

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

Wednesday, 1 March 2023

THE FOLLOWING PAPERS HAVE BEEN WITHHELD ON THE GROUNDS OF CONFIDENTIALITY:

- 7 Update and Extended Discussion on Student Recruitment
- 8.1 2022/23 Updated Financial Projection
- 8.2 Project Proposal – Hillhead Heating Network – **(This will be published at a later date following conclusion of contract award but commercially sensitive until that point)**
- 12.1 Update on AFG College and University of Aberdeen Partnership Qatar
- 14.2 Audit and Risk Committee Report

THE FOLLOWING PAPERS ARE ENCLOSED BUT HAVE BEEN REDACTED ON THE GROUNDS OF CONFIDENTIALITY:

- 14.4 Finance and Resourcing Committee Report (4.3, 6.1 - 6.6, 6.10 – 6.11 and 7.2)

There will be a meeting of the **UNIVERSITY COURT** on **Wednesday 1 March** at 9am to 3pm in the **Craig Suite, Sir Duncan Rice Library.**

BUSINESS

All items of business are for discussion, providing information or context relevant for current or future decisions. Those items that require a decision today are annotated accordingly.

- 1 WELCOME AND RECTOR'S REPORT (enclosed)
- 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REMINDER OF COURT AND MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES (enclosed)
- 3 MINUTES OF 22 NOVEMBER 2022: For Approval (enclosed)
An action note of the 7 February 2023 Deep Dive on Research Strategy is also enclosed for information.
- 4 ACTION LOG, MATTERS ARISING AND DECISIONS BY CIRCULATION (enclosed)
- 5 REPORT FROM THE SENIOR GOVERNOR (enclosed)
- 6 REPORT FROM THE PRINCIPAL AND UPDATE ON HE SECTOR / UNIVERSITY DEVELOPMENTS (enclosed)
- 7 UPDATE AND EXTENDED DISCUSSION ON STUDENT RECRUITMENT (**Strictly Confidential**) (enclosed)
- 8 FINANCE AND PLANNING
 - 8.1 2022/23 Updated Financial Projection (**Strictly Confidential**) (enclosed)
 - 8.2 Project Proposal - Hillhead Heating Network: For Decision (**Strictly Confidential**) (enclosed)
- 9 REPORT ON CUBANE/UNIFORM SERVICES EFFECTIVENESS ASSESSMENT (enclosed)
- 10 RESULTS OF 2022 STAFF SURVEY
- 11 PEOPLE AND INCLUSION
 - 11.1 Public Sector Equality Duty Report: For Approval (enclosed)
 - 11.2 Approach to Supporting the Victims of Conflict (enclosed)
 - 11.3 Cost of Living - Support to our Community (enclosed)
- 12 INTERNATIONAL
 Update on AFG College and University of Aberdeen Partnership Qatar (**Strictly Confidential**) (enclosed)
- 13 GOVERNANCE & REGULATORY
 - 13.1 Delegated Authority Schedule: For Decision (enclosed)
 - 13.2 Update on Changes to Executive Committee Structure (enclosed)

- 14 REPORTS FROM THE SENATE AND FROM COURT SUB-COMMITTEES
- 14.1 Senate Report: For Decision *Includes:*
To approve: Draft Resolution from Senate: Originating from Quality Assurance Committee: Omnibus Resolution Changes in Regulations for Various Degrees
- To approve: Originating from Honorary Degrees Committee: Additional Degrees Available to Senate for Award honoris causa tantum*
- Court Sub-Committee Reports**
- 14.2 Audit and Risk Committee: **Strictly Confidential** For Decision (enclosed)
- 14.3 Governance and Nominations Committee Report: For Decision (enclosed)
- 14.4 Finance and Resourcing Committee Report: **Part Confidential** (enclosed)
- 14.5 Commercialisation Committee Report (enclosed)
- 15 FURTHER REPORTS FOR NOTE OR REFERENCE AVAILABLE IN RESOURCES AREA OF DECISION TIME
- 15.1 Report from the Partnership, Negotiating & Consultative Committee
- 16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Wednesday 26 April 2023 9am to 3pm

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
UNIVERSITY COURT
REPORT FROM THE RECTOR

1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This paper provides Court with a report from the Rector.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 The paper is for **information** and no action is required.

3. REPORT ON ACTIVITIES SINCE LAST MEETING

3.1 November 2022:

- Attended all the winter graduations.
- Gave a keynote address at AUSA Graduation Ball which was very well received by the graduates and their family and friends with the highlight being a comment I made at the end of my address “We are all baked in the same oven, if I can do all I am currently doing as Lord Rector, CEO, a Strong voice for Respiratory care in Scotland, you too can, go out shine brighter, and make the world a better place”.

3.2 December 2022:

- Monthly Career & Employability meetings with John Barrow, Dean for Employability and Entrepreneurship, and his team.
- Participated in the University Carol Service as well as reading one of the lessons. A service I enjoyed and had the opportunity to meet so many members of the community who came in out huge numbers to attend the Carol service and joined in sharing the joy of the Christmas season.
- Rector’s Christmas Lunch – never seen so much gratitude being expressed on a meal, our students thoroughly enjoyed the lunch especially those who couldn’t go home to celebrate with their families. The video is a must watch ([Rector's Christmas Lunch - YouTube](#)) to appreciate all that was done by our University for our students. Massive thanks to Tracey Slaven and the Senior Management Team, Karen Scaife and the student experience team, our wonderful kitchen staff and to Shola Adenuga who very kindly attended the lunch to treat the students to a wonderful Saxophone performance.

3.3 January 2023:

- Visited our Qatar Campus, met with staff and students; attended graduations and had the opportunity to meet with leaders who work within Qatari Education sector to share learning.
- Attended the Meet & Greet VIP Event as we welcomed our Chancellor, Her Majesty, The Queen Consort and to mark her 10th Anniversary of being our Chancellor. It was wonderful to share the many ways our University is making an impact with Her Majesty, including how we look after our students, which is not at all surprising that the University of Aberdeen is 4th in the UK for students’ satisfaction. Also shared the work the University is doing around widening access, ensuring no child is denied an education irrespective of their socioeconomic backgrounds.
- Attended and gave a keynote address at an “Afternoon of Science and Careers in Scotland” event which was held at the Science Teaching Hub.

3.4 February 2023:

- Attended Nigerian students “Meet & Greet” event which gave me the opportunity to welcome the students to the University and to share some pearls of knowledge. I also shared with them that I was an international who arrived Aberdeen about 15 years ago and that studying at the University of Aberdeen is one of the best decisions I made. Hoping to nurture the relationship with these students who can very quickly become a referral point and a source of support for prospective international students.

3.5 In addition, I continue to have my regular Rector surgeries where I listen to students concerns and liaise with staff to address these concerns, and my monthly meetings with AUSA CEO and Sabbatical Officers; Nick Edwards Head of Student Support, Tracey Slaven, Julie Ashworth and George Boyne.

4. FURTHER INFORMATION

4.1 Further information is available from the Rector, rector@abdn.ac.uk

Confidentiality Status: Open



UNIVERSITY COURT

1 March 2023

**DECLARATION OF INTEREST, BUSINESS FOR DISCUSSION
AND REMINDER OF COURT AND MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES**

DECLARATION OF INTEREST:

Any member or individual in attendance (including officers) who has a clear interest in a matter on the agenda must declare that interest at the meeting.

BUSINESS FOR DISCUSSION:

All items of business are for discussion, providing information or context relevant for current or future decisions. Those items that require a decision today are annotated accordingly.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF COURT AND COURT MEMBERS

Enclosed is a reminder for Court, for information, of:

- (a) its remit and primary responsibilities and the schedule of decisions reserved to it;
- (b) the role and duties of members, in particular, as trustees in charity law;

FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information is available from Bruce Purdon, Clerk to the Court, email b.purdon@abdn.ac.uk.

Confidentiality Status: Open

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

RESPONSIBILITIES OF COURT AND DUTIES OF MEMBERS AS CHARITY TRUSTEES

1. REMIT AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1.1 The constitutional basis, authority and responsibilities of the University Court are derived largely from the statutes contained in the Universities (Scotland) Acts from 1858 to 1966 and in the Ordinances and Resolutions made thereunder. Latterly this has been supplemented by the requirements of the Higher Education Governance Scotland (Act). The University is also a registered Scottish Charity and as such the Court as the governing body is the board of trustees, its members are charity trustees and subject to Scottish charities law, with accountability to the Office of the Scottish Charities Regulator (OSCR). The powers and functions of the Court are drawn from these requirements of statute and are set out in its Statement of Primary Responsibilities <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/governance/court-information.php#panel2452>
- 1.2 The Court has delegated many of its functions to its sub-committees: Audit and Risk, Commercialisation, Finance and Resourcing, Governance and Nominations, and Remuneration. These are set out in the respective remits of each Committee – and going forward brought together under a Schedule of Delegations expected to be considered by Court in November 2022. It should be noted, however, that Court as the governing body remains ultimately responsible for any decisions made by sub-committees on its behalf.

2. ROLE OF MEMBERS, CODE OF CONDUCT AND DUTIES OF CHARITY TRUSTEES

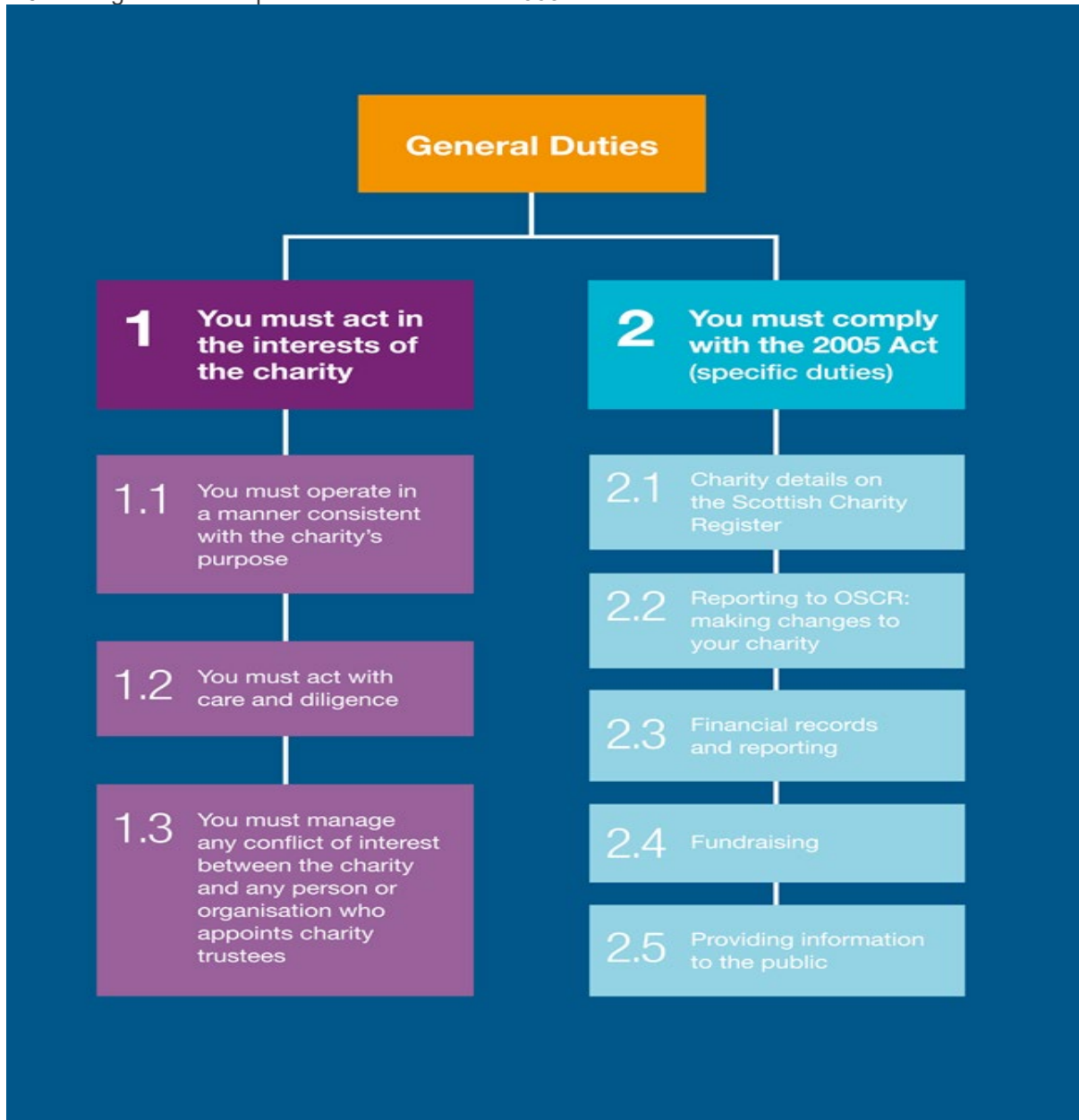
- 2.1 Members are reminded of their role as a governor (detailed below), the Court's Code of Conduct for Members (provided in your letter of appointment a condition of appointment) and, in particular, your duties as charity trustees under the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005. You should also be aware of the requirements of the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance <http://www.scottishuniversitygovernance.ac.uk/2017-code/> and the Financial Memorandum with the Scottish Funding Council: [http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Guidance_Governance/Financial_Memorandum_with_higher_education_institutions - 1 December 2014.pdf](http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Guidance_Governance/Financial_Memorandum_with_higher_education_institutions_-_1_December_2014.pdf)

Duties in Charities Law

- 2.2 These are summarised below, but more detailed guidance on the duties of charity trustees OSCR were provided in papers for the September 2020 meeting or available here <https://www.oscr.org.uk/guidance-and-forms/guidance-and-good-practice-for-charity-trustees/> All members are asked to regularly review their responsibilities as individual charity trustees in law.
- 2.3 All charity trustees have legal duties and responsibilities under the **2005 Act**. A duty is something that you must do, and all the duties must be met. These duties are separated out into **general duties**, that set out a broad framework that all charity trustees must work within, and **specific duties** detailed in the 2005 Act – OSCR note that you might delegate the practical details of the specific duties to your charity's staff, volunteers or professional advisers, but that the charity trustees are ultimately responsible for making sure the specific duties are met. The general and specific duties apply equally to **all** charity trustees and to **all** charities. All of the charity's trustees should work together to make sure that these duties are met. If you fail to comply with these duties then this is **misconduct** and OSCR have powers to take action against charity trustees, where appropriate. OSCR state that their response will be proportionate depending on the situation. Where a charity trustee has acted reasonably and honestly it is unlikely to be treated as misconduct.
- 2.4 As a charity trustee, the key duty is to look after the charity's **assets** and for making sure that the charity fulfils its **charitable purpose(s) – the University's purposes based on OSCR**

registration categorisations are: the advancement of higher education, of health, of citizenship or community development, and the advancement of the arts, heritage, culture or science.

2.5 The general and specific duties under the 2005 Act are:



3. COURT'S AGREED ROLE DESCRIPTION FOR COURT MEMBERS

3.1 In addition to the duties under law, the Court's agreed role description for governors, taking into account the requirements of the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance is:

Each governor is responsible, collectively with fellow governors, for the effective leadership of the University in all its aspects. That translates into more specific responsibilities of which the following are key:

- To play an appropriate part in furthering the values of higher education and the mission of the University of Aberdeen in particular;
- To ensure that the Court exercises efficient and effective use of the resources of the University, maintains its long-term financial viability, and safeguards its assets, and that proper mechanisms exist to ensure financial control and for the prevention of fraud;

- To exercise oversight in respect of the academic, corporate, financial, estate and human resource functions delegated to the authority of the Principal as chief executive;
- To ensure that Court conducts itself in accordance with accepted standards of behaviour in public life, embracing duty, selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability and stewardship, openness, honesty, leadership and respect. Members must at all times regulate their personal conduct as members of the Court in accordance with these standards;
- To establish constructive and supportive but challenging working relationships with the University employees with whom they come into contact, whilst recognising the proper separation between governance and executive management;
- To act fairly and impartially in the interests of the University as a whole using independent judgement and maintaining confidentiality as appropriate;

Ends

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

**MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 22 NOVEMBER 2022
(in the Science Teaching Hub and via Teams)**

Present: Julie Ashworth (in the Chair for minutes 39 to 93)
Keith Anderson (via Teams for minutes 38 to 72)
Colette Backwell
Eleanor Bentley
George Boyne
Martina Chukwuma-Ezike (in the Chair for minutes 38)
Owen Cox
Nick Edwards
Gary McRae
Helen Martin
Lyndsay Menzies (for minutes 38 to 72)
Caryn Miller
Martin Mills
Anne Minto
Vanessa Mabonso Nzola
Iain Percival
Charlotte Pope-Williams
Joachim Schaper
Diane Skåtun
Otto Thoresen
Camilo Torres Barragán
Robert Traynham (via Teams from minute 45)
Neil Vargesson
Ilia Xypolia

In attendance: Liza Boffen-Yordanova (38 to 76)
Marion Campbell
Debbie Dyker (minutes 38 to 72)
Pete Edwards
David Evans
Jenny Fernandes
Garry Fisher (minutes 82 to 83)
Karl Leydecker
Tracey Slaven
Alan Speight
Ruth Taylor
Louise Thomson
Iain Torrance KCVO
Mark White
Bruce Purdon (Clerk)

Apologies: Iain Mackay

WELCOME AND RECTOR'S REPORT

38 The Rector welcomed Liza Boffen-Yordanova the University's new Director of Advancement to the meeting and to the University. The Rector provided a brief oral update to her written report (*copy filed with the principal copy of the Minutes*) which detailed some of her recent meetings and engagements in the role and examples of the kinds of issues that had been raised by students at her surgeries. The Rector reflected also on her first year in office, noting the progress she felt that had been made in raising awareness of the role within the University community. The Rector also noted examples of the positive impact that a person from an ethnic minority being in the role was having on decisions by potential students to choose the University for their studies.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REMINDER OF COURT AND MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

- 39 The Court noted the standing reminder of the responsibilities of Court and members as charity trustees (*copy filed with the principal copy of the Minutes*). The Senior Governor declared an interest as Scottish Lead for Women on Boards in the Governance and Nominations Committee Report (Minutes 90 to 91), the papers for which had reported that training for committee chairs had been arranged via that organisation. In noting the declaration, it was confirmed that the Senior Governor had not participated in the procurement of that training provision.
- 40 Owen Cox declared an interest as a Trustee of the University of Aberdeen Superannuation and Life Assurance Scheme (UASLAS) and this was noted as a standing declaration for future having being declared in the Court's public register of interests.

MINUTES

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 4 OCTOBER 2022

- 41 The Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 October 2022 were approved.

MINUTES OF CLOSED BUSINESS SESSIONS HELD ON 4 OCTOBER 2022

- 42 The Minutes of Closed Business Sessions held on 4 October 2022 were approved.

ACTION LOG, MATTERS ARISING AND DECISIONS BY CIRCULATION

- 43 The Court noted the updated Action Log (*copy filed with the principal copy of the Minutes*) and formally recorded that since the last meeting in October 2022, the Court had approved by circulation the appointment of Colette Backwell as Senior Independent Member with effect from 2 November 2022.
- 44 In response to a question regarding the timeframe for the King's Quarter capital projects, the Court was advised that the tender process was expected to take until February or March 2023 with further reporting through the committee structure and to Court to take place thereafter.

DEEP DIVE SESSION: REF ACTION PLAN AND UPDATES FROM STRATEGY MEETING

VERBAL UPDATES ON PROGRESS ON PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS FOR GROWTH BY 2030, EMPLOYABILITY AND EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT

- 45 Following on from the Court's Strategy Meeting in October, the Court received brief oral updates on how the main themes of that discussion were being progressed. The Court then continued its strategic conversation around research and discussed a paper and presentation on the action plan that had been developed to prepare for the next research excellence framework (REF) (*copy filed with the principal copy of the Minutes*).
- 46 The presentation and report detailed the University's performance in the most recent REF and its position relative to other UK universities, the key components of REF assessment and how this influenced University research income. It summarised the process of institutional review that had been undertaken with staff and Schools following the results and the key issues to address that had emerged from that process which the plan sought to respond to. These were intended to support four core elements of a successful research environment: improving quality, growing research income, enabling the time required for staff to undertake high quality research, and fostering a healthy research culture. The plan detailed the actions that had already undertaken or were planned at the institution wide, school and individual level and the additional resource that was required to implement them from 2023/24, subject to the University's financial position. The Court also discussed the University's recruitment of new staff to bolster research, in particular the Interdisciplinary Fellows which had received a significant level of interest.
- 47 In discussion, a number of points were made, of which the following were noted:

- A range of views were noted on what the conditions for research excellence and a healthy research culture were and where potential barriers to achieving this with other priorities for staff lay. The challenges of workload and the balance of time for research versus teaching and other activities were discussed. This was recognised by the management team and while the ambition was to continue to improve the staff:student ratio, despite growth in some priority areas for income growth, the overall student population remained similar to that of five years ago.
- The steps outlined in the plan were welcome and it was acknowledged that some of these should have been in place earlier. Improving the University's research performance was considered by a number of members to be the key strategic priority for Court and the University and required urgent focus given that the next REF cycle was already underway and the time required to develop 4* research.
- There was no exact correlation between investment in research and return in terms of income, but in purely REF terms, that return would not be known until after the next REF and the resulting research grant allocation by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC). The Court, while recognising that building research excellence was a long-term process, agreed it would find it helpful to receive more information on the level of investment in research and the University's research income targets and that this should be integrated into financial reporting to Court.
- Further information on where the University's particular areas of research strength were and what the priority areas for future investment might be was also suggested as being helpful information for Court to receive, together with an understanding of where Court's role and that of the management team lay respectively in relation to the issues discussed.

48 The Court agreed:

- (i) To hold a further extended discussion on research prior to its next meeting, if possible, by combining with the Finance & Resourcing Committee's planned deep dive discussion scheduled for 7 February 2023;
- (ii) To provide as part of that discussion the further information noted above.

REPORT FROM THE SENIOR GOVERNOR

49 The Court received and noted a report from the Senior Governor on the meetings and activities she had undertaken since the previous meeting (*copy filed with the principal copy of the Minutes*). These included meetings with the First Minister and Deputy First Minister to discuss the higher education sector's role in skills development and with other senior figures in the business and tertiary education sector. The Court discussed further ways in which the University more broadly could influence Scottish Government, including via Junior Ministers, Special Advisors and the Parliament's cross party group system. The Senior Governor also reported on the main issues that had been discussed at the UK Committee of University Chair's winter meeting and on her participation in a number of further events where she was able to promote the role of the University to external stakeholders.

REPORT FROM THE PRINCIPAL AND UPDATE ON THE SECTOR/UNIVERSITY

50 The Court received a report on policy developments relating to higher education and the recent achievements of staff and students at Aberdeen (*copy filed with the principal copy of the Minutes*), supplemented by an oral report from the Principal. As part of this the Principal updated Court on discussions regarding the future budget for higher education in Scotland and on the latest position in the industrial dispute over pay and pensions, which had impacted upon the University. The Principal also noted the student intake for September 2022 which would be discussed further later in the agenda.

51 In discussion, the reference in the report to individual recent research awards was noted and it was confirmed that relative to peer institutions, the University was currently below benchmark but this was being monitored on a quarterly basis by the Research Committee.

FINANCE AND PLANNING

STUDENT INTAKE, STUDENT POPULATION AND BUDGETARY IMPACT 2022/23

- 52 The Court received a report and a detailed presentation on student admissions for Academic Year 2022/23 (as at October 2022) (*copy filed with the principal copy of the Minutes*). This reported on the growth in tuition fee income, trends in the student intake in September 2022, and an overview of movements in the overall student population.
- 53 The Court noted that University had achieved very significant growth in applications and offers made to International Post-graduate Taught students but this had not translated into increased entrants. Increased fees, and volume growth in some other recruitment channels, had resulted in growth of 9% in tuition fee income for September 2022 entry, but the lack of volume growth in International PGT especially meant it fell short of the budgetary student fee target for the year. The Court was briefed on the internal and external factors within the admissions cycle that had contributed to this, particularly for International Post-graduate Taught students.
- 54 The Court noted that significant work was being undertaken to address those issues which were within the University's control for the January 2023 admissions round and that the final year-end projection would be dependent on the recruitment achieved at that intake and that of the online and postgraduate research programmes which were open across the year. The University had, as was discussed in a separate paper (minutes 56 to 60), modelled two outcome scenarios for the final tuition fee income position ranging from £114M to £119M against the target of £124M, as well as taking into account the significant inflationary cost pressures that the University faced in common with other organisations.
- 55 During an extended discussion, the following key points were recorded:
- The Court noted its concern that the University had only relatively recently become aware of the September admissions shortfall and the potential significant budgetary impact this would have. It was explained that the shortfall became apparent when students did not register on campus and that issues with management information systems contributed to the delayed visibility of the issue. Management information would be addressed going forward and was a priority for the January 2023 intake.
 - Considerable progress in significantly increasing applications and in modernising admissions processes had been made in recent years, but while a range of factors had contributed to the issues experienced in this year's cycle, it was recognised that the investment in the systems had not been able to take effect in time to keep pace with the success in transformational growth in applications.
 - It was suggested that further information to put in context admissions/conversions rates and turnaround times would be helpful to receive in future and it was agreed to provide this going forward. It was also noted that the University was exploring third party support for aspects of the admissions process.

ANNUAL REPORT/ACCOUNTS and ASSOCIATED REPORTS

FINANCE REPORT: 2022/23 – POSITION AND PROJECTION

- 56 Linked to the previous discussion, the Court received an updated financial position and projection for financial year 2022/23 (*copy filed with the principal copy of the Minutes*).
- 57 The Court noted that the original Court approved budget projected a deficit for 2022/23 of £1.9m. Gross academic tuition fee income at October 2022 had increased by £7.9m (growth of 9% on October 2021). However, this rate of increase was less than budget, and as a result required a significant increase in the January 2023 intake in order to meet the projected annual growth target of £22.4m (22%).

- 58 The University had modelled two scenarios for January 2023 intake which projected a year-end shortfall on gross tuition fees ranging from £5.8m (Scenario 1) to £10.7m (Scenario 2). This would result in a projected year end deficit of £7.4m on Scenario 1 and £11m on Scenario 2. As such, the paper outlined the mitigating actions that had been identified and were ongoing to achieve the previously approved £1.9m deficit taking into account also the wider inflationary cost pressures facing all organisations. The Finance and Resourcing Committee had considered and approved these high level mitigating actions at the meeting of the 10th November 2022. The Court was assured that while these would regrettably have some impact on operations, this would be managed through the pausing or delaying of expenditure, including some but not all staff recruitment, where posts assessed as priority would be taken forward. The Finance and Resourcing Committee and Court would be kept advised of progress with the January intake
- 59 In discussion, it was recognised by Court that mitigating actions were required but that care was needed not to take short-term decisions which might have longer-term detrimental impacts. It was agreed the Court would find it helpful to be updated on what the assessment of activity that would need to be paused or would not take place as a result of the mitigating actions was once this was clearer. It was also noted that it had been confirmed to the Finance and Resourcing Committee that the University's Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) covenant commitments were secure.
- 60 The Court:
- (i) Approved the revised financial projection for 2022/23 and proposed mitigating actions to achieve the previously agreed £1.9m deficit year-end position.
 - (ii) Anticipated receiving the further information noted above.

GOING CONCERN REPORT

- 61 The Court received a paper on the University's projected cash flows and short-term financing risks. The paper, taken together with the previous Finance Report (minutes 56 to 60), demonstrated that the University could continue, on an ongoing concern basis, for a period of 12 months from the date of approval of the accounts (*copy filed with the principal copy of the Minutes*).
- 62 The Court noted that Audit and Risk Committee had recommended that the University could be considered as a going concern for at least 12 months after the date of signing the 2021/22 accounts and that the accounts could be prepared on that basis. The Court also noted that this recommendation had been based on the Finance & Resourcing Committee, at its meeting on 10 November 2022, approving the mitigating actions in relation to the projected deficits at the year end. The External Auditors were also satisfied with the Going Concern assessment.

FINANCING REPORT FOR YEAR END 31 JULY 2022

- 63 The Court received and noted a paper which outlined the University's long-term financing and assessed compliance with both internal and external covenants (*copy filed with the principal copy of the Minutes*). In particular, the Court noted that:
- The University had met both the internal and external debt service and gearing financial covenant tests for the financial year to 31 July 2022;
 - Due to the financial covenants being met, there was no requirement to develop a recovery plan at this point;
 - The updated counterparty list of banks that the University can place funds with [as approved by the Audit and Risk Committee]

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR END 31 JULY 2022 (INC EXTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT & REPRESENTATION LETTER)

- 64 The Court received the University's Annual Report and Accounts 2021/22, together with the report from its External Auditors for 2021/22 and the University's Representation Letter (*copies filed with the principal copy of the Minutes*).

- 65 The Court noted that the University group reported a deficit of £42.0m for the year ended 31 July 2022 due to the £58.2m increase to the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) on recognition of the March 2020 valuation exercise results during the year and a reduction of £11.7m to other pension liabilities. The underlying surplus from normal operating activities was, however, £7.0m against the budget target of a £3.0m deficit for the year.
- 66 The Court noted that the External Auditors had recently raised a sector wide issue regarding the valuation of pension scheme assets and had reserved their final audit opinion until this had been considered by their actuaries. While the University was awaiting the formal confirmation from the auditors, it had been advised since the circulation of Court papers that these issues were being resolved. Otherwise the external audit process was complete with a clean audit opinion reported. The Audit and Risk Committee's recommendation to Court to approve the Annual Report and Accounts was, therefore, subject to the satisfactory conclusion of this outstanding pension schemes)
- 67 It was confirmed that University management were aware of no further issues related to the representation letter which the Court should be aware of and that the Senior Governor could sign the letter on behalf of Court, again subject to the final confirmation of the external audit opinion being received and no changes to the accounts being required.
- 68 The Court:
- (i) approved the Annual Report and Accounts for 2021/22 and the representation letter, subject to the formal confirmation of the external audit opinion being received. *[Note by Clerk: This formal confirmation from the External Auditors was subsequently received after the meeting with no changes to the reported results that had been presented to the Court].*
 - (ii) noted that where possible it would be helpful to receive this particular report in advance of the standard seven day circulation period for Court papers.

AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE REPORT TO COURT AND ANNUAL REPORT

- 69 The Court received the report from the Audit and Risk Committee which provided an overview of the business considered at its meeting of 8 November 2022 (*copy filed with the principal copy of the Minutes*). As noted above, the Committee had recommended to the Court approval of the Annual Report and Accounts package of reports for submission to the Scottish Funding Council (subject to the formal confirmation of the external audit opinion being received).
- 70 The Court also received and approved the Audit and Risk Committee's Annual Report 2021/22 (*copy filed with the principal copy of the Minutes*) which provided Court with the assurances recommended under the HE Audit Committees Code of Practice, and regarding all elements of the University's Annual Report and Accounts these being the:
- Corporate Governance Statement
 - Statement of Internal Control
 - External Audit Findings
 - External Auditor's Formal Opinion and Representation/Management Letter
 - Internal Auditor's Annual Report

- 71 The Court also noted the Committee's report on matters that it had approved under authority delegated to it.

