



University Court

Minutes

20 February 2024 held from 17:00 to 18:30 in Mal 4, Malmaison, 44 Whitehall Crescent, Dundee DD1 4AY

Members

Chair

Mr David Brew

Vice Chair

Ms Heather Dunk

Professor Liz Bacon

Mr Fraser Keir

Mr John Barnett

Ms Veronica Lynch

Ms Liz Blackburn

Mr Jim MacGregor

Dr Scott Cameron

Mr Antony Marks

Mr Iain Davidson

Dr Hadi Mehrpouya

Ms Robyn Donoghue

Ms Livi Robertson

Professor Ruth Falconer

Mr Thomas Sloan

Ms Kerith George-Briant

Professor Edith Sim

Professor Alastair Irons

Mr Steven Traynor

Apologies

Mr Andrew Bailey

Ms Pam Herries

Ms Lynne Hamilton

Ms Liv Morgan

In Attendance

Professor Alice Brown

Ms Jackie McKenzie

Dr Hannah Coutts (items 56 and 57)

Professor Luke Millard (item 56)

Ms Eilidh Fraser

Mr Gordon Weir

Approved

Minutes

Secretariat

Ms Caroline Summers
(Secretary to Court)

Dr Dianne Peden
Ms Vanessa Kind

Open Business

Preliminary Matters

51. Welcome and Apologies for Absence **Oral Report**

The Chair welcomed Court to its third meeting of the academic year. The Chair, on behalf of Court, extended a special welcome to members attending their first meeting; Mr I. Davidson (newly appointed independent member of Court) and Mr T. Sloan (newly nominated (by Unite) member of Court).

Court was advised that Mr T Sloan replaces Ms Alison Duffy, whose term came to an end on 14 February 2024. The Chair noted thanks on behalf of Court, to Ms A. Duffy for her contributions during her time as a Member of Court.

Apologies were received as noted above.

52. Declaration of Potential Conflicts of Interest **Oral Report**

The Chair reminded members of their responsibility to indicate if they had, or could be perceived to have, a conflict of interest in relation to the items for discussion under Open Business. None were declared.

Court and Governance Matters

53. Minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2023 (Open) **CT/0224/37**

The Chair drew Court's attention to the fact that the approved minutes would be published on the University website. Court received and considered the minutes, submitted as enclosure 37, and approved them as an accurate record.

54. Matters Arising from these Minutes **Oral Report**

The Chair noted that the two actions arising from the previous meeting were complete. No other matters were raised.

**55. Minutes of the meeting of Chair's Committee held on 9 February 2024
(Open; unapproved – for information)** **CT/0224/38**

Court noted the minutes of the Open Business of the meeting of the Chair's Committee held on 9 February 2024, submitted as enclosure 38.

Dr H. Coutts, Professor R. Falconer and Professor L. Millard joined the meeting.

Matters for Discussion

56. Retention, Progression, and Module Performance Update 2022-23

CT/0224/39

The Dean of Teaching and Learning, Professor L. Millard, introduced the Retention, Progression, and Module Performance Update 2022-23, submitted as enclosure 39, highlighting that retention is a key issue across the Higher Education sector. Court was advised that this remains a priority area for the University with a breadth of activities already in place across the University, and by the Students' Association, to address this. It was highlighted that students may often be performing well academically but leave for other reasons. Court was advised that the Programme Assessment Boards are all chaired by Dean of Teaching and Learning to identify any issues, which are then followed up. Court discussed the factors which impacted on retention, including different entry routes, the cost of living crisis as well as the differing expectations of students studying post-pandemic. Court reflected on several the issues raised in the report.

Court formally noted the Retention, Progression, and Module Performance Update 2022-23.

Professor L. Millard left the meeting.

Matters for Approval

57. Key Performance Indicator Update 2022-23

CT/0224/40

The Head of Planning and Insight, Dr H. Coutts, introduced the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Update 2022-23, submitted as enclosure 40, highlighting that the fifteen KPIs had been agreed by Court in April 2021 and would be reviewed as part of the Strategic Plan refresh being undertaken in 2024. This paper had previously been considered by the Finance and Corporate Performance Committee at its meeting held on 14 December 2023.

