launched their Programme for Government in early September where six long term priorities were confirmed: A caring nation; A land of opportunity; A net zero nation; An economy that works for all of Scotland's people and places; Living better; Scotland in the world. Within that some specific headlines included:
- The pledge to hold indyref2 before the end of 2023
- A National Care Service to be established
- A statement on the economy, predicted to return to pre-pandemic levels in the next 12 months with an overall tone of 'cautious optimism'
- Commitment to increase frontline health spending by 20% over the Parliament and to invest £10bn over next decade to replace and refurbish health facilities
- Commitment to pilot a 4-day working week and to progress vision of Scotland as a 'leading Fair Work Nation by 2025'

12. References to universities/education/skills/Research and Innovation in the main reinforce pre-existing policy positions, but in some cases note an intention to undertake reviews or invest in key areas. Highlights include:
- Re-stated commitments to 'no tuition fees' (for Scotland Fee Rate undergraduates) and to Commission for Widening Access recommendations.
- Indicated intention to reform student support to ensure total package is equivalent to Living Wage.

- Undertake a review of postgraduate funding.
- Respond to the Scottish Funding Council coherent provision review 'shortly'
- Develop a student mental health action plan and deliver on a previous commitment to fund additional 80 counsellors in universities and colleges.
- Invest £200M in adult upskilling and retraining opportunities.
- Undertake a review of purpose-built student accommodation in next 12 months, with anticipated recommendations on regulation, affordability and role of local authorities.
- Further invest (£5M a year over course of the Parliament) in digital equipment and WiFi for Further Education/Higher Education students.
- Develop an international education strategy.
- Expand medical school training places by at least 100 per year from 2021-22, doubling the number of widening access places to 120 per year and establish a review into strategic requirements for Allied Health Professionals education.
- Revise Creative Industries policy statement to articulate priorities in light of Brexit, Covid-19 and broader ambitions.
- Invest in research and development generally (including specific statements around low carbon technologies, embedding genomics medicine into routine healthcare, and to bring new medicines and jobs to Scotland).

13. Scottish Government have also confirmed that the Scottish budget for 2022-23 will be made public on the 9th December.

14. In Westminster the announcement of the Health and Social Care levy was made at the same time as the Programme for Government. UK-wide National Insurance contributions are set to rise by 1.25% from April 2022. It was indicated that Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland will receive an extra £2.2bn a year as a result of the new tax (around half of which can be expected to go to Holyrood).

15. Also, that the Comprehensive Spending Review for 2022-23 to 2024-25 will be announced on 27th October. Amongst many other things, including follow-through on statements around previous R&D investments, this is anticipated to set out the Government's response to the recommendations in the Augar Review. Whilst these primarily affect England, they are of course relevant to us because of our substantial intake of students from England also because policy changes in England may well influence policies in the devolved nations. Much of the media reporting around Augar focuses on the headline of tuition fees, whether they will be cut and/or whether there will be differential fees across Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)/non-STEM subjects but in fact the report contained a package of measures which taken together would be broadly welcomed by the sector.

16. A significant, and much discussed, Cabinet reshuffle took place in mid-September resulting in some key new appointments for us and the sector. Within the Department for Education Michelle Donelan has remained in post as Minister of State and has increased status as she will now attend Cabinet. Her responsibilities have been extended to include post 16 education and we very much look forward to working with her in this new capacity. The new Education Secretary is former vaccines minister Nadhim Zahawi and the new Minister for Science, Research and Innovation is George Freeman, a former life sciences minister. We are in contact with them all.

17. Elsewhere, Michael Gove, in addition to taking on the Housing Communities and Local Government brief, will be leading on the levelling up agenda and the Union; Simon Clarke, the new Chief Secretary to the Treasury, was previously Minister of State for regional growth and can be expected to bring a strong levelling up focus to the forthcoming Comprehensive Spending Review and Nadine Dorries as the new Culture and Digital Secretary has responsibility for Artificial Intelligence.

18. Court will be aware of the latest developments with regard to the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) where relatively modest increases from 9.6% to 9.8% for employees and 21.1% to 21.4% for employers will come into effect from October.

19. We also now have information on the University & College Union (UCU) ballots on industrial action where two will be run concurrently at Edinburgh, one on pay, casualisation, workload and equalities and a second on USS. We understand that the ballot process may start in October. If industrial action is supported, it could start before Christmas.

Selected meetings and events from mid-June to end September
20. *University*
- Academic Strategy Group (core membership the Heads of School) continues to meet very frequently and is a very useful forum for consultation and discussion on a wide range of matters including delivering hybrid teaching for semester one. We also met in person at the end of August to discuss our response to the latest NSS results and the ELIR report
- Leaders' Forum, comprising around 150 of the University's senior staff continues to meet every 6-8 weeks, this group is now returning to its original focus of using the meetings to explore different aspects of leadership development.
- Senior Leadership Team weekly meetings continue including our first in-person session in mid-September
- Over the summer I met staff and toured the Advanced Computing Facility at Easter Bush. I also joined staff in the Main Library during Welcome Week and visited the Students' Association stalls outside at Teviot
- We were delighted to welcome Her Majesty the Queen and our Chancellor, HRH The Princess Royal, to the Edinburgh Climate Change Institute to hear more about climate action at the Institute and launch the University's new Edinburgh Earth Initiative
- Participated in a Q&A with the staff undertaking the latest management and leadership development programmes at the University
- Welcomed John Climax, Founder and Chairman of the Human Dignity Foundation, along with some of his colleagues to discuss the possibility of a new data institute to address online and offline child sexual exploitation and abuse
- Chaired the interview panel for the next Director of the Roslin Institute

21. *Edinburgh and Scotland*
- Participated in Edinburgh Festivals Forum meetings
- Chaired the quarterly meeting of the Higher Education - Further Education Strategy Group, which feeds into the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal meetings

- Participated in the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal Leaders Group meeting and Joint Committee meetings
- Participated in a Confederation of British Industry organised meeting on universities and business
- Met with Ken Hay, Director for the Centre for the Moving Image, to discuss further collaborations
- Participated in a sponsors and partners lunch organised by the Edinburgh International Book Festival, and also participated in welcoming the First Minister, Rt. Hon Nicola Sturgeon MSP, to a Book Festival event
- Participated in the launch event for IntoUniversity Scotland, in Govan and will be attending the Edinburgh event in Craigmillar later this week

22. *Sector and Public Affairs*
- The Principals of Edinburgh's four universities and Edinburgh College continue to meet monthly to share progress on various activities
- Participated in various Russell Group meetings including the Board meeting
- Participated in a Scottish Funding Council workshop and as a member of the Scottish Funding Council Board at various meetings
- Joined various Universities UK Members' meetings: Vice-Chancellor discussions on the USS valuation; discussions on other current issues; the annual conference in Newcastle which was the first large scale in person event I have attended since the start of the pandemic
- Participated in various Universities Scotland meetings: main committee meeting; Strategy Development Programme focus group; Strategy Day
- Took part in a Universities Scotland and Scottish Funding Council (SFC) Liaison meeting and a meeting on the SFC review of Coherent Provision and Sustainability
- Participated in various meetings on Security as part of my role as Lead for security issues in higher education for the Russell Group and Universities UK
- Participated in Scottish Health and Industry Partnership Oversight Group meetings
- Participated in Academy of Medical Sciences meetings on the Future of medical research as co-chair of a working group with Dame Julia Goodfellow, Chair of the British Science Association
- Discussed various University activities with the Deputy First Minister, John Swinney MSP, Scottish Government officials
- Participated in the first National Leadership Programme (for health care) Steering Group meeting, chaired by John Burns, Chief Operating Officer, Scottish Government
- Joined the UK National Academies organised event Sir John Kingman in conversation with Professor Sir Adrian Smith
- Took part in a UK Research & Innovation roundtable discussion on the Home Office consultation on legislation to counter state threats
- Welcomed the Rt. Hon Alister Jack MP, Secretary of State for Scotland, and the Rt. Hon Liz Truss MP, Secretary of State for International Trade on a visit to the Bayes Centre to learn about the Centre, Fintech and the Global Open Finance Centre of Excellence, and for a Roundtable discussion with seven Fintech firm leaders
- Welcomed the Rt. Hon Rishi Sunak MP, Chancellor of the Exchequer, to the University whilst he was on a visit jointly hosted by the University and the

Edinburgh Festivals to learn about the Festivals' adaptations, recovery and renewal
- Participated in a UK Government meeting with the Number 10 Levelling up unit and Cabinet Office, hosted by the City of Edinburgh Council, to discuss accelerating delivery of major programmes to inform the Levelling Up agenda and other policy initiatives
- Welcomed Angus Robertson MSP on a visit to learn more about the Bayes Centre, Informatics and Data Driven Innovation
- Participated in a roundtable discussion with Ivan McKee MSP organised by Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce
- Participated in a Covid Recovery Stakeholder meeting chaired by the Deputy First Minister John Swinney
- Participated in the Student Social Mobility Awards at the House of Lords, organised by upReach and featuring a nomination for one particularly remarkable Edinburgh student
- Participated in a ministerial roundtable on Research Security with Amanda Solloway MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Science, Research and Innovation plus relevant senior officials from a number of Government departments.

23. *International (first three online from Edinburgh!)*
- Participated in a Talloires Network Steering Committee Meeting.
- Took part in a Council for the Advancement and Support of Education Board meeting.
- Participated in a Hong Kong Cyberport Advisory Panel meeting.
- Participated in a lunch in Edinburgh hosted by Sandeep Chakravorty, Joint Secretary and Head of Europe West Division, Ministry of External Affairs, India

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

Consultation
29. As the paper represents a summary of recent news, no consultation has taken place.

Further information

30. Peter will take questions on any item at Court or further information can be obtained from Ms Fiona Boyd, Principal's Office.

31. *Author & Presenter*
     Professor Peter Mathieson
     Principal and Vice-Chancellor
     September 2021

Freedom of Information

32. Open paper.

UNIVERSITY COURT

6 October 2021

Senior Leadership Recruitment

Description of paper
1. To update Court on the latest position with respect to the Senior Leadership of the University and the current recruitment exercise.

2. Working alongside existing members of the senior team, the new members will freshen and strengthen the University's leadership in all four key areas of Strategy 2030 as we continue our commitment to deliver on our vision and ambitions.

Action requested/Recommendation
3. Court are requested to note the information presented and to take the opportunity to ask questions should any arise.

Background and context
4. Court will recall that a number of senior level opportunities have arisen due to several key post-holders approaching the end of their terms of office and that we have now started a concurrent recruitment process to fill these posts.

5. This recruitment is in line with the "mission-critical only" appointments approach that the University is operating under. Three of the posts are straight replacements, although the Vice-Principal Research post has been held vacant for over a year. The Provost role (see next bullet point) is an alternative to the Senior Vice-Principal role. No additional posts are being advertised.

6. A key post in the new approach is that of a Provost who will act as the Chief Academic Officer and lead all academic staff across teaching and research. The Provost will act with similar authority as that of a Senior Vice-Principal and will also deputise for me when required. The three Heads of College, two of whom will be new, will continue as full members of the Senior Leadership Team and will report to the Provost. I will continue to chair the Senior Leadership Team and the University Executive.

Discussion
7. With regards to the recruitment of the four posts Provost, Vice-Principal Research and Engagement, Vice-Principal and Head of College Science and Engineering and Vice-Principal and Head of College Arts Humanities and Social Sciences, we have established a core recruitment panel across all of the roles to ensure continuity, to which additional members will be added once we know who has applied. The selection process will also involve focus groups with key stakeholders. We will update Court on further details in due course but in summary the panel and focus groups are likely to involve four Senior Leadership Team members, two Court members, two Students' Association sabbatical officers, two Heads of School, two Heads of Professional Service Departments and an external member for each post.

8. All activity is being handled in conjunction with global search firm Perrett Laver. The new appointments will be substantive Professorial appointments with a five year renewable term of office for each Vice-Principal title/portfolio. The current status of each post is as follows:

9. The Provost role has been advertised since mid-August and closed on the 17th September. Longlisting takes place on 7th October and shortlisting 8th November with interviews 2nd December. Around 40 candidates.

10. The Vice-Principal Research and Enterprise role has also been live since mid-August. The longlisting is also 7th October, shortlisting 10th November and interviews 6th December. Around 40 candidates.

11. Vice-Principal Head of College: in the College of Science and Engineering and College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences went live early September and will close on 8th October, interviews will be held in January.

12. Court will of course be kept informed of progress at key milestones. Recommendations for the appointment of the Provost and new Vice-Principals will come for formal approval either to Court or to Exception Committee depending on time pressure and dates.

Existing Vice-Principal Roles
13. Court will be aware, via Exception Committee, that following an internal recruitment exercise Dr Catherine Martin has been confirmed in a substantive appointment as Vice-Principal Corporate Services. The term of office for the Vice-Principal title will, in the first instance, be in line with the new appointments that is until 31 July 2027. I am delighted with Vice-Principal Martin's confirmation in this role and very much look forward to continuing to work with her in the future.

Chief of Staff
14. In order to ensure the optimum effectiveness of the Senior Leadership Team I wish to appoint a Chief of Staff who, among other responsibilities, will work to establish effective co-ordination across all senior team activity. I intend to put this in place, reviewing any necessary changes to existing roles as this will not be an *additional* role, by the end of the year.

Assistant Principals
15. Although I clarified in 2019 that Assistant Principals do not form part of the *formal* senior leadership structure at Edinburgh, I note for Court a reduction in their numbers by two and a closer alignment of their activities to the strategic priorities of the organisation including regular annual reviews for their Assistant Principal remit.

Resource implications
16. With no new posts created the aim will be to appoint colleagues within the existing resource envelope.

Risk Management
17. The actions noted above are designed to minimise risk to the University across all areas including by ensuring the highest quality leadership for the University that

will enhance our ability to set and deliver on both our strategic direction, ongoing management responsibilities and policy areas.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals
18. In part as an adaptation of the pandemic, all long and shortlisting meetings are taking place virtually. It is considered preferable for external panel members to attend the interviews in person and sustainable travel methods will be used where possible to facilitate this. This will also be true for candidates invited to interview.

Equality & Diversity
19. Equality and Diversity aspects have been a key part of the planning with external recruitment companies required to submit their approach as part of the tender process and assessment. This has been followed through with panel makeup and will be a factor in the salary recommendations to ensure a balanced approach.

Next steps/implications
20. Recruitment will proceed as outlined above and Court will be kept informed. Remuneration Committee will be consulted fully with regard to approving salary recommendations.

Further information
21. _Author & Presenter_
     Professor Peter Mathieson
     Principal and Vice-Chancellor
     September 2021

Freedom of Information
22. Open Paper

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

UNIVERSITY COURT

6 October 2021

Exception Committee Report

Committee Name
1. Exception Committee

Date of Meeting
2. The Committee considered business by correspondence on five occasions over the summer period, listed below.

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

Key points
1-2 July 2021
International Students – Managed Isolation
4. The Committee approved the provision of hardship support for managed isolation costs to those international students from 'red list' countries who would otherwise be prevented from coming to the University.