INTERNAL AUDITOR'S ANNUAL REPORT

- 72 The Court received and noted the Internal Auditors' Report for 2021/22 (*copy filed with the principal copy of the Minutes*).

RISK MANAGEMENT: RISK APPETITE

- 73 The Court received a paper which included a proposed Statement on Risk Appetite that had been developed following a workshop held with Court on 22 March 2022, and with further input from

the University's Audit and Risk Committee when it met in September 2022 (*copy filed with the principal copy of the Minutes*).

- 74 The paper detailed the approach and methodology to determining risk appetite across the 14 strategic risk areas individually and overall based on five categories: Avoid, Averse, Moderate, Open and High. The paper recommended that the University's overarching risk appetite profile be agreed as *Open*; with the caveat that where potential risks across all areas may significantly threaten the health, safety or wellbeing of staff or students, University legislative or regulatory requirements, the financial health of the organisation, or may cause reputational harm, then University will be risk averse, or may seek to avoid risk completely. The paper also proposed appetite ratings for the 14 individual risk areas. In discussion, it was noted the challenge for the University was to ensure this now influenced how it took decisions and to be transparent about this.
- 75 Following discussion, the Court approved:
- (i) the University's draft Statement on Risk Appetite which would now be included within the University's Risk Management Framework;
 - (ii) the appetite ratings proposed for individual risk areas.

ANTI-RACISM STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

- 76 The Court received and noted the high-level Anti-Racism Strategy Implementation Plan (*copy filed with the principal copy of the Minutes*) which had been developed as a framework for the activities associated with ensuring the Anti-racism Strategy is actively embedded in the University and set out the approach to monitoring the progress of the Strategy. The Court also noted that the Implementation Plan would be supported by the development of a comprehensive Anti-racism Strategy Action Plan.
- 77 In discussion, it was confirmed that as part of the implementation anti-racism training for staff and further training for Court members would be provided. It was noted that a training provider had been procured and the University would engage with them to co-create the training to ensure it met the needs of Court members. It was also noted that while the Race Equality Charter provided a helpful framework it was the supporting actions towards it that were ultimately important.

PRESENTATION ON LEAGUE TABLES

- 78 The Court received a presentation providing an overview of the University's performance in the key global and national university rankings. This highlighted that the University's overall performance in UK rankings was very positive with significant progress being made in a number of the rankings. Progress in international rankings was less positive and was therefore a key area of focus. A number of new insights on the University's performance had been identified in this regard which would be helpful going forward. The presentation also discussed the key future changes to the methodology of some rankings which would influence future league tables and the emergence of new rankings related to impact and sustainability.

GOVERNANCE & REGULATORY

SFC OUTCOME AGREEMENT

- 79 The Court received the University's proposed Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) for 2022/23 (*copy filed with the principal copy of the Minutes*). The document set out how the University had addressed the priority areas identified by the SFC, these being:
- Fair access and transitions, which includes the Commission on Widening Access.
 - Quality learning and teaching.
 - Learning with impact, ensuring students are equipped and ready to take up appropriate employment in the future on completion of their studies.
 - Student participation and engagement in their educational experience.
 - Coherent Learning Provision, with a focus on how institutions are using data and intelligence, and engaging with stakeholders to adapt, develop and align provision to meet the needs of business, industry and stakeholders.

- Fair Work, and what universities are doing to deliver Fair Work practices for their employees and through their procurement.
- Equalities and inclusion.
- High quality research and innovation.
- Climate Emergency.

80 The Court approved the Outcome Agreement 2022/23 for submission to the SFC.

ANNUAL STATEMENT ON RESEARCH GOVERNANCE: For Decision

81 The Court received and approved the Annual Statement on Research Governance & Integrity for academic year 2021/22 (*copy filed with the principal copy of the Minutes*).

ANNUAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT 2021-22

82 The Court received for information and assurance the Annual Health and Safety Report for 2021/22 (*copy filed with the principal copy of the Minutes*) noting that the legal responsibility for the University's compliance with Health and Safety law rested with it as the governing body.

83 In discussion, it was suggested that the University might wish to consider including some external representation on its Health and Safety Committee. It was noted that staff and students returning to campus following the pandemic had posed challenges in terms of safety awareness, wellbeing and work-life balance. While data on absences due to stress was not available, informally this was believed to have increased and consequently mental health and wellbeing were a key focus. It was confirmed that while health and safety was not in the 2022/23 internal audit plan it was under consideration as a potential area for 2023/24.

REPORTS FROM THE SENATE AND FROM COURT SUB-COMMITTEES

SENATE

84 The Court received and noted the report on the main items of business considered by Senate at its November meeting (*copy filed with the principal copy of the Minutes*), including outcomes from the Promotions Review and the Workload Review, a new Research Publications Policy and arrangements for academic year 2023/24.

85 The Senate also recommended to Court approval of the draft Resolution, 'Code of Practice on Student Discipline (Non-Academic) noting that the Code had not been updated for some time and was not in keeping with many developments in both operational practice and specific areas of misconduct that now represented a regular part of the work of maintaining good student conduct and managing poor conduct.

86 The Court approved the draft resolution subject to the further consultation required by the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966 being undertaken (through the Business Committee of the General Council and making publicly available for comment). The draft Resolution would return to Court at its next meeting in March for formal approval, subject to any comments received through the required consultation process.

Court Sub-Committee Reports

FINANCE AND RESOURCING COMMITTEE REPORT

87 The Court received and noted a report on the key items of business considered by the Finance and Resourcing Committee at its meeting on 10 November 2022 (*copy filed with the principal copy of the Minutes*). In addition to its recommendation to Court that it approve the Annual Report and Accounts (as noted above), the Court:

- agreed a proposal to delegate the approval of the Annual Procurement Report 2021-22 to the Finance and Resourcing Committee.

- noted that the Committee had, for its part, received by circulation the institutional Outcome Agreement 2022-23 for submission to the SFC and recommended to Court its approval (see Minutes 79 to 80).

COMMERCIALISATION COMMITTEE REPORT

- 88 The Court received a report on the key items of business considered by the Commercialisation Committee at its meeting on 24 October 2022 (*copy filed with the principal copy of the Minutes*). The Chair of the Committee noted in particular that this had been its first meeting since its formation and as such it had agreed on what its core focus should be within the governance and executive framework. The Committee planned to hold a further workshop style meeting prior to Christmas to assist it in further understanding the commercialisation agenda, following which it anticipated confirming its schedule of meetings and business.

PENSIONS ADVISORY GROUP

- 89 The Court received and noted a report on the main items of business discussed by the Pensions Advisory Group at its meeting on 9 November 2022 (*copy filed with the principal copy of the Minutes*). In discussion, it was noted that training on pensions issues was being arranged and that this would be made available for all members of Court.

GOVERNANCE AND NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

- 90 The Court received and noted a report on the key items of business considered by the Governance and Nominations Committee at its meeting on 1 November 2022 (*copy filed with the principal copy of the Minutes*).
- 91 Following the appointment by Court of Colette Backwell as its Senior Independent Member the Court homologated her reappointment as an Independent Member of Court for a second term of office of three years with effect from 1 January 2023. It was also agreed that information on the current periods of office of Court members would be made available in Decision Time.

FURTHER REPORTS FOR NOTE OR REFERENCE AVAILABLE IN RESOURCES AREA OF DECISION TIME

REPORT FROM THE PARTNERSHIP, NEGOTIATING & CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

- 92 The Court received for information and reference the report from the meeting of 1 November 2022 of the Partnership, Negotiating and Consultative Committee (*copy filed with the principal copy of the Minutes*).

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 93 The Court noted that its next meeting would be held on Wednesday, 1 March 2023 at 9am to 3pm.

UNIVERSITY COURT: Deep Dive Session

7 February 2023

Note of Actions

The Court met informally via Microsoft Teams to undertake an extended discussion on research strategy. In advance of the meeting it received:

- A paper that set out plans for investment over the next three years to achieve a step change in research performance in the 2028 Research Excellence Framework (REF) and potential scenarios for the return on that investment.
- Information related to the results of the recent University Staff Survey.
- The presentation from the Vice-Principal for Research to the meeting also addressed a number of key areas/questions that members had highlighted in advance to help maximise time for discussion. Copies of the presentation and responses to these were made available following the meeting in Decision Time.

Action Points

- The Court endorsed the direction of travel proposed by the paper in terms of a strategy and use of investment to deliver an improvement in the University's research performance for the next REF, noting that the formal approval of the investment would be considered as part of the University wide budget approval process in June at Finance & Resourcing Committee and then Court.
- While endorsing the approach, a number of members emphasised the need to carefully manage challenges posed by workload and others welcomed that the plan could be flexed if the financial context necessitated this.
- It was suggested that modelling the impact of staff turnover on the achievement of the scenarios outlined in the paper should be undertaken.
- Members were directed to the website to see examples of impact statements from high quality research [Impact | Research | The University of Aberdeen \(abdn.ac.uk\)](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/impact-research)

Ends

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

ACTION LOG, MATTERS ARISING AND DECISIONS BY CIRCULATION

1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1	This paper provides Court with a copy for information of the current Court Action Log (Appendix 1).
1.2	It also formally notes the following items of business that were considered by circulation: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approval of the University's Annual Modern Slavery Statement

2. PREVIOUS CONSIDERATION BY /FURTHER APPROVAL REQUIRED

	Board/Committee	Date
Previously considered or approved by	n/a	
Further consideration/approval required by	n/a	n/a

3. RECOMMENDED ACTION

3.1	The Court is invited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) Note the action log (Appendix 1) and decision agreed by circulation noted above.
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4. FURTHER INFORMATION

4.1 Further information is available from Bruce Purdon, Clerk to the Court, email b.purdon@abdn.ac.uk.

9 February 2023 **Confidentiality Status:** Open

Oct 2022	11	<p>REPORT FROM THE PRINCIPAL & HE SECTOR/UNIVERSITY DEVELOPMENTS</p> <p>It was noted that members would welcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an infographic or short briefing on the sector funding position that could assist them in their advocacy role; • a discussion at a future meeting of the longer term plan for the physical and digital estate; • further updates on the work being undertaken to support students that had been noted above [in context of cost of living/energy crisis]. 	<p>Chief Financial Officer</p> <p>Senior Vice-Principal and Vice-Principal Regional Engagement</p> <p>University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer</p>	<p>Pending: February 2023</p> <p>Pending: Scheduled for June 2023 Meeting</p> <p>Complete: Included on today's agenda 1 March 2023 Meeting</p>
Nov 22	47/48	<p>DEEP DIVE SESSION: REF ACTION PLAN</p> <p>In discussion, a number of points were made, of which the following were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was no exact correlation between investment in research and return in terms of income, but in purely REF terms, that return would not be know until after the next REF and the resulting research grant allocation by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC). The Court, while recognising that building research excellence was a long-term process, agreed it would find it helpful to receive more information on the level of investment in research and the University's research income targets and that this should be integrated into financial reporting to Court. • Further information on where the University's particular areas of research strength were and what the priority areas for future investment might be was also suggested as being helpful information for Court to receive, together with an understanding 	<p>VP Research/ Chief Financial Officer</p> <p>VP Research</p>	<p>Complete: Further discussion of Research for FRC and all Court took place on 7 February</p>

		<p>of where Court's role and that of the management team lay respectively in relation to the issues discussed.</p> <p>The Court agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) To hold a further extended discussion on research prior to its next meeting, if possible, by combining with the Finance & Resourcing Committee's planned deep dive discussion scheduled for 7 February 2023; (ii) To provide as part of that discussion the further information noted above. 		
Nov 22	56	<p>STUDENT INTAKE, STUDENT POPULATION AND BUDGETARY IMPACT 2022/23</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was suggested that further information to put in context admissions/conversions rates and turnaround times would be helpful to receive in future and it was agreed to provide this going forward. It was also noted that the University was exploring third party support for aspects of the admissions process. 	VP Global Student Recruitment	Complete: To be provided in September 2023 admissions reporting to Court
Nov 22	59/60	<p>FINANCE POSITION AND PROJECTION</p> <p>In discussion, it was recognised by Court that mitigating actions were required but that care was needed not to take short-term decisions which might have longer-term detrimental impacts. It was agreed the Court would find it helpful to be updated on what the assessment of activity that would need to be paused or would not take place as a result of the mitigating actions was once this was clearer. It was also noted that it had been confirmed to the Finance and Resourcing Committee that the University's Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) covenant commitments were secure.</p>	Senior Management Team	Complete: Update to be provided at the March Court as part of reporting on Forecast Budget Position.

		<p>The Court:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Approved the revised financial projection for 2022/23 and proposed mitigating actions to achieve the previously agreed £1.9m deficit year-end position. (ii) Anticipated receiving the further information noted above. 		
Nov 22	89	<p>PENSIONS ADVISORY GROUP</p> <p>In discussion, it was noted that training on pensions issues was being arranged and that this would be made available for all members of Court.</p>	University Secretary/Chief Financial Officer	Pending: Expected to be March/April – External Pensions Specialist Provider Sourced.
Nov 22	91	<p>GOVERNANCE AND NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE</p> <p>It was also agreed that information on the current periods of office of Court members would be made available in Decision Time.</p>	Clerk	Complete

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
UNIVERSITY COURT
REPORT FROM THE SENIOR GOVERNOR

1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This paper provides Court with a report from the Senior Governor.

1.2 This paper is for **information**.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 The paper is for **information** and no action is required.

3. REPORT FROM SENIOR GOVERNOR

3.1 I am pleased to present this update to Court on the key activities I have undertaken in my role as Senior Governor in the time since our last meeting in November.

Internal Activities

3.2 In January, we welcomed Her Majesty The Queen Consort on campus to celebrate the 10th anniversary of her appointment as Chancellor. Her visit to the Science Teaching Hub allowed colleagues from across the University to showcase our new teaching facilities and highlight our achievements over the past decade. The involvement of members of staff, students and children from the local community made this a special and memorable occasion and I am particularly grateful to those who handled the arrangements for this event in view of the additional security and other protocols which were required.

3.3 I hope members of Court found the session we held on 7 February to have an extended discussion of the University's Research Strategy to be helpful. Enhancing our research performance is, of course, of critical importance to our institutional reputation and future financial sustainability and the thoughtful contributions and perspectives from the executive team and governors in shaping our strategy in this area were invaluable. It will, of course, be an area that we will return to as a governing body.

3.4 I've continued to hold my quarterly catch ups with Court members which I find very helpful to me and I have continued to meet regularly with the Principal, Secretary and members of the Senior Management Team, all of which is part of ensuring open and transparent communication between the executive and governors outwith the formal meeting cycle. I am grateful to all for their participation and continued feedback which contributes to the continuous improvement of our governance processes and discussions.

3.5 I hope members are now getting acquainted with their latest Court buddies and also the Head of School/Professional Services Directors that we put in place in November. The buddy pairings and contact details for the Heads of Schools/Directors are available in Decision Time here https://abdn.decisiontime.online/new/document_library?folder=54

3.6 As part of supporting members in their roles, we recently held some external training for members who are in the role of Committee Chair that was provided by Women on Boards. Just after our last Court in November, I also took part in a residential session for Board Chairs from a range of sectors at the INSEAD Business School. It was a really stimulating few days and brought a very diverse group of perspectives together and new ideas that I hope will be helpful for me to bring to Court.

External Activities

- 3.7 I met with the recently appointed Chair of the North East Scotland College Board of Governors where we discussed local and national cross-sector issues of shared interest. We are keen to ensure that the tertiary education providers in the North East maintain a strong and collaborative relationship and, building on the event that we hosted here a year ago, we are discussing a potential further joint event for RGU, University of Aberdeen and North East Scotland College governors.

4. FURTHER INFORMATION

- 4.1 Further information is available from the Senior Governor, julie.ashworth@abdn.ac.uk.

6 February 2023

Confidentiality Status: Open

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

UPDATE ON THE HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR AND UNIVERSITY DEVELOPMENTS

1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This paper provides University Court with a brief overview of policy developments relating to higher education from November 2022 until mid-February 2023, which are of particular relevance for the University of Aberdeen.

2. PREVIOUS CONSIDERATION BY /FURTHER APPROVAL REQUIRED

	Board/Committee	Date
Previously considered/approved by	SMT FRC Senate	19 January 2023 7 February 8 February
Further consideration/ approval required by	n/a	

3. RECOMMENDED ACTION

3.1 University Court is invited to note the update.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 The following sections highlight key policy developments of relevance to the University and the higher education sector between November 2022 and mid-February 2023.

DEVELOPMENTS IN SCOTLAND

5. SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT BUDGET FOR 2023/24

5.1 Universities met with senior SFC staff on 10 January 2023 to discuss implementation of the [budget for 2023/24](#) announced by the Scottish Government on 15 December. Although funding to the university sector will be increased by £12.7m (1.1% in cash terms) this represents a large real term cut in funding when inflationary pressures are taken into account.

5.2 Universities Scotland (US) had exerted considerable pressure on the Scottish Government ahead of the budget being published in December; US and Colleges Scotland issued a [joint call for investment](#) on 29 November, and Universities Scotland [submitted its case](#) to the Scottish Government prior to the budget publication, asking for an increase of £400 per student into the university teaching grant. Leading business figures, including Sir Ian Wood, had urged the government to protect higher education funding and its benefits for the Scottish economy.

5.3 In its [response to the budget announcement on 15 December](#), Universities Scotland acknowledged the difficult financial climate but emphasised that this would leave universities in a very challenging financial position and limit their ability to contribute to the economic transformation of Scotland.

5.4 The SFC will be discussing 2023-24 allocations to the sector over the coming weeks with the SFC’s Board due to meet on 10 March to finalise indicative funding allocations.

6. PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES

6.1 The Scottish government published on 9 December an [interim purpose and principles for post-school education, research and skills](#), for further discussion and feedback with stakeholders. This draft framework, developed as part of the recommendations made in the SFC Review of Coherent Provision and Sustainability, sets out current thinking on the priorities which should guide the reform of the post-school education research and skills ecosystem in Scotland.

- 6.2 The proposal focuses on five key principles underpinning the Scottish post-school education, research and skills ecosystem: High quality opportunities; Supportive and equitable learning journey; Globally respected research, teaching, innovation and knowledge exchange; Agile and responsive ecosystem which responds to global and domestic drivers; and Transparent, resilient and trusted ecosystem, referring to the structure of the tertiary, research and skills system in Scotland and a common understanding of what this system will deliver.
- 6.3 The consultation is open until 24 March with a view to publishing the final version of the purpose and principles in spring 2023. The Scottish Government intends to visit universities to engage with leaders, staff and students as part of the consultation, with a roundtable discussion with the University of Aberdeen scheduled for March.

7. INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF THE SKILLS DELIVERY LANDSCAPE

- 7.1 The Scottish Government [issued a call for evidence on 28 October](#) as part of an independent review of the skills delivery landscape in Scotland. Stakeholders across the post-school skills and education system were invited to provide feedback on the skills delivery landscape and the skills functions of national public bodies such as Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and the Scottish Funding Council, including consideration of the apprenticeship programme, skills planning at regional and sectoral level, and employer engagement. Universities Scotland coordinated the sector's response to the consultation.
- 7.2 The independent review, commissioned by the Scottish government and led by James Withers, commenced in September and arises from recommendations made in the Scottish Government's response to the SFC Review of Coherent Provision and Sustainability. The University made a submission to the consultation which closed on 23 December. The review is due to conclude in Spring 2023.

8. COMMISSIONER FOR FAIR ACCESS

- 8.1 Professor John McKendrick was [confirmed as the new Commissioner for Fair Access](#) to Higher Education in Scotland on 4 January 2023, replacing Sir Peter Scott who stepped down in 2022. Professor McKendrick, who took up the new role on 10 January, is Professor of Social Justice at Glasgow Caledonian University and Co-Director of the Scottish Poverty & Inequality Research Unit.
- 8.2 The Scottish Government target for 2030 is that students from the 20% most deprived communities will represent 20% of entrants to Scottish universities by 2030, with the sector having exceeded the first interim target set for 2020 of 16%.
- 8.3 Universities Scotland welcomed the appointment noting the need for collaboration between schools, colleges and universities, and calling for a review of how disadvantage is measured, but many universities - University of Aberdeen included - have been calling for alternative measures, such as uptake of free school meals, to be introduced to provide a more accurate insight into social disadvantage. However, the new Commissioner will likely also want to look at the way the widening access strategy intersects with the Scottish funding model as critics have been vocal in recent weeks, arguing that the capping of student places is causing friction with efforts to widen access, leading to restricted access for young Scottish people who come from non-disadvantaged areas.

9. REVIEW OF PG SUPPORT

- 9.1 In the 2021/22 Programme for Government, the Scottish Government committed to undertake with the Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS) a review of the funding provision for postgraduate students. On 22 November 2023, changes to postgraduate student support were announced, taking effect from AY 2023/24. The maximum tuition fee loan will be increased by £1,500 to £7,000, funding will be extended to Scottish-domiciled students studying in rUK where an equivalent course is available in Scotland, and funding will also be available to those studying at a validated private provider in Scotland or rUK.

10. SFC NET ZERO AND SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

- 10.1 The SFC published on 23 November its new [Net Zero and Sustainability Framework for Action](#) setting out plans to support colleges and universities in achieving a just transition to net zero, in line with the Scottish Government's target of reducing carbon emissions to net zero by 2045.

UK DEVELOPMENTS

11. UK GOVERNMENT AUTUMN BUDGET

- 11.1 The Chancellor of the Exchequer presented his [Autumn Statement](#) to Parliament on 17 November setting out the UK government's key priorities. The Statement did not lead to any immediate shifts in HE funding with continued commitment to research and development funding. UUK, who had been urging the government to recommit to uplifting investment on research and development ahead of the statement, [welcomed the news](#) that existing commitments on R&D funding would be maintained. However, concerns remain in the sector that further cuts may follow after the next general election.

12. RESEARCH FUNDING AND HORIZON EUROPE

- 12.1 As uncertainty around Britain's association to Horizon Europe continues, the UK government continues to progress alternative plans should association not materialise. George Freeman, as UK Minister for Science, Research and Innovation, [launched an International Science Partnerships Fund](#) on 14 December, aimed at deepening partnerships with other (non-EU) countries globally, with initial funding of £119m.
- 12.2 This follows on from Freeman's [announcement on 21 November of a package of measures](#) to mitigate against the negative impacts caused by delays in association to Horizon Europe. The additional £484m included £30m for the Talent and Research Stabilisation Fund, a £100m uplift to QR funding with additional funding for the devolved administrations, and £200m for UK R&I infrastructures.
- 12.3 Shortly after the announcement on 21 November, Research England confirmed the allocation of [supplementary grant allocations](#) to higher education providers in England in FY 2022-23 through quality-related research (QR) funding, and Research Capital Investment Fund (RCIF) grants. The funding, totalling £100m and £70.65m respectively is to support retention of wider research capabilities and provide stability ahead of a final decision on Horizon Europe association.
- 12.4 It was not until 14 December that [SFC clarified](#) how the devolved funding to Scotland would be distributed, announcing an additional allocation of £24.6m for research and research capital, including £5.2m to support capital investment in physical infrastructure for research.
- 12.5 Universities Scotland, who had been [pressing hard](#) for clarity on the allocation of the funds in Scotland, [welcomed the funding](#) to support research excellence in Scotland. The University of Aberdeen has been allocated £1.4m from the funding pot.

13. UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND (UKSPF)

- 13.1 The [UK government announced](#) on 5 December that it has approved spending plans for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund totalling £2.6bn between 2022 and 2025, and has [published interventions, outputs and indicators for the devolved nations](#). This fund matches and succeeds EU structural funding in the UK and is aimed at regional levelling up, with local councils driving plans to support delivery in three key areas: Communities and place; Supporting local business; and People and skills. Local areas across Scotland have been allocated £212m, with £718k allocated to Aberdeen City in 2022/23 and £833k to Aberdeenshire, along with an additional £807k ringfenced across both councils for 'Multiply' activity. Both councils are consulting about priorities for investment.

14. GREEN FREEPORTS

- 14.1 On 13 January, the UK and Scottish Governments announced the outcome of the Scottish Green Freeports exercise, with Opportunity Cromarty Firth and the Firth of Forth being selected as the locations for Green Freeport status. A Green Freeport is a large, zoned area within which port operators and businesses can benefit from a package of tax and other incentives through a combination of devolved and reserved levers.
- 14.2 Green Freeports are required to contribute to four key policy objectives: (i) promoting regeneration and high-quality job creation; (ii) promoting decarbonisation and a just transition to a net zero economy; (iii) establishing hubs for global trade and investment; and (iv) fostering an innovative environment. While the University was a partner in the ultimately unsuccessful bid for a North-East Scotland Green Freeport, our existing institutional links with Cromarty (including the

Lighthouse Field Station) should provide a platform for early engagement with the Cromarty Firth Green Freeport innovation ecosystem.

15. PAY AND PENSIONS

- 15.1 Following on from strike action at 150 universities in November over pay, conditions and pensions, UCU announced on 12 January that a wave of 18 strike days were planned across the UK sector in February and March. Discussions have been taking place between UCEA and the five HE trade unions (UCU, UNISON, Unite, EIS and GMB) since December and an offer was made in January proposing an average pay rise of 5%, with part of the rise implemented in February. UCU has rejected this offer. UCU had previously announced indefinite strike to start in February 2023 along with a marking and assessment boycott in late January, but the union backed away from this strategy in early January amid signs of growing divergence in views within UCU. On 24 January UCU [confirmed 11 strike dates in February and a further seven in March](#).
- 15.2 However, after the first six strike days in February it was announced that strike action planned for the remainder of February and early March would be paused and that discussions with UCEA would continue with the assistance of mediation body Acas. UCU has announced further strike dates on 16, 17, and 20-22 March, which may still go ahead if agreement is not reached.
- 15.3 In terms of the dispute of pensions, [UCU has pressed for pension benefits](#) to be restored to the position before the cuts were imposed in April 2022 as the USS funding position is showing signs of having improved. UUK, as a representative for employers in the USS pension scheme, has [emphasised](#) that a full valuation would need to be carried out to confirm whether the USS funding position is now stronger, particularly in light of the current fragile funding position and the external economic circumstances. UUK has made a commitment to work constructively with the UCU ahead of the next valuation and a technical forum was set up in the latter half of 2022 to look at the underlying assumptions of the valuation. In an [interim joint statement](#) issued by UUK and UCU on 17 February, shortly before UCU paused strike action, it was noted that the forthcoming 2023 valuation will likely indicate that benefits and contributions can be improved.
- 15.4 Unite announced strike action over pay at ten institutions in November. Unison members at 18 Universities were also on strike on 24 November Scottish universities taking part included Glasgow School of Art, Glasgow, Dundee, Napier and Strathclyde. None of these affected the University of Aberdeen.

16. UUK: NATIONAL CONVERSATION

- 16.1 UUK launched in December a [national conversation on the future of university funding](#). A dedicated task and finishing group, led by Prof. Jenny Higham, Vice-Chancellor of St George's University of London, has been set up to facilitate the national conversation, working with government departments, political parties, consumer groups, employers, staff, students and the public to identify long-term approaches to teaching and research funding.
- 16.2 The Task and Finish Group will advise the UUK Board on a programme of work and will not publish independent findings.

17. QAA

- 17.1 [QAA announced](#) in December a series of conversations to be held on the future scope and direction of the UK Quality Code which is used by providers across the UK to maintain and enhance educational quality and standards. Universities have been invited to participate in three roundtable discussions due to be held between January and March 2023. The University will be engaging with the discussions in due course.

UNIVERSITY DEVELOPMENTS

18. RECENT STAFF AWARDS AND DISTINCTIONS

- 18.1 A number of grants have been awarded to University staff since November 2022, including:
- Dr Kate Gillies, in the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition (Health Services Research Unit), has been awarded a £1.7m Senior Non-Clinical Fellowship from the Medical Research Council (MRC) for a project entitled "Behavioural Optimisation and Operational Strategies for Trials: The BOOST Approach".

- Dr Shinichiro Hiraga, Senior Lecturer in the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition, and colleagues have been awarded £1.5m from Cancer Research UK for research on cancerous cells and targeted treatments.
- Professor Marcel Jaspars, and Dr Rainer Ebel in the School of Natural and Computing Sciences (Chemistry) with Professor Abbe Brown in the School of Law have been awarded EU funding totalling £550k via Innovate UK for research on BlueRemediomics.
- Professor John Swinton in the School of Divinity, History, Philosophy and Art History has been awarded a £500k funding from the McDonald Agape Foundation for research into dementia and mental health.
- Professors Jules Griffin and Wendy Russell in the Rowett Institute have received a £500k equipment grant from MRC to set up a new research facility to support research into single cell metabolomics and proteomics.
- Professor Abbie McLaughlin in the School of Natural and Computing Sciences (Chemistry) has been awarded £370k from EPSRC for research contributing to renewable technology development entitled “Hexagonal Perovskite Derivatives for Next-Generation Ceramic Fuel Cells”.
- Professor Marcel Jaspars and Dr Rainer Ebel in the School of Natural and Computing Sciences (Chemistry) have received an EU Training award via EPSRC totalling £265k for a research project entitled “HOTBIO” for training of the next generation of marine natural product researchers.
- Professor Peter Smith and Fabrizio Albanito, who will be joining the School of Biological Sciences as a new Early Career Researcher, have received an EU grant totalling £163k via Innovate UK for a project entitled “AI4 SoilHealth: Accelerating collection and use of soil health information using AI technology to support the Soil Deal for Europe and EU Soil Observatory”.
- Dr Jason Holland, lecturer in Biological Sciences, has received EU funding totalling £160k via Innovate UK for research into aquaculture, entitled “Cure4Aqua: Curing EU aquaculture by co-creating health and welfare innovations”.
- Professors Kate Britton (Archaeology) and Baukje de Roos (Rowett Institute) have been awarded a £81k ECR (Early Career Researchers) award from NERC for research into vitamin D status in precontact Western Alaska, setting out a new method for exploring past health and dietary adaptations to high latitude living.
- Dr Soumya Palliyil, Research Fellow, and Professor Carol Munro in MMSN have received £75k from Scottish Enterprise to explore a new commercial opportunity relating to novel antifungal antibodies.
- Two capacity building Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) awards have been received via Innovate UK (EU) to enhance capacity to work with industry: Kelly-Jayne Fraser, KTP Centre Manager, and Laura Dee, KTP Development Executive, have been awarded £35k, and Dr Barbara Gorgoni, Industry Partnership Development Officer, and Ann Lewendon, Commercialisation Manager, both in Research & Innovation, were awarded a total of £70k.
- University researchers have been awarded funding from the Royal Society of Edinburgh Scotland Asia Partnerships Higher Education Research Fund (SAPHIRE). This is a new grant scheme funded by the Scottish Government aimed at developing new international research partnerships between Scottish universities and research institutions and partners in Australia, India, Japan, Pakistan, South Korea, Singapore and ASEAN. Three of 17 awards went to the University of Aberdeen: Dr Chunxia Jiang in the Business School received funding for a research partnership on environmental and financial performance of green bonds, Professor David McGloin, Head of School in the School of Natural and Computing Sciences was awarded a grant for a project entitled ‘Terahertz beamshaping), along with Dr Wenbo Zhan in the School of Engineering for research on thermosensitive hydrogel for controllable drug delivery against brain tumour.
- Total funding awarded by the Development Trust in this last period was £649k for a range of projects and research equipment.

