

Court

Wed 12 February 2025, 13:00 - 16:00

Paisley Campus

A meeting of the University Court constituted under the University of the West of Scotland Order of Council 2019 will be held on Wednesday 12th February 2025 at 1pm in Room D145, Paisley Campus.

Agenda

13:00 - 13:00
0 min

1. Welcome/Apologies/Declarations of Interest

13:00 - 13:05
5 min

2. Minutes

2.1. Minutes of Meeting held on 25th November 2024

Decision

☐ CourtMins251124.pdf (6 pages)

2.2. Minutes of Meeting held on 5th December 2024

Decision

☐ CourtMins051224.pdf (2 pages)

13:05 - 13:05
0 min

3. Matters Arising

13:05 - 13:05
0 min

4. Determination of Any Other Business

13:05 - 13:15
10 min

5. Chair's Statement

Information

Oral Report

13:15 - 13:30
15 min

6. Principal & Vice-Chancellor's Report

Discussion

☐ 6 - PVC Report.pdf (9 pages)

13:30 - 13:40
10 min

7. Student's Union Report

Information

☐ 7 - Students Union Report.pdf (5 pages)

London, Scotland
12/02/2025 13:22:01

13:40 - 13:50 **8. Senate**

10 min

Information

8.1. Report from Meeting of Senate held on 11th December 2024

Information

- ☐ 8.1 - Senate Report.pdf (4 pages)
- ☐ 8.1 - Senate App 1 - SEAP.pdf (17 pages)

13:50 - 14:15 **9. Reports from Sub-Committees**

25 min

9.1. Report from Meeting of Governance & Nominations Committee held on 15th January 2025

Information

- ☐ 9.1 - GNC Report.pdf (2 pages)

9.2. Report from Meeting of Resources & People Committee held on 15th January 2025

Information

- ☐ 9.2 - RPC report.pdf (6 pages)
- ☐ 9.2 - App1 - H&S Dashboard.pdf (2 pages)

9.3. Report from Meeting of Audit & Risk Committee held on 21st January 2025

Decision

- ☐ 9.3 - ARC Report.pdf (5 pages)
- ☐ 9.3 - App - SRR.pdf (2 pages)

14:15 - 14:55 **10. Strategic Presentation & Discussion Item : Horizon Scanning - Professor J Miller, Principal & Vice-Chancellor**

40 min

Discussion

14:55 - 15:25 **11. Strategy & Performance**

30 min

11.1. Strategy 2030

Decision

- ☐ 11.1 - Strategy cover - Copy.pdf (19 pages)
- ☐ 11.1 - Draft Strategy 2030.pdf (7 pages)
- ☐ 11.1 - Performance Reflections.pdf (3 pages)
- ☐ 11.1 - EQIA.pdf (10 pages)

15:25 - 15:40 **12. UWS Knowledge Exchange & Innovation Fund (KEIF) Strategy - 2024/2030**

15 min

Decision

- ☐ 12 - KEIF.pdf (4 pages)
- ☐ 12 - SFC Guidance.pdf (8 pages)
- ☐ 12 - KEIF metrics.pdf (1 pages)

15:40 - 15:45
5 min

13. Any Other Business

Paisley, 12th February 2025 being the 80th meeting of the Court of the University of the West of Scotland

Present:

Mrs K Allum (Chair)
Ms O Adebayo
Professor S Carnicelli
Ms L Carroll
Dr A M Craig
Mr R Doherty
Mr A Gubbay (via MS Teams)
Ms K Hedge
Professor R MacIntosh
Dr D MacLean
Mr A Miller
Professor J Miller
Ms A Mitchell
Mr C Morgan
Ms L Muazu (via MS Teams)
Mr A Munro
Mr K Murdoch (via MS Teams)
Mr T Oyinpere
Ms R Paterson (via MS Teams)
Ms R Simpson
Mr H Stolkin (via MS Teams)

In attendance:

Professor R Cragg
Mr A MacIver
Ms D McMillan
Ms F Morton
Mr M Ross
Mrs A Loudon
Mr G Lee (item 11 only)
Ms N Flynn (item 11 only)

Observer: Ms R A Healy

Apologies for absence were received from Ms M Kennedy and Mr R Jefferies.