Staff Benefits Scheme Trustee Appointment
5. It was noted that a vacancy has arisen amongst the four Court appointed members of the Staff Benefits Scheme (the in-house pension scheme for professional services staff in grades 1-5) given the retirement of an existing appointee and that this position is reserved for a senior member of staff nominated by the Principal. Following the nomination by the Principal of Ashley Shannon, Director of Operations in the Corporate Services Group, the Committee approved the appointment of Ashley Shannon for an initial three year term of office with immediate effect.

19-20 July 2021
Committee Memberships
6. It was noted that Court member Caroline Gardner will demit office on 31 July 2021 and following review and recommendation by the Nominations Committee, the following appointments were approved with effect from 1 August 2021:

Audit & Risk Committee
- David Law to be appointed as Convener for a two year term of office;
- Ruth Girardet to be appointed for a three year term of office;

Remuneration Committee
- Hugh Mitchell to be appointed as Convener for a three year term of office;
- Frank Armstrong to be appointed for a two year term of office;

Nominations Committee
- Hugh Mitchell to be appointed for a three year term of office;

Policy & Resources Committee
- Douglas Alexander to be appointed for a three year term of office;

Intermediary Court member
- Frank Armstrong to be appointed for a two year term of office; and,

Court USS Sub-Group
- Janet Legrand to be appointed as Convener on an interim basis, with Nominations Committee to consider the Sub-Group's membership further.

7. The following appointments to take effect on 1 August 2021 were also noted:

Exception Committee
- David Law and Hugh Mitchell will join Exception Committee on an *ex officio* basis as the Conveners of Audit & Risk Committee and Remuneration Committee respectively; and,

Estates Committee (Thematic Committee)
- Alistair Smith will join Estates Committee for a three year term of office, as approved by Nominations Committee.

26-28 July 2021
Strategic Investment
8. Following review and endorsement by the University Executive, proposed expenditure from within the Court-approved budget envelope for 2021/22 on the following strategic priorities was approved: Curriculum Transformation; Programme and Course Information Management; Personal Tutor and Student Support; and other covid-related impacts.

17-20 August 2021
Vice-Principal Corporate Services Appointment
9. The Committee noted the details of the internal recruitment process undertaken and following the unanimous recommendation of the selection panel approved the appointment of Dr Catherine Martin as Vice-Principal Corporate Services.

23-27 August 2021
Usher Institute Additional Project Funding Request
10. The Committee approved additional funding to enable the award of the contract for construction services.

Full minute
11. The papers considered and the minutes can be accessed at:
https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/UCC/Exception+Committee

Further information
12. *Author*   *Presenter*
    Lewis Allan   Janet Legrand
    Head of Court Services   Convener, Exception Committee

Freedom of Information
13. Open version.

UNIVERSITY COURT

6 October 2021

Policy & Resources Committee Report

Committee Name

1. Policy & Resources Committee

Date of Meeting

2. 17 September 2021 (by videoconference).

Action Required

3. To note the key points from the meeting.

Paragraphs 4-19: Closed section

Further information

20. *Author*
    Lewis Allan
    Head of Court Services

Presenter
Janet Legrand
Convener, Policy & Resources Committee

Freedom of Information

21. Closed paper.

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

UNIVERSITY COURT

6 October 2021

Nominations Committee Report

Committee Name
1. Nominations Committee

Date of Meeting
2. The Committee considered business by correspondence between 15 to 16 July 2021.

Action Required
3. To note the key points below.

Key points
Committee memberships
4. The Committee noted that Court member Caroline Gardner will demit office on 31 July 2021, reviewed the membership of each Court committee, the requirements of the roles and relevant skills and experience, and agreed to recommend the following appointments to Exception Committee for approval with effect from 1 August 2021, subject to consultation with the individuals concerned:

Audit & Risk Committee
*   David Law to be appointed as Convener for a two year term of office (and therefore to join Exception Committee on an *ex officio* basis);
*   Ruth Girardet to be appointed for a three year term of office;

Remuneration Committee
*   Hugh Mitchell to be appointed as Convener for a three year term of office (and therefore to join Exception Committee on an *ex officio* basis);
*   Frank Armstrong to be appointed for a two year term of office;

Nominations Committee
*   Hugh Mitchell to be appointed for a three year term of office;

Policy & Resources Committee
*   Douglas Alexander to be appointed for a three year term of office;

Intermediary Court member
*   Frank Armstrong to be appointed for a two year term of office; and,

Court USS Sub-Group
*   Janet Legrand to be appointed as Convener on an interim basis, with the Committee to consider the Sub-Group's membership further at a later date.

5. The following appointment to take effect from 1 August 2021 was also approved, to be notified to Exception Committee:

Estates Committee (Thematic Committee)
- Alistair Smith to be appointed for a three year term of office.

Full minute
6. The draft minute can be accessed at:
https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/UCC/Nominations+Committee

Equality & Diversity
7. Issues related to equality and diversity were considered when proposing committee appointments.

Further information
8. *Author*   *Presenter*
    Lewis Allan   Janet Legrand
    Head of Court Services   Convener, Nominations Committee

Freedom of Information
9.   Open paper.

THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

UNIVERSITY COURT

6 October 2021

Court USS Sub-Group Report

Committee Name

1. Court Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) Sub-Group

Date of Meeting

2. The Committee considered business by correspondence over the summer period.

Action Required

3. To note the key items discussed as detailed below.

Paragraphs 4-9: Closed section

Further information

9. *Author*
   Lewis Allan
   Head of Court Services

   Presenter
   Janet Legrand
   Interim Convener, USS Sub-Group

Freedom of Information

10. Closed paper.

UNIVERSITY COURT

6 October 2021

Audit & Risk Committee Report

Committee Name
1. Audit & Risk Committee

Date of Meeting
2. 15 September 2021 (by videoconference)

Action Required
3. Court is invited to note the key points from the meeting.

Key points
Paragraphs 4-12: Closed section

Equality & Diversity
13. No direct equality and diversity implications were raised in this report

Further information
14. *Author*   *Presenter*
    Kirstie Graham   David Law
    Court Services Office   Convener, Audit & Risk Committee

Freedom of Information
15. Closed paper.

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

UNIVERSITY COURT

6 October 2021

Senatus Academicus Report

Committee Name

1. Senatus Academicus ('Senate').

Date of Meeting

2. Meeting of Senate conducted by videoconference on 2 June 2021.

Action Required

3. To note the key points from the Senate meeting.

Key points

Convener's Communications

4. The Convener updated attendees on the following matters:

- Scottish Elections - since the February 2021 meeting of Senate, a new Government had been elected. The Convener had attended an introductory meeting with the new Minister for Higher Education and Further Education, Youth Employment and Training, and had outlined some of Edinburgh's priorities. The Minister was keen to visit the University in due course. The University also looked forward to having productive, working relationships with the Deputy First Minister, who had also been appointed Cabinet Secretary for COVID Recovery, and the new Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills.

- University Campuses – the University was planning for the return of undergraduate students to campuses in September 2021. Clarification was being sought from the Scottish Government on likely social distancing requirements and other COVID mitigations, but it was recognised that the University would need to remain flexible and able to adapt to changes to restrictions at short notice.

- Hybrid Working – staff surveys had indicated that a substantial majority of staff wished to continue some element of working remotely. Work was being undertaken by the Chief Information Officer and his team to understand what was necessary to give staff choice and flexibility, whilst also ensuring that the University's business needs were met.

- House of Commons Scottish Affairs Committee Report, 'Universities and Scotland' – the recently published report examined the challenges and opportunities faced by Scottish universities as the sector adjusts to the pandemic and life outside the EU, and assessed the further action needed by Scottish and UK governments. The report suggested that the future funding landscape for Scottish institutions might be considerably more difficult than that of the past. It noted that additional funding provided by the Scottish Government during the pandemic for research and student hardship was time-limited, and that the forthcoming review by the Scottish Funding Council of the coherence and sustainability of universities and colleges in Scotland was likely to have a significant impact on the sector.

- Research Funding – a substantial proportion of the University's research funding comes from UK Government sources and three recent developments

give cause for concern: cuts to Official Development Assistance (ODA) funding; possible changes to the way in which the UK's continued association with Horizon Europe would be funded; and recognition that, although the UK Government has committed to increasing spending on research overall, money may be given to other research agencies and institutes and may not directly benefit universities.

- Financial Position – the University is approaching the end of the financial year and there would be detailed reporting on the University's financial position in due course. In brief, the financial position was relatively healthy. The University had taken some difficult decisions, particularly around its capital programme, and as such, it had been possible to retain a surplus. It was noted that the pandemic had impacted less negatively on international student recruitment than had been anticipated.

- Freedom of Expression – the topic had attracted significant attention and debate within the sector and the media. The University had published a statement on its position on freedom of expression some months ago and the Russell Group had also subsequently published a statement. However, the topic remained controversial and the Convener suggested that there may be benefit in considering the matter further at a future meeting of Senate.

- Security of Universities – the Convener noted that a substantial amount of work was being undertaken in this area and that it was an issue that was likely to increase in prominence. UK security agencies understood that universities need to take risks in order to succeed and maximise their potential, but they need to understand these risks and mitigate them where possible.

5. In response to questions received from attendees, the Convener and other senior staff noted that:
- The University remains absolutely committed to the Humanities and Social Sciences. Edinburgh sees the strength of being a comprehensive university, and does not agree that STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics) and non-STEM subjects should be funded differently.

- The University's has confidence in its existing statement on Freedom of Expression, but the statement will remain under constant review.

- The University is in discussion with the Scottish Government about vaccination for all members of the community, including international students who arrive in the UK unvaccinated and those under the age of 18. The University's position is in line with that of the Scottish Government and it will not therefore require members of the community to be vaccinated.

Senate Presentation and Discussion: Looking Forward – Delivering on Strategy 2030
6. Senate received 6 presentations:
- Delivering on Strategy 2030 – the Vice-Principal Strategic Change and Governance and University Secretary, Sarah Smith, provided an introduction to the presentation and discussion section of the meeting, noting that it aimed to explore ways in which the University might best deliver on the aspirations of Strategy 2030. Attendees were reminded that all staff had received a communication on 29 April 2021 sharing some of the work that had already been done in this area and inviting feedback. The communication focussed on a number of questions around enabling a way of working that allows staff to contribute their best to the University's vision and purpose; Curriculum

Transformation; supporting and enhancing our world-renowned research; equality, diversity and inclusion and the development of community; the delivery of professional services; the University's estates and financial strategies; and the University's approach to decision-making and engagement. The Vice-Principal and University Secretary had received a number of thoughtful responses to the communication.

- Key Planning Assumptions – the Director of Strategic Change, Barry Neilson, provided an update on the key planning assumptions for academic year 2021/22. Restrictions permitting, the intention was for students, staff and support services to be back on campus, and for significantly more in-person learning and teaching and research activity to take place than had been possible in 2020/21. Gaining staff and student confidence in the University's approach to the return to campus would be crucial. Sectoral guidance on academic year 2021/22 was, as the Convener had stated, not yet available, but the University was continuing to engage with the Scottish Government on a range of issues. Planning assumptions needed to balance optimism with a degree of caution, and had been shared with all staff via a Sharepoint site: What You Need To Know (sharepoint.com). Significant work on contingency planning was also underway.

  Between now and September 2021, and as Edinburgh moved through the Government's COVID-19 protection levels, the University was aiming to set expectations and prepare as thoroughly as possible for the new semester. Priority areas for return to campus were being identified. Clear communications plans for both students and staff had been developed with Communications and Marketing.

- Student Experience and Student Support – the Vice-Principal Students, Colm Harmon, addressed questions raised by colleagues about the University's student mental health provision. It was acknowledged that 2020/21 had caused significant challenges for students and therefore for the University's mental health services, despite increased investment in this area. The University's services provide a point of triage into NHS services and this can create a bottle-neck. Nonetheless, the University had managed to develop its mental health services over the academic year, and had focussed particularly on enhancing pastoral support and developing a sense of belonging. This had included staff development to help staff better support students with mental health difficulties, and the introduction of more robust case escalation processes. There had also been a focus on supporting survivors of sexual violence. The University had appointed its first Sexual Violence and Harassment Liaison Manager and was funding, on a fractional basis, a counselling support worker through Rape Crisis. It was clear that the needs for mental health support and support for those who experience sexual violence were increasing. Expanding relevant University services would be a focus of attention in 2021/22.

  Early timetable modelling was now available and reflected a substantial uplift in in-person learning activities. Schools were, in general, prioritising in person delivery for senior undergraduate and taught postgraduate level teaching

where classes tend to be smaller, and digital delivery for the teaching of larger classes in the earlier years. Feedback from 2020/21 suggested that students had struggled to understand the heterogeneity of teaching across disciplines and that they had a strong preference for synchronous teaching. These issues would require further consideration.

The Vice-Principal Students advised attendees that the Curriculum Transformation Hub had now been launched: [Curriculum Transformation Hub](#). The critical question to address at this stage was 'What do we want for the Edinburgh student and graduate?' – who are they and what do we want them to be? Consultation around this would continue until the end of this calendar year and potentially into the beginning of the next. It was noted that some concerns had been raised about whether or not this was the correct time to be embarking on this work. The Vice-Principal Students believed it was the right time, provided the work was done at the correct pace.

The Personal Tutor and Student Support Review would be given further consideration in the coming academic year with a view to implementing its recommendations, albeit potentially in part, in academic year 2022/23.

- Research and Innovation – the Senior Vice-Principal, Jonathan Seckl, advised attendees that the University had entered its Research Excellence Framework (REF) submission two months earlier, which was a remarkable achievement. The submission was substantial and early metrics were encouraging.

  It was acknowledged that research during the pandemic had been difficult. Far fewer researchers had been able to be on campus, and spend on research and outputs had reduced. However, grant applications and awards had increased. It was hoped that it would be possible to reduce restrictions around research environments in due course and therefore to increase activity.

  The Data-Driven Innovation (DDI) Programme was going from strength to strength and exceeding its targets.

  The University had a strategy to drive up industry engagement and this was proving successful. The funding environment overall was challenging, but the University was managing well and the outlook was positive.

- Estates and Infrastructure – the Vice-Principal (Interim) Corporate Services, Catherine Martin, provided attendees with a recap on the previous year, noting that Edinburgh has one of the largest and most complex estates of all UK universities. The initial lockdown in March 2020 was managed by the Estates department over a very compressed period, while re-opening was governed by the Adaptation and Renewal Estates and Digital Infrastructure Group. This Group then folded into the 2021/22 Planning Group in spring 2021.

  There had been challenges throughout the period for those who were continuing to work on campus. The University's lateral flow testing centre was established at short notice before the Winter Break. Actions were also taken in

relation to the University's capital programme, with the deferral for two years of projects that were not yet subject to contract.

Looking ahead to 2021/22, around 94% of campus buildings were now open to some degree, albeit not at full capacity. The University was at this stage planning for 1m social distancing with additional safety measures in place. Physical distancing guidance for non-educational and research environments would be established in line with sectoral guidance when this is available.

A risk assessment approach to the use of the estate had been adopted. This included an overarching general teaching risk assessment and local risk assessments for specialist spaces. COVID security measures were being put in place to allow the University to bring vibrancy back to the campus in a safe way.

The expectation was that students would be on campus in 2021/22 and therefore that a proportion would be in University-managed accommodation. Appropriate safety measures were being put in place and the University was continuing to discuss with the Scottish Government the possibility of providing quarantine facilities for those students coming to Edinburgh from Red List countries.

The University was looking afresh at its capital development programme through a short-life working group convened by the Principal which would report to University Executive and Estates Committee in September 2021.

Beyond 2021/22, consideration was being given to de-carbonisation of the University's heating systems.

The Vice-Principal recognised the critical importance of high quality operational estate management over the past 15 months and the colleagues who had been instrumental in facilitating this.

- Hybrid Working – the Vice-Principal and Chief Information Officer and Librarian to the University, Gavin McLachlan, noted that he was overseeing a programme to look at the future of hybrid working at Edinburgh. This was a fast-moving area, and the University had initiated its programme by developing a set of guiding principles. Key principles were around enabling staff to perform at their best, regardless of whether they were working on or off campus; emphasising people and well-being; campuses being a centre of gravity; staff being informed; and not fixing new hybrid work patterns for the first year.

  Hybrid working would be one aspect of the University's overall approach to flexible working. Any working patterns established would need to balance the needs of the organisation with those of teams and individuals, and would be underpinned by optimal use of the estate and modern digital approaches.

  Local managers would provide staff with information about any return to campus and would be guided in their decisions around this by information

provided centrally around prioritisation of staff, the Estates re-opening programme and the Hybrid Working Framework, which it was hoped would be published the end of June 2021.

The Hybrid Working Programme consisted of four steps: tranche 1 feasibility study (end of April to end of June 2021, although it was noted that timings may change if Edinburgh did not progress through the COVID-19 protection levels as anticipated); tranche 2 feasibility study (end of June to end of September 2021); interim hybrid working arrangements to allow ongoing testing and evaluation (September 2021 to April 2022); and incorporation of best practice into the University's Flexible Working Policy and the fixing of working patterns (from May 2022).

7. Presentations were followed by a Q&A session and the following responses were provided by the Convener, presenters and other senior staff:
- In relation to a question about whether or not the University would be participating in the Scottish Government's four-day working week pilot study, it was noted that this was a pledge that was included in the SNP's election manifesto. No further details were known as yet. The University would look to see what was most appropriate for the institution when more details were available, in conjunction with work already being undertaken on hybrid and flexible working.
- In relation to a question about what the University was doing to support staff mental health following an extremely challenging 14-month period, it was noted that all staff wellbeing resources had been pulled together within the Health and Wellbeing hub: Health & Wellbeing. In addition, the University:
  - had given seven additional respite days;
  - was operating a 'best endeavours' approach;
  - how allowed unused annual leave to be carried forward into the following year;
  - was experimenting with meeting and / or email-free days in some areas;
  - was constantly reviewing activity to see where pressures on staff might be reduced;
  - and was giving consideration to what might be done to reduce wait times for the Staff Counselling Service.
- In response to a question about whether or not the quality of the University's current professional services was viewed as being sufficient, it was noted that there were opportunities to build from strengths: colleagues' existing significant expertise and experience would be used to identify where there was scope for efficiencies or improvements in quality.
- While we broadly remain an Edinburgh-based University, it was noted that hybrid working practices now make it possible for some University roles to be undertaken anywhere in the world. Going forwards, the University may need to reconsider its recruitment practices to ensure that it remains competitive and is able to attract the best talent.
- In response to a question about making available detailed information about the University's income and expenditure, to enable areas to engage fully with discussions around Curriculum Transformation and other strategic priorities, it was noted that the University does publish this information at the end of each financial year. In addition, updates on the University's financial position are

produced by the Director of Finance and his team throughout the year. Attendees were advised that the University has six main budget areas (the three Colleges plus the three professional services groupings), and that cross-cutting projects such as Curriculum Transformation do not map directly onto any one of these six areas. As such, discussions about the best mechanism for funding these strategic priorities were underway.

- Strategy 2030 was developed prior to the pandemic. The University was confident that the Strategy still remained fit for purpose, though recognised that the speed at and way in which its aspirations were achieved may have been affected by the pandemic.

- Attendees were advised that the Hybrid Working Programme was not an Information Services Group project as such: the project was being convened by the Chief Information Officer, but much of the work was being undertaken by colleagues in Human Resources, Finance and other areas. The Hybrid Working Group included representatives of HR and the Unions, and senior representation from across the University. Final decisions were being taken by University Executive.

- In response to a question about ways in which the University might better support the local community, particularly young people who were finding it more difficult to secure apprenticeships and entry-level roles because of the pandemic, it was noted that the University has a strong track record of community engagement and widening participation. However, it was recognised that there may be value in making the University's work in this area more visible, and community engagement would also be given careful consideration as part of the Curriculum Transformation work.

- Attendees asked about the link between the University's increased research grant success rate and the provision of increased research support resource. In response, it was noted that the University was in the process of reviewing the way in which it supports research through 'Growing Research Together'. It was hoped that it would be possible to accelerate the pace of this work and to make improvements within the next 12 months.

- There was discussion around an assumption that student support is necessarily better provided in person. It was agreed that there were some situations in which support could be provided just as, if not more effectively, online. Other situations were better handled in person. It would be important for the University to strike a balance going forwards. However, it was also noted that the expectation was that the campus would be the heart of the student experience from September. As such, it would be essential to provide students with visible, accessible, in-person support services on campus.

- It was recognised that staff would need to be provided with further guidance around the successful delivery of hybrid meetings as staff gradually returned to campus.

- Concerns were raised about overseas students who were prohibited from travelling to Edinburgh in September and students who needed to self-isolate and were therefore unable to participate in in-person teaching. It was noted that the University's working assumption was that students would be on campus in September and that any delays to arrival would be relatively short. However, to facilitate hybrid teaching where required, all centrally bookable lecture theatres and seminar rooms were being equipped with hybrid Level 1 classroom technology. In addition, a small number of teaching spaces would

be equipped at Level 2, and a smaller number still at Level 4. Other hybrid options were also available to staff and they were encouraged to discuss these with learning technologists within their areas.

- In relation to taught postgraduate student numbers, it was noted that the University had committed to no growth for growth's sake. Taught postgraduate provision would be considered as part of the Curriculum Transformation work. This would include creative thinking about the required components of a taught postgraduate programme.
- In relation to ensuring that staff expertise, values and priorities were central to the implementation of Strategy 2030, it was noted that the University sees the implementation of the Strategy as a collective responsibility. The 29 April 2021 communication discussed earlier in the meeting invited staff to contribute to discussions, and also raised questions around the University's approaches to engagement and decision-making. The results of staff surveys would be used to guide developments and the Staff Experience Committee, which reports into University Executive, would have a significant role to play in this work.
- Further consideration would be given to the format of online Senate meetings to see if there were better ways of handling attendees' questions and to ensure that presenters made use of accessibility best practice.

Formal Business
Senate Members' Feedback on Presentation and Discussion Topic
8. Senate members provided the following additional feedback on the presentation and discussion topic:

- The importance of ensuring that staff members who feed into strategic discussions can see how their input makes a difference to high-level decision making was reiterated. The Vice-Principal Strategic Change and Governance and University Secretary agreed that this was an issue that required ongoing consideration.
- Members discussed the transparency of the University's budget model and the sense that some programmes which generate significant income for the University do not always benefit from this resource. The Convener noted the complexities of the institution, but was keen to discuss this matter further outside of the meeting.
- In relation to student mental health support, it was noted that the University's expenditure in this area increases year on year. Members were supportive of this, but also expressed the view that there would be benefit of undertaking work to build student resilience. This was likely to be particularly necessary amongst the new student cohort entering in 2021/22 given how disrupted their final years of school had been by the pandemic.
- Members discussed the value for knowledge exchange of the University hosting academic conference and meetings, but noted the climate impact of such events. It was agreed that the academic community should be thinking carefully about ways of reducing travel. However, in-person gatherings were also important if the University was to remain internationally significant. There was therefore a place for continuing to hold such gatherings, but ensuring that knowledge exchange was maximised; best use was made of available hybrid technology; and that events' carbon footprints were accurately quantified and offset.

- The view that research does not cover its costs was challenged: although grant income may not fully cover costs, the University's research also generates significant Research Excellence Framework income and builds the University's reputation, allowing it to attract the highest calibre staff and students. Members discussed the symbiotic relationship between teaching and research and the importance of ensuring that they are not viewed as separate areas of University business.

Report from E-Senate

9. A Senate member raised a question about item 10 of the Report - the Report of the Senate Exception Committee. The Exception Committee Report noted that degree awards may be rescinded if students had unpaid tuition fee debt, and it was asked if the University could be more flexible around this given the circumstances of the pandemic. In response, it was noted that the University's approach was in line with that of the sector and that it is standard practice for students not to be permitted to graduate until debt is at least understood, and preferably cleared. Enhanced measures that had been put in place by the University to support students financially during the pandemic included:

- stopping the practice of withdrawing students' access to the University's IT systems when in debt.
- making significantly more student hardship funding available: in a typical year, £1.2 million would be made available, and an additional £2 million had been available this academic year.

It was noted that widening participation students are not responsible for paying their own fees and would therefore not incur tuition fee debt.

Annual Report of the Senate Standing Committees

10. Members approved the Annual Report. The Convener of Academic Policy & Regulations Committee (APRC) advised members that a large number of concessions requests had recently been dealt with by Convener's Action. These had been well-filtered by Colleges and Schools and none were rejected. Members were invited by the Convener of Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) to identify any gaps in the priorities for the coming academic year outlined in the paper. A question was raised about the extent to which sustainability was being considered by the three Senate Standing Committees. The Convener expressed confidence that sustainability was very prominent in the University's thinking, and it was noted that sustainability was embedded within a number of the priorities detailed in the paper, including Curriculum Transformation and Digital Maturity. However it was acknowledged that there would be value in making this issue more explicit in the Standing Committee priorities, and the Conveners would give this further thought.

Senate Standing Committees: Membership and Terms of Reference

11. Members approved the Senate Standing Committees' memberships and terms of reference, though noted that a senior member of the College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine appeared to have been omitted from the APRC membership. The potential value of including on the membership of the Standing Committees additional 'at large' members of Senate was discussed. A number of members were supportive of this, agreeing that it could assist in making the Committees more representative and enhance discussions around high-level University policy. It was also recognised that:

- the current terms of reference and memberships for the Standing Committees were approved in September 2019 and were therefore relatively new;
- the Standing Committees were already large;
- there was an expectation that those already on the memberships of the Committees were not there as individuals but to represent their constituencies.

It was agreed Senate would welcome a discussion paper on this topic at a later date.

Report from the Honorary Degrees Committee
12. The paper was approved. It was noted that the number of nominees was small because the University was, where possible, keen to wait for normal graduation arrangements to resume before awarding Honorary Degrees.

Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) – Outcome
13. The paper was noted.

Senate Exception Committee Terms of Reference and Membership
14. The paper was approved.

Senate Standing Orders – Minor Amendment
15. The paper was approved.

Annual Review of Effectiveness of Senate
16. The paper was noted.

Full Agenda and Papers
17. http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/committees/senate/agendas-papers

Equality & Diversity
18. No key implications for equality and diversity were raised by Senate. All paper authors are asked to consider and identify equality and diversity implications.

Further information
19. *Author*   *Presenter*
     Philippa Ward   Peter Mathieson
     Academic Policy Officer   Principal & Vice-Chancellor
     Academic Services

Freedom of Information
20. Open paper.

UNIVERSITY COURT

6 October 2021

National Student Survey Results

Paragraphs 1-38: Closed section

Further information

39. <u>Authors</u>

Paula Webster
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<u>Presenter</u>

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Vice-Principal Students

Freedom of Information

40. Closed paper.

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

UNIVERSITY COURT

6 October 2021

Enhancement-led Institutional Review Response Action Plan

Description of paper
1. This paper provides an overview of the recent Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) outcome and recommendations and presents a high-level initial plan for progressing the recommendations.

2. The ELIR response and proposed Action Plan (Appendix 1) contribute to improving the quality of learning and teaching, the student experience and student satisfaction.

Action requested/Recommendation
3. Court is invited to comment on the proposed approach for responding to the ELIR recommendations and the draft Action Plan.

Background and context
4. Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) is the method used by the Quality Assurance Agency Scotland (QAAS) to review and assess the effectiveness of higher education institutions' approaches to securing academic standards and the quality of the student experience.

5. Our review was conducted in a series of online meetings with students and staff in February and March 2021. In advance of the review, we submitted a Reflective Analysis (and other documentation), approved by Court in September 2020.

6. QAA Scotland published the outcome of the review online in July 2021: University of Edinburgh. A shorter "outcome report" provides the formal outcome of the review and an overview of the commendations and recommendations; the longer "technical report" provides further information on the background and findings from the review, providing context to the commendations and recommendations.

Discussion
Overall judgement
7. Overall, we have been judged to have "effective arrangements for managing academic standards and the student learning experience." This is a positive judgement and the best possible outcome for an ELIR, the other two outcomes: "limited effectiveness" or "not effective".

Key findings
8. Whilst the overall judgement is positive, and there are several commendations in the report, two key themes run throughout the findings.

8.1 Inconsistency in implementation of policy and practice; variability arising from our decentralised nature:
   a) "Multiple instances where inconsistent implementation of policy and strategic approach across Schools contributed to variable student and staff experience."
   b) "The decentralised nature of the Schools and Colleges leads to considerable variability in the extent to which many University policies and strategic approaches are implemented…".

8.2 Speed of change has been slow; projects have not delivered substantial change:
   a) "The University has had longstanding concerns on certain aspects of the student experience, notably assessment and feedback and the personal tutor system….(however) the timeliness with which any appropriate measures are put in place is slow."
   b) "Many projects which have set out to address these (student experience) concerns over the last five to ten years have not delivered substantial change, more recent projects were paused due to the pandemic and most are now awaiting the outcome of Curriculum Transformation"

Key recommendations
9.1 We are required to establish a systematic approach to enable effective institutional oversight and evaluation of the implementation of policy and practice:
   a) to increase the range and use of institutionally-determined baseline requirements to ensure consistency and accountability, and
   b) take action when Schools deviate from institutional expectations.

9.2 Develop an effective approach to the strategic leadership and management of change that will ensure more immediate and timely implementation of identified solutions to enhance the student experience.
   a) Linked to this, we have been asked to make "demonstrable progress" over the next academic year in two key areas: Assessment and Feedback and Student Support;
   b) and to take action to implement an effective approach for institutional oversight and management of student numbers.

10. The full set of recommendations and planned actions are set out in the attached table.

Managing our response
11. An ELIR Oversight Group has been established (comprising Colm Harmon, Vice-Principal Students, Gavin Douglas, Deputy Secretary Student Experience, Tina Harrison, Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance, Jon Turner, Director of the Institute for Academic Development, Barry Neilson, Director of Strategic Change, Nichola Kett, Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement, Academic Services) which has had an initial meeting to discuss how we take forward the recommendations.

12. The attached table provides an initial draft of an ELIR Action Plan. The purpose of the action plan is to provide (at a high level) reassurance that there is a plan for progressing the ELIR recommendations and to invite input. Some of the

recommendations can be taken forward through existing committees and work streams, whereas others require further discussion. There will be extensive consultation with appropriate stakeholders/groups/committees as we progress work on the recommendations.

13. The Action Plan will be supported by communications to keep the University community updated on progress.

Formal Year-on Response
14. We are required to provide a follow-up report on actions taken or in progress to address the outcomes of the review to QAA Scotland one year after the publication of the ELIR reports (by 16 July 2022). Court is required to endorse the follow-up report.

15. The ELIR Action Plan and progress will feed into the year-on response.

16. An update on ELIR actions will be presented to the meeting of Senate on 25 May 2022 ahead of the year-on response.

Next ELIR in 5 Years
17. Our next ELIR should be in 5 years; date to be confirmed. Even though we received an overall outcome of "effectiveness", the tone and seriousness of the recommendations suggest that if we do not demonstrate significant change by the time of the next review (in 5 years), we could run the risk of a "limited effectiveness" judgement. For information: Glasgow School of Art recently received a judgement of "limited effectiveness" with some similar comments about inconsistency and change management.

Resource implications
18. Oversight of the ELIR response and the Action Plan does not require any resource implications, but some of the recommended actions may have resource implications in staff time.

Risk Management
19. The approach to responding to ELIR is designed to mitigate the risks associated with a poor outcome in the next review and is monitored as part of the University Risk Register - Strategic Risk 5 "Continued or worsening of National Student Survey or other measures of student experience"

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals
20. Relates to SDG 4: Quality Education, ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education. The overall focus of the recommendations is aimed at improving the quality of education and the student experience. There is a specific recommendation aimed at address equality and diversity in relation to student achievement and attainment gaps.

Equality & Diversity
21. No new or revised policies are currently being proposed, but some of the recommendations and actions will give rise to new or revised policies and practices. Equality impact assessments will be carried out at the point when a new or revised

policy or practice is proposed. Equality and diversity is a key focus of one of the main recommendations.

Next steps/implications
22. Following discussion at Court a paper will go to Senate on 20 October for final approval. Senate will be asked to approve the action plan as its role includes: setting the academic regulatory framework; quality assurance and enhancement; and learning, teaching and curriculum development. Senate Quality Assurance Committee will play a formal role in monitoring progress against the recommendations and, together with the ELIR Oversight Group, will advise University Executive and Court of progress and any concerns.

Consultation
23. This is an initial plan of action and further consultation will follow with appropriate stakeholders/groups/committees in taking both the plan and specific actions forward.

Further information
24. *Author & Presenter*
     Tina Harrison
     Assistant Principal, Academic Standards and Quality Assurance

Freedom of Information
25. Open paper

University of Edinburgh Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) 2021 – Action Plan

Theme	Recommendation	Priority	Owner	Planned actions
Strategy, growth and planning	1. **Oversight and planning for growth of student numbers** "… implement an approach to facilitate institutional oversight and the effective planning and monitoring of student numbers, in order to ensure that appropriate and timely actions can be taken where increases in student numbers impact on arrangements for learning and teaching and student support."	Establish approach/controls (within 1 year) Size and shape (2 years)	Vice Principal Students	To be agreed. Currently no strategic oversight group in place. To be discussed further between Director of Planning, VP Students and Admissions to determine a way forward.
	2. **Strategic approach to the enhancement of learning and teaching** "… in view of the current transition between the Learning and Teaching Strategy 2017 and future plans, the University should provide institutional oversight, and ensure clarity for staff, on the strategic direction underpinning current learning and teaching developments."	Develop strategy within 1 year and implement from year 2 onwards	Vice Principal Students	Task Group of Senate Education Committee to develop a new Learning and Teaching Strategy
Change management	3. **Pace of change** "… develop an effective approach to the strategic leadership and management of change that will ensure more immediate and timely implementation of identified solutions in order to support staff and enhance the student experience."	Within next 2 years	Director of Strategic Change	• Reflect on positives from ART • Consult with internal experts • Articulate an approach
Monitoring consistency of implementation of strategy, policy and practice	4. **Oversight and implementation of policy and practice** "… recognising the decentralised nature of university structures, the institution should establish a systematic approach to enable effective institutional oversight and evaluation of the implementation of policy and practice. As part of this, the University is asked to increase the range and use of institutionally determined baseline requirements to ensure consistency and accountability. The institution should ensure that mechanisms are put in place to adequately evaluate the consistency of implementation of strategic objectives across the institution and act when Schools deviate from institutional expectations.	Develop approach within next 12 months; implementation year 2 onwards	Vice Principal Students Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance Deputy Secretary Student Experience Support from Director of Strategic Change (links to recommendation 3)	• Identify priority areas of student experience (as associated policies and practices) for consistent implementation • Develop a set of associated indicators from which to measure and evaluate e and evaluation mechanisms • Establish clear approach for monitoring consistency of implementation, either via enhanced quality assurance processes or other. • Policy review as appropriate
	5. **Training for postgraduate research (PGR) students who teach** "… ensure effective implementation of its policy for the training and support of postgraduates who teach and ensure all PGR students are trained before engaging in teaching activities."	Linked to above	Doctoral College leads	Example policy to inform approach to recommendation 4

University of Edinburgh Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) 2021 – Action Plan

Theme	Recommendation	Priority	Owner	Planned actions
Student support	6. **Personal tutor scheme** "…make significant progress in implementing plans to ensure an effective approach to offering personal student support. In doing so, and recognising the extended period of time that the University has been developing its approach to personal tutoring, it is asked to reflect on whether the current timescale for implementation of the institutional Student Support and Personal Tutor Plan in 2023-24, is sufficiently ambitious. The University should make demonstrable progress within the next academic year in respect of ensuring parity of experience for students and effective signposting to support services and delivery of an agreed and consistent baseline level of provision. As part of its approach, the University is asked to develop an effective mechanism to monitor consistency of implementation and allow it to evaluate the impact of these changes on the student experience."	Within next 12 months with further implementation to follow on	Deputy Secretary Student Experience	Personal Tutor System 2021/22: • Communication • School statements updated • Reinstate the Senior Tutor Network • Use pulse surveys to gather feedback • Approach to monitoring to be determined • Links to recommendation 4 • Phased implementation of Student Support and Personal Tutor project outcomes
Assessment and feedback	7. **Assessment and feedback** "… over an extended period of time, the University has considered a broad evidence-base which has highlighted concerns about assessment and feedback and this remains an area of challenge for the institution. The University is asked to make demonstrable progress, within the next academic year, in prioritising the development of a holistic and strategic approach to the design and management of assessment and feedback. The University should also progress with proposals for the establishment of a common marking scheme to ensure comparability of student assessment processes across Schools."	Within next 12 months, develop holistic strategy; implementation to follow on.	Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance	• Assessment and Feedback working group already established as part of Curriculum Transformation and reporting into the Curriculum Transformation Board. • Taking forward short-term ELIR recommendations and feeding forward into ongoing Curriculum Transformation Programme
Developing and promoting teaching excellence	8. **Recognition and support for academic staff development** "… take action to remove barriers which exist that prevent some academic staff from fully engaging with its existing suite of development opportunities for the professionalisation of teaching."	Within 2 years	Vice Principal Students HR and new Provost Director of IAD	• Develop a strategy aligned to workload allocation models • Aligns with recommendation of the Teaching and Academic Careers Task Group –for Schools to develop and implement a Professional Development of Teaching Strategies • Implement School-level Professional Development of Teaching Strategies

University of Edinburgh Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) 2021 – Action Plan

Theme	Recommendation	Priority	Owner	Planned actions
	9. Promotion of academic staff based on teaching "… progress with work to improve the recognition of teaching excellence across all aspects of the University. In particular, the University should ensure that recognition for teaching is embedded in annual review processes, that clarity of roles and titles is established, and that a clear progression pathway providing parity of recognition for education-focused academics is developed. In addition, the institution should ensure that it has the data available to be able to evidence and evaluate the progress made in all of these areas."	Within 2 years	Vice Principal Students HR and new Provost Director of IAD	• Baseline evaluation of current practice to inform future actions. • Titles have been harmonised for Grade 8 & 9 staff • Improve data capture (among balanced role promotions) to evidence the impact of teaching excellence.
Attainment gaps	**10. Attainment gap monitoring** "…consider how to address attainment gaps in student performance through the oversight, coordination and monitoring at an institutional level of school-level actions."	Develop approach within next 12 months; implementation from year 2.	Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance with University Lead, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	• EDMARC data reviewed at Equality and Diversity Committee. • Aligns with Senate Quality Assurance Committee Data Task Group and outcomes of Thematic Reviews. Schools now reviewing EDI data and attainment gaps annually, monitoring via Senate Quality Assurance Committee • Identify actions and interventions to reduce attainment gaps, drawing on best practice internally and externally and support schools to implement. • Consult with relevant committees and groups • Pilot projects to test interventions to reduce attainment gaps as part of Enhancement Themes work funded by QAA Scotland.

THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

UNIVERSITY COURT

6 October 2021

Preventing and Responding to Gender-Based Violence and Sexual Violence

Description of paper
1. This paper provides an update for Court on:
   (i) The University's previous and current activity in respect of both preventing and responding to sexual violence and gender-based violence;
   (ii) The work of the University Taskforce, (the "Taskforce"), which has now been integrated into the Gender Equality Sub-Committee of the University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

Action requested/Recommendation
2. Court is asked to (i) note the update; (ii) comment on current activity and future plans.

Background and context
3**.** The University is committed to the promotion of a positive culture for working and studying, with zero tolerance of discrimination and harassment, in which all members of the University community treat each other with dignity and respect and are "equally safe". Any incident of discrimination or harassment is regarded as a serious matter and should be responded to promptly and sensitively, with disciplinary action taken where appropriate. The Dignity and Respect Policy sets out the responsibilities and expectations of each member of the University community.

4. Sexual violence remains a significant challenge across society and therefore, by extension, across higher education. A Universities UK report[1], published in October 2016, set out recommendations for how universities should tackle violence against women, harassment and hate crime affecting university students. A "one year on" update of the report[2] was published in March 2018, which highlighted that many universities still need to develop strategies and programmes of work in order to respond effectively to sexual violence, ensuring that such strategies tackle sexual violence relating to staff as well as students. A recent Office For Students briefing outlines a set of expectations for universities in preventing and addressing harassment and sexual misconduct, (albeit not directly applicable to Scottish universities), and the #EmilyTest organisation continues to progress its Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Charter across a number of pilot sites in Scotland, including the universities of Strathclyde and St Andrews. It is anticipated that this charter is likely to be rolled out across universities in Scotland after the pilot projects have been evaluated.

5. The Equally Safe in Higher Education (ESHE) Toolkit, a Scottish Government funded initiative, was launched in May 2018. This provides universities with a "trauma-informed" framework for tackling sexual violence and a toolkit providing advice on gender-based violence across Scotland's university campuses. All of the

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[1] UUK, Changing the Culture, October 2016
[2] UUK, Changing the Culture: one year on – An assessment of strategies to tackle sexual misconduct, hate crime and harassment affecting university students, March 2018

University's work in this area is aligned to the Equally Safe in Higher Education Toolkit. This initiative now has the working title "[Equally Safe in Colleges and Universities](#)".

6. Existing and emerging evidence demonstrates that during the Covid-19 global pandemic there has been a significant increase in the volume of victims of gender-based violence contacting support agencies for help. For example, in Edinburgh, there was a 5.35% increase in reported domestic abuse incidents to the Police in the period January to April 2021 (Police Scotland 2021). Nationally, recorded crimes of rape fell by 14% in this same quarter, however, within the city of Edinburgh there has been a recorded rise of 44.91% in the volume of rapes (Police Scotland 2021). Scottish Women's Aid and SafeLives, the largest Scottish domestic abuse charities, report that calls to their helplines rose by 33% following the introduction of lockdown measures

7. Within this macro context, it is highly likely that there will be increased numbers of victims/ survivors within our University community who have experienced levels of abuse and trauma. There is clearly an increased need to support survivors of domestic abuse and gender-based violence as part of our duty of care and our responsibility to address GBV effectively within the University community. Since the start of the pandemic, there has been an overall increase in the number of survivors disclosing and reporting within the University that they are the victims of sexual violence and harassment.

8. As reported to the University Executive in April 2019[3], working in partnership with the Students' Association and the Sports Union, the University identified three objectives as part of its strategy to prevent and respond to sexual violence and misconduct, to:
   a) support survivors better;
   b) encourage more students to disclose to the University that they are survivors of sexual violence;
   c) reduce incidences of sexual violence over time through education and culture change.

9. The University Executive approved the establishment of a Taskforce to achieve the three strategic objectives and to review and refresh the University's approach to tackling sexual violence across the whole University community including when staff are involved. The Taskforce, chaired initially by Vice-Principal People and Culture, Jane Norman and, following her departure from the University, by Leigh Chalmers, Deputy Secretary, Governance and Legal, met for the first time on 22 August 2018 and was convened on a quarterly basis until the conclusion of its work in December 2019.

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[3] A paper was presented to the Policy & Resources Committee on 4 June 2018 and to the University Court on 18 June 2018. Both PRC and Court welcomed the paper and noted the content. A follow-up paper was presented to University Executive on 23 April 2019, where it was welcomed, and its content noted.

10. The Taskforce's activity focussed on two key strands: support for survivors of GBV, and culture change/ knowledge, to prevent GBV. Early priorities were a focus on support for survivors; reporting systems; training and guidance for staff and students; refreshing the communications campaign re sexual violence, and reviewing/updating University policies and procedure. The Taskforce was convened for the last time in December 2019, when it was decided which Taskforce projects would be taken forward as part of the Student Experience Action Plan (the "StEAP") and which would transition into 'business as usual'. This work has now (2021) been integrated into the Gender-Equality Sub-Committee of the University's Equality and Diversity Committee.

Discussion
Prevention, Education and Culture Change
11. The current work programme to tackle gender-based violence and sexual violence focuses on three key areas. The first of these is prevention, education and culture change, which is delivered through a combination of campaigns, events and training.

12. In terms of campaigns, the University has funded and worked with the Students' Association to create and run the *#NoExcuse campaign,* which encourages us all to take collective responsibility for ending sexual harassment and violence on campus. The University separately launched the "Don't Cross the Line" campaign in early 2019, focussing on the values expressed in our dignity and respect policy.

13. In terms of events, the University has worked with *The Consent Collective* to deliver powerful and engaging events designed to engage students with the topic of sexual violence, promote healthy sexual relationships and emphasise the central importance of consent in sexual relationships. Students and staff have access to the Consent Collective library of material at University of Edinburgh Consent Collective TV. Sign-up to the TV channel has so far been disappointingly low, and more promotion of this is required to ensure engagement levels for staff and students increase.

14. In terms of training, the University delivers a comprehensive package of training events and courses for staff and students. Every year for the last four years we have delivered "*bystander intervention training*" at the start of the academic year for student leaders – typically, office holders in sports clubs and student societies, as well as Resident Assistants. In 2019/20, the last year we ran the training in person, we trained over 1000 student leaders. In 2021/22, we are training over 1400 student leaders online. This training is very well evaluated by the student leaders who attend, with one of the key outcomes being to give them the confidence to lead on culture change within their community, club or society. The draft Action Plan for the Gender Equality Sub-Committee stipulates that Schools need to engage with the trained student leaders to deliver appropriate workshops for students covering active bystander responsibilities and consent. We are also working in partnership with the Sports Union and the Students' Association to design a 'train the trainer' programme, where student leaders will be paid to deliver sessions on the bystander approach and consent to students in Schools and in their community, their sports club or their student society. Our partner, Cultivating Minds, will be providing mentorship and support for students undertaking these roles.