18.2 Research-related awards and recognition:

- Emeritus Professor David Lurie of the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition, was awarded an honorary degree at the University of Highlands and Islands graduations in November, in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the development of research and scholarly activity.

- The University has been nominated for two awards in the Scottish Knowledge Exchange Awards which are scheduled to take place on 23 March to celebrate high impact collaborations between academia, business and policymakers. Professor Pete Smith in the School of Biological Sciences has been nominated in the Knowledge Exchange Champion category, and Ed Blissett, who works for Motice Offshore Group Ltd, and Dr Andy Starkey in the School of Engineering have been nominated for the Innovator of the Future Award.

18.3 Other research and innovation-related successes include:

- Leading academics from the University of Aberdeen have been included in the Clarivate Highly Cited Researchers 2022 list of the world's most highly cited researchers. A total of nine scientists, several of whom operate across multiple academic disciplines, feature as a result of their work at the University, including Professor Pete Smith in the School of Biological Sciences, Dr Sylvia Duncan, Dr Petra Louis, Dr Karen Scott and Dr Alan Walker, all scientists from the Rowett Institute's Gut Microbiology Group, Emeritus Professor Harry Flint of the Rowett Institute, Jill Francis, formerly professor of Health Psychology at the University, Emeritus Professor Marie Johnston of the Aberdeen Health Psychology Group, and Emeritus Professor Jim Prosser of the School of Biological Sciences
- Researchers at the University of Aberdeen's Just Transition Lab and their local partners have been awarded £390k by the Scottish Government for a project that will see several local climate assemblies take place in the north-east of Scotland.
- Senate recently approved a new research publications policy that will enhance the accessibility of University research. Currently, when academics publish their findings, their work can remain hidden behind a paywall, or made openly available only at significant cost to the University. The new policy will enable researchers to disseminate their research freely, widely, and rapidly, to the benefit of society as a whole.

19. EDUCATION-RELATED ACHIEVEMENTS

19.1 Key education-related achievements in the past few months include:

- University of Aberdeen students were among winners of the [Energy Institute's annual thesis competition](#) held in November that recognises Aberdeen's best MSc students for work on solar monitoring, subsea engineering and wells.
- Dr Heather Morgan, Lecturer in MMSN, has been named a Rising Star in a list of UK's top 50 kind leaders (#LeadWithKindness). This was part of a campaign – Kindness & Leadership – which aims to shine a spotlight on leaders who are impacting on others through kindness. Further information is available at <https://www.kindnessrules.co.uk/>.
- The resilience course team (Amy Irwin, Heather Branigan, Joy Perkins & Ceri Trevethan) published on 11 November a [WonkHE blog](#) on the intervention they have been trialling to help students adapt to periods of adversity.
- Dr Jacqui Hutchison and Dr Heather Branigan (both from the School of Psychology), Dr Sally Middleton and Georgie Leeves (both from the Access and Articulation Team) ran a national Theme Leader Group workshop on 18 January as part of the national QAA Enhancement Theme: Supporting the resilience of advanced entry students through peer and academic support
- University representatives attended a Universities Scotland event at the Scottish Parliament in January 2023 aimed at highlighting the HE sector's contribution to economic transformation. Project SEARCH was highlighted as an example of how the University is transforming the lives of young people with learning disabilities and autism in the north-east, through the provision of workplace skills.
- A [variety of staff events](#) will be held over the coming weeks and months to enable discussion and the sharing of good practice in relation to the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools in teaching and learning, as part of ongoing efforts to ensure our assessment practices are authentic, robust and assess students' learning effectively. AI tools such as ChatGPT, while useful for language-related tasks, do not have the ability to replace critical thinking, problem-solving and creativity. Students need to learn how to use these AI tools appropriately, as these tools are already in use, in the workplace. Guidance is being provided to staff, including customisable communications, as well as to students. Other activities include the offer of assessment clinics for Schools, to enable facilitated discussions on authentic assessment, the review of our academic misconduct guidance, in relation to the unauthorised use of AI tools such as ChatGPT for completing

assessments, and the review of our Code of Practice on Student Discipline, for AY 2023-24, to make explicit what is implicit in the Code, in terms of academic misconduct.

- The University is running a wide range of [Learning and Teaching Enhancement Projects \(LTEPs\)](#) and in the process of ensuring wide dissemination of outcomes from these projects through, for example, the national QAA Scotland Enhancement Themes conference and our own HETL conference (see below).
- Aberdeen is one of ten UK universities partnering with the British Council to offer scholarships to women from South Asian countries including Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. As part of the programme five women from Pakistan, India and Bangladesh are studying fully funded postgraduate degrees at the University of Aberdeen with the aim of gaining the skills necessary to foster a career addressing some of the biggest problems of today in their home countries.
- The University will convene its [inaugural Climate and Sustainability Assembly](#) for staff and students on 15 March 2023, which is to be a first of a rolling programme of termly assemblies focusing on 'Becoming a Nature-Positive University'.
- The University will host the annual HETL (International Higher Education Teaching & Learning Association) conference in June 2023 and some of the [keynote speakers](#) have now been confirmed, including Professor Mona Siddiqui OBE (based at the University of Edinburgh, cultural commentator and broadcaster on BBC Radio), Professor Susan van Schalkwyk (Professor in Health Professions Education at Stellenbosch University, South Africa), and Professor Ruth Taylor (Vice-Principal Education at University of Aberdeen). Further keynotes will be announced in the coming weeks.

20. FURTHER INFORMATION

20.1 Further information is available from George Boyne, Principal and Vice-Chancellor (boyne@abdn.ac.uk) and Hulda Sveinsdottir, Director of Planning (hulda.sveinsdottir@abdn.ac.uk).

22 February 2023

Confidentiality Status: *Open*

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

CUBANE – UNIFORM SERVICE EFFECTIVENESS ASSESSMENT

1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This paper outlines the results of the recent Service Effectiveness Assessment and the proposals for further engagement with the Uniform benchmarking work, supporting service transformation.

2. PREVIOUS CONSIDERATION BY /FURTHER APPROVAL REQUIRED

	Board/Committee	Date
Previously considered or approved by	n/a	
Further consideration/approval required by	n/a	

3. RECOMMENDED ACTION

3.1 The University Court is invited to note the positive results of the recent Service Effectiveness Assessment. The University Court is also to consider the results, the proposed use of the survey, and the proposed wider engagement with the Uniform benchmarking opportunities.

4. BACKGROUND

4.1 The Uniform Service Effectiveness Assessment is part of a portfolio of benchmarking services provided by Cubane Consulting, part of the Nous Group. The benchmarking provided by Cubane is based on a membership model, with members not only sharing benchmarking data but also collaborating and sharing insights as they use the data to transform their services. Cubane was established in Australia and supported substantial transformation in the professional services of the Big 8 Universities, before expanding its membership network to New Zealand, the Russell Group in the UK and Canada.

4.2 The Service Effectiveness Assessment considered approximately half of the services (35) provided within the University, with services from every Directorate included. The survey sought responses from staff in team leadership and academic roles and secured an overall response rate of 36% which is in the expected response range. The survey looked at the extent to which:

- the respondent is satisfied that each service is effective in supporting them to carry out their role; and
- the user experience of services, focusing on the frequency with which users experience certain service attributes.

5. THE RESULTS

5.1 The results for the University of Aberdeen (**see appendix slide set**), compared to other Universities assessing the effectiveness of this group of services (slide 8), is very positive. At the aggregate level, Aberdeen performs near to the top of the benchmark group (4th) and second in the UK.

5.2 The effectiveness of individual services is of course more varied (slide 9). Most Aberdeen services, covered by the survey, are in the top quartile for the benchmark group and all, except

for “travel bookings”, are above the median. However, some of our payment processes and student recruitment services are closer to the median.

- 5.3 Analysis of the responses further identifies that the effectiveness of services varies depending on whether the respondent is in a Professional Services or Academic role and on which School the individual is based in (slide 11). This is likely to reflect the quality of accommodation in which the school is based and whether the requirements of the school are more complex than average.

6. NEXT STEPS – RESPONDING TO PART 1 SERVICE EFFECTIVENESS ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 Colleagues in Finance are already leading work to consider our approach to travel booking services, which are currently provided through a third-party contract. The ranking of this service clearly reflects the anecdotal feedback received in recent months.
- 6.2 Each of the Directors will now receive the detail feedback on their service effectiveness results. A key focus will be to understand the root cause of the variation in assessment of effectiveness between schools.

7. NEXT STEPS - UNIFORM FINANCIAL BENCHMARKING AND PART 2 SERVICE EFFECTIVENESS

- 7.1 As reported in slide 4, spending more money on services does not necessarily support improvement in service effectiveness with other factors (response time, ease of access, right first time) more important. This means having effective systems, ensuring transactional services are not fractured across the organisation and that processes are streamlined.
- 7.2 Engaging with the Uniform Financial Benchmarking process is now proposed for 2023/24. A key differentiator between the Uniform approach and that adopted by other benchmarking services, is the ability to compare in-house and out-sourced expenditure.
- 7.3 The results of the benchmarking should provide insights supporting the redesign of processes and service transformation. It will help us understand where service effectiveness is the result of resource input rather than efficient processes and systems. We would complete Part 2 of the Service Effectiveness Assessment for the remaining services in 2024/25.

8. FURTHER INFORMATION

- 8.1 Further information is available from Tracey Slaven, University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer (tracey.slaven@abdn.ac.uk).

19 February 2023

Confidentiality Status: Open

Commercial-In-Confidence

University of Aberdeen

February 2023

UniForum Service Effectiveness Assessment

2022 Results Briefing

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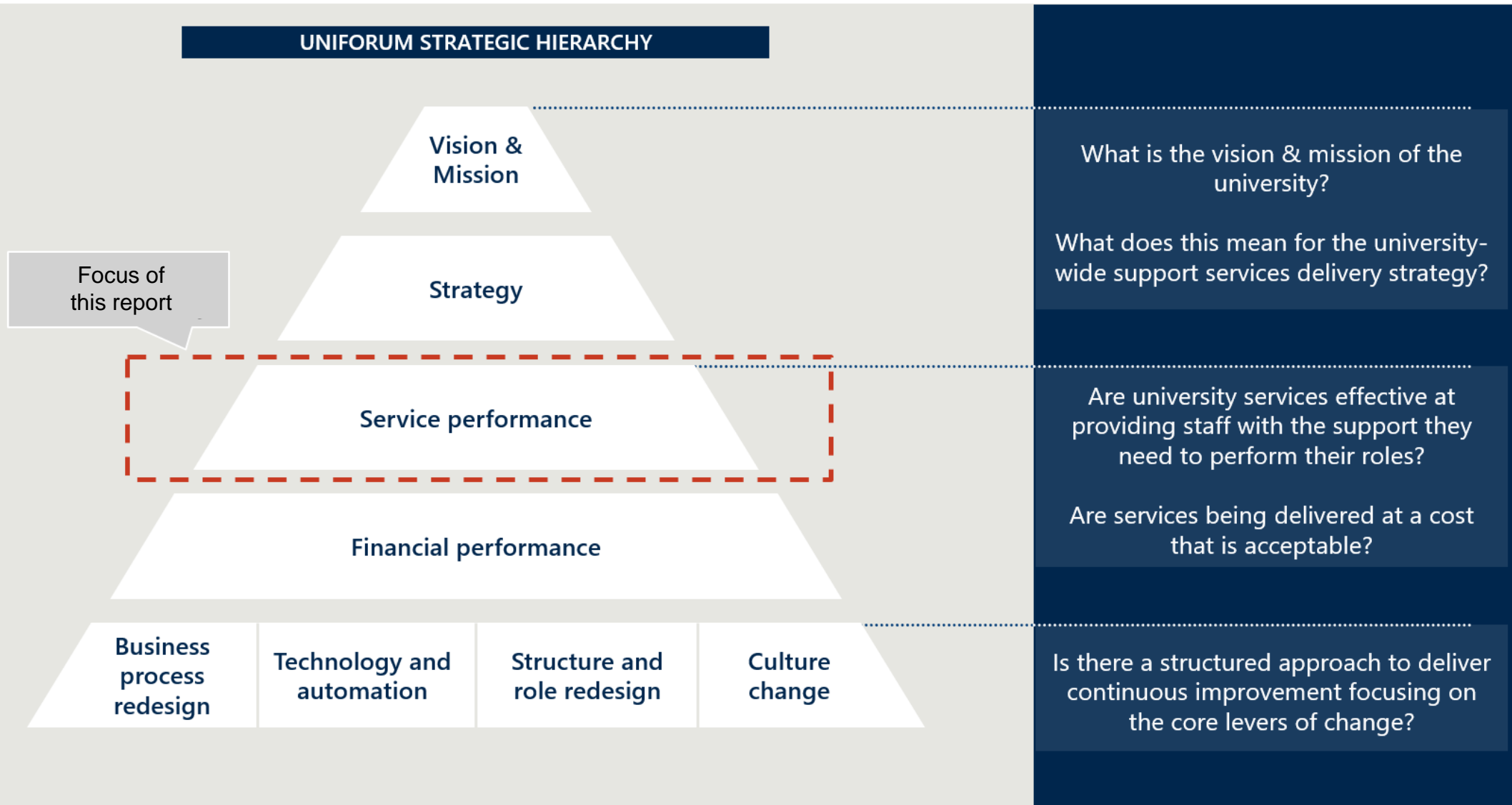
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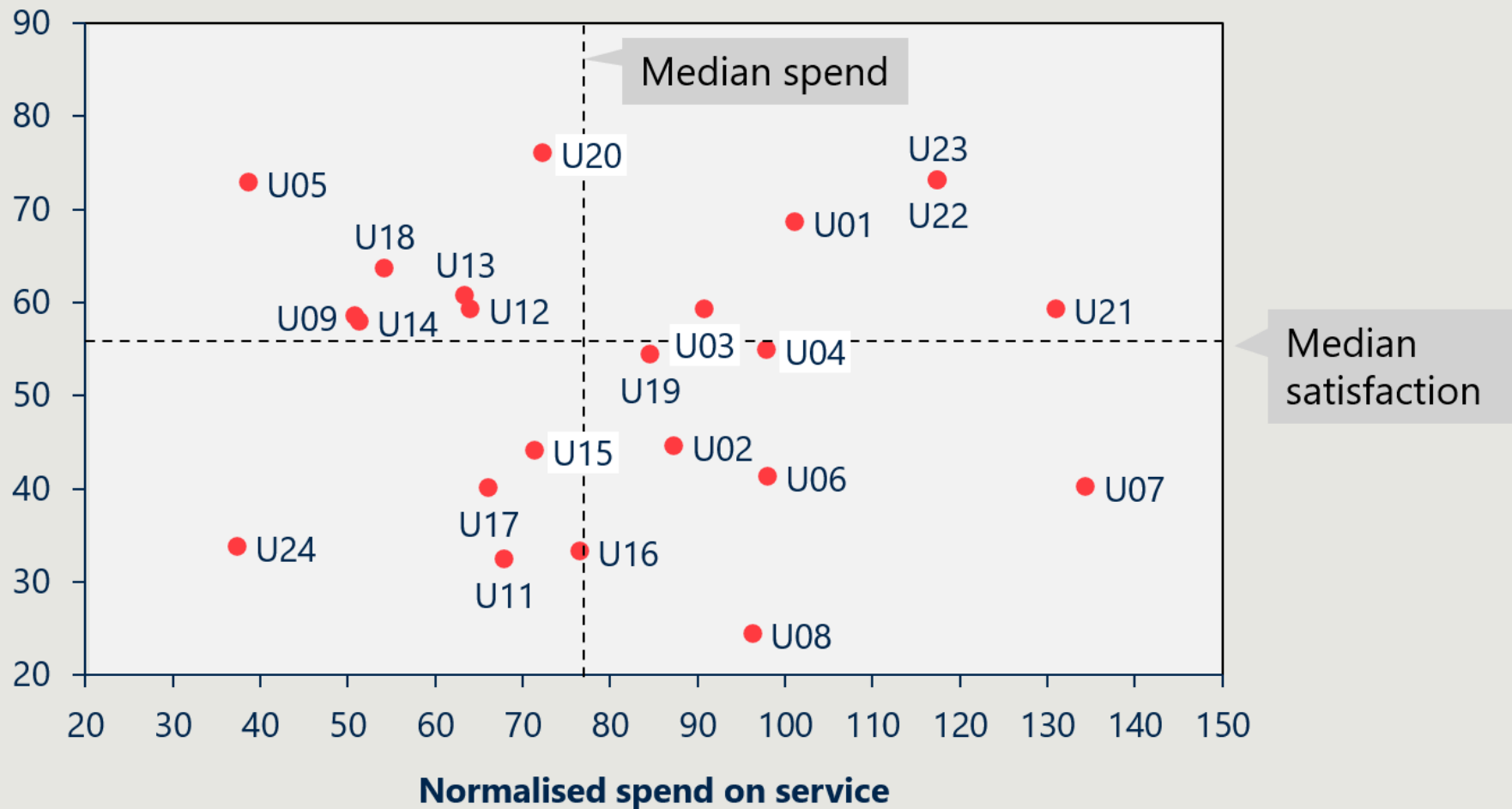
- Introduction
- Results overview

Service performance forms one part of the overall UniForum benchmarking assessment



Results typically show no relationship between spend on a service and its effectiveness rating – other factors are more important

IT Help Desk Effectiveness Ratings for 24 universities



There are two parts to the UniForum Service Effectiveness assessment: Parts 1 and 2; Aberdeen participated in Part 1 in September 2022

INTRODUCTION TO ABERDEEN'S SERVICE EFFECTIVENESS RESULTS

- Aberdeen completed Part 1 of the Service Effectiveness (SE) Assessment in September 2022. Part 1 covers a subset of 35 services within HR; IT; Finance; Facilities Management; External Engagement; Student Support & Services; Teaching Administration; Teaching Design, Development & Delivery; Research Administration; and Research Facilities & Support
- The survey focuses on two key elements:
 - the extent to which the respondent is **satisfied** that each service is effective in supporting them to carry out their role; and
 - the user experience of services, focusing on the frequency with which users experience certain **service attributes**
- There was an overall response rate of 36%, breaking down as follows:

Part	# Academic Staff Invited	Academic Staff Response Rate	# Professional Staff Invited	Professional Staff Response Rate
Part 1	789	29%	761	43%

Source: UniForum Database December 2022; Cubane analysis

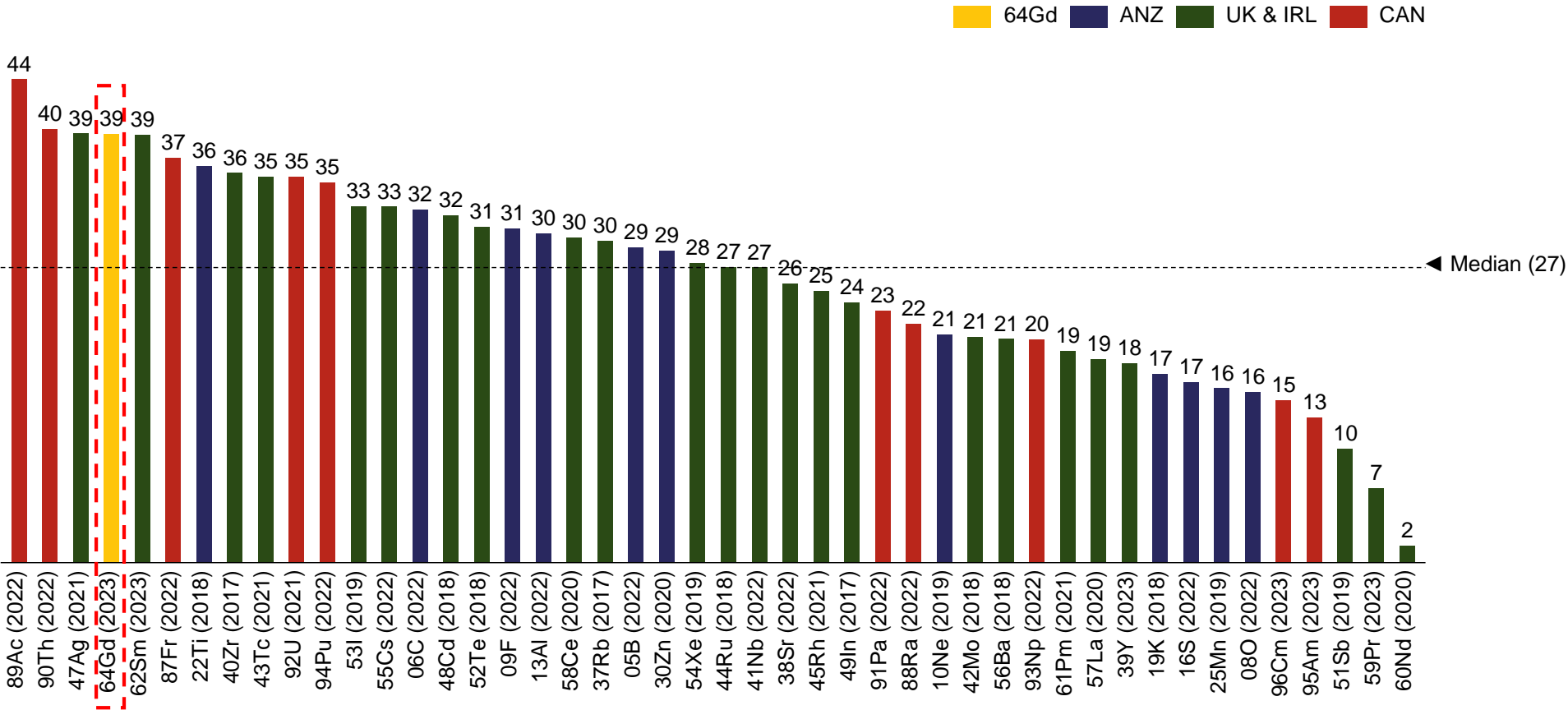
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Aberdeen’s overall effectiveness score is 39, one of the highest in the UniForum group

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS SCORE COMPARISON - PART 1

Net Satisfaction (-100 to +100), Part 1 Services, Most Recent Results, 2017 - 2023



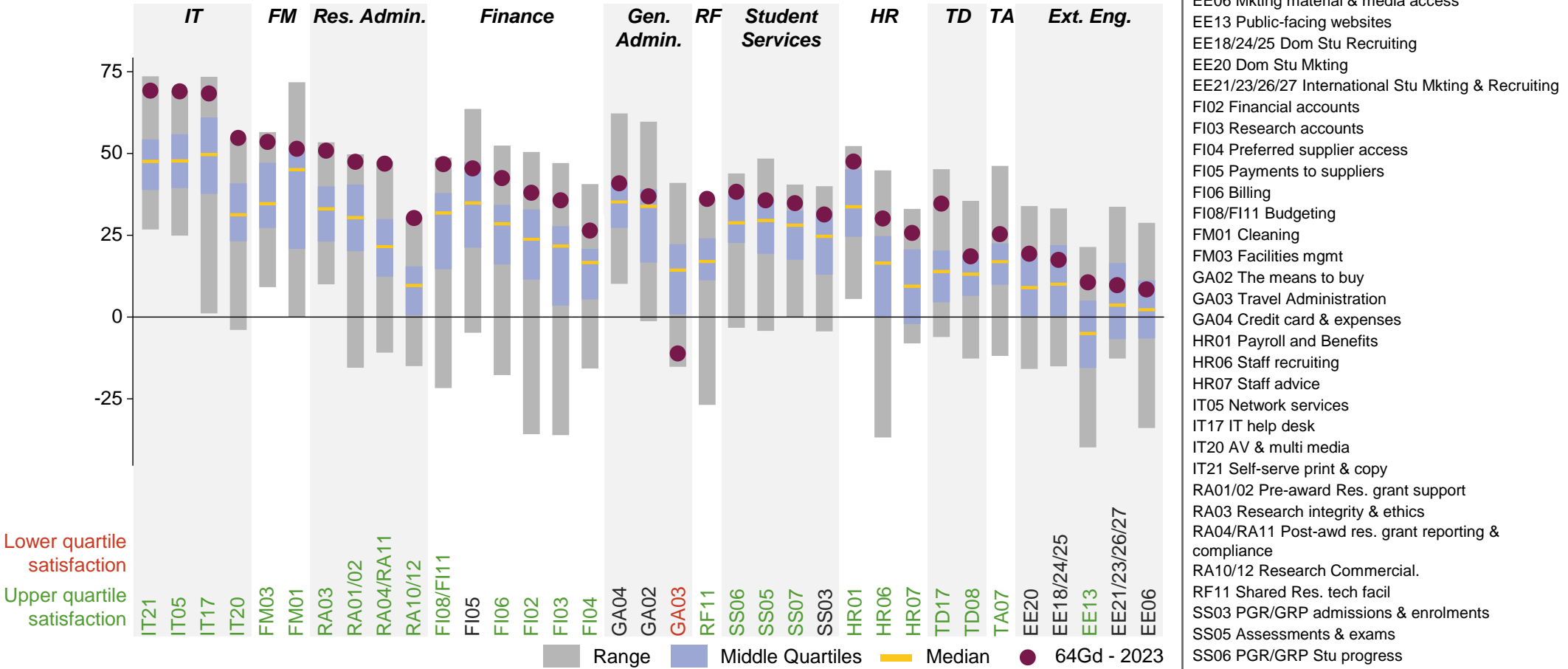
Note: * Assessments conducted from 2020 through April/May 2022 have been excluded from the Median

Source: UniForum Database December 2022; Cubane analysis

Most services are in the upper quartile for effectiveness, although aspects of External Engagement, Student Support, and Finance / General Admin are closer to (or below) the median

EFFECTIVENESS SCORE BY SERVICE - PART 1 SERVICES

Net Satisfaction (-100 to +100), Part 1, 2017 - 2023



Source: UniForum Database December 2022; Cubane analysis

Breaking the results down according to different departments in the University highlights areas where perceived effectiveness is highest (schools in Life Sciences) and lower than average (Physical Sciences)

RELATIVE EFFECTIVENESS SCORE BY FUNCTION AND ORGANISATION UNIT - PART 1 SERVICES**

Relative Net Satisfaction (Higher is better), Part 1 Services, 2023

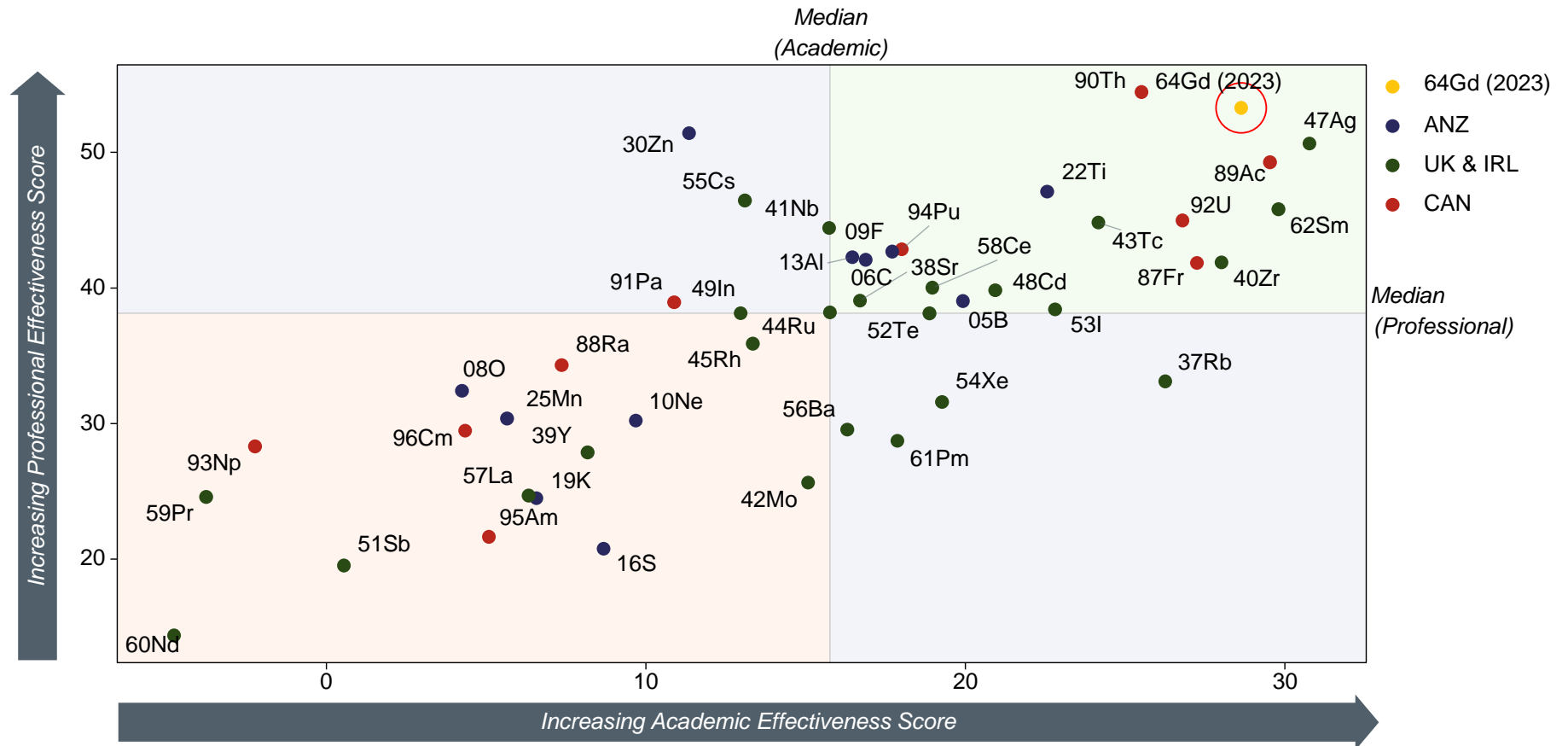
	IT	RA	RF	HR	FM	TD	FI	EE	TA	SS	GA	Overall RNS	Total Respondents
Central Units													
Professional Services	19	25	20	13	12	9	13	14	14	6	1	15	241
Faculty Centres, Schools & Institutes													
Medicine, Medical Sciences & Nutrition	36	32	39	31	22	14	25	34	10	16	11	28	104
Business School	31	32	32	2	6	18	28	29	-13	11	13	20	23
School of Biological Sciences	13			28	29	11	35	-1	10	-4	-1	16	13
School of Engineering	21	12	-26	11	-12	47	12	20	18	18	8	14	22
Social Science	22	-8	0	8	22	16	5	16	18	-9	4	7	15
School of Education	37	-16			32	8			-18	16	-27	7	12
Divinity, History, Philosophy & Art Hist	22	24	5	-4	18	21	-10	-35	31	13	-44	1	30
Language, Literature, Music & Visual Cul	13	-5		-18	26	0	-15	-17	-12	1	-41	-5	18
Natural & Computing Sciences	-17	-4	13	9	-20	-24	2	-42	-6	-15	-16	-12	26
Geosciences	3	6		4	-55	-8	-15	-16	-26	-44	-52	-18	17
Total	23	19	19	14	13	13	12	10	8	7	-5		