No Declarations of Interest were notified.

1. **Welcome**

The Chair welcomed Professor Robert MacIntosh to his first meeting following his appointment as Interim Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

2. **Minutes of Meeting held on 25th November and 5th December 2024**

The minutes of meetings held on 25th November and 5th December 2024 were approved as a correct record.

3. **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising other than those contained elsewhere in the agenda.

4. **Determination of Any Other Business**

No additional items of business had been notified.

5. **Chair's Statement**

The Chair confirmed that 1-1 meetings had now been held with all members of Court. Items discussed had included the effectiveness of Court and succession planning. The Governance & Nominations Committee was keeping vacancies under review and would be addressing plans for recruitment at its next meeting.

6. **Principal & Vice-Chancellor's Report**

The Principal & Vice-Chancellor spoke to the report which provided an external environment scan, covering strategic environmental issues related to HE in Scotland, the UK and internationally.

He drew members' attention in particular to the Organisational Change Project established to address ongoing student population pressures, the challenging external funding environment and the resultant financial consequences. The Project, which would be led by the Interim Deputy Vice-Chancellor and have a number of workstreams, was subject to the University's established Organisational Change Procedure and would be supported by a Steering Group and dedicated Project Team. The composition of the Project Team included a strong representation of colleagues from across the University. The student voice would also be included in discussions. The Scottish Funding Council had been informed.

Court noted and endorsed the key priority of the project to ensure delivery of a return to a surplus position in academic year 2026/2027. Court confirmed a number of principles would apply including retention of employment where possible for those in post; maintenance of the UWS Five-Campus structure whilst maximising effectiveness.; and any VSS would be targeted and there would not be an open voluntary severance scheme.

The Principal & Vice-Chancellor confirmed that there was undoubtedly some worry from staff on the impact of the Project. A communications strategy had been developed and clear advice provided to staff that the "all staff" meetings would be the place to receive updates on progress and outputs. A dedicated web page, including FAQs which would be updated as the project evolved, had also been developed to provide an authoritative source of information for staff.

In response to a question, the staff members on Court confirmed that the communications around the project were clear and staff focussed and understood by colleagues. It was, however, imperative that a consistent and honest message was maintained to ensure that rumours were dispelled internally and also externally.

The Chair of Court reiterated the University's challenging operating environment and the imperative to take action which would be on the basis of a balanced approach based on detailed horizon scanning of external factors. The Chair confirmed that Court would be kept updated as the project progressed.

The remainder of the report was noted for information.

7. **Students' Union Report**

The President of the Students' Union spoke to the report which provided an overview of activities and progress towards the 5 strategic priorities in the Union's operational plan.

She drew members' attention to the ongoing democracy review and governance reforms at the Students' Union which proposed a new student officer model and revised student engagement structures. Feedback from students on the proposed changes had been positive. The governance team within the University were working closely with the Student's Union to align the proposed new sabbatical and other structures with UWS student representative opportunities and the University's Order of Council.

A referendum would be held in March 2025 and if passed the new structure would be rolled out by AY2026-2027.

A link to the Union's Financial Statements for year ended 31st July 2024 was included in the papers for the information of Court. With regard to the current financial year, Court noted that the Union remained within budget. However, funds identified to support the Student Hardship Fund had been allocated and the fund had been closed. The UWS Hardship Fund and other support mechanisms were available for students and those requiring financial assistance were being directed to University's Student Services Team. Other options and sources of funding would be explored.

The remainder of the report was noted for information.

8. **Senate**

8.1 **Report from Meeting of Senate held on 11th December 2024**

Court noted for information the University's Self Evaluation and Action Plan (SEAP) which had been developed by members of the Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework (TQEF) Transition Steering Group based on quality assurance and enhancement activity during 2023/2024. The SEAP, which had now been submitted to the Scottish Funding Council and formed part of the evidence provided to inform discussion at the forthcoming Tertiary Quality Enhancement Review (TQER), consisted of a critical self-reflection and a plan for future enhancements aligned with the TQEF principles of excellence in learning, teaching and assessment, supporting student success, enhancement and quality cultures, and student engagement and partnership

The remainder of the report was noted for information.