Support for survivors

15. In August 2020 the University appointed its first ever *Sexual Violence and Harassment Liaison Manager*, Lesley Johnston. Lesley develops strategy, works on enhancement of services and support and works directly with individual survivors who are referred to her. Lesley has met with almost 170 student survivors within the past 9 months. We are now recruiting two full-time case workers to Lesley's team, which will increase capacity and also free up Lesley's time to work on strategy and service enhancement.

16. Two *online modules* on "Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Violence" and "Understanding and Responding to Gender-based Violence on Campus" have been promoted to all staff on a voluntary basis, with a strong recommendation for all staff working directly with students. Since their introduction in 2018, over 1250 staff have undertaken the training.

17. We are working with Rape Crisis Scotland who deliver online courses for both staff and students, focused on tackling gender-based violence in higher education settings. Students have access to "*Rape Crisis Scotland GBV E-Learning*", a new online module on Learn delivered by Rape Crisis Scotland. Over 100 students completed this in the first two months it was live.

18. In partnership with Rape Crisis Scotland, we are delivering advanced training in understanding sexual violence and its impact on survivors to staff who need to support survivors in their work – this includes Rape Crisis Scotland level 3 face to face training in sexual violence and domestic abuse for University and Students' Association staff.

19. We continue to focus on how we can **enhance the support we provide for survivors**. Gender-based violence information support cards were given to all staff working within the University (within the framework of the Equally Safe in Higher Education initiative) in 2019. These provide staff and students with the contact details both of sources of support within the University and of local organisations which support survivors.

20. We also fund two fifths of a full-time counselling support worker who is embedded within Edinburgh Rape Crisis and who works on a longer term basis with survivors who often need more support than we can provide through our short therapy model of student counselling.

21. We have been the driving force behind the joint Edinburgh further and higher education institutions initiative *"Fearless Edinburgh"* which our Director of Student Wellbeing leads on. Fearless Edinburgh works in partnership with the Police, the NHS and the third sector to end sexual violence by challenging harmful behaviours and attitudes alongside supporting those impacted and building confidence. Lesley Johnston also represents the University on Edinburgh's *Equally Safe Partnership* (which is the region's strategic multi-agency committee working to end GBV and sexual violence) linking us to wider initiatives relating to preventing GBV and supporting survivors in Edinburgh through Local Authorities, NHS, Police, third sector etc. We are currently working with Police Scotland to develop and improve

reporting systems when survivors want to contact the police to talk through reporting an incident of GBV or sexual violence or indeed, to make a report to the Police.

22. In addition to the work of the Sexual Violence and Liaison team, there is significant support and guidance provided both to survivors of gender-based violence, and to those accused of gender-based violence (for whom we also have a duty of care), through the Students' Association Advice Place and the University's Student Counselling Service.

Reporting, Policy and Procedure
23. In the spring of 2021 we launched Report and Support, an online platform that (a) allows students to tell us (anonymously if they so choose) about their experiences of gender-based violence; or (b) to report more formally something that has happened and seek support. Report and Support also promotes all of the support available to survivors of sexual violence. Since its launch, twenty six incidents have been reported through the platform, and support given where the reporting person provided their name. We are promoting awareness of Report and Support and the Equally Safe initiative in communications to students to promote uptake of the newly introduced (September 2021) training in "consent matters" and "tackling harassment".

24. Even before the introduction of Report and Support, we were seeing a steady increase in the number of serious sexual assaults reported to the University and needing disciplinary action. We have reviewed and amended our conduct processes in the light of feedback from the Students' Association and survivors, and we have also enhanced the information available about what a survivor can expect to happen in terms of process when they make a report to the University. Where a student wishes the University to investigate an allegation of gender-based violence, the investigation is carried out by one of a small team in our Academic Services department who have expertise in University conduct processes but who have also had specialist, in depth, trauma-informed training. This means that they are as well prepared as possible to deal with the sensitivities, complexities and challenges in such cases. The University also provides specialist wellbeing support to this team in recognition of the often challenging cases that they are required to engage with.

25. The total number of cases which are reported under the Code of Student Conduct/Staff Disciplinary Policy is outlined below in Table 1:

Table 1: Cases of Sexual Violence and Harassment within the University

Academic Year	Reported cases to Academic Services	Cases investigated within Code of Student Conduct	Cases reported to Human Resources
2018/19	10	4	5
2019/20	12	8	2
2020/21	12	10	3

26. With regard to allegations involving staff:
- The University's Disclosure of Intimate Relationships Policy was implemented in February 2019. This discourages any intimate relationship between staff

and students, sets out a requirement for staff to disclose any intimate relationship with a student or with another staff member for whom they have line management responsibility.

- The University has developed detailed guidance for the investigations of allegations of abuse by a student against a member of staff, this guidance seeks to ensure that the student is well supported throughout the process and receives appropriate updates on the process and its outcomes.

Future challenges

27. Delivering training for 1400 student leaders is a great achievement but it means we are still not educating the great majority of students on the issue of sexual violence, even "just" new students. Plans to introduce online modules in both consent and tackling harassment are at an advanced stage, and these will be piloted in 2021/22 with a view to making them mandatory for all students in 2022/23 (there will be an 'opt out' for students who are survivors of sexual violence and those in other vulnerable groups).

28. The number of staff who have undertaken the short 'Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Violence' training has plateaued, and there needs to be a renewed focus on ensuring that thousands more staff complete this so that staff are aware of what they need to do should a survivor make a disclosure to them. This needs to be delivered as a planned campaign to coincide with the launch of the online consent training. We will use the campaign to reach staff yet to undertake training, ensuring there is a focus on supporting undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research students.

29. We are looking at how we can strategically strengthen the support we provide for students who have been accused of sexual violence, drawing on the experience and expertise of our Director of Student Counselling and our Sexual Violence and Harassment Liaison Manager.

30. The current round of Scottish Government funding for the Equally Safe in Universities and Colleges initiative has ended and Universities Scotland is putting forward new set of priorities. The University has identified recommended priority areas as: prevention of GBV as it applies to vulnerable groups, especially LGBT+, trans and non-binary students and staff, consent awareness, bystander approaches and online harassment. These have to happen within an evaluation framework to assess the impact of interventions in this area so that resources can be targeted where they will be most effective.

31. The School of Social and Political Science had been planning a University-wide research project on the incidence and prevalence of gender-based violence within the Equally Safe framework, but this had to be paused due to resourcing issues. It is hoped that this can be delivered at some point in the near future when funding becomes available.

Resource implications

32. Elements of this work programme will continue to require resourcing as we move forward. There are however no direct resource implications arising from this paper.

Risk Management

33. A series of surveys and projects, including Revolt Sexual Assault (2019) and the National Union of Students Sexual Violence in Further Education report (2019) have demonstrated that there is significant under-reporting of sexual violence within universities. There is a high likelihood that the volume of disclosures of sexual harassment and sexual violence will continue to rise within the University community due to a number of factors:

    a) greater awareness;
    b) culture change illustrating the unacceptability of GBV and lack of consent;
    c) bystander training (shifting responsibility to the majority and not simply survivors);
    d) the availability of enhanced and more visible support and guidance for survivors and for those accused.

34. In order to tackle this issue comprehensively and support students, the University needs to empower survivors to feel safe to come forward and disclose where they wish to do so. A low number of disclosures is not evidence of low incidences of assault but could instead be because students are reluctant to disclose for a wide range of reasons.

35. If reported incidents of GBV increase at the University it will be important to explain the context and culture change associated with an increase in reporting/disclosure.

Equality & Diversity

36. There are significant positive implications of this programme of work and planned future work, with regard to equality and diversity.

Next steps/implications

37. Reporting on the University's strategy in relation to preventing and responding to sexual violence will continue to be made to the University Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee through the Gender-Equality Sub-Committee. This provides excellent opportunities for enhanced partnership as a holistic approach, with academic and professional services staff working together in partnership and collaborating directly with students.

Consultation

38. N/A.

Further information

39. *Authors*

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Chair, Gender-Equality Sub-Group of
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Presenter

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Freedom of Information

40. Open paper

UNIVERSITY COURT

6 October 2021

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:
   i) '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, and financial and strategic developments. It is a regular standing item on the Court agenda.

Discussion
Sabbatical plans for 21-22 and activities to date
5. The 2021/22 Sabbatical Officer team have been in office since 7 June 2021. Although we are still mostly working from our bedrooms, we have been able to enjoy the opening of The Garden at Teviot, the Edinburgh Festivals and an in-person Welcome Week!

6. Our new Vice Presidents have been warmly welcomed onto the existing working groups, committees and projects. We are looking forward to a year with more in-person activity and the opportunity to build back from the impacts of COVID-19. As a team we aim to focus on: supporting the creating of an inclusive community in Edinburgh; centring sustainability at the Students' Association and University and empowering students in new and bigger ways. Below is an introduction to the Sabbatical Officer's individual aims and update on their work so far.
You can hear more about the Students' Association and our officers in our short welcome video: https://youtu.be/rDsKEVDg_os.

Ellen MacRae, President
7. During my second term I wish to focus on building back from the impacts of COVID-19 by promoting the recognition of the dramatically different circumstances some of our students are now in and the University's role in addressing this. I want to ensure that we are improving the diversity and capacity of our mental health and wellbeing resources as well as tackling financial hardship. Secondly, I want to ensure that students feel empowered to create change and feel recognised and support in

their engagement in social issues and the climate emergency. My third manifesto aim focuses on reconnecting our student community after a really isolated year. I hope that the expansion of our Global Buddies programme to Edinburgh Buddies will support students who are new to Edinburgh and will provide a space to meet new people.

8. Over the summer I completed Carbon Literacy training with the Social Responsibility and Sustainability department. It was great to see University students and staff from various backgrounds engaging in this training and we have since promoted this training to our own staff. I look forward to working on the implementation of our own sustainability policy at the Students' Association. In July I got to speak at a Westminster Higher Education Forum about what students needs from the Turing Scheme if it's going to offer the same level of support as Erasmus+. Throughout the summer I have valued being part of the 21/22 Academic Year Planning Group. For the Association, navigating the Higher Education and Hospitality COVID-19 sector guidance had been a challenge and has created a difficult narrative to communicate. The Planning Group has been a useful place to share these concerns as well help shape our plans for the new semester.
It has been very reenergising to see students back on campus for our Welcome Week, I'm very grateful for the staff and students that made the week possible!

Réka Siró, Vice President Activities and Services
9. Réka ran for office with three key objectives on her manifesto: reshaping student leadership, returning to campus as safely and quickly as possible and building up the student community in Edinburgh. She has been able to make some quick progress on the points of student leader training and simplifying the administrative tasks carried out by student group leaders, thanks to the groundwork laid by her predecessor, Rachel, and Students' Association staff. This has already led to an easing of the workload of student leaders who are working to rebuild our on-campus communities following the disruption brought on by the pandemic. Réka is now exploring what further changes student leaders would like to see, and how these could be implemented both at the policy level within the Association, and at the technical level.

10. To help facilitate the return to campus, Réka has also been actively involved in some committees preparing on campus provision for the upcoming academic year. She has been representing the student voice on Information Services Group's Study Spaces Working Group and has been in discussions with members of staff from Accommodation, Catering & Events, Estates and Information Services Group on topics such as transportation, access to food and kitchens on campus and use of study spaces, to ensure that service levels on campus meet students' expectations once teaching resumes in September. Alongside Beth and I, Réka has had the opportunity to use and promote TestEd, which we hope will receive high student uptake throughout the academic year.

11. Finally, Réka is committed to community building on our campuses following the disruption caused by COVID-19. As part of this, she plans to host a range of events that bring together students from different backgrounds when it is safe to do so, to support student groups and encourage collaboration between them, and to build a

stronger network between the other universities and higher education colleges based in Edinburgh.

Beth Simpson, Vice President Community
12. Since starting her role as Vice President Community, Beth has attended training and undergone planning to prepare for the year. Over the past few months, she has developed and begun working towards her objectives for her time in office. The first of these is to centre sustainability at the Students' Association and at the University. Having just finished her MA in Sustainable Development, Beth is keen to lessen the environmental impact of operations at Association venues. With COP26 happening in Glasgow this November, there is plenty of excitement about sustainability and Beth hopes to push student engagement and activity surrounding key issues. A major project she is working on is the development of a Green Hub, a virtual and physical space for collaboration between students and societies interested in taking action on environmental issues.

13. The second of Beth's objectives is to empower students for positive change. She plans to work with myself on the development of an Activist Toolkit to support students in enacting change in their communities. Beth hopes to support student divestment campaigns through consultation with the Investment Committee. She is also pushing to increase student engagement in the Association's democratic processes, such as elections and monthly Student Council meetings.

14. Beth's third objective is to improve the experience of students as tenants and in halls of residence. This has been an area of particular concern lately, as students have been struggling to find places to live in the city. Consequently, Beth has been helping with awareness campaigns surrounding housing safety and scams. She has also been working with Mia, the Disabled Students' Liberation Officer, to improve information on disability provisions in our halls of residence.

Tara Gold, Vice President Education
15. Since taking office in June, Tara has been working on her priorities for the year which include strengthening the role of student voices in planning for our return to campus, improving the accessibility of academic spaces for marginalised students, and fostering greater transparency and accountability with University structures.
In preparation for the academic year, Tara has been working with the Association's Representation and Democracy team to update plans and training for Student Representatives, including for this year's introduction of separate Postgraduate Taught and Postgraduate Research Representatives. Tara has also been involved in planning for the new College of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences Student and Staff Liaison Committee, which she is looking forward to attending. As well as supporting existing structures for student representation, Tara has also been working to facilitate greater student engagement in academic spaces, particularly with the development of the University's Curriculum Transformation Programme, and she is excited to continue this work over the coming year.

16. Another area of work Tara has been focused on is strengthening channels of communication between staff and students. Alongside meeting with the University's central communications team, she has also provided feedback on the

communication of policy changes, such as for the Extensions and Special Circumstances system for the upcoming year.

17. As part of her work to widen the accessibility of the academic experience, Tara has been working on strengthening the use of online tools, such as through the Learn Foundations Project, Digital Education work under Curriculum Transformation, and by contributing to the University's new Digital Strategy. In collaboration with Mia, the Disabled Students' Liberation Officer, she is also working to improve the implementation and application of Learning Adjustments, and the integration of the Student Disability Services' provision and systems with other University services.

Aisha Janki Akinola, Vice President Welfare
18. Determined to reaffirm safety on campus, Aisha has been working on the planning of the #NoHateHere campaign whilst lobbying for funding to hire racial harassment liaison officers at the University. She attended a networking conference with other Edinburgh based university and college officers which was a fantastic opportunity to discuss the #NoHateHere campaign and the potential to make it an Edinburgh wide implementation. In a bid to center the work being done by students around equality, diversity, and inclusion at the university, Aisha valued the opportunity to present to members of the University Court. Overall, she hopes to launch the campaign towards the end of this semester.

19. Aisha has attended a significant number of meetings regarding the implementation of the consent classes for current and incoming students. Working alongside Mukai, the Women's Liberation Officer, and Niamph Roberts from CERT (a policy group of University of Edinburgh students campaigning for contraceptive empowerment in Scotland), she was able to put together a student led video which would act as a promotional material to be shared with staff and students. In addition, Aisha has been a part of the ongoing planning and discussions around the new curriculum and Personal Tutor and Student Support review where she has continued to advocate for embedding mental health and wellbeing in the curriculum and promoting decolonization of the curriculum across all schools. She is also a member of various committees and working groups such as the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion committee and the College of Science and Engineering working group on decolonizing the curriculum.

20. Lastly, Aisha spent some time attending events and delivering presentations including a Facebook live Q&A and a Managing your Money 'How To' session aimed at welcoming students back on campus. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the mental health and wellbeing of the wider community was greatly affected and some students felt isolated, so it was great to be a part of the preparations to transition to more in-person activities.

Welcome Week 2021
21. We were delighted to be able to support both new and returning students with a fun and supportive Welcome Week programme. A combination of both online and on campus activities were available for students wherever they were, whether having to isolate, simply feeling more comfortable at home, and for the many 1000's of students who chose to come on campus. This year, the University agreed to fund a new covered temporary outdoor space 'The Gem', in Bristo Square (pictured below).

This was a new outdoor based space that the Association installed and managed, this was used to deliver safe activities throughout the week, introducing students to the heart of the campus in an iconic location surrounded by Teviot, McEwan Hall, and Potterrow. The visibility of this space has been key in leaving our students in no doubt that the University and the Association is here and they are welcome. There were over 25,000 visits to the Gem over the Welcome Week. By day, the Gem saw 12,700 visits to our Fairs, to find out about Sports Clubs and Societies Monday – Friday, with the weekends providing an opportunity for to pick up items to make them feel at home at our Plant Sale, and the Freeshop provided by SHRUB (Swap and Re-use Hub) with almost 6000 visitors to the space on Saturday and Sunday. By night the space transformed into a vibrant and welcoming alcohol-free social space, hosting almost 8000 students across the week at quizzes, society showcases, themed movie nights – including The Greatest Showman singalong night with circus performers, and candy floss, and finishing in true Edinburgh style with the return of Ceilidhs to the square. This was complemented by our Teviot Garden space providing everything from a scaled back Big Cheese Club garden, to Drag Queen Bingo. Potterrow hosted a range of small group wellbeing activities, from yoga to crafting, to events around safer sex, philosophy, with over 400 students taking part . Student Groups also hosted c500 taster sessions, meet ups and socials in our spaces and outdoors and across the city to enable students to find their community, and our Welcome Week Volunteers took almost 600 students on tours including Coffee Crawls, History tours, Arthurs Seat walks. As the week progressed, students were clearly finding their groups, and their feet, and feeling part of the community – this included several 2nd and later years students who had missed out last year. We are very proud to have delivered that experience this year, with only around 6 weeks of certainty of the landscape prior, given that Welcome Week would normally be 9 months in the planning for us. You can view a short video illustrating the events held in the Bristo Square Gem here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QQt7hKB242Q.

22. All of this said, alongside the positive elements of welcome week, there has been a significant challenge for our new and returning students, in finding **accommodation** – this was the top request for support from our Advice Place over the period immediately before, and during Welcome Week. Our Advice Place worked well in partnership with the university Accommodation team to provide fast and responsive support to students struggling to find a home, and it was useful that the University did have some accommodation remaining at that stage although with students having little choice in terms of situation, location, or cost. Demand still outstrips supply within the University, and this is mirrored across the city with students now struggling to navigate a much more competitive private sector than ever before. Our advisers shared insights from our members of up to 20 people at a time attending viewings and having to make decisions and payment immediately, students having very little choice as to their living situation, landlords putting prices up by as much as £300 per month when they saw the level of interest, and students much more vulnerable to increasingly sophisticated scams in this more pressurised environment. This lack of choice, and increase in pressure within the market will continue to be an issue, and we are certain will also lead to more knock-on impacts: more students facing debt further down the line; unsuitable or sub-standard accommodation; difficult living situations with people; with all of these having very tangible impacts on overall wellbeing, mental health and academic performance too.

Covid-19 recovery and re-opening of services
23. Much of our work over the summer has been planning for 'Beyond Level 0' in terms of our services, facilities and activities, and responding to changes in

government and University guidance along the way. With much of our planning contingent on gaining permission from the University for our building operating plans, it has been a race to the finish to be able to confirm our operations and activities in time for students' return, with both us and the University impacted by changing legislation and guidance.

24. The Association is pleased to be offering more services in person, on campus and has had front-facing staff working on campus throughout the pandemic, particularly retail, but scaling up across a wider variety of departments in time for Welcome Week. his began earlier in the spring with the re-opening of Teviot Garden, developed further during Festival, with wider trading sites at Teviot and Pleasance re-opening up, and finally the Advice Place, Representation, and Student Opportunities teams are on site to support students and our student groups as they return to campus in significant numbers.

25. All services continue to operate in a hybrid way, ensuring we retain the positive accessible developments we put in place during the pandemic: advice available via teams appointments for students no matter where they are; online peer forums for our student group leaders to troubleshoot and share ideas, and our Student Council will continue with online meetings for this year.

26. At the same time we also re-opened bookable spaces to our student groups, and saw pre-pandemic levels of interest. We have over 2000 meetings, rehearsals, events and activities now booked into our spaces for semester 1. We anticipate this interest increasing further with limited opportunities within the University for student bookings, and if we cannot accommodate these then students will look to other venues in the city outside the University community.

27. Re-opening services has brought some challenges in terms of being able to maintain a consistent level of staffing and service when self-isolation is required, and we are also supporting staff to navigate a variety of personal concerns about returning to site. Some teams are remaining at home as the default, mainly 'back of house' services such as our finance, people and development and administrative teams. We are therefore continuing with a variety of online engagement and communications that bring all our staff together and support them to feel connected wherever they are working, and many of our onsite staff are also working flexibly which we expect will become the norm across many areas where this is feasible in terms of the service being delivered. Whilst social distancing is no longer required, we are enabling and encouraging 1m+ in our spaces, continued mandatory mask wearing, and other mitigations to ensure staff and students feel comfortable and confident in our spaces.

28. We are phasing some re-opening, noting that not all spaces are able to operate fully due to ventilation works required – we are working with the University on the resolution of these. Other spaces will not reopen based on their (lack of) financial viability as we seek to recover financially from the pandemic impact. The financial picture across the University we understand is bleak and restricted funding does inevitably mean restricted services until we can support more than core provision.

Semester 1 Plans

29. Attention has now turned to delivering our general plans for semester 1, and with so many students back on campus, much of our activity returns to 'business as usual' with some digital delivery elements to enhance them and ensure accessibility.

30. Representation: Our Postgraduate elections are happening in October and will see new taught and research postgraduate School reps elected for every School. We are working with Schools to ensure that the process of Programme Rep selection works across all Schools and will be delivering training to all 1000+. Student Council meets for the first time on 30 September and we are continuing with online meetings on Teams to enable students to attend wherever they are.

31. Food, Drink and Entertainments: We are also planning the further scaling up of our trading operations, in most of our sites including increased but limited provision at Kings Buildings, and our Zero Waste shop will re-open at 40 George Square. We will also reintroduce a greater variety of evening operations, including the return of Big Cheese nightclub, to ensure students have access to a safe and well-run nightclub option on campus with a focus on a fun and safe space for our students to enjoy. The new vaccination passport requirements create some logistical issues to work through, particularly to ensure that those with exemptions do still have access to opportunities to socialise and have fun.

32. Student Groups and Student Community: We were delighted with the response from student groups in helping build the Welcome Week programme both online, and on campus, and also it was clear to see how important their presence was to new and returning students. As anticipated, engagement from, and with these groups is not 'warming up gently', but is bouncing back to above pre-pandemic levels. The 12,700 visits to our fairs represented appetite for students to be able to connect with others with shared interests and take up a wide array of development opportunities. As noted, we have over 2000 student group events booked into our spaces for Semester 1, although challenges do remain with access to spaces to meet, with more limited access than usual to University spaces, and some limits on key spaces too due to ventilation upgrades required.

33. Our teams have trained almost 3,100 **student leaders and representatives** – 2,200 society office bearers and over 600 peer support leaders. c150 of those are supporting our central/generic Buddies, Global Buddies, and Mentoring schemes this year (which complement other School or demographic-based schemes), and over 1,200 students have signed up for those schemes alone. The others support a wide variety of School-based schemes and we'll be monitoring joining numbers as term progresses.

34. **Community volunteering** was one area of work which really did simply stop during the pandemic. We have had some staff changes and have appointed a new Student Opportunities Co-ordinator for Community Volunteering Development to rebuild this area of work and focus on relationship development across the city – both to source new opportunities for student individual and group volunteering, and rebuild our volunteering online 'brokerage'. We've also become an 'accreditation centre' for the Saltire Volunteering Awards, a nationwide scheme in Scotland to recognise time and effort spent on volunteering, which all our volunteers will be able

to participate in, whether volunteering within the Association or beyond. This is a useful addition to the current portfolio of reward and recognition including the Edinburgh Award and Higher Education Achievement Report.

Financial update
35. This update is based on the position at the end of July 2021 (the Association's accounting period 4). A high level view of the position is shown below and is followed by a review of our current year and long term financial forecast.

Summary results: end July, year to date (YTD)

£ 000's	YTD		
	Actual	Budget	Variance
Commercial net income	(238)	(543)	305
Block Grant	1,015	1,015	0
Total net income	776	472	305
Membership Engagement & People Development	(308)	(409)	101
Corporate Services	(380)	(418)	38
Marketing & Communications	(94)	(99)	5
Central Overheads	(44)	(28)	(16)
Total non-commercial expenditure	(826)	(954)	128
Surplus / (deficit)	**(50)**	**(483)**	**433**

Numbers shown in red & brackets denote a net expense or an adverse variance

Central overheads includes income from CJRS government scheme

36. After several months of making a small surplus, the organisation had made a deficit by the end of Period 4 however this is significantly favourable to the budgeted position. The budget for the year is a deficit of £1.1m however revenue-generating activity reopened earlier than expected, and sales were consistently higher than we anticipated, particularly from the Garden at Teviot outdoor café. This has been partially countered by furlough income being close to £200k lower than expected, as more staff were brought back sooner from furlough to operate the venues.

37. Staff costs have reduced significantly over the past two years, with the restructure of 2019 followed by the voluntary programme in late 2020, which together have reduced annual salaried staff costs by well over £1/2m.

38. Results for August are still to be finalised. Key months in the Association's year – August to October – will determine much of the full year position. In turn this will have a significant impact on the time it takes for the Association to recover financially from the impact of the pandemic.

Forecast
39. We have projected a full year position for the current year and modelled a further 9 years. A crucial aspect is the current year position as this will determine the start point from which we will begin the recovery. Based on the results to end July, the forecast indicates a current year deficit of around £670k. This is about £400k favourable to the original budget. This forecast will continue to evolve as new data is

received and trends identified in what is obviously unchartered territory as we come out of the pandemic.

40. The modelled data indicate that a surplus will be made each year from year 2 onward however even with this projected surplus, net assets remain negative at the end of year 10, leaving the Association in a highly vulnerable position.
Great progress at reducing costs has already been made. We believe further opportunities to increase the profitability of existing operations still exists and, because of the pandemic, the operational benefits of the 2019 restructure are yet to be seen in full.

41. Significant risks remain however. The forecast contains assumptions on income growth, including surrounding the core grant from the University which we have assumed will increase at least in line with inflation, but which has actually been static for a number of years despite costs increasing by greater than inflation (RPI or CPI), including those recharged to us by the University . Without this and trading income growth, further cost cutting is likely to be required which very quickly will lead to further tangible service reductions.

42. In terms of actions we do believe it would be hasty to make such cuts now, as opposed to waiting to develop a more justified plan later in this calendar year (post October), and the current focus is on rebuilding on-campus student engagement and providing good service and experience in semester one.

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

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

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

Equality & Diversity
46. 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
47. There are no next steps to be taken as a result of this paper.

Consultation
48. Consultation on this paper was not required.

Further information
49. _Author & Presenter_
    Ellen MacRae, President 21-22

Freedom of Information
50. Open paper

UNIVERSITY COURT

6 October 2021

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. The Sports Union's activity and direction clearly contributes to the following aspects of Strategy 2030:
   i)   The undergraduate curriculum will support breadth and choice, preparing students, graduates and alumni to make a difference in whatever they do, wherever they do it.
   ii)   We will be leading Scotland's commitment to widening participation.
   iii) We will be a destination of choice, based on our clear "Edinburgh Offer". All of our staff and students will develop here, whether they are from Leith, Lisbon, Lahore or Lilongwe.
   iv)   We will have created opportunities for partners, friends, neighbours and supporters to co-create, engage with the world and amplify our impacts.
   v)   We will be on track to be a Carbon-Zero University by 2040.

Action requested/Recommendation
3. Court is invited to note the report, recognising the wider benefit of sport and physical activity to the University community, and consider its contents as supporting other initiatives and projects designed to improve student satisfaction and enhancing the student experience.

Background and context
4. This paper outlines current activity and achievements of EUSU, alongside strategic developments for the future. It is a recent standalone item on the Court agenda, previously an appendix of the Edinburgh University Students Association's report.

Discussion
Return to Play
5. Following on from Scottish Government and SportScotland guidance, indoor and contact sports have been able to return to fully operational levels. This has allowed clubs such as Judo and Cheerleading to offer a proper experience to their members for the first time since February 2020. Outdoor sports have continued to flourish with membership numbers last year, for clubs such as Tennis, being their highest on record.

6. British Universities and College Sport (BUCS) competitions will be returning in their entirety this academic year. BUCS fixtures are a highlight of the sporting calendar for many of our clubs and an opportunity for students to proudly represent their university on a national level. Big Wednesday fixtures are a big part of this and the expansion of the current teaching timetable jeopardises this for the future

removing one of the most engaging and memorable part of the student experience. (See point 20).

Tokyo 2020 (2021)
7. The delayed Olympics weren't without challenge or scepticism, but that did not stop some University of Edinburgh athletes current and past from performing on a world stage. There were in total 15 athletes and four officials/support staff from eight different sports represented by Edinburgh athletes.

8. Competing in their debut Olympics were Alumnae Sarah Adlington, who was knocked out in the round of 32 in the women's +78kg Judo event and MSc Performance Psychology student Seonaid McIntosh who finished 12th in the 10m Air Final and 14th in Women's 50m rifle 3 positions events. Applied Sport Science student Grace Reid narrowly missed out on the semi-final in the 3m Springboard diving event but, with partner Katherine Torrance, finished an admirable 6th place in the Women's synchronized 3m final.

9. In the pool, Architecture student Audai Hasouna finished in 7th place in his 200m Freestyle heat and Accounting and Business student Lucy Hope played a vital role in securing Team GB 5th place in the Women's 4 x 100m Freestyle Relay. The team's time in the final (3.34.03) set a fantastic new British record for the event.

10. On the water, Psychology student Lucy Glover was part of the Team GB W4x rowing crew who finished in first place in the B final, resulting in a final position of 7th in the event. In one of the stories of the games, alumna Polly Swann and her partner Helen Glover came agonisingly close to medalling in the W2 A-final but just missed out with a fourth place finish. Fellow Alumnae Charlotte Dobson finished in 6th place in the 49er FX medal sailing event.

11. In one of the final events, Applied Sport Science graduate Steph Davis, was the first GB women's athlete to cross the marathon finish line in 39th place. A magnificent achievement for an athlete who only ran her first marathon three years ago. There was medal success for fellow Hockey and Law Alumna Sarah Robertson who played a key role throughout the tournament for TeamGB, who secured a brilliant bronze medal with victory over India. Sarah capped her tremendous Tokyo performances with her first Olympic goal in the bronze medal match.

12. Following on from the Olympics, the Paralympics saw even greater success for University of Edinburgh athletes. Swimmers Stephen Clegg and Scott Quin shone on the Paralympic stage with medal success in multiple events. Stephen picking up bronze in the S12 100m backstroke and S12 100m freestyle and Silver in the 100m Fly and Scott securing bronze in the SB14 100m breaststroke final.

Staffing
13. July saw the handover between Katie Macdonald and Gregor Malcolm in terms of Presidency. Katie had a tough tenure as President with very limited in-person activity, but made a massive impact in the student experience of engaging clubs. EUSU wish her all the best for the future.

Club Conference
14. September saw the annual EUSU Club Conference, an opportunity for new committee members to learn best practice and gain confidence before fully undertaking their post at start of semester. Through this we run workshops on Leadership, conflict resolution and inclusive sports clubs – amongst other sessions.

Welcome Week
15. Monday of Welcome Week saw the Sports Fair take place in the fantastic Bristo Square GEM (a new covered temporary outdoor space). Over the course of the day we had over 3500 attendees across the two sessions. Almost all taster sessions or team trials have been fully (or over) subscribed during Welcome Week. This has shown the appetite for sport within the student community and the passion to return to activity/competition.

16. At the end of week one, there are over 1700 club memberships been purchased – this is roughly half of the numbers at this stage pre-pandemic but very telling of a slow yet controlled return to activity and sport. These 1700 students have committed to being involved with the University of Edinburgh community and should be celebrated rather than compared to previous years.

New Club
17. EUSU has grown by one club since the last academic year – our recent addition of Handball has proven very popular and have ran very successful taster sessions throughout Welcome Week. We look forward to watching them grow throughout the year and beyond.

Resource implications
18. This is a regular update report from the Sports Union; therefore, no resource implications are outlined.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals
SDG 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
By the very nature of the Sports Union, we work to promote healthy living and ensure our members are well. Through our collaborative work with Sport and Exercise, we work to ensure as many students and staff as possible have the opportunity to get active.

SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
Our Coaching and Volunteering Academy (CVA) offers two version of the Edinburgh Award, with the opportunity to complete a Leadership version following the completion of the first year. This programme is central to our wider CVA, which works to achieve people development through learning and volunteering. We work closely with Scottish Student Sport (SSS) and British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) to offer our student volunteers the best opportunities to further their learning through educational seminars and workshops.

SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
Our two elected Women in Sport Officers on our Inclusion Committee will continue to work this year to ensure females (and anyone who identifies as female) are empowered across our Sports Union, through various initiatives and fundraisers. Similarly, our Volunteer Zambia programme will hopefully restart this year after a two year hiatus due to COIVD-19. This sees our volunteers work with female coaches in Lusaka to upskill these individuals and empower them to become better leaders.

SDG 8: Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all
EUSU strives to provide a good working environment for all staff, promoting a flexible schedule for each individual. Through our CVA, we support internal staff development to ensure all CPD opportunities are utilised. EUSU aims to keep costs lost for students across all activity.

SDG 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries
Our Inclusion Committee contains representatives from a variety of previous underrepresented groups, including LGBT+ Officer; Trans and Non-Binary Officer; International Students Officer; Disabled Students Officer; Postgraduate Students Officer; Ethnic Minorities Officer; Women in Sport Officer and Widening Access Officer. From their work last year in consulting with these groups more widely, we are now pulling together the first ever EUSU Inclusion Survey which we hope to promote widely throughout this year to all clubs and members.

SDG 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
We have a huge drive for all our club's playing kit to be environmentally friendly in collaboration with our partner PlayerLayer. We have worked with the Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability to reduce and adapt all travel carried out to minimise the carbon footprint. Furthermore, we are working on projects to off-set emissions from travel.

Equality & Diversity
19. Equality and Diversity considerations are implicitly included in this paper. EUSU are committed to offering opportunities to students regardless of their background, working alongside our Inclusion Committee to break down barriers to sport and physical activity for underrepresented groups. EUSU represents the interests of a diversity of student groups and must ensure we maintain the equal representation of students and student groups.

Next steps/implications
20. An implication of this paper which Court are asked to consider is the protection of Wednesday afternoon time for student experience and recreation, as this loss would be detrimental to the wider student experience and wellbeing. We understand that sacrifices had to be made to allow for in person teaching to return but ask that going forward this is not seen as standard practise. We are grateful for the continual support from Court members thus far in protecting this time, and hopefully enabling students to develop a greater sense of belonging to both the city and the University.

If any Court members would be interested in hearing more about the work of the Sports Union and meeting some of our incredible volunteers, please do not hesitate to get in touch on sports.president@ed.ac.uk.

Consultation
21. Consultation on this paper was not required.

Further information
22. *Author*
    Gregor Malcolm
    Sports Union President
    September 2021

Freedom of Information
23. Open paper.

UNIVERSITY COURT

6 October 2021

Director of Finance's Report

Description of paper

Paragraph 1: Closed section

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

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

Background and context
4. The paper provides a regular update on finance related issues for Court.

Paragraphs 5-19: Closed section

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

Equality & Diversity
21. 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
22. We would welcome feedback as outlined in the discussion above.

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

Further information
24. *Authors*   *Presenter*
     Rachael Robertson   Lee Hamill
     Deputy Director of Finance   Director of Finance

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

     23 September 2021

Freedom of Information
25. Closed paper.

THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

UNIVERSITY COURT

6 October 2021

Performance Measures to Support Strategy 2030

Description of paper
1.   This paper provides Court with an update on the development of a Strategic Performance Measurement Framework to support engagement with, and measurement of delivery of, Strategy 2030. The attached annexes present an initial long-list of measures which is being developed in consultation with colleagues across the University.

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

Action requested/Recommendation
3.   Court is asked to approve the Measures presented in Annexes A and B and to note:
- Annex A presents the highest level strategic indicators for reporting to Court.
- Annex B presents a complementary set of measures under development for reporting to University Executive – these are likely to be flexed more frequently as priorities change over time.

Court is asked to note that we will continue to engage with individual data contributors and other stakeholders to finalise details for the measures, with a view to curating and refining a living set of metrics.

Paragraphs 4-19: Closed section

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals
20. 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.

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

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

Next steps/implications
23. We will continue to engage with subject leads and data holders to further develop and refine measures, including setting milestones where appropriate.

24. When this phase of development has concluded, and our initial set of Court and University Executive measures has been agreed, we will develop an online resource to allow the University community to engage with the SPF, and to access information, data and narrative for our measures, noting the importance of carry-through to the annual planning process. Our strategic Court Key Performance Indicators will be reported on our Strategy 2030 web pages and in the annual report and accounts. Over time we will aim to disaggregate measures, as appropriate, to allow each area to understand their contribution.

25. As part of the maintenance aspect of this work, we will regularly review the Strategic Performance Framework, to check the validity of measures being used, and report to the University Executive and Court as appropriate.

Consultation
26. To develop this set of key performance indicators we have consulted across the University, and we will continue to engage as we refine the SPF.

Further information
27. _Authors_   _Presenter_
    Jennifer McGregor   Rona Smith
    Strategic Planning   Director of Strategic Planning & Insight

    Pauline Manchester
    Strategic Planning

Freedom of Information
28. This paper is closed as the performance measures represent policy under development. The Court measures will be shared on the University website once finalised.

UNIVERSITY COURT

6 October 2021

People and Money Implementation

Description of paper
1. This paper provides a revised and recommended plan for the implementation of the People and Money System which underpins our HR and Finance Transformation programmes.

Paragraphs 2-45: Closed section

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals
46. There are no direct impacts or considerations.

Equality & Diversity
47. The programme team is equipped to carry out Equality Impact Assessments.

Communications
48. A comprehensive communication and engagement plan exist for the People and Money, HR and Finance Transformation programmes.

49. A review/revised approach to communications is being undertaken in recognition of the proposals being put forward and developed with the Director of Communications & Marketing and team.

Paragraphs 50-52: Closed section

Further information
52. *Author*

    Barry Neilson
    Director of Strategic Change

Presenters

Dave Robertson
Vice-Principal and Head of College of Science & Engineering

Gavin McLachlan
Vice-Principal, Chief Information Officer & Librarian to the University

Barry Neilson
Director of Strategic Change

Freedom of Information
53. Closed paper – commercially confidential.

UNIVERSITY COURT

6 October 2021

People and Money: Governance & Assurance Changes

Description of paper
1. This paper sets out the package of governance and assurance changes to the People & Money programme to ensure that the implementation of the project is given sufficient and sustained priority and support over the coming months.

Paragraphs 2-12: Closed section

Resource implications/Risk Management/Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals/Equality & Diversity/ Communications
13. These are all as set out in the previous paper.

Paragraphs 14-15: Closed section

Further information
16. *Authors* | *Presenter*

Proposals: Peter Mathieson | Peter Mathieson
Principal & Vice-Chancellor | Principal & Vice-Chancellor

Plans for implementation of new arrangements:
Barry Neilson, Director of Strategic Change

Paper drafting: Lewis Allan
Head of Court Services

Freedom of Information
17. Closed paper – commercially confidential.

UNIVERSITY COURT

6 October 2021

Edinburgh BioQuarter – Update on Formalising Partnership Arrangements and Procurement of a Private Sector Partner

Description of paper

1. This paper follows previous communications through University Court and its committees relating to the Edinburgh BioQuarter and covers:
    i. formalising the partnership initially between the University, Scottish Enterprise and the City of Edinburgh Council ("the BioQuarter partners" or "Partners"); and,
    ii. the preparations to launch the public procurement process to select a preferred Private Sector Partner (PSP), ultimately leading to the formal strategic joint venture arrangements.

2. The proposals in this paper contribute to a number of the outcomes set out in Strategy 2030, namely:
    i. We will see our research having a greater impact as a result of partnership, international reach and investment in emergent disciplines.
    ii. We will be a global leader in artificial intelligence and the use of data with integrity.
    iii. Improved digital outreach will see us enabling global participation in education.
    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.
    vii. We will deliver inclusive growth and create new companies and solutions for global challenges.
    viii. We will see integrated reporting of our whole organisational impact against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.
    ix. We will be on track to be a Carbon-Zero University by 2040.
    x. Multidisciplinary postgraduate education pathways will support flexible whole-life learning.
    xi. We will support learning, research and collaboration with our neighbours, businesses and partners.

Paragraphs 3-38: Closed section

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

39. BioQuarter responds positively to several of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, namely:
    i. *Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages* – BioQuarter objectives include advancing healthcare discoveries, improving people's lives and enhancing health and wellbeing.
    ii. *Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all* - BioQuarter has the potential to play an important role in creating educational, employment and social-good opportunities for

neighbouring communities, some of which are recognised as the most socially and economically disadvantaged areas in the City of Edinburgh, Scotland and Europe.

iii. *Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all* – significant skilled work opportunities with associated Gross Value Added over the life of the partnership.

iv. *Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation* – BioQuarter aiming to attract private sector funding to deliver c.£1bn development on site creating a global destination for pioneering health and care innovation and enterprise.

v. *Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable* – creating a vibrant, urban quarter of the city that is porous to existing communities, creating adaptable and resilient spaces, and improving health and wellbeing through design.

vi. *Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts* – with objectives to deliver a net zero development in terms of operational carbon, achieve biodiversity gains across the site

Equality & Diversity

40. A principal driver behind the plans for BioQuarter is to bring positive impact to the local communities neighbouring BioQuarter in terms of social and economic benefits and inclusive growth, with the partners commissioning a social and economic impact assessment that is reflected in the Outline Business Case. Some of the surrounding neighbourhoods are recognised as the most socially and economically disadvantaged areas in the City of Edinburgh, Scotland and Europe. The BioQuarter partners therefore understand the crucial role BioQuarter has the potential to play in creating educational, employment and social-good opportunities all of which has a strong connection to the University's Strategy 2030. Further, the major investment into the City Deal, and in particular the Data-Driven Innovation (DDI) related funding for the Usher Institute, has close alignment with the wider strategic plans for BioQuarter. This reflects the growing importance of data in realising inclusive economic growth, social change and improving public services including social and healthcare. As a result, the Partners have included Community in the public procurement which will be evaluated against specified criteria alongside Development, Innovation and Legal to complete the theme-based evaluation.

Paragraphs 40-43: Closed section

Further Information

44. On 17 February 2020, a positioning paper was supported by Court (which had already been supported at University Executive in December 2019 and Policy & Resources Committee in January 2020) setting out the earlier direction of travel towards a formal joint venture approach.
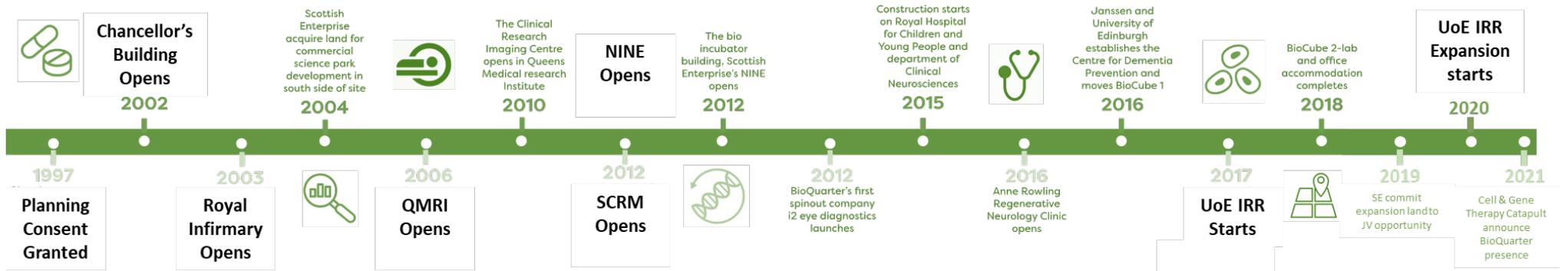
45. *Author & Presenter*
    Ashley Shannon, Director of Operations, Corporate Services Group
    27 September 2021

Freedom of Information

46. Closed paper – commercially sensitive. Disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of the University and the other BioQuarter partners.

Appendix 1 – BioQuarter High Level Timeline

Chancellor's Building Opens
2002

Scottish Enterprise acquire land for commercial science park development in south side of site
2004

2006

The Clinical Research Imaging Centre opens in Queens Medical research Institute
2010

NINE Opens

The bio incubator building, Scottish Enterprise's NINE opens
2012

Construction starts on Royal Hospital for Children and Young People and department of Clinical Neurosciences
2015

Janssen and University of Edinburgh establishes the Centre for Dementia Prevention and moves BioCube 1
2016

BioCube 2-lab and office accommodation completes
2018

UoE IRR Expansion starts
2020

1997

Planning Consent Granted

2003

Royal Infirmary Opens

2006

QMRI Opens

2012

SCRM Opens

2012

BioQuarter's first spinout company i2 eye diagnostics launches

2016

Anne Rowling Regenerative Neurology Clinic opens

2017

UoE IRR Starts

2019

SE commit expansion land to JV opportunity

2021

Cell & Gene Therapy Catapult announce BioQuarter presence

UNIVERSITY COURT

6 October 2021

Carbon Sequestration through Forests and Peatland

Description of paper
1. This paper updates Court on recent progress with prioritising investment in carbon sequestration though forests and peatland. This is a key element of our response to the climate and associated biodiversity crises.

Paragraphs 2-17: Closed section

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals
18. The proposed action will directly contribute to SDG 13 "*Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts"* as well as SDG 8 *(inclusive economic growth),* SDG 12 *(sustainable consumption and production)* and SDG 15 *(life on land).*

Equality & Diversity
19. Climate change impacts disproportionately on the world's poorest and most vulnerable including women and children in the developing world. Tackling climate change makes a major contribution to global justice, gender, education and protection of natural resources

Paragraphs 20-21: Closed section

Further information
22. *Authors*
Sandy Tudhope, University Lead on Climate Responsibility

Dave Gorman, Director of Social Responsibility and Sustainability

Presenter
Sandy Tudhope
University Lead on Climate Responsibility & Professor of Climate Studies

Freedom of Information
23. Closed due to commercial sensitivity.

UNIVERSITY COURT

6 October 2021

Annual Report to the Scottish Funding Council on Institution-led Review and Enhancement Activity 2020/21

Description of paper
1. The University is required on an annual basis to provide the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) with a report on its activities to effectively manage quality assurance and deliver on enhancement. This annual report requires approval by Court.

2. This paper does not contribute to the Strategy 2030 outcomes. It is a regulatory requirement.

Action requested/Recommendation
3. Court is invited to consider and approve the annual report, confirming that it provides Court with the required assurances on the effectiveness of the arrangements put in place by Senate in respect of quality and enhancement of education provision prior to the annual report being submitted to the SFC.

4. The content of the annual report was approved by the Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) on 16 September. The report was transmitted to eSenate (21-29 September 2021) for comment and noting. Comments from eSenate and the initial consideration of these are included in Appendix 1.

5. Court is asked to approve the annual report and authorise the Senior Lay Member of Court to sign the following statement:

> 'On behalf of the governing body of the University of Edinburgh, I confirm that we have considered the institution's arrangements for the management of academic standards and the quality of the learning experience for academic year 2020/21, including the scope and impact of these. I further confirm that we are satisfied that the institution has effective arrangements to maintain standards and to assure and enhance the quality of its provision. We can therefore provide assurance to the Council that the academic standards and the quality of the learning provision at this institution continue to meet the requirements set by the Council.'

Background and context
6. In terms of the University's statutory framework, roles and responsibilities for quality assurance and enhancement are detailed on the [quality website](#).

7. The University's annual report to the SFC on its institutional-led review and enhancement activity is produced in accordance with guidance prepared by the SFC. The exact format is at the discretion of the institution.

8. In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, Court is asked to note:
   - This year's annual report includes the outcomes of the annual monitoring, review and reporting process for 2019/20 as the timescale for reporting was extended.
   - Information on the impact on the internal periodic review schedule is included.

Discussion

9. The annual report draws on the outputs of institutional-led review and enhancement activity: internal periodic review; annual monitoring, review and reporting; student support thematic review; and student support services annual review. The report also contains a narrative on consideration of student data. The report includes a list of provision reviewed in 2020/21 and gives an indication of the forward schedule of reviews for the next cycle. The report also includes a list of the programmes which were reviewed by professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRB) during 2020/21.

10. The full report is available under the 'Additional Information' section on the Court wiki site (https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/UCC/University+Court) or via this direct link and is summarised below.

11. The contents of the annual report are prescribed by the SFC and cover:
   - Summary of the institutional-led review outcomes from the preceding academic year including main themes, recommendations and/or commendations
   - Ways in which support services were reviewed
   - Role and nature of student engagement in institution-led review
   - Contextual information and key messages from analysis of data
   - Summary

Summary of the institution-led review outcomes from the preceding academic year including main themes, recommendations and/or commendations
1. Institution-led Review

Areas of Good practice
   - The dedicated support provided and commitment and leadership shown by both academic and professional services staff, including in challenging circumstances due to the pandemic.
   - The consideration of equality, diversity and inclusion throughout many aspects, including recruitment, support for student-led initiatives, online activity to support widening participation and funding.
   - Community building activities, initiated by both staff and students.
   - Approaches to listening to the student voice.

Areas for further development
   - Tutors and demonstrators. Recommendations covered training, the provision of information, allocation of work, and support.

2. *Annual monitoring, review and reporting 2019/20*

   Themes of positive practice for sharing at University level
   - Student and staff welfare: sense of community, support provided to students by staff, and local level communication.
   - Teaching and learning: positive innovations as a result of the transition to hybrid teaching and partnership approach to curriculum adaptation.
   - Assessment: adaptions to and diversification of assessment methods were well received by students and staff.
   - Equality, diversity and inclusion: Schools strove to promote an inclusive learning environment during the pandemic.
   - Administration: the rapid development of new and innovative administrative systems and procedures, including the move to online Boards of Examiners and PhD vivas.

   Areas for further development at the University level:
   - Staff Welfare. Schools expressed concern that the pandemic had exacerbated existing staffing and workload pressures.
   - Communication. A theme that emerged across School reports was University communications to students and staff and the need to ensure that University level communications to students align with local communications and plans as a key element to managing student expectations. There was also a widespread desire from staff for more information and clarity in relation to initiatives or projects that were halted due to the pandemic.
   - Equality, diversity and inclusion. Schools highlighted the impact of the pandemic on students with protected characteristics, caring responsibilities, and students from widening participation backgrounds
   - Extensions and Special Circumstances. Schools reported that the implementation of the Extensions and Special Circumstance (ESC) system had been very challenging, causing additional workload for staff at a time when they were already under pressure.
   - Online learning platforms. Schools highlighted issues with the online learning platforms that the University had in place at the start of the pandemic, in part reflecting the rapid shift to digital delivery, and reported a desire for a strategic assessment of digital learning platforms to ensure they are fit for purpose going forward.
   - On-campus space and resources. Access to the University's on-campus space and resources continued to be a theme across School reports. Concerns were raised in terms of the consistency of quality and suitability of teaching and community building space that was under strain before the pandemic and which may be under further strain when students return to campus under social distancing constraints. In addition, Schools noted the impact of expanding student numbers on an estate already under strain, and timetabling challenges including delays and lack of suitable rooms.
   - Assessment and Progression Tools (APT). Some Schools (predominantly in the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences) reported issues with the functionality and reliability of APT.

3. *Annual monitoring, review and reporting 2020/21*

    Themes of positive practice for sharing at University level
    - Community Building: the sense of community evoked by the pandemic and support that academic and professional service staff provided for their students and each other.
    - Online/Hybrid Enhancements: in response to the pandemic, Schools/Deaneries developed new approaches to teaching & learning and administrative systems and procedures.
    - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: there were a number of initiatives by Schools striving to promote an inclusive learning environment.

    Areas for further development at the University level:
    - Staff Welfare and Student Experience. There are ongoing concerns that the pandemic has exacerbated existing issues in relation to staffing and workload pressures. This year's reports raised concerns that these may now be impacting the student experience.
    - Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion. Increasingly Schools/Deaneries have engaged with student data and reflected on the gaps in attainment of different groups of students within their local area and across the University. Concerns were raised in a number of reports about the University's support of students with protected characteristics, particularly in relation to the impact of the pandemic. The issues have been widely discussed and Schools/Deaneries would now like support from the University to address the underlying causes.
    - Online/Hybrid Platforms. In response to the pandemic, Schools/Deaneries developed new approaches to teaching & learning and administrative systems and procedures. They would like to maintain and carry these innovations into the post-pandemic world and, to support this aspiration, there is a general desire for a strategic assessment of the University's online learning platforms with the aim of improving functionality and suitability.

4. *Contextual information and key messages from analysis of data*

    The report confirms that the 2021 institutional level results of the National Student Survey, Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey and Postgraduate Research Experience Survey are being considered. The report then outlines the outcomes of discussions at Senate Quality Assurance Committee on trends in undergraduate degree classification outcomes. A summary of analysis on retention and themes from external examiner reports are also outlined in the report alongside a commentary on widening participation.

5. *Summary*

    Actions undertaken and planned are outlined in the report under the headings of: Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR); strategy and strategic projects; equality, diversity and inclusion; student voice; and widening access.

    Senate Quality Assurance Committee will remit issues requiring further development to relevant committees and roles for action.

Resource implications

12. There are no specific resource implications associated with the report. Actions are expected to be taken forward within current budgets or, if additional resources are identified, to be proposed via the planning round.

Risk Management

13. The provision of a high quality student experience is a high level risk on the University's Strategic Risk Register, and is overseen by the Risk Management Committee reporting to Audit & Risk Committee and Court. Additionally, failure in effectiveness of the quality assurance framework, including aligning review activity with external expectations and taking action on findings, constitutes an institutional risk.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

14. This paper does not contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals. It is a regulatory requirement.

Equality & Diversity

15. Equality impact assessments are carried out on University quality assurance polices and processes.

Next steps/implications

16. Following approval of the report by Court the document will be submitted to the SFC.

Consultation

17. The content was approved by the Senate Quality Assurance Committee on 16 September 2021 and was circulated to eSenate (21-29 September) for comment and noting.

Further information

20. *Author*s

Professor Tina Harrison
Assistant Principal Academic
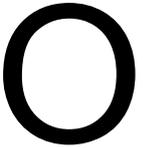Standards and Quality Assurance

Nichola Kett, Academic Services

Presenter

Professor Tina Harrison
Assistant Principal Academic Standards
and Quality Assurance

Freedom of Information

21. Open paper.

UNIVERSITY COURT

6 October 2021

Singapore Office Bank Account

Description of paper
1. In order to enable the University's activities in Southeast Asia and the Australasia region, it is recommended that a bank account be opened to support the activities of the University's Singapore Branch Office.

Paragraphs 2-10: Closed section

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals
11. The outcome of this paper does not have an impact on the University's response to the climate emergency or the sustainable development goals.

Equality & Diversity
12. There are no equality & diversity issues associated with this decision.

Next steps/implications
13. If approved by Court, the Deputy Director Edinburgh Global will instruct the opening of the corporate account in Singapore.

Further information
14. *Author*   *Presenter*
      Chris Yeomans   Lee Hamill
      Deputy Director, Edinburgh Global   Director of Finance

Freedom of Information
15. Closed paper.

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

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UNIVERSITY COURT

6 October 2021

Donations and Legacies; Alumni Events

Description of paper
1. A report on legacies and donations received by the University of Edinburgh Development Trust or directly by the University from 28 May 2021 to 12 September 2021.

2. The paper also includes an update on current alumni relations activities.

3. 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
4. Court is invited to note the legacies and donations received and the update on current alumni relations activities.

Paragraphs 5-7: Closed section

8. Summary of current alumni relations activities.

Alumni sharing insights and experience
9. We continue to actively facilitate alumni volunteer involvement in an array of events and activities for prospective and current students. The alumni relations team hosted a virtual alumni stand as part of Undergraduate Virtual Open Days in June, giving our future students an insight into the University community and the opportunities available to them including how they can connect with alumni during their studies.

10. Alumni took part in a number of online sessions to support postgraduate offer holders including an event for future LLM students from India, where we were delighted to have one of our Being Edinburgh finalists, Akhil Ennamsetty, as a speaker.

11. In the run up to the new academic year, our alumni supported a range of pre-departure activities including two online sessions for our new postgraduate students with alumni panellists sharing insights and advice and taking questions directly from the students. Alumni also supported an informal online pre-departure event for new students from Latin America and the University of Edinburgh Alumni Association of Shenzhen held their first event for new students before they set off for Scotland.

Alumni events
12. A number of alumni events have taken place over the summer months and while many remain virtual, some have been held in-person as restrictions in some locations ease. These included alumni club events in China and Switzerland and,

after a long pause on reunions during the pandemic, a Medical School reunion took place in Edinburgh in September.

13. Virtually we have supported collaborative Scottish Universities events for alumni in India and the first in a series for alumni in Africa, as well as a number of School specific alumni gatherings and online anniversary reunions.

Student Experience Grants 10th anniversary
14. The Student Experience Grants scheme has generated many inspiring student stories over the years. To celebrate their 10-year milestone in 2021, we have captured some of these stories through a special edition of the Multi Story Edinburgh podcast and a selection of written features.

15. The Student Experience Grants are one-off contributions of up to £5,000 to support innovative projects and initiatives that will enhance students' social, academic, entrepreneurial, sporting or cultural development. Alumni and friends of the University make the Student Experience Grants possible through their donations to the Edinburgh Fund and a new series of infographics has been developed to illustrate the impact of alumni funding.

16. The new anniversary content is available on a dedicated website here. It will be used to communicate the achievements of the scheme with alumni and donors and to promote future application rounds across the University.

Edinburgh Snap Reunion 2021
17. Building on the success of last summer, the Edinburgh Snap Reunion returned in July. This social media initiative is a moment to reflect, recognise and celebrate the many ways the University of Edinburgh community is connected, using just a single photo.

18. This year's theme celebrated companionship, compassion and community. Those taking part posted a photo with a Covid Companion - the person, pet - or object - that helped sustain them during the difficult past year, creating a vibrant tapestry of images and captions shared across social media channels.

Sharing things and Multi Story Edinburgh podcasts
19. The fourth season of the Sharing things podcast wrapped up in June with an episode featuring GP and writer, Gavin Francis, in conversation with first year Sociology student, Rose Meikle. You can listen to their conversation about changing landscapes, living through history and capturing memories here. A fifth season was recorded throughout August featuring a new student intern host, Ayanda Ngobeni, who is a 4th year Law Student and MasterCard Foundation Scholar. Season five will launch at the end of September and guests include zoologist and TV presenter, George McGavin, and our new Rector, Debora Kayembe.

20. Following a series of bespoke communications for our graduating students in collaboration with the Careers Service, the new series of the Multi Story Edinburgh podcast launched at the end of August with five honest and thought-provoking episodes featuring new graduates from the Class of 2021. Hear some of

our most recent alumni talk candidly about their experiences of the last year and their hopes for the future here.

Resource implications

21. There are no specific resource implications associated with this paper. The funds received will be appropriately managed in line with the donors' wishes.

Risk Management

22. There are policies and procedures in place to mitigate risks associated with funding activities including the procedure for the ethical screening of donations.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

23. 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

24. There are no specific equality and diversity issues associated with the paper. Cognisance is however 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.

Next steps/implications

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

Consultation

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

Further information

27. _Authors_
    Gregor Hall, Finance Manager
    Natalie Fergusson, Global Alumni Clubs and Groups Manager
    Development & Alumni Office

Freedom of Information

28. Closed paper