Source: UniForum Database December 2022; Cubane analysis

Aberdeen’s effectiveness score amongst professional staff is one of the highest globally; overall effectiveness score amongst academic staff is also high but there is more room still to improve here

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS SCORE BY COHORT - PART 1 (ACADEMIC VS PROFESSIONAL STAFF)

Net Satisfaction (-100 to +100), Part 1 Services, 2017 - 2023

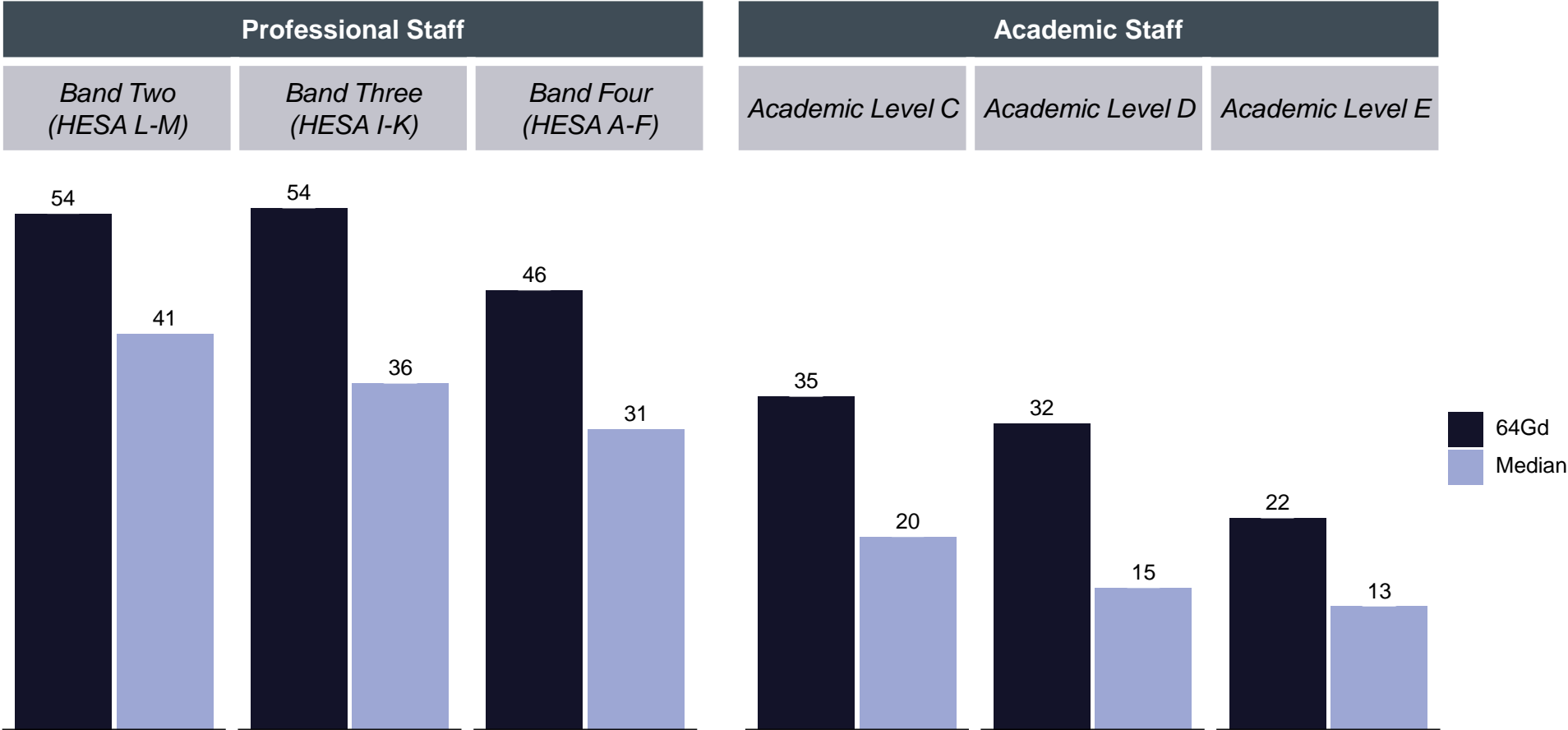


Source: UniForum Database December 2022; Cubane analysis

Results by seniority level reveal high satisfaction across all staff levels, especially amongst band three professional staff; satisfaction is closer to average for senior academic staff

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS SCORE BY SENIORITY LEVEL - PART 1 SERVICES

Net Satisfaction (-100 to +100), Part 1 Services, 2023

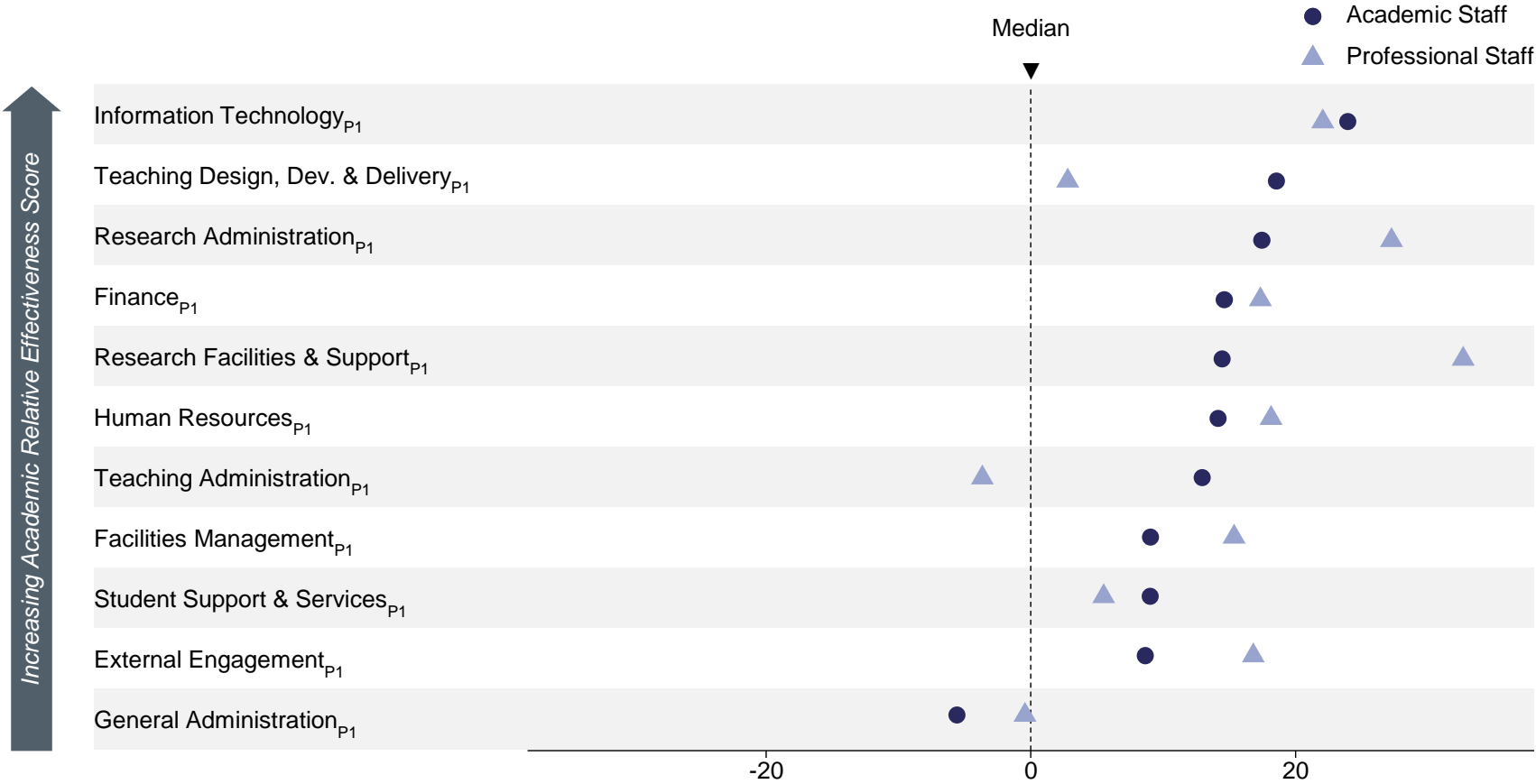


Source: UniForum Database December 2022; Cubane analysis

There is a big difference in satisfaction of professional staff versus academic staff for services in Teaching Design, Teaching Admin, Research Facilities, External Engagement and General Admin

FUNCTIONAL RELATIVE EFFECTIVENESS SCORE BY COHORT - RESPONDENT GROUP

Relative Net Satisfaction (Higher is better), Part 1 Services, 2023

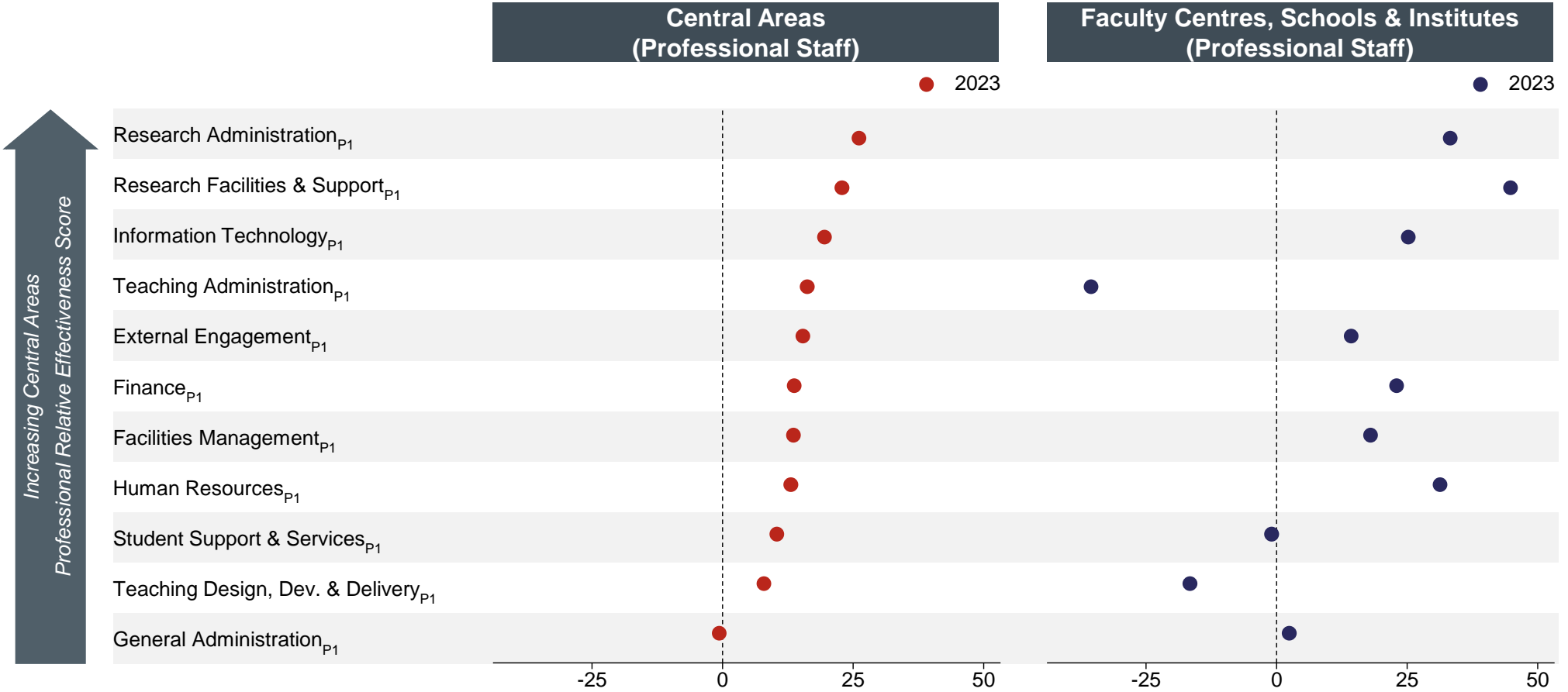


Source: UniForum Database December 2022; Cubane analysis

Professional staff in faculties are generally more satisfied with Research support, Finance and HR services while staff in central teams are more satisfied with Student and Teaching support services

FUNCTIONAL RELATIVE EFFECTIVENESS SCORE BY COHORT - LOCATION

Relative Net Satisfaction (Higher is better), Professional Staff Only, Part 1 Services, 2023



Source: UniForum Database December 2022; Cubane analysis



A rigorous approach to gather detailed data across a wide range of administrative activities.

A comprehensive benchmarking service which provides rich evidence to underpin transformation and improvement decisions.

Expert advice to define the problem and determine which opportunities to address for maximum benefit.

Genuine collaboration and a focus on building capability for implementation, with a tailored approach which can scale up and down across the transformation.

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY INTERIM REPORT 2023

1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1	This paper introduces the University’s interim Public Sector Equality Duty report (attached) as required by the Equality Act 2010. The report showcases the progress made on mainstreaming Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in the University and on delivering against the University’s Equality Outcomes in the period 2021 – 2023.
1.2	This paper highlights the key aspects of the report for ease of reference.
1.3	Court is invited to approve the report for publishing on the University’s website by the deadline of 30 April 2023.

2. PREVIOUS CONSIDERATION BY /FURTHER APPROVAL REQUIRED

	Board/Committee	Date
Previously considered/approved by	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee	25 January 2023
	Senior Management Team	9 February 2023
Further consideration/ approval required by	N/A	N/A

3. RECOMMENDED ACTION

3.1	Court is invited to approve the attached Equality Mainstreaming and Outcomes report for publication on the University’s website by the legal deadline of 30 April 2023.
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4. DISCUSSION

4.1 PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

The University must comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) – a section of the Equality Act 2010 which requires public sector bodies to take, and report biennially on, action which addresses the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Foster good relations between people from different groups
- Advance equality of opportunity

The attached report provides the University’s progress from 2021 – 2023 and provides examples of how the University has mainstreamed equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in order to fulfil its legal obligations and embed its values as articulated in Aberdeen 2040. The report is ‘interim’ in that it falls in the middle of the four-yearly cycle of significant review required by the Equality Act 2010. The University’s previous PSED reports, including the most recent 2021 report, can be seen here: [Public Sector Equality Duty | StaffNet | The University of Aberdeen \(abdn.ac.uk\)](#)

The PSED interim 2023 report must be published by 30 April 2023.

4.2 MAINSTREAMING EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The report highlights examples of action taken to progress and mainstream equality, diversity and inclusion in 2021-2023. Court is invited to note the following key areas of activity, which are detailed in the report.

Antiracist University

The University has been building on previous work on race equality to mainstream antiracist behaviours and systems. Sectoral reports as well as internal 'listening activities' and the [results of the University's 2022 Race Equality Charter staff and student surveys](#) have indicated that systemic racism exists in the Higher Education sector and in our University. The University has addressed this urgent call to action by committing to creating an antiracist environment – acting at organisational and individual level to address barriers and racism. A bold [Antiracism Strategy](#) was launched in 2022, following approval from University Court, providing a framework for tackling racism. Action to date has included tailored race literacy training for staff in 2021/22 with further specific training planned for 2023 which will support frontline staff to handle a racist incident appropriately. An Antiracism Roundtable has been established by the University, bringing together local partners to build knowledge, capacity and action on antiracism in the northeast of Scotland. Race Equality Champions have been appointed across the University to act as contact points and support the implementation of the Antiracism Strategy.

Gender Equality

The University has been progressing with its commitments to the Athena Swan Charter, with the University, the Rowett Institute and the Institute of Applied Health Sciences successfully retaining their Bronze awards through the submission process. Three Schools have applied for Silver awards, with the School of Psychology being the first in the University to achieve this and all other Schools holding a Bronze award, a significant achievement in the Scottish sector. The University's focus will be on achieving an institutional Silver award by 2026, and a new Gender Equality Steering Group will be established to drive this forward. The Gender-Based Violence and Sexual Harassment (GBV) Strategy Group launched a policy outlining the University's commitment to eradicating GBV, setting out a framework for achieving this and the sources of support available. Training on the GBV risk-assessment tool LISTEN has been rolled out and the University is progressing its commitment to the EmilyTest Charter, with an application for full Charter status to be submitted in 2023. The University's median Gender Pay Gap decreased slightly in the reporting period, however, this is not decreasing at the rate required. A range of measures are being put in place to address this, mainly overseen by the Reward Consultation and Negotiation Group, working with Human Resources through the implementation of the new Recruitment and Selection Policy which significantly enhances EDI requirements and strategies for addressing under-representation of women and racialised groups where appropriate in the selection process.

LGBT+ Equality

The University continues to be a Stonewall Diversity Champion and was delighted to achieve a Silver award in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index in 2022. The University invited the Scottish Trans Alliance to deliver training on transgender awareness and this was well received and supported the roll-out of the Transgender Equality Policy. The University was a proud sponsor of Grampian Pride 2022 and hosted a range of activities to support LGBT History Month.

Disability, Mental Health and Wellbeing

The University has launched a new policy on neurodiversity, working in consultation with campus trade unions, the Staff Disability Network and external advisory organisations. This provides important recognition of the value neurodivergence brings to the University and supports staff and managers to understand how staff and students can be supported. The University was delighted to participate in the ADHD Foundation Umbrella Project – a neurodiversity awareness raising campaign across the city involving the display of bright umbrellas, in our case in the Cruickshank Botanic Gardens. A Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy was introduced in 2021 and the University was delighted to be able to resume mental health first aid training following the pandemic. An increased male representation of mental health first aiders was achieved as well as ensuring a spread of trained staff across the University.

4.3 EQUALITY OUTCOMES – MEASURING THE IMPACT OF MAINSTREAMING ACTIVITIES

The University fundamentally reviewed its Equality Outcomes in advance of publishing its PSED 2021 report, committing to driving transformative change during 2021-2025. The agreed Outcomes remain the University's priorities and are as follows (progress can be seen in the attached report):

- 1 Achieve the highest recognition in equality and diversity through achievement of awards in accreditation initiatives such as Athena Swan, Race Equality Charter and Stonewall Workplace Equality Index
- 2 Tackle mental health stigma to improve outcomes and experiences for staff and students who have mental ill health
- 3 Eliminate barriers which may present due to multiple intersectional protected characteristic identities
- 4 Create an antiracist university by tackling racial harassment and fully embedding the recommendations of the Equality and Human Rights Commission report "Tackling Racial Harassment: Universities Challenged" (2019) and the Universities UK report "Tackling Racial Harassment in HE" (2020)
- 5 Create a culture where gender-based violence is eradicated within the University community and staff or students who do experience this can seek effective support
- 6 Eliminate barriers to learning, progression, promotion and physical accessibility for disabled staff and students by taking actions to continuously improve the working and learning environments for disabled staff and students
- 7 Reduce the level of discrimination reported in the staff survey from 11% to 5% in 2022

The Outcomes will be reviewed following the recent publication of National Equality Outcomes by the Scottish Funding Council and the Equality and Human Rights Commission. The National Equality Outcomes seek to address 'persistent inequalities' in the HE sector identified through consultation. In the main, the National Equality Outcomes align with the University's Outcomes listed above, albeit framed through a data-driven approach. The University welcomes this and will be working with Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee to agree the University's approach to addressing the National Equality Outcomes.

5. RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 Court is invited to approve the report for publication on the University's website by the legal deadline of 30 April 2023.

6. FURTHER INFORMATION

- 6.1 Further information is available from Debbie Dyker, Director of People d.j.dyker@abdn.ac.uk, Janine Chalmers, Head of Organisational Development janine.chalmers@abdn.ac.uk or Ceit Mackintosh, Graduate Trainee – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion ceit.mackintosh@abdn.ac.uk

7 February 2023

Confidentiality Status: Open

University of Aberdeen

Mainstreaming and Equality Outcomes Interim Report 2023

FOREWORD

I am delighted to introduce the University of Aberdeen's Mainstreaming and Equality Outcomes Interim Report 2023.

This report draws together the progress made in mainstreaming Equality, Diversity and Inclusion since our report published in 2021. The previous two years have seen a significant level of activity in breadth and scope across the University on embedding the principles of inclusion.

Through our strategic plan, Aberdeen 2040, the University is committed to creating an inclusive working and learning environment and celebrating the diversity of our staff and students, recognising that this supports our success as a University. We continue to embed EDI across the University through the work of our strategic body for EDI, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, and the establishment of School EDI Leads, Race Equality Champions and Mental Health First Aiders.

Taking this inclusive approach to operational activities has continued to serve us well in our response to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, which held staff and student wellbeing at its core throughout.

The creation of an antiracist University continued to be a priority over the reporting period as we drive forward transformative change in this area. I am delighted that our Antiracism Strategy was launched in 2022, setting out a bold and progressive framework for our strategic priorities on race equality. Listening will be a continuous thread through this work, and we are committed to enhancing and opening communication channels across the University for conversations on race. Our staff and student surveys on race and racism indicated that inequalities exist in our institution – this is deeply troubling to the University and dedicated action is being progressed to address the issues raised by our staff and students.

We have taken action to advance equal pay for staff who identify with protected characteristics, worked towards creating a more welcoming and inclusive environment for LGBT+ students and staff achieving a Silver Award in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, and enhanced mental health and wellbeing support. Our commitment to intersectional approaches seeks to bring the lived experience of staff and students to the heart of our work. It is critical that the impact of our EDI activities is positive for our diverse community.

This area of work is evolving, challenging and a priority for the University. I am looking forward to continuing and expanding our work on inclusion in line with our Aberdeen 2040 commitments and to listening and learning from our University community and beyond to deliver our goal of achieving a culture that celebrates, recognises and supports our diverse community.

Professor George Boyne
Principal and Vice-Chancellor
University of Aberdeen

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Table 1: Table of acronyms and denotations

ACRONYM	FULL TITLE
AUSA	Aberdeen University Student Association
BHM	Black History Month
BSL	British Sign Language
EDI	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
EDIC	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee
EIA	Equality Impact Assessment
FSM	Free School Meals
GBV	Gender Based Violence and Sexual Harassment
GLP	Gaelic Language Plan
GLPAG	Gaelic Language Plan Advisory Group
HR	Human Resources
IWD	International Women's Day
JDA	Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism
LGBT+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and encompassing all identities associated with the LGBT+ spectrum
MHFA	Mental health First Aid
NEOs	National Equality Outcomes
NESCol	North East Scotland College
REC	Race Equality Charter
RESG	Race Equality Strategy Group
RGU	Robert Gordon University
SAMH	Scottish Association of Mental Health
SIMD20	Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 20
SMMSN	School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition
SMT	Senior Management Team
WDN	Women's Development Network

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND EDI GOVERNANCE

1.1 The University of Aberdeen celebrates and values the diversity of its community and recognises how the range of perspectives this brings enriches University life and contributes to its success. In line with our strategic plan, Aberdeen 2040, the University is committed to ensuring that it is an inclusive and welcoming environment for all, acknowledging that each individual may identify with multiple characteristics which contribute to lived experience. The University recognises the critical role the University community has played in continuing to promote a proactive and collaborative approach to embedding equality, diversity and inclusion across its functions.

1.2 This report outlines how the University has embedded Inclusivity in its strategic planning and demonstrates how an enhanced EDI governance structure is ensuring that the priorities as set out in our strategic plan are being delivered. The report details the progress the University has made in mainstreaming equality, diversity and inclusion since 2021. Key examples of how this has been achieved and ongoing actions are detailed under the three core objectives of the general duty of the Equality Act 2010 which are to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

1.3 The report provides progress on the University's Equality Outcomes 2021 – 2025. The Equality Outcomes are:

- Achieve the highest recognition in equality and diversity through achievement of awards in accreditation initiatives including Athena Swan, Race Equality Charter and Stonewall Workplace Equality Index
- Tackle mental health stigma to improve outcomes and experiences for staff and students who have mental ill health
- Eliminate barriers which may present due to multiple intersectional protected characteristic identities
- Create an antiracist university by tackling racial harassment and fully embedding the recommendations of the Equality and Human Rights Commission report Tackling Racial Harassment: Universities Challenged (2019) and the Universities UK report Tackling Racial Harassment in HE (2020)
- Create a culture where gender-based violence is eradicated within the University community and staff or students who do experience this can seek effective support

- Eliminate barriers to learning, progression, promotion and physical accessibility for disabled staff and students by taking actions to continuously improve the working and learning environments for disabled staff and students
- Reduce the level of discrimination reported in the staff survey from 11% to 5% in 2022

1.4 Following the development of this report, [National Equality Outcomes](#) (NEOs) were launched by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC). The University welcomes these and the focus on transformative change for staff and students across the sector. The NEOs broadly align with the University's current Equality Outcomes and the University will undertake a consolidation exercise to determine its approach to addressing the NEOs.

1.5 This report is an opportunity for the University to showcase its practice in relation to mainstreaming equality throughout its functions. Please note that it will not repeat information which has already been shared through previous Mainstreaming and Equality Outcomes reports which can be found here <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here/public-sector-equality-duty-13390.php> and the actions identified in the 2021 report continue to be progressed/completed. The report is available to staff, students, visitors and other interested groups or individuals. It will be published on the University's Equality and Diversity webpage and will be publicised to staff and students through the University's communication channels.

1.6 GOVERNANCE

1.7 In 2019, the [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee](#) was established (replacing a previous Advisory Group). It reports to the Senior Management Team and the University Court, providing a strategic focus for EDI matters. The Committee was chaired by the Senior Vice-Principal until October 2022, with the chair role then moving to the Vice-Principal Education. EDIC oversees work undertaken by relevant steering and working groups as well as equality networks. The groups which report to EDIC can be seen in Figure 1.

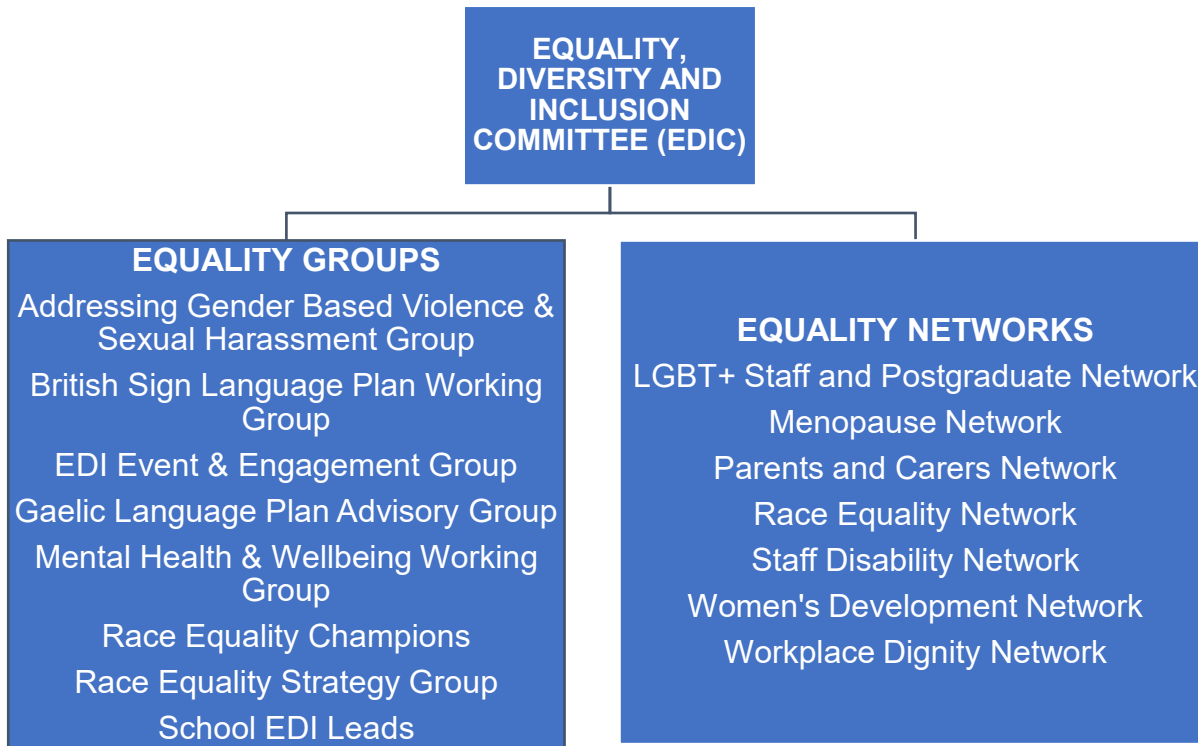


Figure 1: Groups reporting to EDIC

1.8 In 2022, an external audit of EDI Governance at the University was conducted. The report concluded that the University has robust governance structures in place to handle EDI matters. Advisory recommendations were provided, such as recommending that the membership of EDIC be reviewed to ensure the Committee does not become fully operational rather than retaining its strategic focus. The membership of EDIC has been reviewed and a streamlined approach has been adopted, although the Committee has retained the breadth of senior level engagement as well as the voices of equality groups in the University. An EDIC Digest is produced following EDIC meetings to provide an overview of key discussions. This enables the University community to learn about the work of EDIC. A sample of the EDIC Digest can be seen below in Figure 2.



Welcome to the **EDIC Digest** where you will find a rundown of the discussions held at EDIC on 12 Oct 2022.

UPDATE FROM STAFF EQUALITY NETWORKS:

- The Women's Development Network held a successful event with University rector Martina Chukwuma-Ezike where she shared personal experiences of building and maintaining resilience. An event focussing on menopause was held in September.
- The LGBT+ Staff and PG Student Network reported that they would be hosting a panel event as part of National Coming Out Day and BeWell and Inclusion Week in October.
- The Menopause Network has been re-launched and has been involved in reviewing the draft Menopause and Perimenopause Policy, which has now been approved.
- The New Staff Network has been launched.

DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY WORKING GROUP

It was noted that the Digital Accessibility Working Group was expanding and that it had progressed a range of work such as developing a Digital Accessibility Policy, introducing web captioning services and web governance software. EDIC approved that the training recommended by the Group should be rolled out to staff involved in developing University materials.

SCHOOL EDI LEADS

The Leads have been appointed to support Heads of School in driving forward equality, diversity and inclusion matters in their Schools. Highlighted issues have included Estates and Facilities concerns around providing an accessible environment for staff and students including gender-neutral toilets and prayer room facilities. Through Aberdeen 2040, the University has committed to developing our campuses to create an environment that is caring and alert to cultural differences.

PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

Work is currently being undertaken to develop the Public Sector Equality Duty Equality Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report 2023. This requires the University to report on the following objectives:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Figure 2: EDIC Digest sample

- 1.9 The Audit also noted that progress reporting mechanisms could be reviewed to ensure that EDIC receives updates on the equality action plans within a consistent framework which easily identifies where progress is on track or lagging. An Equality, Diversity and Inclusion intern was appointed in November 2022 to conduct a project to support the University in clearly establishing the progress being made against equality action plans

and the commitments made in Aberdeen 2040 and its associated Implementation Plan.

