

**Paisley, 11<sup>th</sup> February 2026 being the 84<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Court of the University of the West of Scotland**

Present: Joyce White OBE (Chair)  
Omowaleola Adebayo  
Professor Sandro Carnicelli  
Lucy Carroll  
Dr Anne Marie Craig  
Ryan Doherty  
Alex Gubbay (via MS Teams)  
Karen Hedge  
Colin Howden  
Dr Gordon Jack  
Professor Robert MacIntosh  
Professor Diane MacLean  
Dr Katie McQuade  
Professor James Miller  
Christopher Morgan  
Andrew Munro  
Timiebi Oyinpere  
Ruth Paterson (via MS Teams)  
Gemma Roxburgh (via MS Teams)  
Rachael Simpson  
Hugo Stolkin

In attendance: Professor Rachel Cragg  
Gavin Lee  
Marie Liston  
Alison Loudon  
Archie MacIver  
Stephanie Pitticas  
Marcus Ross

Observer: Dr Dearbhla Gallagher

There were no apologies for absence

No Declarations of Interest were notified.

1. **Minutes of Meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2025**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2025 were approved as a correct record.

2. **Matters Arising**

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

3. **Determination of Any Other Business**

No additional items of business had been notified.

4. **Chair's Statement**

This being her first meeting, the Chair extended her thanks to colleagues across the University community for the opportunity to serve as the new Chair of Court and commended the outgoing Chair for her support and commitment to the role.

A comprehensive induction programme had been undertaken which had included meetings with the Vice-Chair of Court, the Principal & Vice-Chancellor and members of the Vice-Chancellor's Executive as well as an introduction to national groups.

Arrangements would be put in place over the coming months for members to meet individually with the new Chair of Court.

## 5. **Principal & Vice-Chancellor's Report**

The Principal & Vice-Chancellor drew members' attention to the report which outlined a range of key developments across the external policy environment, strategic change programmes and the University's recent achievements.

Court was pleased to note that the University had received the highest possible rating of "effective" in the Tertiary Quality Enhancement Review (TQER), confirming strong assurance in academic standards. Following the publication of a recent Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) peer review of the University of Glasgow, the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) had commissioned QAA to undertake a national review of assessment and associated policies and procedures across the sector. Further details on the scope and timescales for this review were still to be confirmed.

The Principal & Vice-Chancellor updated Court on the introduction of a new service by the Westminster Government to provide support to any UK University experiencing foreign interference.

In response to a question, the Principal & Vice-Chancellor confirmed that, following the passing of the Tertiary Education and Training (Funding & Governance) (Scotland) Bill, Universities will be required to evidence application of an extended set of fair work principles. This would not include any changes to annual leave entitlements. Further work was being taken to align the new requirements with the Employment Rights Act (2025) introduced by the UK Government.

Court was interested to note the jointly commissioned work by Universities Scotland and Scottish Government, which had cross-party support, bringing together the Scottish Government, Universities Scotland and others to co-design and secure "a successful and sustainable future" for the Scottish HE Sector. The Steering group would oversee 3 pillars of work and was expected to report back in the first few months of the new Scottish Parliament.

Finally, with regard to the ongoing Organisational Change Project (OCP), the Principal updated Court on a senior staff briefing held earlier in the day at which the forthcoming retirement of the Vice-Principal (Finance & Infrastructure) and the Vice-Principal (Planning & Recruitment) had been noted. As a consequence, and to reflect the work of the OCP workstreams, the portfolios of the Vice-Chancellor's Executive would be reviewed.

The remainder of the report was noted for information.

## 6. **Organisational Change Project (OCP)**

The Interim Deputy Vice-Chancellor made a presentation to Court outlining the rationale, background and key priorities of the Organisational Change Project and the recommendations from Workstream 1 for the implementation of a new 3-faculty structure, supported by a new leadership structure.

Court welcomed the detailed paper, supplemented by a number of appendices, which set out the final proposals from Workstream 1 and next steps in aligning Workstream 2 to deliver the final proposals.

In response to a question, the Interim Vice-Principal (People & Wellbeing) confirmed that, at their request, all Trade Union consultation on the project had been conducted exclusively through the Joint Negotiating and Consultative Committee (JNCC) framework. The University had been clear throughout the project that the principle around employee retention would remain and had reinforced its commitment to no compulsory redundancies by ensuring there were opportunities for colleagues to transition into new roles.

Communication with the student population on the new structures would be taken forward through the Student Partnership Forum. The importance of student representation and student facing roles was identified as part of the Tertiary Quality Enhancement Review (TQER) and would be clearly visible in the new structures.

The detail of the revised structure would be presented to staff at an all-staff meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> February. The extensive opportunities for staff engagement in the process were noted. It was recognised that there was not a unanimous view on any single structure and that the rationale for the choices made was contained within one of the accompanying papers.

After discussion, and noting that in line with the Scheme of Delegation, responsibility for the management of the institution lay with the Vice-Chancellor's Executive, Court endorsed the proposals set out for the new 3-faculty structure and associated leadership structure.

The recommendations presented would now be taken forward through standard change mechanisms and Workstream 1 of the project would now conclude. As organisational change for professional services would be dependent on the successful implementation of the revised academic structures, the next phase of implementation would be managed through Workstream 2. In relation to Workstream 2, and review of professional services, it was noted that the University retained the commitment to employment retention and that details of the process for structures, roles and group and individual staff consultation would follow the same cascade process.

A detailed communications and engagement plan has been developed with the key anchor point being the all-staff meetings. The plan would be updated and circulated following feedback at the next all-staff meeting and would be a live document available for all to access.

An update on progress would be submitted to the next meeting of Court.

The remainder of the report was noted for information.

## 7. **UWS Students' Union**

The President of the Students' Union spoke to the report which set out a summary of activity at the UWS Students' Union since the last meeting.

Court noted progress with implementation of the recommendations from the Students' Union Democracy Review, noting that, due to changes to structures arising from the Organisational Change Project, the election of the new officer team would be done this year in two parts with the election of the new President and Vice-President, Education in March and the election for the part-time Vice-Presidents of Schools in October.

The Chair of Court thanked the President of the Students' Union for the informative report and welcomed in particular ongoing student engagement activities. In line with the Code of Practice relating to the operation of the Students' Union, the annual accounts of the Union for year ended 31<sup>st</sup> July 2025, which had received an unqualified opinion, had been made available to Court for information.

The remainder of the report was noted for information.

## 8. **Senate**

### 8.1 **Report from Meeting of Senate held on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2025**

The Principal & Vice-Chancellor spoke to the report which provided an overview on key items discussed at Senate on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2025.

He drew members' attention in particular to the outcome of the recent portfolio health review which, following strong engagement with each School, had reviewed all programmes in the University against a suite of metrics and 5 year trend data, following which Senate had approved the withdrawal of a number of programmes from the University's portfolio. In response to a question, the Principal & Vice-Chancellor confirmed that the teaching of STEM subjects would remain, as part of updated under and post graduate qualifications.

The Chair highlighted the interesting and informative CPD session led by the Assistant Secretary to Senate into the role of the Senate held earlier in the day and reminded members of the opportunity to attend meetings of Senate as observers.

The remainder of the report was noted for information.

## 9. **Reports from Sub-Committees**

### 9.1 **Report from Meeting of Resources & People Committee held on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2025**

The Chair of the Resources & People Committee spoke to the report which set out the detail of some of the items discussed at the meeting of the Committee held on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2025.

He drew members' attention in particular to the in-depth and robust discussion at the meeting in relation to proposals to transform the University's student information system which underpinned all key aspects of student administration, including admissions, enrolment, statutory data, assessments, progression and graduation. Appropriate programme governance arrangements were being finalised to support its development. It was recognised that the programme was a business change process with IT components and would require strong engagement from across all parts of the university to ensure its success.