Court was advised that the individual KPIs were updated at various points throughout the year with all having been updated over the past 12 months. It was highlighted that since the previous report (submitted to Court at its meeting held on 26 April 2023) seven KPIs had improved in their RAG rating with none having worsened. Court reflected on a number of the indicators, in particular the negative trajectory of KPI 04 “% of full-time, all-age first degree undergraduate entrants still in higher education after one year (HESA PI)” in light of its earlier discussion on retention issues. Court recognised the improvement in two indicators, KPI 13 “Staff: overall gender pay gap” and KPI 08 “Income from new online and franchise provision” and welcomed the positive trajectories in these areas.

Court approved the Key Performance Indicator Update 2022-23.

Dr H. Coutts left the meeting.

58. Court and Committee Meeting Schedule for 2024-25 to 2027-28**CT/0224/41**

The Head of Governance and Deputy Secretary, Dr D Peden, introduced the draft Court and Committee meeting schedule for 2024-25 to 2027-28, submitted as enclosure 41. Court was advised that, as the term dates until 2027-28 had been approved, it was proposed that a schedule for Court and its Committees to the end of academic year 2027-28 be agreed. Court noted that this had been recommended to Court for approval by the Governance and Nominations Committee at its meeting held on 6 February and also reviewed by the Chair's Committee at its meeting on 9 February. Court noted that the proposed schedule took into account key university dates and reporting timelines and also a request from the Students' Association to avoid committee meetings in Freshers and Refresher weeks. Court noted that it was proposed that an annual review of both the schedule (to ensure no business requirements to alter it) as well as the suitability of the dates as they fall that year would be undertaken.

Court's attention was drawn to the proposal that the Committees of Court would meet on Tuesdays, with the meetings of Court continuing to be held on Wednesday afternoons, and that the Governance Office would work with Committee Chairs to find a suitable alternative if any dates were unsuitable. Court noted that it was proposed that the Chair's Committee meetings would be scheduled mid-way between Court meetings and would only take place if it was deemed necessary.

Court formally noted the change to the scheduling of the Chair's Committee.

Court formally noted that the committees of Senate would be considered for approval by Senate at its meeting on 27 March 2024.

Court approved the proposal to agreed Court and Committees dates based on terms dates/teaching weeks to allow forward planning to 2027-28.

Court approved the proposed meeting dates for 2024-25 (subject to agreement with the Committee Chairs).

Committee Matters

59. Audit and Risk Committee**59.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2024 (Open; unapproved)****CT/0224/42**

The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, Mr J. Barnett, introduced the draft minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 30 January 2024, submitted as enclosure 42, noting that these were largely for information.

Court formally noted the minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee from 30 January 2024.

60. Finance and Corporate Performance Committee**60.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2023 (Open; unapproved)****CT/0224/43**

The Chair of the Finance and Corporate Performance Committee, Mr A. Marks, introduced the draft minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 14 December 2023, submitted as enclosure 43, noting that these were largely for information.

Court was advised that the Committee had recommended the Key Performance Indicator Update to Court for approval, which had been considered under agenda item 57.

Court approved the Annual Procurement Report 2022-23, submitted as Annex A for submission to the Scottish Government and for external publication on the University's website.

Court formally noted the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Corporate Performance Committee from 14 December 2023.

61. Governance and Nominations Committee**61.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2024 (Open; unapproved)****CT/0224/44**

The Chair as the Chair of the Governance and Nominations Committee introduced the draft minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 6 February 2024, submitted as enclosure 44, noting that they were largely for information although they were a number of items recommended to Court for approval.

Court approved the re-appointment of Ms V. Lynch as Court Intermediary until 31 December 2025.

Court approved the appointment of:

- Mr I. Davidson to the Audit and Risk Committee from 1 March 2024.
- Mr T. Sloan to the Health and Safety Sub-Committee.
- Dr H. Mehrpouya to the Governance and Nominations Committee.

Court formally noted the appointment of Ms L. Hamilton and Mr. S. Traynor to the Chair's Committee.

Court approved the revised Chair's Committee Terms of Reference, submitted as Annex A.

Court was advised that the Committee had recommended the Court and Committee Meeting Schedule for 2024-25 to 2027-28 to Court for approval, which had been considered under agenda item 58.

Court formally noted the minutes of the meeting of the Governance and Nominations Committee from 6 February 2024.

62. People, Health and Equality Committee

62.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2024 (Open; unapproved)

CT/0224/45

The Chair of the People, Health and Equality Committee, Ms H. Dunk, introduced the draft minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 16 January 2024, submitted as enclosure 45, noting that these were largely for information.