9. **Reports from Sub-Committees**

9.1 **Report from Meeting of the Governance & Nominations Committee held on 15th January 2025 (part 1)**

Members were reminded that the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance required that where the Chair of Court was also Chair of the Nominations Committee, this role should be delegated to another member during the appointment process for the new Chair of Court. In addition, any member of Court who had expressed an interest in the role of the Chair may not participate in the work of the Committee managing the appointment and election process. Accordingly, by Chair's action, Mr C Morgan had been co-opted to membership of

the Governance & Nominations Committee and would Chair the Committee when it was discussing the appointment of the new Chair.

Court noted that discussions were ongoing with two potential consultants in relation to the externally facilitated review of the Court and the Senate which would take place during this calendar year. A draft scope and terms of reference for the review had now been agreed with a view to ensuring a bespoke and enhancement led review tailored to UWS which recognised the different requirements of the Court and the Senate.

The remainder of the report was noted for information.

9.2 Report from Meeting of Resources & People Committee held on 15th January 2025

Court noted for information the report from the meeting of the Resources & People Committee held on 15th January 2025. Items discussed at the meeting included an update on intake and the continuing student population, the colleague experience survey and UWS values, ongoing initiatives at enhancing the work environment and supporting staff wellbeing, and the new UWS Sustainability Plan 2025-2030. The Health & Safety Dashboard Report was also noted.

9.3 Report from Meeting of Audit & Risk Committee held on 21st January 2025

The Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee spoke to the report from the meeting of 21st January 2025. He drew members' attention to discussion on the University's financial position and provided assurance to Court of the Committee's continued detailed scrutiny and challenge on financial reporting and financial forecasts.

Court approved the recommendation that Anderson, Anderson Brown (AAB) be appointed the University's external auditors for an initial 3-year period. In response to a question, the Vice-Principal (Finance & Infrastructure) confirmed that AAB had provided support to the University in the aftermath of the cyber incident, but this was by a different team to that providing external audit services and there was clear segregation during the tendering process.

Court noted and endorsed the updated Strategic Risk Register.

The remainder of the report was noted for information.

10. Strategic Presentation & Discussion Item

The Principal & Vice-Chancellor made a presentation to Court covering a strategic horizon scan of the social, technological, economic, environmental and political challenges and opportunities facing the sector and the University. The information presented was used to inform discussion of the new UWS Strategy 2030 and development of the associated supporting framework.

11. Strategy & Performance

11.1 Strategy 2030 – Progress Update

The Vice-Principal (Recruitment & Planning) spoke to the reports which presented a final draft Strategy 2030 and the intended development of design and supporting framework. Hard copies of the draft Strategy were provided to Court for illustrative purposes.

In response to a question, the Strategic Development Manager outlined the various opportunities offered to ensure staff engagement throughout the development of the new

Strategy, including Focus Groups, School & Departmental meetings, all staff survey and through the Employee Forum. Students had also been involved in the process through the Students Union and a reference group and the views of external stakeholders had also been sought.

Court approved the UWS Strategy 2030, subject to further reflection and revision where appropriate in the light of comments made during discussion. New Performance Indicators and Enabling Plans would be developed for consideration and approval by Court at the June 2025 meeting.

Arrangements would be put in place for the launch of the new Strategy which would provide an opportunity to reset the University's strategic direction and to bring to life what achievement of UWS goals would look like over the next 5 years. The University had to change to ensure its success and sustainability and continued staff engagement in the Strategy was imperative to support this. Consideration would be given to opportunities to measure staff engagement in the new Strategy including through a future pulse engagement survey.

The remainder of the report was noted for information.

12. **UWS Knowledge Exchange & Innovation Fund (KEIF) Strategy 2024/2030**

Court noted and approved the UWS Knowledge Exchange & Innovation Fund (KEIF) Strategy 2024/2030, noting that to meet SFC deadlines this had already been submitted to the Funding Council, subject to Court approval.

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed.