Senatus Academicus
Wednesday 22 May 2024 at 2-5 pm
Larch Lecture Theatre, Nucleus Kings Buildings or Teams

Confirmed Minute

Attendees: Peter Adkins, Gill Aitken, Mteeve Amugune, Arianna Andreangeli, Ruth Andrew, Jake Ansell, Mohammad Amir Anwar, David Argyle, Kate Ash-Irisarri, Sharan Atwal, Nikos Avramidis, Vansh Bali, Kasia Banas, Michael Barany, Sian Bayne, Matt Bell, Shereen Benjamin, Philip Best, Richard Blythe, Holly Branigan, Mary Brennan, Christina Boswell, Julian Bradfield, Mary Brennan, Aidan Brown, Tom Bruce, Celine Caquineau, Jeremy Carrette, Neil Chue Hong, Martin Corley, Miguel Costa-Gomes, Juan Cruz, Brenda Cundy, Sarah Cunningham-Burley, Jo Danbolt, Sumari Dancer, Jamie Davies, Ricardo De Oliveira Almeida, Chris Dent, Charlotte Desvages, John Devaney, Simone Dimartino, Kevin Donovan, Claire Duncanson, Agata Dunsmore, Murray Earle, Andrea English, Jite Eferakorho, Tonks Fawcett, Samantha Fawkner, Valentina Ferlito, Manuel Fernandez-Gotz, Vashti Galpin, Benjamin Goddard, Richard Gratwick, Emily Ford-Halliday, Beatrix Frissell, Stuart Gilfillan, Iain Gordon, Kim Graham, Patrick Hadoke, Colm Harmon, Gareth Harrison, Tina Harrison, Helen Hastie, David Hay, Thorunn Helgason, Melissa Highton, James Hopgood, Gbenga Ibikunle, David Ingram, Jakov Jandric, Aarrnesh Kapoor, Itamar Kastner, Jim Kaufman, James Keeley, Tobias Kelly, Meryl Kenny, George Kinnear, Linda Kirstein, David Kluth, Dave Laurenson, Andy Law, Steff Lewis, Tom Leinster, Ashley Lloyd, Jason Love, Ewa Luger, Sophia Lycouris, Antony Maciocia, Alistair McCormick, Cait MacPhee, Sam Marks, Rebecca Marsland, Lorna Marson, Peter Mathieson, Gavin McLachlan, Avery Meiksin. Steven Morley, Susan Morrow, Simon Mudd, Rachel Muers, Lyndsay Murray, Rupert Nash, Pau Navarro, Max Nyman, Steven O'Hagan, Richard Oosterhoff, Natalia Penar, Jon Pridham, Sarah Prescott, Colin Pulham, David Quinn, Alma Kalina Riessler, Ken Rice, Simon Riley, Hollie Rowlands, Ricardo Ribeiro Ferreira, Simon Riley, Aryelly Rodriguez Carbonell, Maximilian Ruffert, Eberhard Sauer, Marion Schmid, Ash Scholz, Bernd Schroers, Matthias Schwannauer, Pablo Schyfter Camacho, Jo Shaw, Geoff Simm, David Smith, Sean Smith, Gavin Sullivan, Emily Taylor, Alex Thomson, Tamara Trodd, Uzma Tufail-Hanif, Nadia Tuzi, Jeremy Upton, Patrick Walsh, Stephen Warrington, Michele Weiland, Christopher Weir, Iain Wright, Qingchi Wu, Ingrid Young, Ansgar Zoch

In attendance: Adam Bunni, Anne-Marie Coriat, Lisa Dawson, Sinead Docherty, Lucy Evans, Lee Hamill, Olivia Hayes, Patrick Jack, Nichola Kett, Cristina Matthews, Lee-Anne Mitchell, Dave Robertson, Lorna Thomson, Jon Turner.

Apologies: Matthew Bailey, Laura Bickerton, Kelly Blacklock, Chandon Bose, Laura Bradley, Adam Budd, John Cairns, Jane Calvert, Leigh Chalmers, Sharon Cowan, Jeremy Crang, Karen Dawson, Hannah Dong, Gillian Gray, Kate Hardwick, Pia Helbing, Sarah Henderson, Emma Hunter, Kirstin James, Laura Jeffery, Lesley McAra, Carmel Moran, Andrew Morris, Chris Mowat, Bryne Ngwenya, Ailsa Niven, Diana Paton, Wayne Powell, Tobias Schwarz, Mike Shipston, James Smith, Tim Stratford, Melissa Terras, Frank Venter, Mark Williams

The Convener, Principal Sir Professor Peter Mathieson, opened the meeting and confirmed that Senate had reached quorum.

1.   **Convener's Communications**

The Convener provided an update to Senate on a range of items:

Financial situation in the University sector

- The sustainability of university finances is causing anxiety and concern across the sector, with some institutions expressing concern regarding their continued existence. This is the case across all types of institutions, including ancient universities.
- Edinburgh remains in a strong position in Scotland and the UK, however is not immune to the financial pressures.
- Financial pressures have arisen due to national discussions around immigration and the role of students within this, as well as inflation and rising costs when compared with income.

Review of the Migration Advisory Committee

- A report was published last week which concluded that the graduate visa route is working as expected.
- This is a good outcome; however, it is unclear what the government's response to the report will be.