The equality action plans include:

- Antiracism Strategy
- British Sign Language Plan
- Equal Pay Audit
- Gaelic Language Plan
- Gender Based Violence and Sexual Harassment
- Gender Pay Gap
- Institutional Athena Swan
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Public Sector Equality Duty

- 1.10 The remit of the intern project is to develop a system to support senior management and EDIC to easily identify where progress is and is not being made and support colleagues with allocated actions to be reminded of key dates and appropriate means by which they can report their progress. The project will conclude in April 2023, with the first reports being made through the new system by September 2023.
- 1.11 The EDI communication and engagement structure was enhanced in 2022 with the appointment of eighteen School EDI Leads and the establishment of School EDICs. Their role involves providing advice and guidance to staff and students and overseeing the implementation of School EDI action plans. The Leads convene their School EDICs and report to their Head of School and the School Executive. One representative from the School EDI Leads group sits on the University EDIC, enhancing collaboration, communication and inclusive policy development.

2.0 MAINSTREAMING EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The following three sections outline how the University is meeting its legal requirement to mainstream equality into all of its functions through the following objectives:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation
- Advancing equality of opportunity
- Fostering good relations between people from different groups

2.1 ELIMINATE DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, VICTIMISATION AND ANY OTHER CONDUCT THAT IS PROHIBITED BY OR UNDER THE EQUALITY ACT 2010

Included in this section:

Access and Articulation, Antiracism Roundtable, Antiracism Strategy, Decolonising the Curriculum, EDI Capacity Building, Gender Pay Gap, Gender-Based Violence, the Jerusalem Declaration of Antisemitism, Mainstreaming EDI in Policy Frameworks (Digital Accessibility Policy, Homeworking Policy, Menopause Policy, Neurodiversity Policy, Recruitment and Selection of Staff Policy), Race Equality Charter Survey, Race Equality Strategy Group

2.1.1 ACCESS AND ARTICULATION

2.1.2 Widening access is one of the strands of Aberdeen 2040 within the Inclusive theme and represents the wide definition of equality, diversity and inclusion adopted by the University. The Access and Articulation Team provides pre-entry support to applicants who meet widening access criteria. The team works with school pupils, further education college students and mature applicants who meet one (or more) of the relevant criteria and aspire to study at the University. The Access and Articulation team also provides support and advice for parents, guardians, teachers and any other interested individuals or agencies.

2.1.3 Within the widening access criteria are students who would identify as belonging to one of the Vulnerable Groups (as defined by the Scottish Funding Council). The categories of students under the umbrella term 'vulnerable groups', are as follows:

- Care Experienced (Care Leavers)
- Estranged Students
- Student Carers (Unpaid carers)
- Gypsy, Roma, Traveller
- Veterans and Armed Forces
- Refugees & Asylum Seekers
- Reach

2.1.4 Actions that have been taken since 2021 to support inclusion of vulnerable groups include:

- Fifty new scholarship awards were awarded in 2023 at a total value of £127,200

- Reach Aberdeen has organised and/or attended forty events and engagements for pupils in seventy-five local authority secondary schools across Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, Moray, Highlands, Orkney, and Shetland
- The University established Free School Meals (FSM) as a widening access characteristic. Data capture, reporting lines, and promotional materials and activities have been adapted to reflect this recognition. FSM students are now treated the same as Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD20) applicants. This is now detailed in the University's Admissions Policy
- Sixteen events have been attended to support widening access pupils in the University's region
- Twenty-three careers and information, advice and guidance events have been attended in priority schools and schools with high SIMD20 pupils
- Forty personal statement reviews from widening access pupils for the UCAS process have been conducted
- Fifteen career sessions across Scottish colleges have been attended
- A North East Widening Access Practitioners Forum has been created
- One hundred and sixty-eight students have registered for a transitional summer school for all new first year students starting in 2022/23
- Thirty-four students attended an on-campus event for transitioning widening access and articulation students
- Seven widening access students attended an Engineering Transitional Summer School for Advanced Entry Engineering Schools

2.1.5 The students supported by the Access and Articulation team may have specific requirements and the University endeavours to meet those to create an inclusive learning environment.

2.1.6 **ANTIRACISM STRATEGY**

2.1.7 Overseen by the Race Equality Strategy Group, the University launched a bold [Antiracism Strategy](#) in October 2022 following its approval by University Court. The areas of focus in the Strategy were identified and fostered through conversations across campus and with input from Advance HE and other partners throughout 2020 and 2021. The Strategy sets out strategic ambitions on Governance, Leadership, Representation, Recruitment and Selection, Diversifying the Curriculum, Closing the Awarding Gap, Research and Reporting Racism, and Support. An Antiracism Strategy Action Plan has been developed to identify the actions which will support the implementation of the Strategy.

2.1.8 To support the formal launch of the Antiracism Strategy, [a video](#) featuring staff and students sharing their views on the Strategy was shared with the University community. The video highlights insights and perspectives from staff and students on how the Strategy will drive forward race equality in the University.

- 2.1.9 In line with our Inclusive commitments within our University Strategy, Aberdeen 2040, the Antiracism Strategy's aims are to:
- Create an antiracist environment recognising that this is an ongoing journey for the University
 - Eradicate race discrimination in all its forms on campus and proactively play our part in eradicating it in the Higher Education sector
 - Ensure that all staff and students are safe on campus and feel that they belong in the University
 - Embed a culture of accountability and transparency in our antiracist work – individual and organisational action to promote antiracism will be celebrated. Where behaviours fall short of expectations, these will be addressed promptly and effectively
- 2.1.10 The development of the Antiracism Strategy represented the step change in the progress the University has made and provides a robust framework against which staff and students can hold the University accountable. The Strategy is based on transparency and the University has committed to sharing progress with the University community.
- 2.1.11 **Action:** Publish the Antiracism Strategy Action Plan (Action 4.9)
- 2.1.12 **Action:** Establish a communication framework for continuing to share progress made against the Antiracism Strategy with staff and students (Action 4.10)
- 2.1.13 **ANTIRACISM ROUNDTABLE**
- 2.1.14 The Antiracism Strategy highlights the importance of engaging with the HE sector and beyond. The University has established an Antiracism Roundtable with local partners including Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, Fire Scotland, Grampian Regional Equality Council (GREC), NHS Grampian, Northeast Scotland College, Northeast Police Division, and Robert Gordon University. The purpose of the Roundtable is to identify where shared action could support antiracist work in the northeast of Scotland and within member organisations. Presentations on antiracism work from the University, Grampian Regional Equality Council, Police Scotland and NHS Grampian have been delivered to the Roundtable. The Roundtable has met three times since its establishment in March 2022 and is beginning to identify areas of shared working and is refining its ambitions which include supporting the development of an antiracist region in the Northeast of Scotland. To date, the following initiatives have been progressed:
- Representatives from the University of Aberdeen, Robert Gordon University and North East Scotland College have collaborated through sharing initiatives related to decolonising the curriculum
 - The participating organisations are working with Police Scotland to explore the establishment of further Third-Party Reporting Centres.

- A commitment to co-create Black History Month events and engagement in 2023

2.1.15 **DECOLONISING THE CURRICULUM**

2.1.16 In May 2021, the University established a [Decolonising the Curriculum Steering Group](#). The purpose of this subgroup of the University Education Committee is to develop an approach that addresses embedded racial stereotypes and/or limited perspectives in the curriculum and supports Schools to develop learning materials that offer students a rich diversity of views and role models. The remit of the Group is as follows:

1. Develop a partnership and collaborative approach to working practices and the formulation of strategy, policies and guidance for the delivery of the purpose of the group.
2. Develop a set of principles and definitions that articulate the vision for the work of the group and the wider institutional goals associated with the group's purpose.
3. Undertake a scoping exercise to understand the existing curriculum practices, and from there identify both good practice and gaps for action.
4. Put in place an institutional action plan for the work and monitor progress on the action plan.
5. Support Schools and Professional Services to develop their own plans to address the agreed vision and principles.
6. Develop a good practice toolkit and staff training for Schools so that they can:
 - a. Utilise evidence-based approaches to support their curriculum work
 - b. Gain literacy on decolonising curricula
7. Develop internal and external partnerships that will enrich the work of the group and enable the sharing of good practice.
8. Put in place an evaluation strategy.

2.1.17 The Group has six workstreams which are as follows:

Workstream 1: Context, definitions and ambitions

Workstream 2: Evidence-based practice

Workstream 3: Leading and managing critical conversations in Schools

Workstream 4: Content focused (curriculum design), assessment focused and delivery focused

Workstream 5: Quality assurance and enhancement

Workstream 6: Challenges faced in the classroom

2.1.18 The Group is in the first phase of its work and has completed, or is in the process of finalising, the following:

- Established leads for decolonising the curriculum in each of the twelve Schools, all of whom are members of the Group
- Embedded students in all the work of the Group, ensuring that they are paid for their work
- Defined 'Decolonising the Curriculum' for the University

- Finalising a set of resources (web-based and Toolkits) to support staff to take forward the work at School and discipline levels
- Collated examples of existing good practice across the University to support the resources
- Building in the QAA Scotland / Advance HE Antiracist Curriculum Project outputs into the University's resources

2.1.19 **EQUAL PAY REPORT**

2.1.20 The University publishes its Equal Pay Report every four years. The most recent report is based on data from 2019 and was published in 2020. The report can be found here: [Equal Pay Report 2019 v4 \(ON WEB\).pdf \(abdn.ac.uk\)](#)

2.1.21 The report published in April 2020 is based on data obtained from the Human Resources and Payroll System as of 31st August 2019. This covered gender, ethnicity, and disability. The data indicated that the University's overall Gender Pay Gap in 2019 was 20.2% which was a slight improvement from 2016 when the gap was 23%. The gap is indicative of the uneven distribution of males and females across the pay grades. The under-representation of females at higher grades is a factor in weighting the overall gender gap in favour of males.

2.1.22 The data also demonstrated that there are no significant pay gaps across individual grades and none which exceeded the 5% recommended threshold. The report highlighted, however, that females are disadvantaged in relation to contribution point salaries.

2.1.23 Actions being taken to address Equal Pay and which are part of the Equal Pay Report include:

- Undertake a robust Equal Pay Audit (see section 1.6 below), using an independent provider and which will follow all criteria required for the audit as per the Equality and Human Rights Commission guidelines. This was undertaken in 2021 by Zellis Consulting and the recommendations arising from it form part of the remit of the University's Reward Consultation and Negotiation Group.
- All gaps of 5%> or repeated gaps of 3% to be investigated on an annual basis.
- Continue to monitor the rates of successful and unsuccessful promotions/regrading applicants.
- Review of the Contributions Procedure to ensure that it is used appropriately and fairly to reward staff.
- In addition to the above, the University will continue to publish its Gender Pay Gap report on an annual basis and progress actions that seek to enable equality in pay.

2.1.24 **EQUAL PAY AUDIT**

2.1.25 In 2021 an independent Equal Pay Audit was undertaken by Zellis Consulting. The Audit indicated that the University has appropriate policies and procedures in place to

support equal pay for equal work for staff who identify with protected characteristics. The Audit provided recommendations for improvement. These related to workforce distribution/workforce segregation, the pay structure, including current incremental progression arrangements, intersectionality between protected characteristics, harmonisation of terms and conditions and adoption of a formal pay policy to cover areas including market supplements, starting salaries and salary on promotion/regrading.

2.1.26 The University’s Reward Consultation and Negotiation Group is responsible for overseeing the progress of the Equal Pay Audit recommendations.

2.1.27 GENDER PAY GAP

2.1.28 Under [Aberdeen 2040](#), the University is committed to eliminating pay gaps across all protected characteristics (Commitment 5 in Aberdeen 2040). The University publishes a Gender Pay Gap report annually and the most recent report based on data as at 31st March 2021 can be found here: [Gender Equality | StaffNet | The University of Aberdeen \(abdn.ac.uk\)](#)

2.1.29 The University’s 2021 mean Gender Pay Gap is 20.2%. In 2020, the mean Gender Pay Gap was 19.5%. The 2021 median Gender Pay Gap, which compares the mid-point salary for males and females, is 19.4% - a slight decrease from 20.2% in 2020. This is the more representative figure and the University’s interim target agreed by the University Court is to achieve a median Gender Pay Gap of 17% or lower by 2025.

Year	Mean (%)	Median (%)
2017	22.4%	22.2
2018	22.03	22.7
2019	20.6	22.4
2020	19.5	20.2
2021	20.2	19.4

Table 2: Gender Pay Gap 2017 – 2021

2.1.30 The main reasons for the Gender Pay Gap in the University relate to occupational segregation and the impact of a greater proportion of higher salaried males in the upper salary bands compared to females. Females are under-represented at senior posts and/or over-represented in lower grades and mid-level posts. If females are under-represented, the ratios are highly impacted by even small changes in the high-level posts, for example, high earning female(s) leaving the organisation or high earning male(s) being recruited. Over 67% of staff in the lower salary quartile are female while 57% in the upper salary quartile are male and this gender occupational segregation impacts on the Gender Pay Gap.

2.1.31 The Covid-19 pandemic had a unique impact on the Gender Pay Gap figures for 2021. The University accessed the Furlough Scheme for limited numbers of posts during the pandemic and maintained salaries for those furloughed at 100%. Staff did not have the normal opportunity, however, to undertake additional hours/overtime which would be included in the calculation. In the year leading up to 31st March 2021, due to the predicted adverse impact of the pandemic on the University's finances, the decision was taken to pause promotions, contributions and regradings. Each were reinstated, when the financial forecasting improved, and any successful promotions, regradings and contributions had an effective date after 31st March 2021.

2.1.32 The Reward Consultation and Negotiation Group has a remit to address the Gender Pay Gap by driving forward the following actions:

- Strategic commitment to eliminating all pay gaps
- Implementing the revised Recruitment and Selection Policy to support the University's commitment to addressing the Gender Pay Gap in the forthcoming year through the equality, diversity and inclusion (positive action) measures incorporated in it to tackle occupational segregation
- Revising recognition arrangements
- The development of a Pay Policy including clarity in approach to starting salaries, salary on regarding/promotion and contribution pay. The University will develop a market supplement policy
- Continuing the University's commitment to the Advance HE Aurora Women's Leadership Programme with further internal development opportunities planned
- Supporting a diverse cohort of staff to participate in the International Leadership Development Programme
- Improved monitoring of our actions and increased reporting on progress or other actions required

2.1.33 **GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE**

2.1.34 The Addressing Gender-Based Violence and Sexual Harassment (GBV) Strategy Group is responsible for driving change in combating GBV at the University and setting strategic goals in this area. The Group oversees the [Combating GBV Action Plan](#) and develops and enhances appropriate support and reporting mechanisms at the University. The Group engages across the sector, and beyond, on addressing the root causes of, and associated issues linked to, GBV and sexual violence in society.

2.1.35 In November 2021, the University launched its Addressing GBV and Sexual Harassment Policy. The Policy was drafted following extensive input from staff and students; AUSA; Campus Trade Unions; and external groups working on combating GBV and supporting victims of sexual harassment and assault.

2.1.36 In April 2022, the University and AUSA re-signed a [Statement of Commitment](#) to address GBV in the University community. The Joint Statement is a signed promise made by the University and AUSA to work together to address GBV on campus,

acknowledge that work is required to provide enhanced support to victims of GBV and to support national and international initiatives to end GBV in society. Activities related to the Joint Statement are undertaken in partnership with AUSA.

- 2.1.37 In 2022, staff were trained in a new Risk Assessment tool called LISTEN, which is offered by EmilyTest, a Scottish Government-funded charity working to improve GBV prevention, intervention and support in further and higher education. The University is planning to roll out the training to additional key frontline staff in 2023. The University is a Pledging member of the EmilyTest Charter and will apply for full Charter status in 2023/24.
- 2.1.38 Tackling GBV is one of the University's Equality Outcomes (Outcome 5) and a detailed update on actions taken can be seen in the Action Plan in Appendix A. It is noted that the National Equality Outcomes also contain a targeted Outcome which will require the University to evidence approaches that prevent and respond to violence, harassment and abuse.
- 2.1.39 **JERUSALEM DECLARATION ON ANTISEMITISM (JDA)**
- 2.1.40 The University established a Race Definitions Task and Finish Group to recommend a set of definitions related to its antiracism work and to progress discussions related to agreeing a definition of antisemitism. In 2022, the University adopted the [Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism \(JDA\)](#), following extensive consultation and option appraisal. The JDA helps to identify, address and raise awareness of antisemitism and how it can manifest. Work is continuing with the University's Jewish community to understand the barriers faced and to increase safety on campus. The University recognises the increase in antisemitic incidents across the sector and the importance of opening and nurturing discussion on this as part of the implementation of the Antiracism Strategy.
- 2.1.41 **MAINSTREAMING EDI IN POLICY FRAMEWORKS**
- 2.1.42 **Digital Accessibility Policy**
In May 2022, the University published its first Digital Accessibility Policy, which represented the culmination of dedicated work to enhance the University's digital accessibility. The Policy sets out the principles, responsibilities and obligations for managing digital accessibility within the University. The Policy is designed to ensure compliance with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 and to support the University's strategic aim to secure the highest standards of equality, diversity and inclusion. Expectations for staff who create, purchase and publish digital materials and the support available to them are detailed within the Policy. Sources of support and advice for staff members are signposted. The Policy will be reviewed in May 2023.

Staff and members of the University Court responsible for creating and/or publishing digital materials must observe the following standards:

- Web content and page structure must be fully compatible with screen readers and navigable by keyboard and speech recognition software.
- Images that convey information and are not purely decorative must have alternative content.
- Video materials must have accurate captions or accessible alternatives such as transcripts or audio descriptions.
- Documents (PDF, PowerPoint, Word, and others) must be fully accessible to screen reader software.
- Forms must be labelled and be keyboard accessible.
- Social media posts must follow best practice guidance, as recommended by the Digital Marketing Team.
- Digital materials produced in support of teaching & learning and/or professional services must only be published on University-approved platforms.

2.1.43 **Homeworking Policy**

To support the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, a Homeworking Policy was developed in 2021. The University recognised the benefits of homeworking to staff in terms of balancing work and personal life and reducing commuting. Consequently, homeworking has continued to be offered to staff where possible and the Homeworking Policy was reviewed in 2022, including a survey of staff and Line Managers. The survey had a good response rate, and the University is working with campus trade unions and staff to identify improvements which could be made following the feedback received.

2.1.44 **Menopause Policy**

The University recognises the challenges that staff and students who are experiencing the menopause or perimenopause may encounter while they work and study at the University and endeavours to create environments where individuals feel confident in asking for support. In November 2022, the University approved a Menopause Policy which applies to staff and students. It aims to raise awareness of menopause, its symptoms and the impact it can have on work and study. The responsibilities of staff, line managers, students, Human Resources, Student Advice and Support and the role of Occupational Health are detailed in the Policy. Guidance on providing the right support to manage menopausal symptoms at work and study are also included. Advice and support mechanisms for both staff and students are signposted within the Policy.

A Menopause Policy implementation plan has been developed and the University is currently identifying menopause awareness training providers to support this. It is expected that the Policy, in tandem with training, will contribute to raising awareness of menopause and its symptoms as well as ensuring that working and studying environments are supportive for those experiencing menopausal symptoms. Practical support is also being promoted, such as the provision of desk fans and light boxes.

2.1.45 **Neurodiversity Equality Policy**

The University recognises that a diversity of cognitive approaches amongst its community is a source of strength and value. In June 2022, the University approved a Neurodiversity Equality Policy. The Policy applies to staff and students and seeks to promote awareness of neurodiversity and how it affects individuals. The responsibilities of managers and the Disability Team are detailed in the Policy, as is guidance on potential adjustments for neurodiverse individuals. Confidential advice and support mechanisms are signposted for both staff and students within the Policy.

The Policy supports and promotes the services available to neurodiverse staff and students in the University e.g. the Disability Team, the Student Learning Service for students and the HR Team for staff and managers.

A Neurodiversity Equality Policy implementation plan has been developed and the University is currently identifying neurodiversity awareness training providers to support this. It is anticipated that the Policy, in tandem with training will contribute to raising awareness of neurodivergence, challenge negative stereotypical views and ensure that teaching, learning, research, and employment practices at the University are accessible to individuals who are neurodiverse.

2.1.46 Recruitment and Selection of Staff Policy – embedding EDI in the Policy to address under-representation

In July 2022, the University launched an enhanced Recruitment and Selection of Staff Policy. The Policy applies to all staff who are involved in the recruitment and selection of staff. It details that appointments will be based on skills, experience and merit while also highlighting new initiatives to address under-representation where it exists in the University.

University staff who participate in the recruitment process are required to undertake online training modules on recruitment and selection, equality, diversity and inclusion and unconscious bias on a three yearly basis.

The Policy details the University's commitment to encouraging the recruitment of staff with disabilities and applications from underrepresented groups to meet its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion aims. The University continues to implement the Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS) principles in relation to disabled candidates and the Policy will ensure that female candidates and candidates from racialised groups are represented on shortlists. Where advertisement does not lead to a diverse shortlist for University Management Group roles, further steps will be taken to widen the pool of applicants before the recruitment process is progressed.

Further new measures include incorporating a statement in job advertisements and job descriptions welcoming applications from under-represented groups in that staff category or area where there is evidence of under representation. The Policy requires the application of the 'Rooney Rule' for vacancies in University Management Group. This supports the mainstreaming of race equality, in line with the Antiracism Strategy.

The Policy is integral to a range of EDI initiatives such as addressing under-representation of racialised groups, particularly at the senior levels, addressing the Gender Pay Gap and eliminating bias from the recruitment and selection process. These are aims which require time to manifest, however, the requirements of the new Policy, such as understanding and reviewing equality data as part of the recruitment and selection process, should accelerate change and deliver the transformation required. The Race Equality Strategy Group, EDIC and the Reward Consultation and Negotiation Group will play an active role in monitoring the implementation of the Policy.

2.1.47 RACE EQUALITY STRATEGY GROUP (RESG)

2.1.48 Established in 2020 to drive progress on race equality, the Race Equality Strategy Group (RESG) is chaired by the Vice-Principal Education and Head of the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition and comprises representatives from across the University and from a range of racialised groups. The Group supports the implementation of the Aberdeen 2040 Inclusive commitments and acts as the Self-Assessment Team for the Race Equality Charter submission. RESG is responsible for:

- Driving forward the Antiracism Strategy and monitoring its implementation to enable the University to meet its targets and ambitions
- Recommending actions to create a culture which is anti-racist, and which will support the University to tackle systemic inequalities
- Developing and monitoring a strategy to deal with racial incidents/complaints
- Addressing the recommendations of the Equality and Human Rights Commission on tackling racial harassment in universities
- Developing an approach which addresses embedded racial stereotypes and/or limited perspectives in the curriculum and supporting Schools to develop learning materials which offer students a rich diversity of views and role models
- Developing internal and external partnerships which will assist the University in understanding the lived experience of minority ethnic people, and responding to their needs
- Acting as 'Race Equality Charter self-assessment team' and lead the University's Race Equality Charter Bronze application (by February 2024) through:
 - Analysis of qualitative and quantitative data to identify racial inequalities in the representation (e.g. ethnic profile), progression and continuation, degree attainment, and post-graduate employment of minority ethnic students, as well as in the recruitment, progression (e.g. regrading/promotion), and development of minority ethnic staff;
 - Evaluation of the efficacy of the University's policies relating to race equality and recommending change where appropriate, in consultation with other working groups and committees;
 - Development of an evidence-based action plan which states clear aspirations and success criteria, and monitoring progress on its achievement.

2.1.49 RACE EQUALITY CHARTER STAFF AND STUDENT SURVEYS

2.1.50 In February 2022, the University carried out its first Staff and Student Race Equality Charter Surveys to assess the culture of the institution and explore whether racial inequalities exist in its policies and procedures. The results indicate that inequalities exist in the University and provide insights as to the specific areas where improvement is required to achieve the University's ambition of becoming an antiracist University, as set out in the Antiracism Strategy. The University is committed to addressing the issues that were raised in the surveys, primarily through the development and implementation of the Antiracism Strategy Action Plan.

2.1.51 **Main themes arising from the results of the surveys were:**

- Staff and students have reported that they have experienced racism and are unclear as to the most appropriate route for reporting it
- Staff indicated the importance of transparency in recruitment and selection and career development processes
- Students indicated that race could be discussed in the learning environment more frequently

2.1.52 **Areas where action is required:**

- Implementing and monitoring the new Recruitment and Selection Policy which has a focus on addressing under-representation and embedding equality, diversity and inclusion
- Build on the race literacy training delivered to staff, including senior management, to increase knowledge and awareness of antiracism
- Further promoting and developing the race incident reporting systems such as the Online Reporting Tool and the role of the Race Equality Champions
- Continue to drive decolonisation through the priorities and aims of the Decolonising the Curriculum Steering Group
- Drive work on addressing the ethnicity awarding gap through the Race Equality Strategy Group
- Embedding antiracism in University initiatives and policies for staff and students through the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee and Student Support and Experience Committee and in all University business, working with Court members
- Continue with a rolling programme of race listening activities to further explore the results of the survey.

2.1.53 All of the above actions will be addressed as part of the Antiracism Strategy Action Plan which will be published by March 2023.

2.1.54 The University is grateful to all staff and students who participated in the surveys, sharing their experiences, ideas and thoughts. This generosity is recognised and valued, and the University commits to addressing the issues raised through consultation and further engagement sessions. Racism in any form has no place in the University and any incident reported will be investigated timeously.

- 2.1.55 The full results of the surveys can be found here: [REC-Survey-Report-2022.docx \(live.com\)](#).
- 2.1.56 Outcome 4 of the University's Equality Outcomes captures our commitment to creating an antiracist university and fully embedding the recommendations of the Equality and Human Rights Commission report "Tackling Racial Harassment: Universities Challenged" (2019) and the Universities UK report "Tackling Racial Harassment in HE" (2020). This closely aligns with the new NEOs under the protected characteristic of race.

2.1.57 Actions:

Conduct focus groups with staff and students (Action 15.1)

Develop an Antiracism Strategy Action Plan to support the implementation of the Antiracism Strategy and address the issues identified in the REC surveys (Action: 15.2)

Submit an annual report of progress and challenges to the Senior Management Team (SMT) and Court (Action: 15.3)

Repeat Race Equality Charter surveys every two years (Action: 15.4)

Increase engagement in race training that is open to all staff (Action: 15.5)

2.1.58 **EDI CAPACITY BUILDING**

The University is conscious of the need to support staff to champion an inclusive culture and be empowered to practically implement equality, diversity and inclusion. There are challenges associated with this given the scale of the training interventions required. The University has continued to prioritise race literacy training, and this will be followed through in 2023 with specific training provided to appropriate cohorts of staff on how to handle a racist incident appropriately, sensitively and fairly. However, the University has identified and welcomed offers of training which have presented where appropriate and is grateful to internal colleagues who have shared their expertise in a training capacity.

In the 2021 report, it was noted that an extensive suite of online modules had been procured and these have received positive feedback. The courses have been publicised and are embedded into other learning opportunities offered by the University.

2.1.59 **Autism Awareness for Support Staff**

In November and December 2022, Dr Jacqueline Ravet, Reader in Initial Teacher Education, delivered two sessions on autism awareness for support staff at the University. The purpose of these sessions was to deepen understanding of autism

through exploring diagnostic criteria as well as detailing how to support students with autism.

2.1.60 **Deaf Awareness Training**

To support commitments within the University's British Sign Language Plan, in May 2022, Signs4Life delivered a three-hour online workshop to sixteen colleagues representing areas from across the University, including postgraduate research students. The training enabled learners to:

- Identify the barriers that deaf and hard of hearing people face
- List the ways in which deaf and hard of hearing people communicate
- Understand and demonstrate how to implement positive methods of communication and offer an equal service to deaf and hard of hearing people.
- Apply the finger-spelling alphabet
- Explore the deaf community and culture

Feedback received on the Deaf Awareness Training was overall positive and most of the learners reported that the session empowered them to apply the learning in their workplace.

2.1.61 **Trans Awareness Training**

Two three-hour Transgender Awareness workshops were delivered to sixty members of staff in November 2022 by Scottish Trans Alliance. These sessions covered terms and definitions, relevant Scottish legislation, issues facing trans people in Scotland, and allyship. 83% of participants stated that they would highly recommend the training to a colleague and the University will seek to offer this training to a wider audience. The training served to support the implementation of the University's Transgender Equality Policy and provided personal testimonies and safe opportunities to discuss specific questions and case studies.

2.1.62 **Inclusion Essentials**

Inclusion Essentials Training is online training provided by Skill Boosters and is mandatory for all new staff to complete within three months of employment. The training covers UK legislation such as the Equality Act 2010 and the types of discrimination individuals are protected from in the workplace. Each of the protected characteristics are covered within the training and practical steps to eliminate bias and create an inclusive working environment. During 2022, 605 staff members undertook the "Inclusion Essentials" training.

2.1.63 **Tackling Racial Bias**

Tackling Racial Bias is an online training course from Skills Boosters that is mandatory for all staff to complete within three months of employment.

The course seeks to give learners an understanding of:

- The changing nature of racism

- How racial bias, prejudice and discrimination manifest themselves in the workplace
- The impact of racial and religious stereotypes
- How to find out the extent to which racial bias is a problem in your organisation
- Key steps for leaders, HR teams and Learning and Development departments to take in tackling racism and race bias.

During 2022, 459 members of staff undertook the “Tackling Racial Bias” training.

2.1.64 **Understanding Unconscious Bias**

This course is mandatory for all staff members who are involved in the recruitment and/or promotion of staff and/or students. The course provides psychological insights into how behaviour might be affected by prejudice and reviews what can be done to reduce or eliminate its influence in decision making. The course contains insightful video content, including re-staged psychological experiments, original drama scenarios and expert analysis.

The course seeks to provide an understanding of:

- How and why people are biased
- How unconscious bias can impact on the workplace and on working relationships
- What we can do to reduce or eliminate bias from our decision-making process
- How to address bias in specific situations, such as recruitment and performance management.

409 members of staff undertook the “Understanding Unconscious Bias” training in 2022.

2.1.65 **Online Equality Diversity Inclusion Training**

In addition to the mandatory online training, the University has a broad range of online equality, diversity and inclusion training available to all staff and students on the Staff Development webpage. The courses are interactive and video-based and there is a strong focus on lived experience. Courses include:

- Allyship
- Being Disability Confident
- Cultural Awareness in the Workplace
- Disability Etiquette
- Disabled Adventures in Work and Recruitment
- The Diversity Challenge
- The Effective Bystander
- Gender Matters
- The Impact of Micro Behaviours
- Inclusive Language and Communication
- Inclusive Leadership

- Maternity and Paternity
- Menopause in the Workplace
- Mental Health – Doing the Right Thing
- Mental Health – Managing Stress
- Mental Health – Stress Less
- Mental Health Overview
- The Multi-Generational Workforce: Tackling Age Bias
- Neurodiversity Inclusion
- Sexual Orientation
- Supporting Trans and Non-Binary People at Work: A Managers Guide
- Tackling Race Bias at Work: A Manager’s Guide
- Tackling Sexual harassment at work – a manager’s guide
- Trans and Non-Binary Awareness
- Understanding and Confronting Sexual Harassment at Work
- Understanding Equality Impact Assessments
- Understanding and Tackling Gender Bias
- Working Effectively with the Equality Act

2.1.66 **Race Literacy Training**

Tailored race literacy training sessions were delivered in 2021 by Challenge Consultancy to members of the University Management Group (who received training on leading an antiracist university) and frontline staff in Professional Services roles (353 attendees). In March and April 2022, five race literacy training sessions, available to all staff and postgraduate research students, were delivered via Zoom. 459 individuals booked to attend the sessions. The Race Equality Strategy Group (RESG) noted that this was a low uptake and agreed that methods of increasing engagement should be explored. Action to address this is being taken forward and is captured in Appendix A.