Court was advised that the Committee had reviewed and recommended to Court for approval a revised Student Code of Discipline: Non-Academic Misconduct, submitted as Annex A. The Chair noted that it had been agreed prior to the meeting that a further review would be undertaken to ensure ECHR (European Convention on Human Rights) compliance and that the Code would be re-submitted for consideration by Court at a future meeting.

Court noted that the Committee had considered and provided feedback on the proposed Sustainable Travel Policy (item 24). Following further consideration by the Senior Management Team, a revised version would be reviewed at the Committee's next meeting, along with associated documents which supported the policy. These additional documents would be considered by Finance and Corporate Performance Committee in March, with the intention that the full suite of documents would then come to Court for approval.

Court formally noted the minutes of the meeting of the People, Health and Equality Committee from 16 January 2024.

63. Remuneration Committee

63.1 Report from the meeting held on 1 February 2024

CT/0224/46

The Chair of the Remuneration Committee, Mr A. Marks, introduced the report of the meeting of the Committee held on 1 February 2024, submitted as enclosure 46.

Court was advised that this had been an extraordinary meeting of the Committee to complete the Review of Senior Salaries which the Committee had discussed at its meeting held on 24 October 2023.

Court noted that the Committee had also received a report from the Principal and Vice-Chancellor, Professor L. Bacon, on a recent job evaluation exercise which had taken place for members of the Senior Management Team and the decisions which had been taken by Executive Group.

Court was advised that further information on the Committee's decisions regarding the remuneration of individuals would be provided under agenda item 23 in the reserved part of the meeting.

Court formally noted the report from the meeting of the Remuneration Committee from 1 February 2024.

The Chair, on behalf of Court, noted thanks to Mr A. Marks for his contribution as the Chair of the Remuneration Committee, highlighting that Mr F. Keir will take over as

Chair from 1 March 2024. Court noted that Mr A. Marks would remain a member of the Committee as the Chair of the Finance and Corporate Performance Committee.

Senate Matters

64. Minutes from the meeting of Senate held on 31 January 2024 CT/0224/47

The Principal, Professor L. Bacon, as Chair of Senate, introduced the draft minutes of its meeting held on 31 January 2024, submitted as enclosure 47, noting that these were largely for information.

Court was advised that Senate had considered the Retention, Progression and Module Performance Update, which had been considered under agenda item 56.

Court's attention was drawn to Senate having noted the process for a Portfolio Review (agreed by the Senior Management Team) with the purpose of ensuring that all academic programmes are relevant, sustainable, and contributing appropriately to the University's overall strategic aims.

Court noted that Senate had ratified the approval of a waiver of the undergraduate academic regulations 47 and 49 relating to a Stage 1 Academic Appeals Panel Outcome, which had been deemed to be too urgent to be delayed to the formal meeting.

Court noted that Senate had approved the following items:

Division of Sport and Exercise Sciences Institution-Led Review Report and Action Plan (Item 22)

Postgraduate Research School Institution-Led Review Report and Action Plan (item 23 of the minutes)

It was highlighted that members of Court are welcome to observe meetings of Senate and it was agreed that members would receive the relevant calendar invitations as optional attendees.

Action – Head of Governance and Deputy Secretary to ensure that members of Court are sent the relevant calendar invitations to observe meetings of Senate.

Court formally noted the minutes of the meeting of Senate from 31 January 2024.

65. Academic Matters Report

CT/0224/48

Court offered its congratulations on the wide range of activities taking place across the University.

Court formally noted the Academic Matters Report.

Matters for Information

66. Executive Group Report to Court **CT/0224/49**

Court welcomed the Living Wage increase being implemented by the University from 1 December 2023.

Court formally noted the Executive Group Report to Court.

67. Students' Association Report to Court **CT/0224/50**

The Students' Association President, Ms L. Robertson, introduced the Students' Association Report to Court, submitted as enclosure 33, noting that it provided a brief overview of their recent and upcoming activities and highlighted several matters of interest. Court was advised that the elections for new sabbatical officers would take place from 11 to 15 March 2024, with the new officers joining Court from 1 July 2024.

Concluding Matters

68. Any Other Competent Business **Oral Report**

No other competent business was raised.

Professor A. Brown, Ms E. Fraser, Ms J. McKenzie, and Mr G. Weir left the meeting.

Next meeting: Wednesday 24 April 2024

This will be preceded by the Public Engagement Event

Chair: Mr David Brew