University encampment and protests regarding Gaza and the University's investments

- The Convener highlighted two unique elements regarding the Edinburgh encampment and protests:
    - There are students participating in a hunger strike. This is a source of great anxiety to the Convener and he would like to see the hunger strikes come to an end. The University has appointed an independent mediator to offer their services to the protestors.
    - Lord Balfour was the Chancellor of the University for a period of 30 years and this included the time of the Balfour Declaration. The University is undertaking a Race Review and the group responsible for undertaking the review has been asked to extend their remit to include Lord Balfour, and the historical links and current relationship with Israel and Palestine. The Race Review is expected to be published by the end of the year.

Sustainable Travel Policy and University Executive response:

- The University Executive have received the report on the Sustainable Travel Policy and will honour the commitment to provide the report to Senate and the wider University community.
- The report was received late, and has been shared with key colleagues in finance, procurement, and sustainability for a response. These responses were discussed by the University Executive when they met last week.

- The Convener advised that the report and the proposed response would be circulated to Senate in the week commencing 10 June. The response goes beyond the recommendations of the report. The recommendations have been accepted with some minor exceptions.

Letter from the Secretary of State for Science and Innovation in the UK Government:

- The University received confirmation that UK Government funding for a £900 million exascale supercomputer will be awarded to Edinburgh.

- It was also confirmed that Artificial Intelligence research resources would also be situated in Edinburgh, signalling a significant investment in Edinburgh from the current UK Government.

One member questioned the continued delay in sharing the Sustainable Travel Policy report, noting that it is encouraging to hear the recommendations of the report have been accepted, though expressing caution as to whether this is welcome news without the contents of the report being available. The member questioned senior management's credibility in claiming a precarious financial situation while paying a premium to a compulsory travel management service for each and every journey and while the Principal personally travelled in business class.

The Convener reiterated his commitment that the report and proposed response would be circulated to Senate in the week commencing 10 June and explained that the response goes beyond the recommendations of the report, which explains why the report will not be circulated without the accompanying response.

2. **Senate Minutes & e-Senate Reports - S 23/24 2A**

For approval

- Minutes of 7 February 2024
- Report of 24 April- 8 May e-Senate 2024

The Convener noted that corrections to the 7 February 2024 minute have been incorporated. A further correction will be incorporated as a Clerk's note to the Sustainability item which will include reference to the 2023 QS Sustainability Rankings.

The Convener invited Senate to approve the 7 February 2024 minutes as presented subject to the correction outlined. Senate approved the minutes as presented without requiring a vote.

The Convener invited Senate to approve the Report of E-Senate for 24 April – 8 May 2024 as presented. Senate approved the report as presented without requiring a vote.

One member commented on the lack of response received to questions raised via the e-Senate process. They identified the redirection of Senate items as one matter queried during the recent e-Senate where they would appreciate a response. The member suggested that the e-Senate process and closing the feedback look be considered by the Senate Task and Finish Group. The Senate

Clerk confirmed that e-Senate is one of the areas for the Task and Finish Group to consider and the members comments would be shared with the group for consideration.

Action: Senate Clerk to refer comments regarding e-Senate and closing feedback loop to the Senate External Review Task and Finish Group.

3. **Matters Arising - S 23/24 2B**

- Senate Action Log

The Convener highlighted that a summary of actions completed from the Senate Action Log was circulated as a paper to note. The Action Log includes an additional column with a brief summary of the outcome. The Action Log remains a live document and will continue to be updated.

A member expressed the understanding that the action log was intended to bring Senate clarity as to the outcomes of decisions Senate has made but was concerned that it has turned out to be narrowly tailored to track only whether decisions have been communicated rather than what actions have followed from the decisions. The member noted that the Principal had last year suppressed a paper asking for updates on decisions Senate had taken and was told at the time that the action log would contain these updates, but it has not done so. The member stated that the lack of information about the effect of Senate decisions is a matter of great concern for understanding Senate's effectiveness.

The member urged Senate to think about the bigger picture of what Senate does and the consequences of its decisions. The member stated that the Action Log is narrowly tailored around tracking the communication of Senate decisions to areas responsible and that if Senate decisions are to have meaning these should be recorded on the Action Log for tracking as appropriate. The member concluded that it is important to understand whether Senate decisions are being carried out by responsible areas and the Action Log should provide the mechanism for tracking this and providing feedback on Senate's effectiveness.

The Convener expressed his understanding that the Senate action log was to record where Senate is to take some action, rather than where some other party takes an action, and agreed with the member that there needs to be a means to ensure Senate is informed of the outcomes of actions taken by other parties from Senate decisions.

Action: Senate Convener and Senate Clerk to consider communication pathway for reporting back to Senate.

ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

4. **Conferral of Awards – CLOSED**

- **School of Literature, Languages and Cultures - S 23/24 3C**
- **Undergraduate Medicine and Veterinary Medicine (MVM) students - S 23/24 3D**

Senate approved the conferral of awards on graduates from the School of Literature, Languages and Cultures and College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine (MVM) without requiring a vote.

5. **Report from the Honorary Degrees Committee – S 23/24 3E**
   CLOSED

   For approval

   Ms Lucy Evans introduced this item and highlighted that additional detail has been provided for each nominee based on Senate's feedback. Ms Evans welcomed questions on the report from Senate.

   Senate approved the Report from the Honorary Degrees Committee without requiring a vote.

   ITEMS TO COMMENT

6. **College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine Modernisation programme - S 23/24 3F**
   To comment

   Professor David Argyle, Head of College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine introduced the paper and accompanying slides. He explained that the paper represented considerable consultation which had taken place within the College over the last 18 months.

   The proposal presents a simplified version of the current structure, with a six-School model proposed, and the removal of Deaneries and combining of Institutes. The revised structure would be supported by a revised Professional Services structure.

   Professor Argyle explained that the programme is now within its consultation phase, with Senate members invited to contribute via an open portal. He explained the timeframe for the modernisation programme and that a change impact assessment and Equality Impact Assessment were still to take place. The establishment of School names and critical infrastructure will follow once these assessments have taken place.

   Senate members made the following points:

   - A member reflected on the wide consultation though low response rate from staff. They discussed the changes within their local area and reported that few colleagues were aware of the restructure. They felt there would be value in providing tangible examples of how the restructure will affect staff on a day-to-day basis for staff to provide meaningful feedback and engagement with the consultation. The member's perception was that colleagues were concerned about the potential impact on education and a potential segregation of teaching.

     The Head of College encouraged staff to attend the town halls and provided reassurance around these being a meaningful way to engage with the restructure.

     The College Registrar expanded on the next stage of consultation and acknowledged that a range of communication methods is required to reach all colleagues. Engagement has been focussed on a top-down and ground-up approach with the next stage of engagement to focus on reaching staff not

previously covered and clarifying how the structure will affect staff on a day-to-day basis.

- The CAHSS Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Validation queried where the Dean of Quality for CMVM would be situated in the new structure as this was not included in the diagram presented to Senate.

  The College Registrar confirmed that a Dean of Quality would be included in the new structure and the College are working with the current Dean of Quality to establish where this role fits within the revised structure.

- A member suggested that the restructure was a good opportunity for the College to develop a workload model which aligns with that of other Colleges and they felt this should be explicitly incorporated at an early stage in the restructure plans.

  The Head of College and College Registrar stated that the plans for a College-wide workload model are included in the larger pack of documentation and that work towards expanding a workload model across the College is taking place. The College is working with their counterparts in CAHSS and CSE to share best practice and learn how a wider-scale roll out has been achieved in other areas.

- A member welcomed the College Registrar's comments reflecting the consideration of the impact of changes on academic, clinical, and professional services staff. The member welcomed some elements relating to change management and highlighted other areas which should also be accounted for, including the need for a detailed risk assessment, a need for change to reflect the on-the-ground experience of staff and consideration of the University's relationship with the NHS. The member sought to clarify that the process and timelines for implementation take account of the lessons learnt from other University change management projects.

  The Head of College explained that the timelines presented were for approval of the structure, and not for implementation of the revised structure.

  The Convener also explained that engagement with the NHS on the restructure has been positive at a high level.

- A member sought to clarify what problems the restructure was intended to solve and that it would be helpful for non-CMVM staff to understand what the main issues and risks are. The member also queried what would happen to staff whose research and teaching teams are split in the new structure.

  The Head of College explained that there is currently a high degree of complexity between Deaneries, Institutes and Schools and which areas individual staff belong to, which the revised structure seeks to simplify. The proposals put forward are based on feedback from staff, with a pulse survey undertaken across the College and a significant amount of work taking place toward improvements made in response to staff feedback.

- A member queried whether an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) has taken place and whether this includes specific provision for women and minority groups to provide anonymised EQIA will take place in the next phase of work,

with the EDI Committees providing input into the Assessment. The EQIA would provide anonymised opportunity for staff to feed into this and this would include provision for gender specific and minority groups to feed into the Assessment.

- The College Registrar noted that the College is planning for the 300-year anniversary of the Medical School in 2026 and considering how these celebrations can be integrated into the restructure plans.

- A member reflected on there being a communication issue with colleagues 'on the ground' unaware of the forthcoming changes. The member believed that the town hall events had been useful, however there are long gaps between updates and suggested that an Action Log be developed on the CMVM SharePoint for staff to access real-time updates via this portal.

  The College Registrar explained that there was a series of FAQs on the CMVM SharePoint site which includes an Action Log and provides real-time updates. The College will consider means to empower local leadership to share these resources in their areas.

The Convener reminded Senate that a link to provide further comments on questions on the CMVM restructure would be posted on the Senate Members Portal and members informed once this link is available.

ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

7. **Senate Letter from the Encampment - S 23/24 3G**

   Senate noted the letter.

   Student Welfare, Investment Policy, and Research Expertise - S 23/24 3H
   For approval

   Dr Peter Adkins and Dr Claire Duncanson introduced the item and extended their thanks to the Senate Convener and Senate Clerk for incorporating the late paper into the billet.

   Dr Adkins provided an overview of the paper and explained the paper is intended to represent a broad University view on this topic. There are deep concerns amongst the student and staff community regarding the ongoing hunger strike.

   Each of the motions within the paper were introduced in turn.

   Dr Adkins and Dr Duncanson expressed their concern students felt it necessary to protest through hunger strike and drew on comparable institutions where amicable agreement has been reached with protestors.

   The paper seeks to affirm the Principal's statement regarding the right to protest and opposes any disciplinary measures against students who participate in the protests.

   The paper calls on Court to divest from two companies, Amazon and Alphabet and highlighted this action as being particularly urgent due to the ongoing hunger strike.

Finally, the paper seeks the formal involvement of academic and research expertise in the Investment Policy setting bodies, including the Investment Committee.

The Convener echoed the concerns regarding the hunger strike and expressed his desire that these come to an end. He confirmed University Executive are meaningfully engaging with the protestors and highlighted that those participating in hunger strike are autonomous adults and the Executive cannot force individuals to end their hunger strike. The Convener invited Mr Lee Hamill, Director of Finance to comment on Motions 2c and 2d.

Mr Hamill explained the University has engaged with Investment and Fund Managers to understand the University's holdings of the two companies in question. There are two distinct ways in which funds are held:

1. Direct holdings: This is where the university holds shares for a named company and it is possible to sell those shares on the approval of the University Court.

2. Indirect holdings: This is where the university holds shares for a fund which contains multiple companies. These funds can contain hundreds of different companies, and it is not possible to exit from the investment of individual named companies without exiting from the entire indirect holding fund.

Mr Hamill confirmed the university holds both direct and indirect holdings for the two companies in question. He explained the process for disposing of direct holding funds was more straightforward than exiting from indirect holding funds.

Mr Hamill also clarified the University's Investment Committee is not responsible for setting the University's Investment Policy. The responsibility for setting the policy sits with University Court. Court provides the Investment Committee with the terms, targets, and exclusions for companies which they can and cannot invest in on the University's behalf.

In response, one of the paper authors, Dr Kevin Donovan, welcomed the explanation regarding direct and indirect holdings and clarified that Motion 2c is seeking the sale of direct holdings of Amazon and Alphabet.

Dr Donovan acknowledged the Convener's point that those participating in the hunger strike are autonomous adults and the paper does not suggest any coercive action take place. Dr Donovan highlighted that those participating in the hunger strike have indicated that they will end their strike if the direct shares are sold, as outlined in Paper S23/24 3G, and stated that there is a clear path forward that falls within the University's remit.

Senate members made the following points in discussion:

- A member, who is also a member of Court, expressed their support for the paper and the recommendations. They stated that Court receives updates from the Investment Committee, however the student member does not feel there is sufficient detail contained in these updates and they find the governance and bureaucracy around policy making and guidance confusing.

  The student member also sought to clarify the process for urgent Court consideration if Senate is to approve the motions.

The Convener confirmed in response that the Investment Policy is set by University Court. Court however receives regular updates on Senate business, via the Routine Senate Report to Court, Senate minutes and via the Principal's Report. Additionally, there are two Senate Assessors who sit on University Court. The Convener also confirmed that a Court Exception Committee exists and could meet electronically to consider what urgent action is necessary if Senate passes Motion 2c.

- A member stated that the decision to divest should be made because this is the right thing to do, rather than to end a hunger strike.

- The Convener stated that the wording of Motion 2a assumes a causal link between University Executive engagement and ending the hunger strike, whereas wording should refer to creating conditions to end the hunger strike.

- One of the paper authors, Dr Donovan, explained that the motions are distinct and discreet actions and highlighted that Motion 2a recognises the autonomy of the protestors, but also seeks to reach an agreement as soon as possible.

  Motion 2a is intended to urge the University Executive to act, rather than this being at the request of the hunger strikers.

  Motion 2c is intended to reflect the broader sense of prudency regarding university investments and urges Senate to consider these motions in line with this intention, it is not suggested that Senate approve Motion 2c to end the hunger strike.

- One of the paper authors, Dr Duncanson welcomed the acceptance of the motions, the clarification of onward referral to University Court and the ongoing staff involvement and decision-making regarding investments. She clarified that Motion 2d point to a longer-term intention, which is to ensure ethical expertise of the Responsible Investment Policy and ensuring this is reflected in the Investment Committee. She highlighted the most urgent issue is Motion 2c and the request that the university divest from direct shares in the named companies. The Convener confirmed in response that if Senate supports Motion 2c that this would be relayed to Court with urgency and with a recommendation that this be considered sooner than the next meeting of Court.

- A Senate member, who is also a member of Court, sought to clarify the intention of Motion 2d is to ensure staff expertise is considered in forming the Responsible Investment Policy, which is the responsibility of Court, rather than carrying out the policy, which is the responsibility of the Investment Committee.

- The paper author, Dr Duncanson explained that it is not as straightforward as Court setting the policy and this being carried out by the Investment Committee. She highlighted that the priority of the Investment Committee is to ensure strong returns on the University's investments. There is not staff expertise on the Investment Committee, and she stated that, in her view, this is why investments in Amazon and Alphabet still exist. The paper calls on Court to determine the best way to ensure that there is genuine ethical investment approach, and seeks ongoing structural and institutional means to support such investment.

- Co-author, Dr Donovan echoed this sentiment and explained the intention is for Court to consider the implementation of the policy. He identified that this is the second occasion in 10 years that the University's investments have been

the subject of student protests and encampment. He urged Court to consider a means to move away from a reactive approach to such action, and towards a structured approach to managing investments in an ethical way. He expressed a view that a broader remit within Court and expansion of expertise beyond a consultation exercise would be valuable in achieving this.

- In response, Mr Hamill provided greater detail on how the Investment Committee operates. The Committee does not consider individual shares, rather takes the mandate provided by Court and looks to invest in a way that obeys the Responsible Investment Policy, which contains exclusions such as fossil fuels and controversial weapons, whilst also achieving a reasonable return on investment. Fund Managers will only be considered if they comply with the University's Responsible Investment Policy. Mr Hamill explained that the Investment Committee does not go through individual stocks within each fund to check if there are investments with specific named companies, and that changing the membership of the Investment Committee would not achieve the desired outcome as provided in the paper and discussion. He reiterated that engaging with the consultation process is the means to achieve the desired outcome.

- A member asked if there was an indicative timeframe for how quickly divestment could take place. They expressed concern about the lack of urgency and lack of definite commitment to a timeline for divestment, and expressed that it was fortunate that Senate was meeting in time to consider this paper but disheartening that this timing was by chance.

- The Convener agreed with the urgency of action and confirmed that consideration of action is not linked to the timing of Senate meetings. The Convener expressed a commitment to take forward Senate's decision before the end of the week, though reiterated that it is at the discretion of Court and its Exception Committee to determine how quickly they would consider and enact any action in response. The Convener also noted that the sale and disposal of assets would depend on whether these were held in direct or indirect funds and were dependent on other agencies to carry out any such request to dispose of funds.

- Two Senate members expressed their surprise that investments are not scrutinised line-by-line and expressed a view that this action seems necessary. One of the members stated that urgent action is critical and highlighted that the hunger strike has reached day 22 and reported that 21 days is the duration that someone can survive without food.

- In response, Mr Hamill explained it is standard practice within the fund management model that managers do not scrutinise investments line-by-line, with many indirect funds containing hundreds of companies. He explained that the University provide Fund Managers with criteria for investment of funds and fund managers are obliged to confirm and certify that they comply with this criterion.

- A Senate member expressed their sympathy to the cause but sought to understand why Amazon and Alphabet are expressly identified as companies which the University should divest from.

- In response, paper author Dr Donovan explained that Amazon and Alphabet hold contracts with the Israeli military that allow weapons systems to use cloud services. He indicated one such example is Project Nimbus and further information on this can be found via internet search. He also stated that Amazon and Alphabet have expanded the purposeful contracting with military

entities, including the Israeli military, and that the International Criminal Court has been asked to issue warrants of arrest for the Prime Minister of Israel and Minister of Defence of Israel.

The Convener invited a response from Lee Hamill, who stated that the university invests in funds that have the highest Ethics, Sustainability, and Governance characteristics and did not have the resources to scrutinise individual company investments.

Senate approved Motion 2a via a vote of 87%.
Senate approved Motion 2b via a vote of 92%.
Senate approved Motion 2c via a vote of 69%.
Senate approved Motion 2d via a vote of 69%.

Action: The Senate Convener and Clerk to relay Senate's approval of Motion 2c to University Court by 24 May at latest as an urgent matter for consideration.

Action: Senate Clerk to relay Senate's approval of the remaining motions via the routine Senate Report to Court.

The Convener initiated a short break before resuming the meeting.

8.   **Taught Postgraduate Curriculum Framework - S 23/24 3I**
      For approval

      The paper authors noted that the paper is taken as read and welcomed questions and comments on the Taught Postgraduate Curriculum Framework from Senate.

      Senate members raised the following comments:

      • A member queried the absence of specific elements from the paper which Senate has previously requested be included in future papers on the Curriculum Transformation Project. They recalled that these included specific and measurable indicators of success aligned to the University's strategic priorities, comprehensive risk assessment and risk management plans, and detailed costing and demonstration of resource. The member also asked for comment on the timing of the Edinburgh Student Vision, which the member understood from previously approved motions to be the next priority from CTP to come to Senate.

      • A member welcomed the Taught Postgraduate Framework and appreciated the differing stackable options available for postgraduate programmes. They expressed concern that stackable options may require heavy administrative load to support and the potential challenges around continuity of administrative support and knowledge, particularly where some stackable options last up to 15 years, which introduces risks associated with changes to personnel, systems, and programmes.

      • Another member expressed concern regarding the currency of knowledge for programmes which are delivered over a long period of time.

      • The Project Lead, Dr Jon Turner explained that the risk assessment and costings associated with the Taught Postgraduate Curriculum Framework would be included in the business case when this is presented to the University Initiatives Project Board. The paper presented to Senate focusses

on the academic framework, rather than the resourcing and costings for the project.

Dr Turner also addressed the question regarding the Edinburgh Student Vision. He explained that the understanding following the previous Senate meeting was that the Postgraduate Taught Framework was a priority to return to Senate and that the Edinburgh Student Vision will return to Senate at the first meeting of 2024/25. The Project is currently undertaking market sensitivity testing on the Edinburgh Student Vision with students who have applied to programmes to understand if there are any elements of the Vision which may be viewed differently by different student cohorts.

Dr Turner explained that the Senate Academic Policy and Regulation Committee (APRC) are scheduled to meet on 23 May and are expected to scrutinise the points raised regarding stackable options. He confirmed that Schools and programmes would continue to have discretion to decide the model and options suitable for programmes, and the intention is to provide options across the institution.

The Project Sponsor, Vice-Principal Students, Professor Colm Harmon, confirmed that the scrutiny provided by Senate Committees including APRC will include consideration of governance and guidelines required to support the implementation of the Postgraduate Taught Framework and such issues will be reported to Senate.

Dr Turner addressed concerns regarding the lengthy time periods and administrative challenges, noting that such challenges currently exist within the institution. He explained that the existing University systems and processes are not designed to manage such cases and therefore a significant piece of work is being undertaken in consultation with APRC and the Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) to understand the end-to-end processes and what changes may be required to support the new model.

- A member raised specific query on Model E and reflected that this provides priceless opportunity for students to prepare for the job market, but also expressed concern regarding assessing progression of students through this model, and where studies are spread across external assessors and who may not have sufficient insight into the University's assessment processes.

- A member raised a query regarding the Postgraduate Taught models where there is no dissertation or research project and therefore teaching is expected to take place over the summer. They queried whether this means a third semester and staff will be expected to undertake teaching over the summer and raised concern with the impact of this on individuals with heavy teaching loads.

  The Dean of Education in the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine (CMVM), Professor Jamie Davies explained that teaching over the summer is routine across the undergraduate and postgraduate curriculum and that CMVM has a 48-week teaching year.