The aim of this course was to enable participants to increase their understanding of how race can impact staff and student experiences in the University, and build participants’ knowledge, understanding and confidence in relation to race and discussion about race. The feedback collated by Challenge Consultancy from the participants was positive with 94% reporting that the course was very easy/easy to understand, 86% found the course very relevant for their work, 77% found the pace and the length of the course about right, 99% and 96% considered the trainer and training methods, respectively, as very good/good.

Analysis of the open comments provided through the feedback form indicate that participants felt that:

- The training provided them with helpful and practical knowledge to take their anti-racist journey forward.
- The training sessions were not long enough and that they would benefit from further and more in-depth training sessions.
- Race training should be mandatory for all staff.

The University is committed to ensuring that training sessions on race equality continue to be delivered regularly. Training and education play a vital role in the University's journey to become an anti-racist Institution. University Court and frontline staff will engage in further training by April 2023 as part of an ongoing race training plan. Frontline staff will receive training on handling a disclosure of a racist incident sensitively and appropriately.

3.1 ADVANCE EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY BETWEEN PERSONS WHO SHARE A RELEVANT PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC AND PERSONS WHO DO NOT SHARE IT

Included in this section:

British Sign Language Plan, Charter Marks (Athena Swan, Race Equality Charter, Stonewall Workplace Equality Index), Court Diversity, Disability Confident Scheme, Gaelic Language Plan, Mental Health and Wellbeing, Staff Survey 2022 Results, University of Sanctuary, At – Risk Fellowship Scheme

3.1.1 BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE PLAN

3.1.2 The University continues to implement its [British Sign Language Plan and has established a working group to take forward the initiatives](#). Key areas of note are:

- British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters were available on campus during the University's Open Day on the 1st of October 2022 and Offer Holder Day on the 27th of April 2022. Translation was available on key talks – (Welcome, Finance, Applying to UCAS, Accommodation) and for subject talks for specific visitors. Any visitor who, when registering, identified as needing assistance was contacted by the University for further details about which talks, they planned to attend. If the University was alerted on the day to specific requirements, it did everything possible to arrange for the additional sessions to be translated. Talks which were to be interpreted were highlighted in the printed guide
- Challenges exist in accessing BSL interpreters in the Northeast of Scotland. This is an issue the British Sign Language Working Group is aware of and will continue to raise at local and national networks
- All graduation events are signed by a BSL interpreter
- Links have been re-established with RGU and NeSCOL to identify where shared initiatives could drive BSL awareness across the three institutions.

3.1.3 CHARTER MARKS

3.1.4 Athena Swan Charter

The University continues to progress its long-standing commitment to the Athena Swan Charter to drive understanding of barriers to gender equality and the actions required to address them. Of note since the last report in 2021;

- The University, the Rowett Institute, and the Institute of Applied Health Sciences retained their Bronze awards
- Three Schools (Law, Biological Sciences and Education) submitted an application at Silver level

- The School of Natural and Computing Sciences submitted an application to retain its Bronze award
- Two Schools (Social Sciences and Divinity, History, Philosophy & Art History) applied to postpone their submission due to changes in Heads of School
- Each Head of School signed up to [the principles](#) of the Transformed Athena Swan Charter

Key actions which have been taken since 2021 to support the Athena Swan principles include:

- Creation of the Parents' Guidebook which provides guidance on the support available on return to work from leave, the locations of the two dedicated nursing rooms (Old Aberdeen and Foresterhill Campuses), other rooms available for breastfeeding and how to request a personal fridge for storage of milk. Breastfeeding is welcomed in all social areas and posters have been designed to highlight this
- During the pandemic, events and meetings were delivered virtually where possible. Meetings and events have also been recorded where appropriate so that colleagues who are unable to attend can keep up to date
- Vacancies continue to be advertised with clear links to EDI and flexible working opportunities
- The Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy is currently being reviewed. Changes include the addition of an appendix that details third-party and University support available to staff and students. The Policy also includes an expansion beyond the nine protected characteristics to include groups such as those who have experienced perinatal loss
- In 2021, a Workload Reduction Toolkit was launched to address workload pressures
- The Business School, the School of Engineering and the School of Divinity, History, Philosophy and Art History (DHPA) appointed female Heads of School. The School of DHPA is also led by a woman
- The Athena Swan Forum was replaced with the EDI Forum to streamline work in this area
- As part of initiatives to address the Gender Pay Gap, the University rolled out a Social Bias Observer Scheme within its promotions process. This involves a member of staff trained in Unconscious Bias sitting within a promotions or regrading panel and highlighting biased behaviour or comments
- A Gender Equality Steering Group is being established to drive forward the University's institutional Silver level Athena Swan submission.

The Schools are working towards detailed specific action plans to support their ambitions with the Athena Swan Charter and at institutional level an extensive gender action plan is being progressed.

3.1.5 Disability Confident Scheme

The University renewed its Level 1: Disability Confident Committed status in December 2021. Work is being undertaken to advance the University to Level 2: Disability Confident Employer of the Disability Confident Scheme. A number of initiatives are currently being progressed to support this, including the development of comprehensive guidance on reasonable adjustments for staff with disabilities and their line managers.

3.1.6 **Race Equality Charter**

To progress work on antiracism, in 2019 the University signed up to the Advance HE Race Equality Charter, which provides a framework through which institutions work to identify and self-reflect on institutional and cultural barriers faced by racialised groups. The University adopted the principles of the Charter and is working towards a Bronze level submission in February 2024.

In September 2020, the Race Equality Strategy Group (RESG) was established to drive forward change on race equality and to act as the self-assessment team for the Institutional Race Equality Charter Bronze application. This means that the Group is responsible for collecting and analysing appropriate quantitative and qualitative data which can be used to identify where racial under-representation exists in the University, where barriers exist for staff and students from racialised groups and how and when racism, including systemic racism manifests.

RESG launched a series of listening activities, commencing in 2020 (for example, interviews, focus groups and online submission forms) with the aim of empowering staff and students from racialised groups to engage and share their experiences of racism and ideas for combatting it. The Staff and PGR Race Equality Network was established to provide a safe space for staff and students to share their experiences and seek support.

3.1.7 **Stonewall Workplace Equality Index**

The University remains a member of the Stonewall Diversity Champions Programme and achieved a Silver Award in the 2022 index. This is recognition of the wide-ranging input from across the organisation to make the University a more welcoming and inclusive space for LGBT+ staff and students.

3.1.8 **COURT DIVERSITY AND COMPLIANCE WITH THE GENDER REPRESENTATION ON PUBLIC BOARDS (SCOTLAND) ACT 2018**

3.1.9 The University has continued to improve the diversity profile of Court, its governing body, since the last report in 2021, consistent with the commitment articulated in the Court Statement of Intent on Diversity. This sets out the Court's commitment for its own membership to reflect the diverse nature of the University community insofar as is possible and practicable.

3.1.10 Across its membership, the Court's gender balance on 31 July 2022 was 48% female, 52% male and the Court has continued to achieve gender balance in its appointed

independent membership consistent with the objective of the Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018. The diversity of the Court’s ethnicity has also been enhanced with 12% of its membership identifying as Black ethnic origin as of 31 July 2022.

- 3.1.11 In support of recent recruitment processes to independent member positions, the University undertook measures to increase awareness of the vacant positions among under-represented groups. The Court’s Governance and Nominations Committee identified the need to be proactive in encouraging more female candidates and candidates from racialised groups. The role description, person specification and advertisement were reviewed to ensure they were inclusive and to emphasise the diversity of the University community and the Court’s wish to encourage applications from women and individuals from protected characteristic groups that were under-represented on Court. The range of advertising networks used beyond mainstream print media was also reviewed to include professional networks for women and other under-represented groups. The prioritisation of encouraging a diverse field of applicants was a key part of the project brief to the recruitment consultants used by the University and interviews were conducted through a gender balanced panel.
- 3.1.12 A further recent initiative has since been the Court’s participation since July 2022 in the *Governance Apprenticeship Programme* in partnership with Perrett Laver. The programme aims to address one of the barriers to improving board diversity, namely the limited pipeline of individuals from underrepresented backgrounds with the required board level experience. It provides the opportunity for one individual to shadow the Court for a year, offering the skills, insights, and networks, that can build a solid foundation for future board roles.
- 3.1.13 These steps have helped the Court to achieve the progress noted above in terms of gender balance, ethnic diversity and age profile. It is recognised, however, by the Court’s Governance and Nominations Committee that there remains further progress to be made in enhancing the wider diversity of the Court in terms of the aspirations set out in its Statement of Intent on Diversity. This remains a priority for action in forthcoming recruitment processes as new vacancies on Court arise.

3.1.14 Gender Profile of the Court

The University Court has a composition of twenty-five. The following figures are based on the membership in office as at the following dates since 2021:

	31 July 2021	31 July 2022
Women	11	12
Men	12	13
% of membership	44% Female 48% Male 2 vacancies	48% Female 52% Male

Table 3: Gender profile of Court 2021 and 2022

3.1.15 Reporting Information Specific to Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act

3.1.16 This section reports on the information required by Section 8 of the Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018. It covers the period since August 2020 to 31 July 2022.

3.1.17 The Act applies to members who are appointed by the Court but excludes members who are elected or nominated. For the University Court, this translates to being twelve of the thirteen independent members of Court (the Senior Governor who, while independent, is elected and therefore excluded).

3.1.18 As of 31 July 2022, the objective of the legislation has been achieved with six of the twelve independent members of Court being female. This has been achieved through the steps outlined above. Furthermore, as at the time of writing (February 2023) the Court continues to meet the objective of the legislation.

As required by the Act, the following further information is provided:

	31 July 2021	31 July 2022
Women	6	6
Men	5	6
% of membership	50% Female 42% Male 1 Vacancy	50% Female 50% Male

Table 4: Gender profile of Independent Members Appointed by Court 2021 and 2022

Number of Vacancies	Number of Recruitment Processes Undertaken	Number of Applications	% of Applications from Women	Number of Appointments Made	Number of Appointments Female
4	1	64*	24%*	4	2

Table 5: Recruitment of Independent Members 1 Aug 2020 to 31 July 2022

Note *: While 64 applications were received, only 38 disclosed their gender. The percentage of applications from women given above, therefore, represents the percentage of those 64 applications.

3.1.19 The Court composition by ethnicity can be seen in Table 6 below:

ETHNICITY	PERCENTAGE
White British	40%
White Scottish	16%
Other White Background	4%

Black or Black British - Caribbean	4%
Black or Black British - African	4%
Other Black Background	4%
Other Mixed Background	4%
Not known	16%
Prefer not to disclose	8%

Table 6: Court composition by ethnicity

3.1.20 GAELIC LANGUAGE PLAN

3.1.21 The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 secures the status of Gaelic as an official language of Scotland, recognising it as the same status as the English language. Under the Act, the University has a statutory duty to support the Gaelic language and its endurance in Scotland. The University developed a [Gaelic Language Plan](#) which is overseen by the Gaelic Language Plan Advisory Group which comprises members from across the University. The University's Gaelic Language Plan 2019 – 2024 sets out how the University plans to raise awareness of Gaelic, increase the number of Gaelic speakers and embed Gaelic in the University's activities. The Group reports annually on the University's progress to [Bòrd na Gàidhlig](#), the public body in Scotland responsible for promoting Gaelic development.

3.1.22 In March 2022, the University reported to Bòrd na Gàidhlig that between June 2021 and June 2022:

- Six social media posts in Gaelic were released to the University community
- Current data indicated that thirty-one members of staff reported being Gaelic speakers in the Staff Survey 2022. This is an increase of five individuals since 2020
- The student accommodation team continues to ask students if they would like to share with other Gaelic-speaking students and this is asked bilingually on the online accommodation form
- Undergraduate and Post Graduate degrees in Gaelic Studies and Celtic Studies continue to be offered in the University as well as a Gaelic for Business and Local Authorities course.

3.1.23 The University successfully bid for funding in July 2022 through the Gaelic Language Act Implementation Fund which will go towards recruiting a Gaelic Language Officer. This role will be based within the Human Resources team but will work closely with External Relations and the School of Literature, Language, Music and Visual Culture. The postholder will support the implementation and raise awareness of the University's Gaelic Plan 2019-2024. The Gaelic Language Officer will be responsible for identifying and delivering other opportunities to raise awareness and increase the use and learning of Gaelic across the University and in the wider community.

3.1.24 MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- 3.1.25 In September 2021, a [Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy](#) for staff and students was approved. The Policy details the University's commitment to care for the wellbeing, health and safety of its diverse community, supporting and developing people to achieve their full potential, as outlined in the University's strategic plan, Aberdeen 2040. The Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy underpins the [University's Wellbeing Strategy](#). It details how the University will support staff and students to maintain good mental health and wellbeing. It also sets standards and responsibilities for the management of mental health and wellbeing for all staff and students. The University has a legal duty of care to its community and is committed to exceeding its minimum legal requirements.
- 3.1.26 The University has committed to creating an environment that is conducive to the health, safety and wellbeing of staff and students. The University recognises that individuals identify with many characteristics that combine to contribute to lived experience and the intersectionality of those is important in determining outcomes related to mental health and wellbeing. The University's strategic plan, Aberdeen 2040 places people and inclusivity at the heart of its vision and the institution aspires to lead the HE sector in promoting good mental health and wellbeing. The University will achieve this through the implementation of its Wellbeing Strategy.
- 3.1.27 Since the 2021 report:
- An additional five Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) courses were delivered in targeted areas with no or low representation of trained colleagues. Fifty-three new MHFAs have been trained, with 34% being male from priority areas following a campaign to encourage more male colleagues to train to undertake the role
 - Twenty-five Welfare Officers were appointed within AUSA sports clubs. The training has been enhanced to include more case studies to further upskill officers in their role to support students. In 2022/23 officers have been given the opportunity to attend 'Introduction to Suicide Prevention' with The Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH)
 - Thirty staff members attended 'Introduction to Suicide Prevention' with SAMH, with more courses being planned due to high demand
 - BeWell and Inclusion Week took place across the Aberdeen campuses 10th – 14th October 2022 to raise awareness of the pillars of mental health and wellbeing, empowering and supporting the University community to make a positive change in their lives. This included a variety of events such as:
 - BeWell and Inclusion Fairs held on the University's Foresterhill and Old Aberdeen campuses for staff and students. These provided a relaxed environment to network, learn about the support available and win prizes. 1300 staff and students attended the Fairs

- An interactive seminar about building healthy habits was facilitated by the author of “A Toolkit for Happiness”, Dr Emma Hepburn, attracting a hundred delegates
- Breathing and meditation sessions
- University staff panel and question and answer session for National Coming Out Day
- Kundalini Yoga, attended by twenty-one participants
- Online Qigong
- University of Sanctuary event
- Mental Health First Aider networking breakfast and workshop

3.1.28 It is noted that a range of factors impact on staff and student mental health and wellbeing. The pandemic created unprecedented challenges and the University centred its response on staff and student wellbeing. The current cost-of-living crisis will be impacting on the University community and University has implemented initiatives through its Cost of Living Working Group.

3.1.29 **STAFF SURVEY 2022 RESULTS**

3.1.30 The University invited staff to respond to a Staff Survey, managed by an external consultancy, in October 2022. The survey is conducted biennially and overall consistency was maintained in the questions so that comparisons can be made and progress measured. The completion rate was 51%, which is a drop from the 2020 rate of 60%. The reasons for this are being investigated. However, it represents a significant improvement on the 2018 rate of 39%. Overall, the results were positive. 94% of staff agreed that the University is a good place to work and 93% would recommend the University to a friend as a place to study.

3.1.31 97% of staff confirmed that they were aware of the University’s Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy – one of the top scores in the survey. 97% of staff stated that they are not being currently bullied or harassed at work. This figure remains the same as that reported in the 2020 survey and is an improvement of 5.7% reported in the 2018 survey. Any report of bullying and harassment is of concern to the University, and it is committed to addressing this and continues to identify specific actions which will address bullying and harassment.

3.1.32 The University’s Equality Outcome 7 2021-2025 is:

Reduce the level of discrimination reported in the staff survey from 11% to 5% in 2022

3.1.33 The level of discrimination reported in the 2022 survey was 9%, representing a small reduction but not at the target level of a 6% reduction. This Equality Outcome will be rolled over to the next Staff Survey and enhanced actions taken to support the achievement of a statistically significant reduction in the levels of discrimination being reported by staff.

- 3.1.34 Except for questions related to workload, the 2022 survey results are more positive than individual or aggregate benchmark results. The 2022 Staff Survey results indicate levels of staff satisfaction and morale that continue to be higher than are generally experienced elsewhere in the sector. 91% of staff stated they are proud to work for the University, with the sector average being 77%. 86% of respondents believe that the University's Senior Management Team manage and lead the University well. Although this is a drop of 6% in 2020, it is significantly higher than the sector average of 48%.
- 3.1.35 At the time of writing this report the Staff Survey results are being collated at a high level and shared with Schools and Directorates. EDIC will receive a breakdown of the results by protected characteristic to identify where barriers and challenges may exist for staff who identify with a protected characteristic. The University recognises that generally positive results may mask negative experiences experienced by cohorts of staff who may be small in number but who are important to the University in creating inclusive cultures. EDIC will also take cognisance of the Race Equality Charter staff survey results when reviewing the Staff Survey results.
- 3.1.36 It is also noted that the Staff Survey results will be a key indicator for the University in assessing progress against its Equality Outcomes and the National Equality Outcomes. A review will be undertaken regarding the National Equality Outcomes and how the Staff Survey questions may require to be re-framed to capture the data required.

Action: EDIC to review the results of the Staff Survey 2022 to determine where specific actions may be required to address inequalities (Action 7.4)

Action: Review Staff Survey questions and National Equality Outcomes to ascertain how the questions may require to be re-framed (Action 7.5)

3.1.37 **UNIVERSITY OF SANCTUARY**

- 3.1.38 In April 2022, the University applied to the City of Sanctuary Charter for University of Sanctuary status. The application has been well-received, and a panel will be visiting the University to meet with staff and students. In the meantime, the University continues to progress its action plan with key priorities being to enhance communication and engagement with this work with staff and students across the University.

- 3.1.39 The University has been supporting staff and students impacted by the Russian invasion of Ukraine and has implemented measures to support scholars and students from Ukraine and the wider region impacted by the war.

3.1.40 **At Risk Fellowship Scheme**

In January 2023, the University launched its At-Risk Fellowship Scheme. The University will support one At-Risk Fellow per year (studying towards a Masters or PhD

qualification) on a rolling basis. The Fellow will be supported for the duration of their period of study (PhD or Masters level) and will receive the equivalent of a PhD stipend (£17,668 in Session 2022/23) towards living costs, a single return trip to cover travel costs at the beginning and end of the period of study, and visa costs, including NHS Immigration Surcharge. If discipline-appropriate, the Fellow will also receive the standard 'bench fee' contribution.

4.1 FOSTER GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN PERSONS WHO SHARE A RELEVANT PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC AND PERSONS WHO DO NOT SHARE IT

Included in this section:

ABDN Celebrates You 365, Black History Month, Disability History Month, EDI Events and Engagement Group, Global Accessibility Day, International Women's Day, LGBTQ+ Pride Month, Neurodiversity Celebration Week, Project SEARCH, Race Equality Champions, School EDI Leads, Staff Equality Networks, Students with Specific Backgrounds, Transgender Awareness Week, The Umbrella Project, Young Academy of Scotland Charter for Responsible Debate

4.1.1 EDI EVENTS AND ENGAGEMENT GROUP

4.1.2 In 2021, an EDI Events and Engagement Group, reporting to EDIC, was established, comprising staff and student equality networks and forums as well as colleagues from Human Resources, Events, Student Experience, Stakeholder Engagement and Communications. The Group has secured funding to plan and deliver a series of events and engagement initiatives across the year, taking the University's Diversity Calendar into account. The Group has agreed that a flexible approach should be taken, for example, not focussing all events in relation to Black History Month in the nationally recognised month of October. Consequently, the campaign ABDN Celebrates You 365 was established to host EDI events out with core dates.

4.1.3 A key aspect of the remit of the Group is to take cognisance of intersectionality as an important theme throughout its work. The Group continues to work with staff and students from across the University to harness expertise, lived experience, interests and knowledge and elevate and support EDI initiatives taking place across the University. The Group will also review the feedback received following EDI events and the demographic reach of the audiences to inform decision-making

4.1.4 ABDN CELEBRATES YOU 365

4.1.5 The Aberdeen Celebrates You 365 campaign was developed to continue the University's approach to promoting inclusion and celebrating diversity across the year, not only during associated awareness raising campaigns. The campaign includes promotion of support, events and engagement activities through social media. Post-pandemic there has been a shift from online activities to in-person activities with several events planned for 2023. The ABDN Celebrates You 365 campaign supports

the Inclusive pillar of the University's Aberdeen 2040 strategy and the Wellbeing Strategy. These events have been positively received by the University community.

4.1.6 **BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

4.1.7 Black History Month (BHM) is an annual global reflection and celebration of Black history throughout the month of October. Initiated by American historian Carter G. Woodson and the Association for the Study of African Life and History (ASALH) in 1926, it comprises a series of events each October, to promote Black history and acknowledge the achievements of Black people. Observed across the world, Black History Month continues to educate, inspire and motivate millions of people, whilst acting as a catalyst for change.



Figure 3: Black History Month Promotional Poster

4.1.1 **Black History Month 2021**

The theme for 2021 was "Proud to Be". The University's broad and successful [programme](#) for Black History Month 2021 was developed by staff and students who belong to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Engagement and Events Group. The BHM subgroup included staff from the Student Experience team, Organisational Development team, Events team, AUSA Students' Union and the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Student's Forum.

4.1.2 The Library Service has been actively engaged in identifying how it can diversify its collections and shared a post in October 2021 on Facebook and on the [University Service News page](#) inviting staff and students to suggest relevant books to add to their collection. Following this, 120 new titles were purchased. An additional 17 titles were purchased in 2022. The full list can be seen here: [New Acquisitions | Library | The University of Aberdeen \(abdn.ac.uk\)](#)

4.1.3 The 2021 Black History Month Programme included:

- [An online event](#) with Professor Yinka Omorogbe that explored the way in which Africa has approached the climate crisis and the lessons that can be learned from the approaches they have taken
- Black Asian Minority Ethnic Students' Forum playlist called "cheke sana" which is Kiswahili for "laugh out loud". The playlist featured afro funk, jazz, samba, rumba and reggae from Black artists from 1950 to the 80's
- An online talk hosted by author, blogger and screenwriter Uju Asika. The event explored Uju's life, career and experiences leading to her writing her acclaimed book 'Bringing Up Race: How to Raise a Kind Child in a Prejudiced World'
- A two-day series of events exploring the expression and articulation of Black experience from different historical, cultural and creative perspectives. Co-hosted by The Centre for the Novel and WORD Centre for Creative Writing at the University
- An online talk , "Meet the Artists: Noon Salah Eldin's and Helen Love's Art Responding to Slavery"

4.1.4 Figures:

- There were seven live bookable events to celebrate BHM
- Between the 1st of October – 31st of October there were 803 BHM landing page views
- There were 1.86k impressions across Facebook and 431 across Twitter on a post sharing the BHM 2021 programme

4.1.5 **Black History Month 2022**

The theme of Black History Month in 2022 was "Time for Change: Action not Words". The programme included:

- Black Girls' Pamper night organised by the students' union and the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Students' Forum.
- Nigerian food tasting by local restaurant TastyT in the Student Union Building.
- Talk and performance by intersectional cellist, Simone Seales
- Panel talk "Climate Injustice: Decolonising Climate Change"

4.1.8 The Antiracism Roundtable, established by the University, has agreed to co-create Black History Month events in 2023.

Action: Antiracism Roundtable to co-create Black History Month events in 2023 (Action 10.5)

4.1.9 **DISABILITY HISTORY MONTH**

4.1.10 As part of Disability History Month 2021, a student blog "Hidden Disabilities and University: Studying with Dyspraxia" was shared with the University community. The entry can be seen here: [Hidden Disabilities and University: Studying with Dyspraxia | Blog | Students | The University of Aberdeen \(abdn.ac.uk\)](#). The University's BeWell Podcast series featured a podcast on the topic of hidden disabilities. Guests included

an undergraduate student, a postgraduate student and the Lead Student Support Advisor at the University. The podcast series can be found here: [BeWell Podcasts | Students | The University of Aberdeen \(abdn.ac.uk\)](#).

4.1.11 “Disability, Health and Wellbeing” was the theme for Disability History Month 2022. As part of this, in November, there was an event “Take a Break” held in the University’s Sir Duncan Rice Library for students to take a break from studying with free lunch and learn about the support available to them. Student Support, Assistive Technology, the Student Learning Service and the Students’ Union Liberation Network were present to share support information.

4.1.12 In December 2022, a free plant potting event open to all was held. The purpose of the event was to encourage members of the University community to take a break for their wellbeing and learn about the University’s Staff Disability Network while potting a plant for their desk, home or as a Christmas gift.

4.1.13 **GLOBAL ACCESSIBILITY AWARENESS DAY**

The Assistive Technology Team held an event in May 2022 open to all staff and students for Global Accessibility Awareness Day. This session included an introduction to Assistive Technology, a demonstration of solutions to help with focus and visual stress and an introduction to mind mapping to help explore ideas and organisation. This 90-minute meeting also included a question-and-answer session.

4.1.14 **INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY**

4.1.15 International Women’s Day (IWD) is a celebration to mark the impact that women have made culturally, socially and economically on a local, national and international level. The celebration also presents an opportunity to highlight the ongoing challenges that women face in the workplace and in wider society.

4.1.16 Programming of events links directly with the Aberdeen 2040 Inclusive strategic theme and closely aligns with the interdisciplinary challenge of Social Inclusion and Cultural Diversity. Following these themes allowed the Events team to curate programmes that would discuss how to challenge bias, broaden perceptions and the shared responsibility to create a gender equal world.

4.1.17 Events were hosted online in 2021 and 2022, meaning that the University could open the event to a wider community external to the University and throughout the region as well as internationally.

4.1.18 **International Women’s Day 2021**

All events in 2021 embraced the official theme of “Choose to Challenge”. There were six events ranging from in-conversation style events, a topical panel discussion, a young people’s mentoring session and a comedy evening.

The audience demographic of respondents who completed the feedback survey were aged from under 18 to over 75, with majority being aged 35 – 64 years old, female, from the United Kingdom and working within the education sector. The events attracted 1,896 registrants with 936 attendees logging in from 21 countries. 68% of respondents had never attended a University IWD event in the past, 85% were satisfied with the IWD celebrations, and 94% were likely to attend a similar online event in future. More information can be seen in the infographic in figure 4 below.



Figure 4: International Women's Day 2021 infographic

4.1.19 International Women's Day 2022

In 2022, the University hosted events which adopted the official campaign theme of Break the Bias. Three events were hosted throughout the week including a keynote talk with Maggie Alphonsi MBE, a mentoring session, panel discussion that coincided with British Science Week and a social media campaign highlighting some of the inspirational women at the University. A painting of the first female Rowett Institute professors was also unveiled which featured Professors Baukje de Roos, Jennie MacDiarmid, Alex Johnstone, Lora Heisler and Emeritus Professor Linda Williams. The painting is now displayed in the Rowett main seminar room.

The Museum and Special Collections team hosted an online exhibition, 'Envisioning Women's Places in the 19th Century' which showcased rarely seen photographs from the Victorian and Edwardian era from the George Washington Wilson Collection.

A news story featuring University student Freja Lundberg, her great grandmother, grandmother and mother who were all pioneering graduates of the University was shared. The story can be found here: [Four generations of women battling the odds to become University of Aberdeen graduates \(abdn.ac.uk\)](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/news/2022/04/four-generations-of-women-battling-the-odds-to-become-university-of-aberdeen-graduates/).

The audience demographic of respondents who completed the feedback survey were aged from under 16 to over 60, with majority in their 30's, closely followed by those in their 20's and 50's. The events attracted 209 registrants with 109 attendees. When respondents were asked if they would recommend the future IWD events to others, 93% indicated they would and 89% of respondents indicated they would be likely to attend IWD events in future. More information on this can be seen in the infographic in figure 5 below.



Figure 5: International Women's Day 2022 infographic

4.1.20 **LGBTQ+ PRIDE MONTH**

4.1.21 June each year marks LGBTQ+ Pride Month. The University was a proud sponsor of Grampian Pride 2022 and hosted activities and events for its community and the public. As a sponsor of Grampian Pride, the University provided staff and students with an opportunity to meet prior to the Pride march. This offered companionship and support to individuals who wished to attend. The University was also the exclusive sponsor of the All Day Disco in the Tiki Tent.

4.1.22 The Wellbeing team and LGBT+ Staff Network invited staff and Post Graduate students to join them for a Pride Picnic in the University's Cruickshank Botanic Garden.

4.1.23 The Aberdeen Blackwell's store offered exclusive deals on their LGBTQ+ books, with 3 for 2 on books selected by members of the University community.

- 4.1.24 The University's Professor William Naphy delivered an online talk "Fops and Mollies: The Eighteenth-Century "Feminine Man". This talk explored the varied ideas about masculinity based on class.
- 4.1.25 The University launched its Pronoun Pins which are free for all staff and students. These have been very popular and have been well received by staff and students.
- 4.1.26 **NEURODIVERSITY CELEBRATION WEEK**
- 4.1.27 During Neurodiversity Celebration Week in March 2022, the University promoted Neurodiversity Celebration Week's Event Schedule. This included talks such as "Celebrating Neurodiversity in the Workplace" and "Autism and ADHD in Women and Girls: Under-identified and Under-supported". The full schedule can be viewed here: [2022 Events Schedule | Neurodiversity Celebration Week \(neurodiversityweek.com\)](https://neurodiversityweek.com)
- 4.1.28 Autism Understanding Scotland and the University's Museums and Special Collections collaborated to deliver a free event by and for neurodivergent adults. The event, "Exploring Museums and Special Collections at the University of Aberdeen" introduced the University's museums, archives and rare book collections. More information about the event can be found here: [Exploring Museums and Special Collections at the University of Aberdeen \(Neurodivergents Adults\) — Autism Understanding Scotland](#).
- 4.1.29 A social media campaign explaining the terminology around neurodivergence and promoting support available to students was streamed during Neurodiversity Celebration Week.
- 4.1.30 **PROJECT SEARCH**
- 4.1.31 Project SEARCH is a transition to work programme committed to transforming the lives of young people. It provides real-life work experience, combined with training in employability and independent-living skills, to young people with learning disabilities and/or autism who want to go on to find paid employment. Project SEARCH University of Aberdeen offers a one-year Internship programme to twelve young people aged 16-24 every year who are supported to undertake 3 work placements within the University and study towards City & Guilds qualifications. Upon graduation, Interns receive support to enter paid employment.
- 4.1.32 Graduates from the University's scheme are employed in a variety of roles from an assistant in a local butcher to Grounds Person in the University's Estates and Facilities Directorate. A story on the latter intern featured in the Universities Scotland webpage which can be viewed here: [Aberdeen is committed to creating chances for the community — Universities Scotland \(universities-scotland.ac.uk\)](#).
- 4.1.33 Seven of the eight graduates were in employment following graduation in 2021. For this success the University's programme won two Outcomes Awards at the DFN Project SEARCH UK & Iberia Conference in 2022. There are currently 120 DFN

Project SEARCH sites across the UK & Iberia and the University was one of 11 sites which were recognised as part of the awards ceremony at the conference. The criteria for jobs to count towards the awards is that the Interns are working in posts which are more than 16 hours per week, paid the prevailing wage for the job, employed in an integrated setting and conducting systematic and complex work. Six of the ten graduates had secured employment following the June 2022 graduation.

4.1.34 **RACE EQUALITY CHAMPIONS (RECS)**

In 2021, the University established a network of Race Equality Champions across its Schools and Directorates. There are twenty-three RECs who play a critical role in supporting the implementation of the University's Antiracism Strategy. Their role involves being a point of contact for staff and students for advice, guidance, sharing ideas, or for a listening ear. The RECs meet quarterly to discuss their roles and impact.

The remit of the REC is as follows:

- Act as a point of contact for staff and students on race equality matters in the School or Directorate
- Always maintain confidentiality unless in exceptional circumstances and/or where a breach of confidentiality is agreed
- Signpost staff and students to appropriate internal or external information and support
- Promote University race equality developments and initiatives within the School or Directorate
- Liaise with the Head of School/Director and other managers about the implementation of good practice in race equality and participate in School committees on equality, diversity and inclusion
- Build expertise on race equality and contribute to awareness-raising and capacity building activities
- In due course support the local implementation of the University's commitments under the Race Equality Charter
- Interact with the staff and student Race Equality Networks where appropriate
- Maintain current knowledge of support services, processes and structures
- One Race Equality Champion, on a rotational basis, will be a member of the Race Equality Strategy Group to elevate the work of the Champions and feed in key trends and discussions.

4.1.35 **SCHOOL EDI LEADS**

4.1.36 The University's academic Schools have been addressing EDI issues through the appointment of eighteen School EDI Leads, one of which sits on the University Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC). The Leads provide advice and guidance to staff and students and have worked on initiatives such as:

- Developing a School of Medicine, Medical Sciences, and Nutrition EDI Strategy

- Collaborating with the Young Academy of Scotland to develop guidance for Scottish universities on how STEM subjects can decolonise the curriculum.

4.1.37 The School EDI Leads meet quarterly to discuss their roles and impact.

4.1.38 **STAFF EQUALITY NETWORKS**

4.1.39 The University's Staff Equality Networks have continued to play a central role in the development of EDI policies, practices and initiatives. The chairs of the Networks are members of the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC), positioning them at the heart of EDI decision-making. The contribution of the Networks continues to be invaluable, with the chairs engaging proactively in decision-making and offering safe spaces for colleagues to share experiences and/or discuss how the University can continue to support EDI.

4.1.40 The next phase of the Networks' development is to collaborate and integrate where this is appropriate and impactful.

Action: Build links across the Networks and facilitate partnership working where appropriate (Action 16.1))

4.1.41 An internship project in 2021 focussed on the work of the EDI Staff Networks and included surveys of members and chairs. The results of this project are being discussed with the Networks and actions are to be agreed and implemented to support the development of the Networks.

Action: Share the results of the intern Equality Networks project and agree actions for implementing ideas shared through the surveys (Action 16.2)

4.1.42 All the Networks have participated in the New Staff Engagement Events which are held in May and November. The purpose of these events is to ensure that the staff who joined the University during the previous six months have an opportunity to engage with departments, organisations, and staff networks available to them. The Networks have seen increases in membership following the events. Key contributions and achievements of the Staff Equality Networks since the 2021 report include:

4.1.43 **Staff Disability Network:**

- The Staff Disability Network meets online and in person. Several social picnics have been held in the Cruickshank Botanic Gardens during the warmer months.
- Valuable feedback has been provided on policies and guidance including the Neurodiversity Equality Policy and the development of A Guide to Reasonable Adjustments for Staff with Disabilities and their Line Manager.
- The Network has been consulted on campus estates developments and has considered and reviewed plans for the Johnston Business School, the Kings Quarter Project and the University's flagship Science Teaching Hub.

4.1.44 **LGBTQ+ Staff and Postgraduate Network**

The LGBTQ+ Network Group supports staff and Postgraduate students who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender or any other sexual orientation/gender identity. This support is through advocacy, one-to-one support and events and campaigns.

- In-person social events and monthly online meetings enable maximum engagement, support hybrid working and increase opportunities for engagement.
- In person events have helped to provide a space for staff to meet, especially a number of new staff members who have found it challenging to build their own connections due to venue and group closures during the pandemic. These have included lunchtime walks and bowling trips
- The Network hosted well-received Cake Decorating sessions as part of the ABDN Celebrates You 365 for both the staff and student Live on the Lawn events
- The Network held a panel event in October to share experiences of Coming Out and being “out” in the workplace. This event was in collaboration with BeWell & Inclusion Week
- Following a successful funding bid by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team, the Network was consulted on the best approach to use funding to support Trans Awareness and Support training. Transgender awareness training was delivered by Scottish Trans Alliance in November 2022
- A-Z of LGBT sessions in October 2022 and February 2023. The focus of these events was to empower staff to support students and colleagues through understanding the history and oppression experienced by the LGBTQ+ community
- A lunchtime walk in May 2022 to link in with walking month and wellbeing activities

4.1.45 **Staff Menopause Network**

The Menopause Network aims to raise awareness of the potential impact of menopause at work and provide a support mechanism for staff who are experiencing the menopause.

- Valuable feedback has been provided on the University’s Perimenopause and Menopause Policy
- The Menopause Network attended BeWell Fayre’s on the Foresterhill and Old Aberdeen campuses as part of the Wellbeing Week. An estimated 300 staff and students engaged with this. Quizzes on the perimenopause and menopause were distributed to raise awareness and the support available to menopausal staff and line managers at the University was signposted

4.1.46 **Parents and Carers Network**

All parents, parents-to-be, and carers among staff and students are welcome to join the Parents and Carers Network. The Network provides a confidential, supportive and informal setting where parenting stories, doubts, and tips can be shared and support is

shared and signposted. Topics such as flexible working arrangements, self-care, returning to work, and work-life balance are explored by the Network.

- The Parents and Carers Network is supporting a review of the University's Maternity/Birth Parent Procedure
- Feedback on the Carers Policy for staff and students has been provided during the consultation process
- Provided feedback on the review of the Structured Conversation template for line managers and team leaders discussing special circumstances with staff in the context of reducing workloads
- Subgroup of the Network dedicated to supporting parents who have gone through perinatal loss has been established
- Held a lunch time wellbeing walks for Network members

4.1.47 **Staff and Postgraduate Research Race Equality Network**

The Network provides an informal social space for discussion of shared experiences related to race at the University and explores best practice in advancing race equality in learning and working practices and everyday life on campus. The Network is open to all staff and postgraduate research students.

- The Network's membership has grown rapidly to over 100 members
- A series of film nights for students has been delivered. This provides a space for students to discuss representation of race in their chosen film
- The Network consulted on discussions around the adoption of the JDA
- Guidance on using racially inclusive language/images in marketing material has been developed
- Support on Decolonising the Curriculum is being provided by the Network

4.1.48 **Women's Development Network**

The Women's Development Network (WDN) is designed to connect female staff at all grades, career paths in both formal and informal settings.

- The Network held an event in December 2021 which was led by Katie Wilde (Digital Research Services Manager, University of Aberdeen) on Putting the 'You' in Aurora, "A reflection on my experience of Aurora in 2020 and a discussion around how we all can support past, current and future cohorts". Aurora is Advance HE's leadership development initiative for women. It is run as a unique partnership bringing together leadership experts and higher education institutions to take positive action to address the under-representation of women in leadership positions in the sector
- Held a well-attended in person event in June 2022 with the newly elected Rector, Martina Chukwuma-Ezike. Martina discussed building and maintaining resilience and shared her personal experiences and knowledge. This was followed by a networking session
- A Teams event covering aspects of menopause was held in September 2022 by founder of "Let's Talk Menopause", Ruth Devlin. Ruth founded Let's Talk Menopause to raise awareness and provide accurate information on the menopause. She is passionate about providing accessible, evidence-based information and support for women, employers and health care

professionals. A second speaker, Dr Becky Smithson (a GP) talked about Hormone Replacement Therapy. The final speaker was Catherine Cook (HR Partner at the University of Aberdeen) who gave an update on the development of the Perimenopause and Menopause Policy. Approximately 60 members of staff attended, and feedback was excellent

- The steering committee is liaising with the Events and Wellbeing teams to develop the programme for the 2023 International Women's Day celebration

4.1.49 **New Staff Network**

In 2022, a New Staff Network was developed. It's open to all new employees of the University with the goal of connecting staff across the University through a friendly and welcoming environment, noting that it can be challenging to understand and navigate the University in the first months of employment, particularly for staff who joined online during the pandemic. The Network has hosted a networking barbeque and shares hints and tips through its Teams site, which is accessed by sixty new colleagues.

4.1.50 **SUPPORTING STUDENTS WHO IDENTIFY WITH EQUALITY CHARACTERISTICS**

4.1.51 Student feedback from 2021 suggested that students who identify with equality characteristics would welcome the opportunity to engage with students with similar experiences. The Experience, Engagement and Wellbeing team established a Teams site for students to connect with their peers through the following channels:

- Autistic
- Care Experienced
- Estranged
- First Generation
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller
- Mature students
- Parents in the military
- Parents who have a custodial sentence
- Parents
- Carers
- Refugee and Asylum Seeker
- Veteran

4.1.52 A series of peer support videos and blogs have also been developed and include:

- My Experience as an Estranged Student: [My Experience as an Estranged Student - YouTube](#)
- A Warm Welcome to our First Generation Students: [A Warm Welcome to our First Generation Students - YouTube](#)
- A Refugee's Tale: [A Refugee's Tale | Blog | Students | The University of Aberdeen \(abdn.ac.uk\)](#)

4.1.53 **TRANSGENDER AWARENESS WEEK**

- 4.1.54 As part of Transgender Awareness Week in 2021/22, a video message from the Principal and Vice Chancellor, Professor George Boyne in support of the University's transgender community was shared.. The video can be found here: [Transgender Awareness Week: A Message from Principal George Boyne - YouTube](#)
- 4.1.55 The Experience, Engagement and Wellbeing team promoted the Trans Students' Forum and its events such as Vigil on Trans Day of Remembrance.
- 4.1.56 In 2021, as part of the University's Disability History Month and Transgender Awareness Week Celebrations, student and Disabled Students' Forum Liaison Officer, Rian Hiney discussed his experience as a disabled, bisexual, trans man. The video was shared with the University community and can be found here: [Disability History Month: A Conversation with Student, Rian Hiney | Blog | Students | The University of Aberdeen \(abdn.ac.uk\)](#)
- 4.1.57 **ADHD FOUNDATION UMBRELLA PROJECT**
- 4.1.58 The University was delighted to participate in the ADHD Foundation Neurodiversity Charity's Umbrella Project to raise awareness and understanding of neurodiversity and support the roll-out of the Neurodiversity Policy. Umbrellas were displayed across the city of Aberdeen and the University was proud to be part of this initiative. Five different colours of umbrellas were displayed in the University's Cruickshank Botanic Garden along with an information sheet. The display was designed to represent the estimated one in five people who have a neurodevelopmental condition, such as ADHD, Autism, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Dyscalculia or Tourette's syndrome. A picture of the display can be seen in figure 6 below.



Figure 6: The ADHD Foundation Umbrella Project display in Cruickshank Botanic Gardens

4.1.59 YOUNG ACADEMY OF SCOTLAND CHARTER FOR RESPONSIBLE DEBATE

4.1.60 The University, through EDIC, has adopted the principles of the Young Academy of Scotland’s [Charter for Responsible Debate](#) (the principles can be found below in Table 7) and is committed to upholding the principles of free speech and academic freedom. The Young Academy of Scotland proposes nine general principles for responsible public debate. These are grounded in an ideal of informed, respectful and inclusive collective decision-making. This is designed as a starting point to support discussion amongst those who initially disagree, but who listen well to each other in pursuit of common ground and common cause. The principles can be adapted and refined for specific contexts. The Charter contains helpful case studies, some relating to EDI issues and provides a steer on navigating conversations on challenging and polarising issues. The adoption of the Charter seeks to build confidence in handling debate in the teaching environment and provide all individuals participating in debate a framework for respecting differing views and opinions.

Informed	1. Aim for accuracy, and base your contributions on evidence and experience
	2. Talk to people with different beliefs, experiences, perspectives and backgrounds
	3. Be honest in how you communicate, and speak with conviction for what you believe
Respectful	4. Listen carefully, open-mindedly, and with empathy
	5. Use emotional language judiciously, avoiding disrespectful or inflammatory language
	6. Show appreciation for good points made by others, acknowledging when they change your mind.
Inclusive	7. Communicate in ways that unite rather than divide
	8. Try to address imbalances in power, knowledge and accessibility
	9. Seek to identify common ground and shared purpose

Table 7: Young Academy of Scotland Charter for Responsible Debate Principles

5.1 EQUALITY OUTCOMES PROGRESS AND NATIONAL EQUALITY OUTCOMES

5.2 The University reviewed its Equality Outcomes in preparation for the publication of its 2021 report. The Outcomes were agreed through assessing the University's challenges and evidence in EDI and reflected the areas the University recognised as key priority areas for changing experiences and outcomes for staff and students and the commitments in Aberdeen 2040. The aim of the Outcomes is to challenge the University's progress and provide measurable success measures. The University's Outcomes are:

Outcome 1

Achieve the highest recognition in equality and diversity through achievement of awards in accreditation initiatives such as Athena Swan, Race Equality Charter and Stonewall Workplace Equality Index

Outcome 2

Tackle mental health stigma to improve outcomes and experiences for staff and students who have mental ill health

Outcome 3

Eliminate barriers which may present due to multiple intersectional protected characteristic identities

Outcome 4

Create an antiracist university by tackling racial harassment and fully embedding the recommendations of the Equality and Human Rights Commission report "Tackling Racial Harassment: Universities Challenged (2019) and the Universities UK report Tackling Racial Harassment in HE (2020)"

Outcome 5

Create a culture where gender-based violence is eradicated within the University community and staff or students who do experience this can seek effective support

Outcome 6

Eliminate barriers to learning, progression, promotion and physical accessibility for disabled staff and students by taking actions to continuously improve the working and learning environments for disabled staff and students

Outcome 7

Reduce the level of discrimination reported in the staff survey from 11% to 5% in 2022

- 5.3 The University's Equality Outcomes are intended to focus EDI work across 2021-2025. A progress report can be seen in Table 8 below.
- 5.4 Following the development of this report, [National Equality Outcomes](#) (NEOs) were launched by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC). The University welcomes this development and the focus on transformative change for staff and students across the sector. It can be noted that the NEOs broadly align with the University's current Equality Outcomes.
- 5.5 The University has identified the steps to be taken to fully understand the NEOs and the approach which the University will take. A mapping exercise of the sources of data currently available to the University such as the NSS, Staff Survey, Race Equality Charter Surveys, Equality Networks, Athena Swan surveys will be undertaken to re-frame questions where appropriate to support the collection of data required by the NEOs. EDIC will then be invited to discuss the NEOs and the University's current Outcomes and the University's approach. The University commits to issuing an addendum to this report once internal consultation is complete.

Action: Consult EDIC on the NEOs and the University's approach to addressing them and options for the University's current Equality Outcomes (Action 17.1)

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN EQUALITY OUTCOMES PROGRESS (numbers in brackets reference the section in the report where further information can be found)

Outcome	Progress
<p>Outcome 1 Achieve the highest recognition in equality and diversity through achievement of awards in accreditation initiatives such as Athena Swan, Race Equality Charter and Stonewall Workplace Equality Index</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The University holds an institutional Bronze award. The School of Psychology holds a Silver award and all other Schools hold a Bronze award which is a significant achievement compared to the sector (2.2) • The principles of the Race Equality Charter have been adopted and the University is working towards submitting a Bronze application in March 2024 (2.2) • Silver Award in Stonewall Workplace Equality Index achieved in 2022 (2.2)
<p>Outcome 2 Tackle mental health stigma to improve outcomes and experiences for staff and students who have mental ill health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy for all staff and students was approved in 2021 (2.5) • A Staff and Student Wellbeing Strategy 2021 – 2025 was published (2.5) • Two BeWell and Inclusion Fairs were held in October 2022 with the intention to raise awareness of the pillars of mental health and wellbeing, empowering and supporting the University community to make a positive change in their lives (2.5) • 5 Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) courses have been delivered in targeted areas with no or low representation. 53 new MHFAs have been trained, with 34% being male from priority areas (2.5) • 30 staff members have attended ‘Introduction to Suicide Prevention’ with SAMH, with more courses being planned due to high demand (2.5) • 25 Welfare Officers were appointed within AUSA sports clubs (2.5) • The initiatives outlined seek to support confident conversations on mental health and break down stigma

<p>Outcome 3 Eliminate barriers which may present due to multiple intersectional protected characteristic identities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of events for Black History Month, National Coming Out Day and World Mental Health Day took an intersectional approach as part of the Aberdeen Celebrates You 365 campaign (3.1) • The Equality Impact Assessment template was updated to include a statement on intersectionality and a broader range of identities such as neurodivergent and carer experienced (Appendix A, 3.2) • Profiles of staff and students with intersecting identities have been a regular feature in the staff and student newsletters (Appendix A, 3.3) • A key aspect of the remit of the EDI Events and Engagement Group is to take cognisance of intersectionality as an important theme throughout its work (3.4) • The Reward Consultation and Negotiation Group is taking forward the recommendations made within the Equal Pay Audit
<p>Outcome 4 Create an antiracist university by tackling racial harassment and fully embedding the recommendations of the Equality and Human Rights Commission report Tackling Racial Harassment: Universities Challenged (2019) and the Universities UK report Tackling Racial Harassment in HE (2020)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Antiracism Strategy and supporting Implementation Plan were approved in 2022. These were developed with input from across the University community (1.2) The Action Plan incorporates the recommendations of the EHRC and UUK reports. • Race Equality Charter staff and student surveys were conducted in 2022 (1.12) • The University has a Race Equality Strategy Group which has responsibility for driving forward antiracist work, including the Antiracism Strategy. The Group is co-chaired by two senior members of staff (Vice Principal Education and Head of the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition) (1.11) • The University has established a thriving Staff and PGR Race Equality Network (3.12)

- 23 Race Equality Champions have been appointed across the University's Schools and Directorates (3.12)
- An Antiracism Roundtable was established in 2022 with local partners in the North East of Scotland (1.3)
- The University Court has undertaken training on racial equality and racial literacy. Analysis on the ethnic representation of court has also been undertaken (2.3)
- Race literacy training was offered to all staff and PGRs in 2022 (1.13)
- Unconscious bias and racial bias training is mandatory for staff involved in key decision making. Frontline staff will engage in specific training on handling racist incidents in 2023 (1.13)
- The University has an [Online Reporting Tool](#) which allows for anonymous reporting of a racist incident
- The Recruitment and Selection Policy has been reviewed. It states that further steps will be taken to widen the pool of candidates if advertisement does not lead to a diverse shortlist for University Management Group roles. The "Rooney Rule" is used for University Management Group roles. Job advertisements include a statement welcoming applications from under-represented groups (1.10)
- A Race Definitions Task and Finish Group was established and recommended a set of definitions and undertook work on the adoption of the Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism (1.9)
- The University collects and internally shares data on protected characteristics in relation to recruitment, retention and career progression
- There have been communications from the Principal and senior management detailing the University's commitment to tackling

	<p>racial harassment. These can be seen here: Resources StaffNet The University of Aberdeen (abdn.ac.uk)</p>
<p>Outcome 5 Create a culture where gender-based violence is eradicated within the University community and staff or students who do experience this can seek effective support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The University launched its first Addressing GBV & Sexual Harassment Policy in 2021 (1.8) • An Addressing Gender-Based Violence & Sexual Harassment Strategy Group has been established. The Group oversees the Combating GBV Action Plan (1.8) • The University is a Pledging member of the EmilyTest Charter and will apply for full Charter status in 2023/24 (1.8) • Over 70 staff have been trained on a new Risk Assessment tool called LISTEN, which is offered by Emily Test. More training dates have been made in available in 2023 (1.8) • Key staff in the Student Advice and Support team have had enhanced training in Domestic Abuse risk assessment • Since 2021, first responder training has been delivered to over 40 members of staff by Rape Crisis (1.8) • In 2022, the University of Aberdeen and Aberdeen University Students' Association (AUSA) re-signed a Statement of Commitment to address gender-based violence and sexual harassment (GBV) in the University community (1.8)
<p>Outcome 6 Eliminate barriers to learning, progression, promotion and physical accessibility for disabled staff and students by taking actions to continuously improve the working and learning environments for disabled staff and students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The BSL Plan Working Group continues to meet quarterly and work towards actions within the University's BSL Plan (2.1) • An Inclusivity and Accessibility in Education Framework has been launched (Appendix A, 6.2) • The University's accommodation website has been developed for easier navigation. A range of accommodation with accessible rooms and hearing impairment facilities are advertised (Appendix A, 6.2) • Reasonable Adjustments Guidance has been developed

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steps to achieve level 2 of the Disability Confident Scheme have been mapped out with support from the Department for Work and Pensions • The Recruitment and Selection Policy details the University's commitment to encouraging the recruitment of staff with disabilities and applications from underrepresented groups to meet our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion aims. The University follows the Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS) principles in relation to disabled candidates (1.10) • In 2022, a Digital Accessibility Policy and a Neurodiversity Equality Policy for staff and students were approved (1.10) • In 2022, the University of Aberdeen's Dr Jacqueline Ravet, Reader in Initial Teacher Education, delivered two sessions on autism awareness for support staff at the University (1.13) • To support our commitments within our British Sign Language Plan, in 2022, Signs4Life delivered a three-hour online workshop to 16 members of staff representing areas across the University, including postgraduate research students (1.13) • The data in Appendix B indicates an increasing level of staff and students are disclosing a disability year-on-year. This is encouraging and may indicate increasing levels of safety experienced by staff and students. However, it is noted that an ongoing issue is the low levels of disclosure of a disability amongst current staff.
<p>Outcome 7 Reduce the level of discrimination reported in the staff survey from 11% to 5% in 2022</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 6% reduction was not achieved but the level of discrimination reported in the 2022 staff survey has dropped from 11% to 9% • Detailed analysis of specific questions in the 2020 staff survey has been undertaken and discussed with EDIC. Issues identified included lower levels of satisfaction in the LGBT+ community as compared to other groups. Action has been taken to address this

	<p>through the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index framework and by the Staff and PG Student LGBT Network (Appendix A, 7.2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Dignity at Work and Study Toolkit will be rolled out in 2023 (Appendix A, 7.3) • The University is committed to rolling forward this Outcome and will strive to achieve a statistically significant change in this metric in the 2024 Staff Survey.
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Table 8: University of Aberdeen Equality Outcomes progress

6.1 STAFF AND STUDENT INFORMATION

The staff and student profile for data for 2020 and 2021 are available in Appendix B. There are relatively few significant changes in the overall profile data.

6.2 Changes of note in the staff profile are as follows:

- Overall, the gender balance has remained relatively stable with a slight increase in the number of female staff, particularly in Professional Services. 52% of the University's academic staff are female. The UK HEI average is 47%.
- 6% of staff shared that they have a disability in 2022. This is an increase of 1.1% from 2020.
- In 2017, 18.2% of staff refused to share their sexual orientation, in 2020 this had decreased to 11.9%. Our most recent data indicates that 10.3% of staff refused to share their sexual orientation.
- 41.5% of staff worked part-time in 2017, in 2022 this had increased slightly to 44.9%.
- In 2020, 2.1% of staff stated they were Muslim. In 2022, this increased to 4.3%. The percentage of staff stating they have no religion has steadily increased from 42.7% in 2017, to 44% in 2020 and to 45.8% in 2022.

6.3 Changes of note in the student profile are as follows:

- The number of both staff and students identifying as bisexual has increased significantly since our last report.
- In 2019/2020 period, 58 (0.3%) of students stated that their gender is not the same as at birth. In 2021/2020 this increased to 126 (0.5%).
- 11.6% of students shared that they had a disability during the 2019/20 period. This rose to 15.7% in 2021/2022.

6.4 UK-domiciled staff 2021/22

The proportion of staff from racialised groups at the University is substantially higher in the academic staff cohort (14.7%) than in Professional Services staff (8%). However, the percentage of Professional Services staff sharing that they belong to a racialised group has increased by 3.7% since the 2021 report. The percentage of academic staff who stated that they belong to a racialised group (14.7%) has decreased since the last report (16.7%). The UK average for all Higher Education staff belonging to a racialised group is 11.4% and 4.6% for Scotland.

The Schools with the highest percentage of staff belonging to a racialised group continue to be the Business School (33.9%) and School of Engineering (22.8%). The School of Engineering experienced a drop in the number of staff belonging to a racialised group, however the Business School noted an increase of 4.9%.

Currently there are no staff from racialised groups at senior management level.

Appendix A

EQUALITY OUTCOMES ACTION PLAN 2021 - 2025 PROGRESS AND REVIEW

The University's first set of Equality Outcomes were developed in 2013. Since then, the Outcomes have evolved through consultation and evidence-gathering. The University reviewed its Equality Outcomes in 2021 and agreed seven new Outcomes. The Outcomes have been useful in addressing overarching EDI concerns relevant to the University. The Outcomes also align with Aberdeen 2040. The progress made, in the last two years, in relation to furthering the Equality Outcomes and additional actions are documented below.

Outcome 1: Achieve the highest recognition in equality and diversity through achievement of awards in accreditation initiatives such as Athena Swan, Race Equality Charter and Stonewall Workplace Equality Index					
Action	Evidence	Responsible Person	Timeline	Success Measure	Progress February 2023
1.1 Support five Schools to submit Athena Swan awards at Silver level	Five Schools (Law, Divinity, History and Philosophy, Natural and Computing Sciences, Social Sciences and Biological Sciences) have stated their intention to submit Silver level awards.	Heads of School/Chair of School EDIC working with Senior EDI Partners	April 2022	Silver award submissions submitted	Law, Education and Biological Sciences have submitted Athena Swan awards at Silver level. Divinity, History, Philosophy and Art History and Social Sciences have delayed submission due to changes in Heads of School. The School of Natural and Computing Sciences submitted an

					application to retain their Bronze award.
1.2 Submit a Silver level institutional Athena Swan award	The University has held a Bronze award since 2012. A Silver award requires the University to demonstrate the impact of actions taken. The revised Athena Swan guidelines support the University's ambitions to achieve a Silver award.	Vice-Principal Education working with Senior EDI Partners	April 2026	Silver award submission submitted	Actions around this are ongoing including the establishment of a Gender Equality Steering Group to drive the Silver application. It is noted that a Silver application requires a demonstration of success and impact and this will require the focus of the new Group.
1.3 Submit a Bronze application to the Race Equality Charter	The University has already started work on this following signing up to the Charter in September 2019	RESG working with Senior EDI Partner	February 2024	Bronze award submitted and achieved	The University has adopted the principles of the Race Equality Charter and is continuing to work towards submitting a Bronze application.
1.4 Achieve a Bronze award in the	The University has participated	Vice-Principal Education	February 2022	Bronze award achieved	The University achieved a Silver Award in 2022

Stonewall Workplace Equality Index	in the Stonewall Workplace Index for six years. Through supportive feedback from Stonewall Scotland, we have a detailed action plan for achieving an award in the WEI	working with Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team and Chair of Staff and PG Student LGBT+ Network			
Outcome 2: Tackle mental health stigma to improve outcomes and experiences for staff and students who have mental ill health					
Action	Evidence	Responsible Person	Timeline	Success Measure	Progress February 2023
2.1 Agree updated version of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy and five-year Strategy	New policy and strategy required to reflect updated position of the University in its journey to tackling mental health stigma	Head of Health, Safety and Wellbeing	December 2021 (Policy and strategy agreed) 2021-2025 (implementation)	Policy and strategy launched with effective communication and implementation plan	In September 2021, a Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy for all staff and students was approved. Underpinned by this Policy, the Staff and Student Wellbeing Strategy 2021 – 2025 was published.
2.2 Review Stress Management Policy and launch revised version	Enhance the policy to take account of progress made	Head of Health, Safety and Wellbeing	June 2021 (launch new version)	Policy reviewed, consulted upon and agreed by the Policy and	The Policy was reviewed and launched in September 2021

				Resources Committee	
2.3 Review the training requirements relating to the HSE Management Standards	Review required to establish what extra training is required to support implementation of the Stress Management Policy	Head of Health, Safety and Wellbeing	September 2021	Training requirements and the resources needed to deliver them identified. Training plan agreed.	<p>This action has been incorporated into the Health and Safety Management Plan 2022-2025 and the Wellbeing Action Plan for 2022/23.</p> <p>Managing stress has been included in the Middle Managers Training Program.</p> <p>A range of training has been offered including online training made available for all staff, in conjunction with AMOSSHE and UHI.</p>
2.4 Maintain Healthy Working Lives Silver award accreditation and strive towards Gold standard.	Nationally recognised accreditation which supports improved health, safety and	Wellbeing Adviser	September 2022/dependent on NHS restarting award	Annual review passed. Award programme currently paused due to Covid 19 pandemic.	The programme has stopped so this action is no longer relevant.

	wellbeing in organisations in a structured and productive way. Demonstrates University's commitment to creating healthy working lives for colleagues.				
2.5 Deliver the annual calendar of wellbeing events and activities online and on campus when restrictions allow.	A variety of wellbeing events and campaigns will be delivered to support staff and student wellbeing. These are based around national health campaigns and the needs of staff and students. Community needs are continually monitored, and	Wellbeing Adviser	2021-2025	Successful events delivered online. Measured through monitoring participation levels and feedback responses	A number of wellbeing events and activities have been delivered online and more recently in person. Most notably, the BeWell and Inclusion Fairs which were attended by an estimated 1300 members of staff and students. Figures for all event and activities have been collected.

	campaigns will reflect this.				
2.6 Train new Mental Health First Aiders when the courses become available. Funding has been secured, a waiting list is held, and provisional dates are set for the second half of the calendar year.	Training needed to account for turnover of staff and build in some additional capacity in cover for some parts of the University.	Head of Health, Safety and Wellbeing	Dependent on availability of courses	Courses run to accommodate everyone on the waiting list, when this is permitted.	5 Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) courses have been delivered in targeted areas with no or low representation. 53 new MHFAs have been trained, with 34% being male from priority areas.
2.7 Fully implement reporting/monitoring procedure for Mental Health Champions and Mental Health First Aiders.	Feedback on activities and effectiveness of the MHFA purely anecdotal/verbal at present, via the MHFA Forum. Need to quantify this	Head of Health, Safety and Wellbeing	Dependent upon findings of 2.8	Quantitative evidence of MHFA activities reported to enable analysis and feedback.	A procedure for this has been developed and implemented. A review of the network, procedures and resources is due to commence in 2023.
2.8 Carry out an Evaluation of MHFA and MH Champions activities.	Study needed to identify reasons why the reporting form is not being utilised and any other	Head of Health, Safety and Wellbeing	July 2021 (evaluation completed)	Report produced with recommendations for consideration by the Mental	A survey of MHFAs & MHCs was completed over the summer of 2021.

