THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

KNOWLEDGE STRATEGY COMMITTEE

30 May 2024, Brenda Moon Boardroom, Floor K, Argyle House/Microsoft Teams

Web Version   **Minute**

Present: Shereen Benjamin, Court appointee (by videocall)
Richard Blythe, Court appointee
Patrick Hadoke, Senate appointee
Colm Harmon, Interim Convener
Carl Harper, Student member
Tina Harrison, Senate appointee (by videocall)
Melissa Highton, Senate appointee
Sarah McAllister, Court appointee
Gavin McLachlan, Vice-Principal, Chief Information Officer and Librarian to the University

In attendance: Rick Arnautovic, CAHSS representative (by videocall)
Anne-Marie Coriat, CMVM representative (by videocall)
Jo Craiglee, Head of Knowledge Management & IS Planning (by videocall)
Lisa Dawson, Academic Registrar (by videocall)
Bryne Ngwenya, CSE representative (by videocall)
Rona Smith, Deputy Secretary Governance & Strategic Planning
Jamie Tait, Governance Manager
Dylan Walch, EUSA Vice-President Education Elect
Muriel Mewissen, Portfolio and Team Manager for University Secretary's Group (USG) and the Colleges (for agenda item 6)
Barry Croucher, Head of Help Services (for agenda item 9) (by videocall)
Hannah Mateer, Head of Collections Services (for agenda item 9) (by videocall)
Jeremy Upton, Director of Library and University Collections (for agenda item 9)
Carina Svensen, Director of Accommodation, Catering and Events (for agenda item 10) (by videocall)
Andrew Glass, Head of ACE ICT (for agenda item 10) (by videocall)
Alistair Fenemore, Chief Information Security Officer (for agenda item 11) (by videocall)

Apologies: Siân Bayne, Senate appointee
Lee Hamill, Director of Finance
Lisa Kendall, CAHSS representative
Catherine Martin, Vice-Principal Corporate Services
Barry Neilson, Director of Strategic Change

1   Minute   **Paper A**

Members and attendees were welcomed to the meeting.

The Convener noted that Barry Neilson, Director of Strategic Change, was leaving the University at the end of the month and thanked him for his contributions to the Knowledge Strategy Committee (KSC). Thanks were also given to Carl Harper, Edinburgh University Students' Association (EUSA) Vice-President Education, at their last meeting. Dylan Walch, EUSA Vice-President Education elect, was welcomed to the meeting and it was confirmed he would be the EUSA representative on KSC for 2024/25.

The minute of the meeting held on 21 March 2024 was approved, subject to an amendment of a date in section 5:

- ***Artificial Intelligence***. *The recommendations from the short-life working group convened by Michael Rovatsos, Professor of Artificial Intelligence, would come back to the KSC meeting in May ~~2023~~ 2024.*

2   Matters Arising   Verbal

The Convener noted that the recommendations from the short-life working group convened by Michael Rovatsos, Professor of Artificial Intelligence, would now be presented to KSC in October 2024. It was noted that the short life working group had disbanded, with an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Taskforce now set up in its place, also chaired by Professor Rovatsos. The Taskforce is responsible for implementing the recommendations from the working group, and has been allocated a budget in order to seed fund AI related projects, including building an AI best practice community, and links between AI and academic integrity. It was agreed that an update from the Taskforce would also be given at the October 2024 meeting.

SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS

3   University Digital Strategy and Digital Estate   Paper B

The Committee discussed the high-level outline of the University Digital Strategy and Digital Estate, an overview of the University Digital Strategy and plans for the Digital Estate.

The Vice-Principal, Chief Information Officer and Librarian to the University noted the Digital Strategy aligns with Strategy 2030, having the same focus areas of People, Research, Teaching and Learning, and Social and Civic Responsibility. These are underpinned by the Digital Estate. A 10-year University Digital Estate Roadmap had been developed and the University Digital Estate Capital Plan supported the investment needed to deliver the Strategy. It was also reported an Estates Committee seminar had recently taken place to consider the University Digital Strategy and Digital Estate. The Seminar was supportive of the Strategy and commended the work that had been undertaken.