- A member queried what Senate is being asked to approve and the purpose of the Postgraduate Taught Framework and what issues this is seeking to solve. They reflected that, in their view, the Framework presented captures 80% of the University's existing taught Postgraduate provision and that many elements presented are incorporated via other means. They questioned what elements are worthy of the 'transformation' name and sought to understand what the Framework enables that the University does not currently deliver.

They reflected on Senate's request to receive information regarding the resourcing and risks involved and its desire to understand these elements prior to approving the academic proposal.

- Dr Turner, explained that Model A is the dominant model seen across the University at present. He explained that, at present, programmes that wish to diverge from a 60-credit dissertation or research project need to seek approval via additional approval pathways and that adopting the Postgraduate Taught Framework would allow areas to adopt an alternative postgraduate framework as standard and without additional layers of approval. Dr Turner explained that Models C, D and E are not presently supported by the University regulations and processes, and approval of the Framework would allow regulations and frameworks to be evolved to support these structures.

  Dr Turner addressed the query regarding the forward-looking benefits of the Framework and explained that increasing opportunities for flexibility and lifelong learning are becoming commonplace in the sector. He explained that approving the Framework, provides the University with significant opportunity to develop these changes, and for these to be supported by the University systems, processes, and regulations.

  Dr Turner addressed a query regarding fully taught Masters' programmes and explained that there is scope for local areas to determine which clusters of the Framework they wish to adopt, however it is not anticipated that programmes will offer both fully-taught and taught with dissertation models simultaneously.

  Dr Turner also addressed queries regarding maintaining currency of programmes that are delivered over several years. He explained that this will be discipline specific,

  Dr Turner noted that the paper is seeking approval for the Framework, and that APRC will undertake detailed work on support and implementation before returning to Senate.

- The Convener of SQAC, Professor Tina Harrison reflected that the paper presents options for the delivery of postgraduate programmes and does not compel any areas to change their programmes. Rather, the proposal provides postgraduate taught structures which are available for local areas to adopt without requiring additional approval. Professor Harrison reflected that it is helpful to consider the Models as stackable blocks of study, rather than an overall period of 15 years, with students able to complete blocks and seek accreditation for their learning at various points over a period of time.

- Professor Harmon reflected on the feedback previously received at Senate on the Postgraduate Framework which indicated that the Framework is facilitative and allows a straightforward process for programmes that are seeking to reform.

  Professor Harmon also addressed queries regarding the business case, reflecting that Senate's view, as endorsed by the University Initiatives Project Board (UIPB), was to progress the Postgraduate Framework and continue development and consultation on the Undergraduate Framework over the coming months, with the business case to be considered separately, looking to ensure that resources reside within Colleges and Schools to facilitate and encourage the innovation the Project allows.

- A member expressed a desire to see the Framework approved, but urged caution regarding launching the Project without an Equality Impact Assessment or risk assessment being undertaken. The member reflected on

lessons learnt from People and Money and that Senate had asked to see these assessments prior to approving the framework.

The Convener confirmed that the UIPB will be responsible for considering these elements should Senate approve the Framework.

- A member expressed the view that seeking approval at this stage is premature, and that the paper should be presented for comment. The member felt that when more detail was available from APRC and UIPB, the Framework could be presented for Senate's approval at this stage.

- Another member echoed this view, and highlighted that the motions approved in March 2023 indicated the expectation that any future recommendations relating to the approval of the Project be accompanied by a risk assessment and detailed costings.

- A Head of School indicated their eagerness for the Framework to be approved and reflected on the Framework being facilitative with many elements being essential for Schools to be able to progress as quickly as possible with plans and reshaping in the 2030's and beyond.

- The Convener reminded Senate that the item is presented for approval.

- Professor Harmon stated that it is essential for Senate to give its approval to the Framework to allow APRC and other areas to progress with the technical work that is required to support implementation. The risk and resourcing of the Project has been discussed at UIPB and these will return to Senate for scrutiny following the work undertaken by APRC and UIPB.

- The Provost, Professor Kim Graham, Convener of the UIPB, explained that UIPB needs to understand the broader direction of travel and Senate's support for this. The UIPB has already provided feedback to the Curriculum Transformation Board regarding resources and costings and provided reassurance to Senate that this is a key element of what UIPB considers, and the capacity for delivery and management of risks alongside other University projects. Professor Graham reiterated that if Senate approves the proposed Framework, then this will allow APRC and UIPB to progress with their work before the Framework returns to Senate.

- The Convener explained that the UIPB was formed in response to lessons learnt from People and Money and is responsible for ensuring that the questions relating to risk and resourcing are considered and properly addressed.

Senate considered the following amendment, proposed by Dr Tamara Trodd and seconded by Dr Steven Morley:

Add to 'Actions requested': 6. Senate welcomes the flexibility and choice signalled by this iteration of the Taught Postgraduate Framework, and notes that the choice of programme archetypes and pathways through programmes offered by Schools should remain at School and subject-area discretion, and should not be mandated by other authorities, including Colleges.

Ahead of a decision on this amendment, the proposer explained the rationale for the amendment, which is to address potential concerns that the pathways and stackable models will be mandated. They sought to clarify that the amendment is intended to ensure that decision making on the Taught Postgraduate Framework is delegated to Schools.

The following comments were raised in relation to the amendment:

- The Head of the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine, Professor David Argyle expressed concern regarding a vote on the proposed amendment as a fundamental change to the governance structure of the University.

- The Provost echoed these concerns and reflected that the amendment is at odds with the University's governance structures and these structures allow Colleges and Schools to work collaboratively across areas.

- Professor Harmon explained that the Project is silent on this matter and it is up to Colleges or Schools to determine the appropriate structure for their programmes.

- A member explained their reading of the amendment as being in line with the status quo and instead seeking to confirm that this will be maintained. They noted that School Boards of Studies are currently tasked with considering programme related matters.

- A Head of School explained that Schools and Colleges work collaboratively to reach decisions, and it would be difficult for a College-wide approach to be implemented as there are variances across School and subject areas.

- A member explained that at present Schools have discretion to make decisions and Colleges do not mandate these decisions. The member expressed concern regarding the phrase 'not mandated by other authorities' as the University is subject to external Quality Assurance Requirements.

The proposer of the amendment, Dr Trodd noted the points raised regarding the governance structures and reflected that this was not intended by proposing the motion. She accepted that the proposed amendment may break the governance structure and therefore agreed to withdraw the amendment if an alternative amendment, proposed by Dr Rupert Nash, is approved as an alternative.

Dr Rupert Nash proposed an alternative amendment and this was seconded:

Replace point 4 with "Senate thanks the CTP board for the progress and requests Senate Academic Policy & Regulations Committee (APRC) take forward the technical implementation and detail of policy changes for final approval in a future Senate meeting."

Senate approved the proposed amendment via a vote of 72%.

The Convener explained that the approved amendment means that final approval of the Postgraduate Framework will return to a future meeting of Senate.

In the interests of time, the Convener moved to item 12 on the agenda: S23/24 3P Research and Partnerships in the Defence Sector.

9. **Award of degrees: delegation of authority to Boards of Examiners - S 23/24 3J CLOSED**

For approval. Senate did not reach this item ahead of the conclusion of the meeting.

10.   **Senate Committee Administration**

For approval:

- **Senate Exception Committee Membership & Terms of Reference - S 23/24 3K**
- **Senate Standing Committee Membership - S 23/24 3L**
- **Senate Standing Committee Priorities - S 23/24 3M**

For information:

- **Senate Standing Committee Upcoming Business - S 23/24 3N**

Senate did not reach these items ahead of the conclusion of the meeting.

11.   **Senate Task and Finish Group Update & Proposals - S 23/24 3O**

For approval. Senate did not reach this item ahead of the conclusion of the meeting.

12.   **Research and Partnerships in the Defence Sector - S 23/24 3P**

For approval

Dr Ricardo Ribeiro Ferreira introduced the item and explained that the item has originated from discussions with Senate members and colleagues who are not Senate members and who have expressed concern regarding research areas. He highlighted that the paper proposes that a review of projects be undertaken on an annual basis, rather than only at the commencement of each project, and is seeking greater transparency by publishing this report on an annual basis. The paper authors have been approached by Senate members and have tried to incorporate a series of amendments to the paper to try and achieve a consensus on most motions. He explained that discussions have taken place between Engineering colleagues who work in these areas and the authors seek to achieve the right tone and scope for the item and acknowledged the important humanitarian applications of some research being undertaken in these areas.

He confirmed that further amendments to the paper had been received, with student representatives expressing concern regarding the student impact of Motions 2.3 and 2.6 and proposed that more comprehensive wording be provided for these items to provide protection to students who may be affected by a review.

He also explained that a further amendment was received to include an additional motion, Motion 2.7, which the paper authors agreed to include:

2.7 To enhance the smooth operation of this suite of actions Senate recommends the creation of a working group - with adequate representation from Senate members, staff and students with experience in this area - to refine the scope, definitions and process implied in this paper.

Dr Ribeiro Ferreira also notified Senate that the paper authors received a petition with signatures from 250 students and staff expressing their support for the item.

Senate members raised the following comments:

- The Vice-Principal Research, Professor Christina Boswell thanked the paper authors for the item, noting her appreciation for the spirit in which the paper is written and the openness of colleagues researching in this area in engaging in discussions to develop proposals with paper authors.

  She explained that the paper points to a gap in the University's Ethics Policy on how ethical review and due diligence takes place on external partnerships, coupled with how the University applies broader societal wellbeing within its research. She acknowledged that this merits further clarification and work and notified Senate that there are two Working Groups which the University Executive has agreed to establish in these areas. Within the research space it is beneficial for alignment across how these are identified and operationalised.

  The recommendations from these two Working Groups would be rigorously implemented in research ethics and due diligence approaches. Once these definitions are identified, Colleges and Schools would be supported in examining projects within the scope of the definitions and with clearer guidelines in establishing parameters and undertaking ongoing review. Moving forward, these principles and parameters will be embedded in the University Ethics Policy, which will ensure a joined up and systematic approach across the University.

  Professor Boswell confirmed that she would be happy to bring a paper to Senate which outlines how this work is being operationalised and which will incorporate the additional points into this process. She noted the importance of striking a balance between a rigorous ethics assessment process and not seeking to overburden specific projects and research across the University.

- A member thanked the paper authors for preparing the item and for highlighting the need to understand the University's exposure to projects which present risks. The member sought to understand the practical application of Motion 2.5, adding that guidance was required to understand how Research Ethics Committees are intended to apply this, and operationalise some of the principles.

- A member from the School of Engineering welcomed the open and transparent discussion and disclosed that they undertake research in the defence and security space with the majority of the research funded by the Ministry of Defence (MoD). They outlined their experience of working in this space and explained that work is often within a specific academic research area which has undergone an ethics approval process by the MoD and government. They explained that majority of the work is in uncontentious fields such as mine detection and cyber security.

  The member expressed their concern regarding the potential widespread interpretation of the paper and the use of non-specific language could result in unintended consequences and cover up to 95% of research work undertaken within the School of Engineering. They explained that the paper could apply to companies which work across multiple disciplines spanning security and defence, but where the University's relationship with them is related to an uncontentious context, for example, tidal work.

  They also expressed concern regarding ethical reviews resulting in additional work for Primary Investigators and noted that this is not adequately

acknowledged by the paper's resource implications. They also expressed concern regarding the additional complexity and vulnerability of early career staff and PhD students who are undertaking research in legitimate areas and who may be targeted by ill-informed individuals online.

- Another member from the School of Engineering echoed these points and provided an example of having undertaken research which was originally intended for military use but was instead found to be beneficial for search and rescue services within the UK. The member supported seeking greater clarity in the wording for this proposal and welcomed the earlier points raised by the Vice-Principal Research.

- The Head of the College of Science and Engineering echoed the points made by elected members from the School of Engineering and added that work could be undertaken to ensure greater transparency and clarity around its ethics processes. He noted that there is expertise across the institution that can be utilised to ensure that research work is undertaken with greater scrutiny leading to the right benefits being achieved. He welcomed the Vice-Principal Research's proposed approach and reiterated the importance of ensuring there were no unintended consequences.

- One of the paper authors expressed that the intention of the item is to emphasise the need for greater transparency, noting that the University is a publicly funded institution.

- The Director of the Edinburgh Research Office, Dr Lorna Thomson provided explanation on the forthcoming changes to the University's Ethics Policy. She explained that the ethics management system will allow for University-wide reporting on the projects undergoing the ethics review process, and these will be attached to a schedule for returning to the Ethics Committee. There has been investment in the office which provides support around governance, compliance and risk, and this team will provide greater support to Principal Investigators. The ethics approval process is a complex area with regulatory requirements rapidly changing and the office will provide greater support to ensure due diligence around partners.

  Dr Thomson also explained some of the additional governance around projects in the defence sector, noting that the Research Office has access to information and support via a government team; this team has clearance with the MoD and other government departments and can provide advice on partners or research that the University plans to undertake. She noted that Principal Investigators work on this closely with Research Office staff but greater detail cannot be widely shared for confidentiality reasons.

- One of the paper authors welcomed the proposals from the Vice-Principal Research and stated these would be beneficial to receive in writing at a future meeting of Senate. The paper author expressed concern regarding further extending the process and that a report would be beneficial to affirm that proper checks are in place. They explained that the addition of Motion 2.7 is not intended to be attached to the two executive-approved working groups identified by the Vice-Principal Research, rather this group would be additional and proposed to help oversee the reporting work.

- The Senate Convener identified the overlap between work which is already taking place and work which is being proposed within the item. He agreed with the importance of the University being transparent and compliant with the law in this sector.

The Convener invited the paper authors to consider withdrawing the paper and returning this to a future meeting following further work with the Vice-Principal Research to refine the proposals.

- The Vice-Principal Research echoed the Senate Convener and stated that a revised paper could be returned to the October meeting of Senate.

- The paper authors expressed a preference that the item be considered now, and stated that other elected members on Teams were supportive of the item being considered at this meeting.

- A member suggested that the paper be treated as a starting point for implementation by the working group proposed in Motion 2.7 and that a revised proposal for the remaining elements returns to a future meeting of Senate.

Senate approved Motion 2.1 as contained in the paper via a majority vote of 75%.

An amendment to Motion 2.2 was proposed by Professor James Hopgood and seconded by Professor Sean Smith:

2.2: "Senate requests that the Edinburgh Research Office and the Research Ethics and Integrity Review Group (REIRG), in consultation with the Research Ethics Committees (RECs) at School level and relevant bodies, undertake a full consideration of the ethical review process for active research projects in the area of defence and security. This is to ensure that such research projects are not undermining "the interests and well-being" of the "broader society" that need to be safeguarded as per the University Research Ethics Policy, including violations of human rights or international and humanitarian law by the partners or any actors supplied with their products. Senate requests that the REIRG report to Senate on this process, with the intention that Senate subsequently approves a review of defence and security research and partnerships in accordance with that process."

Senate approved the proposed amendment via a vote of 72%.

Senate approved Motion 2.2 as amended via a majority vote of 79%.

The paper authors withdrew Motions 2.3, 2.4, 2.5 and 2.6 as contained in the paper and these would be referred to the proposed working group referred to in Motion 2.7.

Senate approved the addition of Motion 2.7 via a majority vote of 85%:

2.7 To enhance the smooth operation of this suite of actions Senate recommends the creation of a working group - with adequate representation from Senate members, staff and students with experience in this area - to refine the scope, definitions and process implied in this paper.

The Convener closed the meeting and noted that Senate would receive further communication regarding items not considered.

Action: Senate Convener and Senate Clerk to consider process for taking forward items not considered by Senate and communicating to members as soon as practicable.

ITEMS TO COMMENT

13. **People & Money Improvement Plan 24-26 - S 23/24 3Q**

To comment. Senate did not reach this item ahead of the conclusion of the meeting.

14. **Court Resolutions – Personal Chairs - S 23/24 3R**

To comment. Senate did not reach this item ahead of the conclusion of the meeting.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION
The following items were provided to Senate for information:

15. Report of the Central Academic Promotions Committee - S 23/24 3S

ITEMS FOR NOTING
The following items were provided to Senate for noting:

16. Senate Election Results - S 23/24 3T

17. Annual Internal Effectiveness of Senate - S 23/24 3U

18. Student Partnership Agreement - S 23/24 3V

19. Communications from the University Court - S 23/24 3W

20. College Management Structure 2024-25 - S 23/24 3X