To ensure that appropriate assurance mechanisms would remain, an update on progress would be a standing item at meetings of the Resources & People Committee for the duration of the project.

Court recognised the impact to staff of the significant amount of change being experienced currently as the University moved to implement the outcomes of the Occupational Change Project, together with the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) project and the new Student Information System Project.

Progress with the disposal of the Almada Street, Hamilton site was welcomed. In response to a question on the cladding and glazing issues at the Lanarkshire Campus, the Vice-Principal (Finance & Infrastructure) confirmed that appropriate mitigations were in place and consultants had been engaged to explore longer term options.

The remainder of the report was noted for information.

### 9.2 **Report from Meeting of Audit & Risk Committee held on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2026**

The Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee spoke to the report which set out some of the items discussed at the meeting of the Committee held on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2026.

He drew members' attention to approval by the Committee to the UWS Annual Procurement Report, which had now been published on the UWS website, and a refreshed Exploitation of Intellectual Property Procedure which had been updated to make role and responsibilities more explicit throughout the lifecycle of UWS spin-out companies.

Court was pleased to note that a review of the effectiveness of the external audit arrangements had confirmed confidence in an assessment of "satisfactory". Work had now commenced on the 2025/2026 year-end audit.

On behalf of Court, the Committee had confirmed assurance that the process and approach adopted for the annual Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) review aligned to the Development Guidance.

Court approved the updated Strategic Risk Register, noting that work was ongoing to align this with Strategy 2030.

The remainder of the report was noted for information.

### 9.3 Report from Meeting of Governance & Nominations Committee held on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2026 (part 1)

Court noted for information the report from the meeting of the Governance & Nominations Committee held on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2026. A further report from this meeting would be taken under Reserved Business.

## 10. Finance

### 10.1 Period 4 – Management Accounts

### 10.2 Q1 Financial Forecasts

Court noted for information the reports which set out the management accounts for the period to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2025 and the financial forecast to 30<sup>th</sup> October 2025, noting that these had been scrutinised in detail by the Audit & Risk Committee at its January 2026 meeting.

Although the accounts and Q1 forecast showed a favourable variance against the budget for the same period, this may be impacted by anomalies in tuition fee income and phasing of expenditure which would even out as the year progressed.

## 11. Student Population

The Vice-Principal (Planning & Recruitment) spoke to the report which outlined UWS student cohorts including Scottish controlled and non-controlled, international and rUK at the near end of Term 2 enrolment.

Court was pleased to note that Scottish non-controlled numbers reflected the multi-year recovery programme to recover the UWS Scottish population and demonstrated year-on-year growth. The Scottish controlled population was slightly above budget targets due to better than expected retention and remained slightly below the SFC funded places, in particular for controlled subjects.

Although challenges had been faced in the London recruitment market, international student recruitment to Scottish Campuses remained strong. However, changes to the application of UKVI visa regulations were causing significant sectoral issues relating to visa delays and an increase in refusal rates. This has impacted on Term 2 recruitment and while forecasts for Term 3 remain on target, the situation was being monitored closely.

Court acknowledged the significant challenge that this new development may cause to the University multi-year recovery plan, noting that detailed scenario planning was underway to identify the potential financial impact, risks and mitigating actions. Sector wide lobbying of both Westminster and Scottish Government on the UKVI issue was ongoing with separate lobbying of the Scottish Government as part of the *Future Funding Framework* to ensure sustainable funding of Scottish HEIs. The ambassadorial role of members of Court to spotlight the issues facing the HE sector through their own networks was highlighted.

The remainder of the report was noted for information.

## 12. **Complaints Handling Overview Report**

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching & Student Success) drew members' attention to the paper which provided an overview of the operation of the Complaints Handling Procedure for the 2024/2025 academic session and statistics on the number of complaints considered.

Court was pleased to note that the University's approach to integrating complaints data and outcomes into quality processes to support institutional reflection and drive enhancement was recognised in the recent Tertiary Quality Enhancement Review.

The remainder of the report was noted for information.

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