In discussion the Committee noted the following:

- Overall ownership of the Digital Strategy would sit with KSC, which would also review its progress. It was confirmed this would be in the form of an annual or bi-annual progress report.
- The importance of communicating the Strategy. It was confirmed that a full communications approach was in place, and upon approval, it was crucial that awareness of the Strategy was raised across the University community.
- There are 10-year roadmaps for each theme within the Digital Estate Heatmap, with the roadmap showing items where work is taking place or expected to take place.
- Feedback from postgraduate research students to be included in the Key Performance Indicator of "Excellent University Community Experience". It was suggested this could draw on responses to relevant questions in the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey.
- A summary of progress on the substantive Digital Estate projects, along with an overview of plans for the Digital Estate in support of University Digital Strategy and Strategy 2030, would be produced for each KSC meeting going forward.

The Committee were supportive of the Strategy and recommended for approval the University Digital Strategy to University Court (17 June) via Policy and Resources Committee (3 June).

4   Chief Information Officer Update   Verbal

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

- **Visit from John Edwards, UK Information Commissioner.** The UK Information Commissioner recently met with the Principal, Director of EPCC and the Vice-Principal and Chief Information Officer, and Librarian to the University.
- **Zoom licence**. It was noted that a small number of Schools remain regular users of Zoom, and the University is therefore renewing its licence for a further year. It was noted that Zoom will only negotiate at an individual institutional level and not on a national sector level. It was also noted that Microsoft Teams and Collaborate (the University supported virtual classroom and meeting tool) are the other widely used video conferencing/collaboration platforms.
- **Printer use**. There will soon be a wide consultation on the use of printers, with the aim of reducing the number on the estate, both in order to help reduce costs and for environmental reasons.
- **Digital Accessibility**. Digital accessibility regulations mean that public sector bodies have a legal obligation to meet accessibility requirements for their websites. The University is currently the subject of two digital accessibility audits, one of which is on how external members of the University use our recruitment website and functionality.

5   Knowledge Strategy Committee Governance Update   Paper C

The Committee noted an update on governance relating to KSC, its thematic committees and other related committees and groups. It was also noted that an

internal audit review of the Estates Committee, and effectiveness reviews of both University Court and Senate, would feed into the discussions. An options paper would be submitted to the KSC meeting in October 2024.

6   Enabling Curriculum Transformation   Paper D

Muriel Mewissen, Portfolio and Team Manager for the University Secretary's Group (USG) and Colleges, gave a short presentation on the outcome of the impact assessment, of the potential roll-out of the proposed new curriculum, on Information Services Group (ISG) managed systems and services. The significant impact, effort and potential cost was highlighted, set in a context of an extended period of time. Assessment is currently being undertaken on the split between postgraduate taught and undergraduate to respond to feedback from the University Initiatives Portfolio Board (UIPB). It was noted that, in order to help reduce risk and impact a number of elements would require to be developed, including obtaining a full set of technical requirements and a clear and well managed scope.

The Convener noted that the business case under development was proposing a phased rollout with different timelines for postgraduate taught (PGT) programmes, undergraduate (UG) programmes and new elements of the curriculum. An outline business case (OBC) was presented to the UIPB in May, and the Curriculum Transformation Project (CTP) is currently coordinating feedback to the UIPB, to allow the UIPB to make a recommendation to University Executive.

The Committee welcomed the update and detailed conversations and planning that had taken place. It was confirmed that parallel discussions in relation to non-ISG systems were also taking place to ensure work was aligned and the business case fully informed. It was noted that the full business case (FBC) should clearly demonstrate the benefits of CTP, recognising the context of competing areas for potential investment.

7   Captioning Project Update and Service Improvement   Paper E

Melissa Highton, Director of Learning, Teaching and Web Services and Assistant Principal Online Learning, provided an update on the progress and findings of the Captioning Project and on what is planned for the future for the project. It was noted that captions play a key part in making content accessible and inclusive, and in order to encourage increased use of captions, it was recommended to switch them on by default for both Media Hopper Replay (Lecture Recording) and Media Hopper Create (Media Streaming Service). It was confirmed that the quality of captioning had improved and both services had the most up-to-date technology.

The following points were raised in discussion:

- The membership of the Captioning Service Project Board for 2023/24 included staff and students with hearing loss and significant equality, diversity and inclusion experience.
- The project provides paid work for students to work as captioners, with flexibility on hours and hybrid working.

- Any recording with a confidence score of 90% and over would be automatically published by default. This would be regularly reviewed and can be changed if required. It was confirmed that the confidence score was generated by AI.
- Any potential difficulties with certain words or phrases can be flagged in advance.
- A sentence could be shown at the start of each recording to note that automatic captions had been used.

Having sought assurance around the ability to highlight errors and have these addressed, and to pre-warn students of the automatic basis of captioning, KSC were strongly supportive of the project, noting the value it added to the student experience. KSC therefore approved the recommendation that, in line with the discussion at the previous meeting, automated captions are turned on by default on two services starting next academic year – Media Hopper Replay (Lecture Recording) and Media Hopper Create (Media Streaming Service).

The Committee noted the service would be formally launched with communication going out across the University, including to students with adjustment, staff in the Disability and Learning Support Service and School Student Advisers.

It was also recommended a short paper be submitted to the next Senate Education Committee to confirm this decision, and a one-page crib sheet for staff in advance of the automated captions being turned on would be helpful.

8   Student Analytics to Underpin Student Support   Paper F

Lisa Dawson, Academic Registrar, presented a paper with the outcomes of a pilot study undertaken to assess whether the data held within our core University systems could identify changes in patterns of student engagement enabling early and targeted interventions and support for students. It was noted an OBC had been presented to Senate Education Committee in November 2023, who endorsed the next phase of work to develop a full business case to introduce student analytics as an underpinning technology for student support. Earlier this month, the Student Lifecycle Management Group discussed the use of student analytics and its practical application within Schools, with positive feedback from this session.

The Committee welcomed the update, noting the project was about supporting our staff and students and helping make potentially earlier decisions. The following points were raised in discussion:

- Learn was used as the critical data source for the pilot and would therefore be key as the project moves into Phase 2.
- As a Digital Estate related project, this could be included within the roadmap.
- The importance of clearly defining procurement requirements in Phase 2.
- The need to protect student data with clear communications, helping mitigate any mistrust or negative reactions.
- Phase 2 will involve UG, PGT and PGR students, with the outcome of the study aiming to support the objective of the new student support model. It was

recommended to include PGR supervisors and the Doctoral College in Phase 2 to ensure PGR students are involved in this work.

KSC noted the outcomes of the pilot study and endorsed the proposed next steps.

ITEMS FOR FORMAL APPROVAL OR NOTING

9   Library Book Management (RFID) Full Business Case   Paper G

The Committee considered the FBC for a Library Book Management (RFID - Radio Frequency Identification) project. This project would replace outdated self-service and book security equipment at the University's Main Library and nine site libraries, and add RFID tags to an estimated one million open-shelf library items.

The Director of Library & University Collections noted that the current technology at the University is becoming obsolete, and market intelligence showed that RFID would remain for the foreseeable future and is the standard technology for libraries in the higher education and other sectors. The project would also provide an improved student experience through secure collections and the development of services in line with evolving technologies.

The Committee approved the FBC and agreed for it to be added to the roadmap, noting capacity to support the project by ISG would be subject to the final outcome of the University's planning round. If supported, this would be taken forward under the Collections 2025 Programme. The Committee also agreed it would be useful to see longer-term trends of Library usage at a KSC meeting in 2024/25.

**10   Accommodation, Catering and Events Kx System Direct Award Full   Paper H
          Business Case (Including Kx Hosting)**

The Committee noted the contract renewal for the Kx system by direct award via the Advanced Procurement for Universities and Colleges (APUC) framework, as well as the project to move on-premise Kx databases and applications to Kinetic Solutions managed Azure hosting. It was confirmed a detailed migration plan would be in place to move the on-premise database and application servers to the fully managed cloud hosting environment. The Committee were supportive of the FBC and endorsed submission to the Digital Estate Prioritisation Group, Capital Projects Group then Estates Committee for final approval in August 2024.

11   Revision to University Computing Acceptable Use Policy   Paper I

The Convener noted that KSC agreed last year that future revisions to this Policy should be approved by University Executive rather than University Court.

The Committee noted the revisions to Version 1 of the University Computing Acceptable Use Policy. A further amendment to paragraph 4 was suggested:

> *4. By-passing Security Controls*

No person shall, unless appropriately authorised, take any deliberate action ~~which attempts to reconfigure system setting~~ with the intent to by-pass or circumvent any security controls installed to protect University digital systems or services. "Take action" includes attempts or successful implementation of unauthorised changes and includes acts or omissions.

Subject to this change being made, the Committee recommended to University Executive for approval the changes to the Policy and the publication of the revised Version 2.

12   KSC meeting dates 2024/25   **Verbal**

The dates for KSC meetings in 2024/25 were approved.

ITEMS FOR NOTING

It was confirmed that no items had been selected in advance by members and attendees for discussion and that they would be noted without the expectation of discussion.

13   ISG Planning 2024/25 to 2028/2029   **Paper J**

The Committee noted the revised Information Services Group (ISG) Plan for the period 2024/25 to 2028/29.

14   Digital Estates Capital Plan – 2023-2029   **Paper K**

The Committee noted the update on Digital Estates capital expenditure projected for 2023/24 and forecast to 2028/29.

15   Digital Estate Project Status   **Paper L**

The Committee noted the status of Digital Estate projects as of April 2024, and noted that a similar paper would be produced for each KSC meeting.

16   Information Security Update   **Paper M**

The regular Information Security update paper, providing a summary of the current external cyber threat environment, together with details of ongoing centrally managed technical control improvements that will further enhance University cyber security controls, was noted.

17   Identity and Access Management – Business Case Update   **Paper N**

The Committee noted an update on Multi Factor Authentication (MFA) and a revised approach for the Identity and Access Management (IDAM) element of the Managing User Access (MUA) improvement programme. The Committee noted:

- the revised plan for Phase II (IDAM) to include a more in-depth discovery and consultation phase;

- that no additional funding is required at this point;
- that the current sponsorship for the Identity and Access Management is within ISG as there is no senior responsible officer regarding Information Security out with the Group; and that Estates Committee have been asked to provide feedback and options regarding executive sponsorship options.

18   Edinburgh access to Language Models and AskEdHelp   Paper O

The Committee noted the launch of a new institutional AI platform with the launch of a new service, ELM (Edinburgh access to Language Models). The University student EDHelp service is also launching an AI chatbot called AskEDHelp.

19   Main Library Masterplan Update   Paper P

The Committee noted an update on the masterplan to improve facilities in the Main Library through a series of small projects, funded from the University Small Capital Work budget.

20   Network Replacement Programme Update   Paper Q

A progress update on the University's Network Replacement Programme was noted.

21   Timetabling and Exams Replacement Project – Progress Update   Paper R

An update on the implementation project to replace the systems to support teaching timetabling, room booking and exam scheduling, was noted.

22   Committee Reports
- **IT Committee**   **Paper S1**
- **Library Committee**   **Paper S2**
- **University Collections Advisory Committee**   **Paper S3**
- **Estates Committee**   **Paper S4**

The reports were noted.

23   Any Other Business

There was no other business.

24   Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 29 October 2024, 13:00 – 15:00 (hybrid meeting)