	concerns impeding the effectiveness of the MHFA and Champions. (Very little research has been done on this in the UK).			Health and Wellbeing Group, and the Equality Diversity, Inclusion Committee.	
2.9 Continue to roll out the Suicide Prevention Training Plan.	Training needed to support MHFA and Academic Tutors.	Head of Health, Safety and Wellbeing	2021-2025	Deliver courses as detailed in the training plan and meet demand.	AUSA Welfare Officers have been given the opportunity to attend 'Introduction to Suicide Prevention' with SAMH. 30 staff members have attended 'Introduction to Suicide Prevention' with SAMH, with more courses being planned due to high demand.
Outcome 3: Eliminate barriers which may present due to multiple intersectional protected characteristic identities					
Action	Evidence	Responsible Person	Timeline	Success Measure	Progress February 2023
3.1 Consider intersectional	The University is increasingly alert	Equality, Diversity and	Ongoing	Feedback on events and	Aberdeen Celebrates You 365 campaign has

<p>approaches when delivering events and engagement activities</p>	<p>to the issues combined protected characteristics can present. Some of this work is already being undertaken as part of the University's Charter work, but it needs to become an ingrained part of data analysis</p>	<p>Inclusion team working with EDI Events and Engagement Group</p>		<p>engagement activities is positive and refer to positive outcomes in relation to multiple identities</p>	<p>been established. A number of BeWell and Inclusion week events took an intersectional approach. For example, there was collaboration with Black History Month and National Coming Out Day.</p>
<p>3.2 Update Equality Impact Assessment template with guidance on intersectionality</p>	<p>The current EQIA process is focussed on specific protected characteristics. To raise awareness of intersectionality the EQIA form requires to be updated</p>	<p>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team</p>	<p>September 2021</p>	<p>EQIA template updated and re-launched</p>	<p>The EQIA template was updated to include a broader range of identities such as neurodivergent and carer experienced. Acknowledgment that an individual's identities may intersect with a number of other identities has been included.</p>

3.3 Increase number of staff and student profiles in newsletters and other communication channels which refer to intersectional identities	Raises awareness of the issues around intersectionality	Communication s Team working with Equality and Diversity Adviser and Student Experience Team	2021-23	At least one profile launched every six months	Staff and student profiles have been a regular feature in the staff and student newsletters. The newsletters also contain sections dedicated to wellbeing and to equality, diversity and inclusion.
Outcome 4: Create an antiracist university by tackling racial harassment and fully embedding the recommendations of the Equality and Human Rights Commission report Tackling Racial Harassment: Universities Challenged (2019) and the Universities UK report Tackling Racial Harassment in HE (2020)					
Action	Evidence	Responsible Person	Timeline	Success Measure	Progress February 2023
4.1 Develop and implement a Race Equality/Antiracism Strategy	Key remit of RESG to develop a strategy and important to launch a strategy which communicates the University's goal to create an anti-racist culture and set out what this means for	Vice-Principal Education working with Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team	September 2021	A successful strategy will lead to a culture where staff and students experience a sense of belonging, measured through focus groups and surveys	An Antiracism Strategy was launched in July 2022

	staff and students				
4.2 Analyse feedback on the Race Equality training launched in January 2021 and agree training approaches for refresher training/reflection and additional training for groups of staff	Appropriate, challenging and reflective training is a key aspect of tackling racial harassment	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team working with Staff Development and Head of HR	September 2021 and ongoing	Feedback on the training analysed and recommendations for the next phase approved	Feedback from race training in 2021 and 2022 has been analysed and acted upon. Plans are underway for Advance HE to deliver training to frontline staff as well as a specific session for staff involved in staff and/or student investigations.
4.3 Implement and launch new racial harassment reporting system with regular communication of the reporting options	Listening activities have shown that a range of reporting procedures are valued and that strong communication of those is required	Acting Deputy Director of People	June 2021	Expect numbers of reports to increase as the system is communicated Listening sessions / race surveys indicate increased awareness of reporting procedures	The Online Reporting Tool has been launched and awareness of this has been raised through digital communications, posters and digital signage across the University's campuses.
4.4 Develop and launch new race equality	A dedicated webpage is	Equality, Diversity and	May 2021	Webpage launched.	The Race Equality Webpage has been

webpage and monitor traffic	required to act as a 'home' for resources, information about actions the University is taking, support and reporting procedures, consultation initiatives	Inclusion team working with HR Intern		Number of hits indicates that it is being used by staff and students Race equality surveys indicate that staff and students are aware of the page	launched and awareness of this page has been raised through digital communications.
4.5 Achieve 100% uptake on Understanding Race Bias online training	Mandatory training should be completed by all staff	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team working with Head of HR	September 2022	100% uptake achieved Race surveys and listening activities demonstrate the impact of the training	Yet to achieve 100% uptake but steps are underway to achieve this.
4.6 Develop and launch race communications plan	A planned approach to communications on race equality is required to maintain an open and transparent approach with	Head of Organisational Development working with Head of Communications	April 2021 and ongoing	Communications Plan developed and launched Expect increased representations and queries from staff and	Regular communications have been shared with the community and can be seen here: Resources StaffNet The University of Aberdeen (abdn.ac.uk)

	the University community and to provide opportunities for staff and students to engage with the work on creating an anti-racist culture			students about activities	
4.7 Working group to recommend a set of terminology/definitions to be used in the University to present its recommendations by September 2021	It is critical that the University explores the use of terminology and definitions in partnership with staff and students to ensure that processes are in place to monitor use of language and review	Vice-Principal Education working with Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team	September 2021	Working group established and achieving appropriate consultation and meeting remit of the group	A Race Definitions Task and Finish Group was established and recommended a set of definitions and undertook work on the adoption of the Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism. This work is ongoing.
4.8 Establish a network of Race Equality Champions	The Race Equality Champions will be in place by March 2021 and	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team	End of April ongoing	Champions appointed Network created Network providing useful	23 Race Equality Champions across the University's Schools and Directorates have

	the network will serve to support the Champions to undertake their role effectively and to provide the University with vital feedback which could inform decision-making			space for discussion and ideas for moving forward with creating an antiracist University	been established and meet quarterly
4.9 Publish the Antiracism Strategy Action Plan	The Antiracism Strategy Action Plan is available on the University of Aberdeen intranet pages and are shared widely with our staff and students	Senior EDI Partner working with Vice Principal Education and Head of the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition	March 2023	Our community understand how and when the University will achieve its goals set out in the Antiracism Strategy	An Antiracism Strategy Action Plan has been developed and shared with RESG. Steps are being taken to make the Plan more widely available.
4.10 Establish a communication framework for continuing to share progress made	A planned approach is needed to ensure that the University	Head of Communications and Senior EDI Partner working with	Ongoing	Staff and students receive regular updates on progress via email	The Implementation Plan has been shared with Court and sets out the broad timelines for reporting on the

against the Antiracism Strategy with staff and students as per the Implementation Plan	community is kept updated as to the progress of the Antiracism Strategy.	Vice Principal Education and Head of the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition			Antiracism Strategy. A Communications framework is being developed to align with this.
Outcome 5: Create a culture where gender-based violence is eradicated within the University community and staff or students who do experience this can seek effective support					
Action	Evidence	Responsible Person	Timeline	Success Measure	Progress February 2023
5.1 Publish a comprehensive policy and accompanying procedures supporting the statement of commitment	Enshrining the values of the statement of commitment into University policy is critical to operationalise its principles	Acting Deputy Director of People/Head of HR Partners	June 2021 (published) 2021-2025 (implemented)	Policy approved and launched. Expect increased queries/reports of GBV as the policy becomes embedded	An Addressing Gender-Based Violence & Sexual Harassment Strategy Group has been established and is responsible for driving change in combating GBV. The Group oversees the Combating GBV Action Plan. In November 2021, the University launched its first Addressing GBV &

					Sexual Harassment Policy.
5.2 Continue to participate in pilot training for staff and roll this out to all frontline support staff and Senior Personal Tutors	Training is critical to raising awareness and creating a culture where staff and students can confidently and safely discuss/report GBV	Acting Deputy Director of People/Head of HR Partners	December 2021/ongoing	Effective training assessed through feedback rolled out	<p>A range of training has been offered including online training made available for all staff, in conjunction with AMOSSHE and UHI.</p> <p>Recently, staff have been trained on a new Risk Assessment tool called LISTEN, which is offered by Emily Test. This training has now been delivered to over 70 staff, with more dates in early 2023 for more staff to sign up to.</p> <p>Some key senior staff in the Student Support team have had enhanced training in Domestic Abuse risk assessment.</p>
5.3 Work with AUSA to develop and deliver	Training for students in	Acting Deputy Director of	September 2022	Effective training assessed	Ongoing – the University is

Consent training to students entering the University and to all student leaders (Club Captains and Committees and Society Presidents and Committees)	specific roles is critical to raising awareness and creating a culture where students can confidently and safely discuss/report GBV	People/Head of HR Partners		through feedback rolled out	collaborating with EmilyTest on this.
5.4 Work with local partners and institutions (RGU, NESCOL, Police Scotland, ACC and NHS) to further the idea of a “Fearless Aberdeen”	Working with local partners is critical to challenging GBV	Acting Deputy Director of People/Head of HR Partners	December 2021 and ongoing	Partner organisations contacted Actions developed regarding the role of the University and the partners in taking forward the University’s priorities.	Since 2021, first responder training has been delivered to over 40 members of staff by Rape Crisis and continue to work with them on their training being rolled out at the University to key frontline staff.
Outcome 6: Eliminate barriers to learning, progression, promotion and physical accessibility for disabled staff and students by taking actions to continuously improve the working and learning environments for disabled staff and students					
Action	Evidence	Responsible Person	Timeline	Success Measure	Progress February 2023

6.1 Continue to implement and review the University's BSL Action Plan	Required under legislation but is also key to the implementation of Aberdeen 2040 Inclusive commitments	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team	ongoing	Actions implemented with reviews undertaken	The BSL Plan Working Group continues to meet quarterly and work towards actions within the University's BSL Plan
6.2 Approve and implement an Accessibility and Inclusion in Education Policy	Policy required after inconsistencies in the implementation of EDI practices identified across the University. Policy to highlight and support enhanced and consistent implementation of EDI practices across Education	Dean of Student Support working with Head of Organisational Development	December 2021 (approve) December 2022 (implement) 2025 (review)	Policy approved and launched Expect increased queries about accessibility in Teaching and Learning as colleagues begin to implement the Policy	Following consultation, it was agreed that an online framework would be more appropriate than a policy. An Inclusivity and Accessibility in Education Framework has been launched.
6.3 Continue to work in partnership with the Disabled Students Forum to enhance	Feedback from the Disabled Students Forum indicated that	Dean of Student Support working with	2021-2025	Feedback from students is positive Students who wish to use	Website developed for easier navigation. A range of accommodation with

the accessible accommodation – new website created, and physical changes made	students were regularly unable to find information about what was available. Application process needs to be more accessible.	Head of Accommodation Estates Committee		the accommodation report being able to access information more easily – monitored through surveys/focus groups	accessible rooms and hearing impairment facilities are advertised
6.4 Implement the recommendations of the Higher Education Commission report Arriving at Thriving: learning from disabled students experiences (2020)	A working group has been established to take this forward – the report requires careful consideration regarding the student journey as it indicates that disabled students face challenges and barriers across all aspects of university life	Dean of Student Support working with Inclusion Practitioners Group Estates Committee	September 2021 (actions agreed and communicated) 2021 – 2025 (review of implementation)	Feedback from Disabled Students Forum and wider student body improves, measured through focus groups/surveys	Significant work has been undertaken to support disabled students and to implement the recommendations of the Report. Wider work on creating inclusive campuses to be launched as part of Aberdeen 2040 commitments.
6.5 Review support offered to disabled	The Staff Disability	Head of HR working with	December 2021 (review	Review undertaken	A review has been undertaken and

staff and implement changes where appropriate	Network plays a key role in supporting staff and it is through this route that a review would initially be undertaken	Chairs of Staff Disability Network and Equality and Diversity Adviser	completed) 2021-2025 (implementation of actions)	Actions identified and implemented Feedback from Staff Disability Network is positive	feedback is being acted upon. Reasonable Adjustments Guidance is being developed and steps to achieve level 2 of the Disability Confident Scheme have been mapped out.
Outcome 7: Reduce the level of discrimination reported in the staff survey from 11% to 5% in 2022					
Action	Evidence	Person Responsible	Timeline	Success Measure	Progress February 2023
7.1 Achieve 100% completion rate in Inclusion Essentials mandatory online training (advise on implementation at Qatar campus)	Mandatory training should be completed by all staff	Senior Vice-Principal working with Equality and Diversity Adviser and Head of HR	September 2022	Uptake reports indicate 100% completion rates	The University is yet to achieve a 100% completion rate but is continuing to take steps towards achieving this.
7.2 Undertake analysis of the results of the staff survey 2020 by protected characteristic and develop and implement actions with EDIC where issues are identified	Understanding where there may be barriers or concerns in relation to specific questions in the survey will assist in teasing out where	Senior Vice-Principal working with HR Specialist Services Partner	May 2021 (discussion with EDIC) 2021-2025 (implementation of actions)	Analysis completed and appropriate actions approved and implemented	Detailed analysis of specific questions in the 2020 staff survey has been undertaken and discussed with EDIC. Issues identified included lower levels of satisfaction in the LGBT+ community as compared to other

	discrimination is identified				groups. Action has been taken to address this through the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index framework and by the Staff and PG Student LGBT+ Network.
7.3 Implement the Dignity at Work and Study Toolkit and roll out appropriate training	The Dignity at Work and Study Working Group has engaged in powerful debate and conversation on the development of the Toolkit. The Toolkit will, along with appropriate training and awareness raising, support the University's development of a culture which embraces diversity by understanding	Director of People working with Senior HR Organisational Development Partner	December 2021 (Toolkit launched) 2021 – 2025 (implementation and review)	Toolkit launched successfully, measured by hits on website, feedback from SMT/UMG Appropriate training delivered, receiving excellent feedback, measured through feedback forms	The Toolkit will be launched in 2023. A full revision of related policies has been undertaken by the Dignity at Work and Study Working Group. Following approval of these, a training plan will be implemented to raise awareness of the new policy framework and the changes which are implemented.

	the barriers, both at an individual and group level, encountered by staff and students and how to address these.				
7.4 EDIC to review the results of the Staff Survey 2022 to determine where specific actions may be required to address inequalities	The results of the Staff Survey 2022 are analysed by School and Directorate	Senior HR Partner, Head of Organisational Development and Vice Principal Education	December 2023	Set of actions to address inequalities identified and an action plan developed and implemented to support this	EDIC will receive a report on this at its meeting in April 2023
7.5 Review Staff Survey questions and National Equality Outcomes to ascertain how the questions may require to be re-framed	A full review of the Staff Survey questions is conducted and	Senior HR Partner	December 2023	New questions are approved and implemented into the Staff Survey 2024	EDIC will be invited to discuss this in a workshop format and further work will be undertaken to develop the University's approach
Additional actions identified					
Governance					
Action	Evidence	Responsible Person	Timeline	Success Measure	Progress

<p>8.1 Review the frequency of meetings of University EDIC, with a view to adding one more meeting per year</p>	<p>Agenda items have been steadily increasing in number with enhanced level of robust discussion at each meeting</p>	<p>Vice-Principal Education working with Head of Organisational Development</p>	<p>September 2021</p>	<p>Number of EDIC meetings eases pressure on agenda length and provides enough scope for strong discussion</p>	<p>EDIC has increased its meetings by one meeting per year, meaning it meets every three months to maintain momentum and provide opportunity for issues to be raised and discussed at a senior level on a regular basis</p>
<p>8.2 Review the operation of EDIC to ensure that it retains its remit as a strategic body. Consider an operational arm of EDIC to present the key questions to be discussed by EDIC</p>	<p>Important that EDIC is perceived as and operates as a strategic decision-making body within the wider University governance structure to reflect the breadth and scope of EDI activities</p>	<p>Vice-Principal Education working with Head of Organisational Development</p>	<p>September 2021</p>	<p>EDIC retains its position as a strategic body, contributing to the wider University strategic framework</p>	<p>An external audit of EDI Governance in 2022 noted that the University has robust governance structures in place to handle EDI matters. The report noted the strengths of EDIC and provided a recommendation that the size of the Committee could be reviewed. This has been undertaken, with a more streamlined approach being adopted, however</p>

					retaining the breadth of senior level engagement as well as voices of equality groups in the University.
8.3 Support the School EDICs to link into the University EDIC to support consistency in approaches	It will be important to ensure that the School EDICs are fully appraised of the discussions at the University EDIC and are then supported to understand what those mean for the School EDICs	Vice-Principal Education, School EDICs and Head of Organisational Development	Ongoing	A robust framework of governance exists between the School EDICs and the University EDIC to achieve effective flow of communication and support	18 School EDI Leads have been appointed and meet quarterly. One representative of this group is a member of the University EDIC. EDIC Digests are now produced for dissemination to School EDI Leads.
Transgender Equality					
9.1 Develop supporting guidance for the Transgender Equality Policy through consultation with staff and student groups	The Policy provides high-level guidance however there is a need for practical support to achieve the	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team with Chair of the Staff and PGR LGBT+ Network	September 2021	Guidance developed and launched	Guidance on gender pronouns is currently being developed. The timeframe for developing supporting guidance for the Transgender Equality

	full implementation of the Policy				Policy has been extended to September 2023.
9.2 Roll out associated training on the Policy and Guidance to staff, exploring online options	School-based session delivered by the STA was well-received and training would support the implementation of the Policy	Head of HR, Head of Organisational Development and Staff Development	December 2021	Training identified and delivered Feedback indicates the training was helpful Feedback from networks and forums indicate the training has had a positive impact	Transgender and Non-Binary Skill Boosters online course has been added to the eLearning webpage. Two transgender awareness sessions were delivered to 60 members of staff in November 2022. Feedback was overall positive.
EDI Events and Engagement Group					
10.1 Plan an events calendar for 2021 and seek approval of this from EDIC	A calendar must be produced to support the Diversity Calendar and to reflect the funding received from DT	Acting Deputy Director of People working with Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team and clerks to the group	May 2021 (approval from EDIC) 2021-2025 (implementation of action plan)	Calendar produced detailing resources and timescales	An events calendar was planned for 2021 and 2022 with timescales. Key celebrations were Black History Month and LGBTQ+ Pride Month
10.2 Communicate with the staff and student community on the work of the	Strong communications plan required to ensure the	Acting Deputy Director of People working with Equality	Ongoing	Communications plan developed and launched Feedback from	Staff and students have been asked for feedback following a number of celebrations

Group and the events and engagement planned	community is aware of the events and engagement opportunities	and Diversity Adviser and clerks to the group and Communications		staff and students on feedback forms indicate they were aware of events in good time	such as International Women's Day and Black History Month.
10.3 Work with staff and students from across the University to harness expertise, lived experience, interests and knowledge and elevate and support EDI initiatives taking place across the University	Events and engagements which are based on feedback from staff and students and which address the lived experience of staff and students should inform the work of the group to deliver events which are likely to be successful and impactful	Acting Deputy Director of People working with Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team and clerks to the group	Ongoing	Feedback from staff and students indicates that events and engagement themes are relevant and can drive meaningful change	Members from student liberation forums and staff equality networks are members of the Events and Engagement Group Teams site and are invited to relevant planning sessions. Engagement is being reviewed in consultation with student representatives to ensure that students feel empowered to engage with this work.
10.4 Secure an annual budget for the work of the Group	Budget critical to be able to plan appropriately and to maintain	Acting Deputy Director of People working with Head of	Annually	Budget secured Plan of action regarding how	Budgets have been approved and secured annually through the Development Trust.

	the momentum of the group	Organisational Development and clerks to the group		the budget will be spent	This is to be reviewed going forward.	
10.5	The EDI Events and Engagement Group and Antiracism Roundtable to co-create Black History Month events in 2023	Areas for cross working amongst the EDI Events and Engagement Group and partners with the Antiracism Roundtable identified to support antiracism work in the northeast of Scotland	EDI Events and Engagement Chair working with Vice Principal Education	October 2023	Appropriate University of Aberdeen Black History Month events and initiatives advertised externally and one event delivered in collaboration with Antiracism Roundtable partners	Discussions with the Antiracism Roundtable on Black History Month to take place from May 2023.
Research Excellence Framework						
11.1	Continue the equality monitoring of decision-making in the REF process and involve EDIC in the analysis of data	EDIC requested that it be kept appraised of the monitoring being undertaken to assess the contribution of different staff	Senior Policy Adviser, Research and Innovation	May 2021 (EDIC discussing REF EQIA) 2021 – 2025 (continued monitoring and implementation of actions)	Analysis used to implement meaningful actions to address under-representation in the REF process	The REF2021 EQIA was developed and uploaded to the University webpages. It can be found here: Equality Impact Assessment StaffNet The University of Aberdeen (abdn.ac.uk)

	groups to the REF process				<p>The annual deep dive and benchmarking exercise of the University Research Committee includes an analysis of applications, awards and research income by gender and ethnicity.</p> <p>An online dashboard which shows applications, awards and research income by protected characteristic by School/discipline/institute is being developed and will be shared with EDIC.</p>
Court Diversity					
12.1	Actively monitor the diversity of Court and establish mechanisms for achieving a	Significant improvement had been made regarding the gender imbalance on	University Secretary and Chief Operating Officer working with clerk to Court and Head	2021-2025	<p>Actions taken to address under-representation where appropriate</p> <p>Actions result in</p> <p>Steps have been taken to achieve greater diversity and a gender balance. Court has 25 members. 16% of these belong to a racialised</p>

<p>membership which reflects more closely the diversity of the University staff and student community</p>	<p>Court. It is critical that Court now seeks to address under-representation in relation to other characteristics</p>	<p>of Organisational Development</p>		<p>a Court which is more representative of the University community</p>	<p>group and 48% of these are female. Through our Antiracism Strategy, the University has committed to increasing the racial diversity profile of our Court. All staff involved in the recruitment of Court members must undertake Inclusion Essentials, Tackling Racial Bias and Understanding Unconscious Bias training.</p>
<p>Aurora Leadership Programme</p>					
<p>13.1 Monitor the effectiveness of the Aurora Leadership Development Programme</p>	<p>Schools and Professional Services areas continue to support staff to attend the Aurora Leadership Programme and it is important to</p>	<p>Senior EDI Partner working with School Athena Swan Leads</p>	<p>Ongoing with regular review</p>	<p>Monitoring undertaken and recommendations made as appropriate</p>	<p>Five staff across the People Directorate were supported through Aurora during the 2021/2022 academic period. The Aurora Programme for 2022/2023 is currently being rolled out and each School agreed to</p>

	monitor the experiences of those staff and ascertain the impact of the programme					fund at least one person through this.
Carers						
14.1	Achieve accreditation as a Carers Positive employer	The Parents and Carers Network has noted the impact on working life being a carer has. An accreditation such as the Carers Positive award would signal University commitment to supporting carers	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team working with Chairs of Parents and Carers Network	January 2022 (initial accreditation) 2021-2025 (implementation of principles of the Charter)	Accreditation achieved Related policies and guidance developed, launched and implemented	Work on this is being undertaken. However, the timeframe has been moved to September 2023
Race equality actions identified through the Mainstreaming and Equality Outcomes Interim Report 2023						
15.1	Conduct focus groups with staff and students to further understand the	Detailed conversations are required to enhance understanding of	Senior EDI Partner	October 2023	Focus groups provide further insights as to the barriers faced by	External focus group facilitators with experience in race discussions have been contacted for

results of the REC surveys	the issues raised by staff and students through the REC surveys.			racialised groups in the University	quotations. Further discussions required regarding how to structure and facilitate the discussions.
15.2 Develop an Antiracism Strategy Action Plan to support the implementation of the Antiracism Strategy and address the issues identified in the REC surveys.	An operational plan is required to translate the strategic actions identified in the Antiracism Strategy into achievable actions.	Vice Principal Education and Senior EDI Partner	February 2023	A SMART action plan is developed, monitored and shared with the University community.	An Antiracism Strategy Action Plan has been developed and will be shared with staff and students by March 2023.
15.3 Submit an annual report of progress and challenges to the Senior Management Team (SMT) and Court.	Leadership in antiracism is critical to progress in this area. The Senior Management team must be kept updated and be aware of challenges or barriers to progress.	Vice-Principal Education and Senior EDI Partner	Annually	Helpful reports are produced for the SMT and Court, generating discussion and ideas.	This forms part of the Antiracism Strategy Implementation Plan which is being progressed

<p>15.4 Repeat Race Equality Charter surveys every two years.</p>	<p>Requirement of the Race Equality Charter. Explore views on racial inequalities, monitor the success of our actions and identify where a change in approach is required.</p>	<p>Vice Principal Education, Head of SMMSN and Senior EDI Partner</p>	<p>May 2024</p>	<p>Staff and student surveys are conducted and achieve a higher response rate than that in the 2022 surveys</p>	<p>The next surveys will be conducted in 2024 (although discussions with Advance HE are required to ascertain whether a further survey is required before the REC submission in March 2024)</p>
<p>15.5 Increase engagement in race training that is open to all staff</p>	<p>Identify barriers to undertaking race training and address these.</p> <p>Race training is advertised more widely and encouraged by senior staff</p> <p>This is required to ensure that all staff understand their</p>	<p>Vice-Principal Education and Senior EDI Partner</p>	<p>June 2024</p>	<p>Feedback on barriers is received and addressed and senior staff contact teams about race training opportunities and encourage attendance</p> <p>Engagement in race training</p>	<p>No progress to report in February 2023</p>

	responsibilities to deliver the Antiracism Strategy			open to all staff increases		
Equality Networks						
16.1	Build links across the Staff Equality Networks and facilitate partnership working where appropriate	Organise a meeting for the EDI team to meet with the Equality Networks chairs/co-chairs – there have been conversations about how the chairs could work together on initiatives and further develop intersectional approaches	Head of Organisational Development	June 2023	Initiatives and events are delivered through collaboration across the Equality Networks	A meeting for the Networks to meet has been scheduled for February 2023
16.2	Share the results of the intern Equality Networks project and agree actions for implementing ideas	The report provides recommendations for developing and enhancing the Networks	Senior EDI Partner working with Head of Organisational Development	June 2023	The discussions on the report generate change where appropriate and where a positive	The results will be presented to the Networks in February 2023 and implementation of

shared through the surveys	and building on strong foundations			impact will be experienced by the Network group members. Actions are successfully implemented	changes achieved by June 2023.
New National Equality Outcomes					
17.1 Consult EDIC on the NEOs and the University's approach to addressing them and options for the University's current Equality Outcomes	EDIC will need to be involved in setting the direction for the University and in mapping the data requirements for the NEOs.	Head of Organisational Development	May 2023	A coherent approach to addressing the NEOs while being cognisant of the University's internal Equality Outcomes is established and approved through appropriate governance structure.	EDIC has been advised of the development of the NEOs and will have the opportunity to discuss an approach at its next meeting.

Appendix B

STAFF AND STUDENT DATA 2021/22

STAFF GENDER BY SCHOOL 2021	F		M	
	No.	%	No.	%
Business School	90	45.7	107	54.3%
Divinity, History, Philosophy & Art History	39	42.9	52	57.1%
Geosciences	43	32.1	91	67.9%
Language, Literature and Visual Culture	112	58	81	42%
Law	75	47.2	84	52.8%
Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition	566	63	332	37%
Natural and Computing Sciences	58	33.9	113	66.1%
School of Biological Sciences	111	55	91	45%
School of Education	118	78.7	32	21.3%
School of Engineering	42	25.1	125	74.9%
School of Psychology	42	64.6	23	35.4%
Social Science	34	49.3	35	50.7%
Professional Services	1031	64.24	574	35.76%
University Total	2361		1740	

STAFF GENDER BY SCHOOL 2022	F		M	
	No.	%	No.	%
Business School	100	45.2	121	54.8%
Divinity, History, Philosophy & Art History	35	38.9	55	61.1%
Geosciences	46	33.3	92	66.7%
Language, Literature and Visual Culture	110	55.8	87	44.2%
Law	84	48.6	89	51.4%
Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition	597	63.9	338	36.1%
Natural and Computing Sciences	55	29.9	129	70.1%
School of Biological Sciences	92	53.5	80	46.5%
School of Education	136	77.3	40	22.7%
School of Engineering	40	21.7	144	78.3%
School of Psychology	45	64.3	25	35.7%
Social Science	45	54.2	38	45.8%
Professional Services	927	62.34	560	37.66%
University Total	2312		1798	

STAFF AGE BY SCHOOL 2021	25 and under		26-35		36-45		46-55		56-65		66 and over 66		Total no.
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Divinity, History, Philosophy & Art History	3	3.3%	16	17.6%	25	27.5%	26	28.6%	19	20.9%	2	2.2%	91
Language, Literature, Music and Visual Culture	5	2.6%	34	17.6%	56	29%	63	32.6%	25	13%	10	5.2%	193
Law	4	2.5%	28	17.6%	51	32.1%	41	25.8%	27	17%	8	5%	159
School of Education	1	0.7%	22	14.7%	24	16%	45	30%	36	24%	22	14.7%	150
Social Science	2	2.9%	7	10.1%	16	23.2%	27	39.1%	12	17.4%	5	7.2%	69
Business School	4	2%	43	21.8%	60	30.5%	46	23.4%	30	15.2%	14	7.1%	197
Medicine, Medical Sciences & Nutrition	59	6.6%	147	16.4%	221	24.6%	260	29%	186	20.7%	25	2.8%	898
School of Biological Sciences	30	14.9%	57	28.2%	43	21.3%	40	19.8%	27	13.4%	5	2.5%	202
School of Psychology	4	6.2%	12	18.5%	26	40%	17	26.2%	6	9.2%			65
Geosciences	9	6.7%	30	22.4%	40	29.9%	27	20.1%	24	17.9%	4	3%	134
Natural & Computing Sciences	25	14.6%	46	26.9%	35	20.5%	38	22.2%	23	13.5%	4	2.3%	171
School of Engineering	20	12%	27	16.2%	43	25.7%	46	27.5%	30	18%	1	0.6%	167
Professional Services	301	18.8%	317	19.8%	324	20.2%	346	21.6%	264	16.4%	53	3.3%	1605

STAFF AGE BY SCHOOL 2022	25 and under		26-35		36-45		46-55		56-65		66 and over 66		Total no.
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Divinity, History, Philosophy & Art History	1	1.1%	13	14.4%	29	32.2%	24	26.7%	19	21.1%	4	4.4%	90
Language, Literature, Music and Visual Culture	4	2%	28	14.2%	55	27.9%	66	33.5%	31	15.7%	13	6.6%	197
Law	4	2.3%	30	17.3%	61	35.3%	44	25.4%	25	14.5%	9	5.2%	173
School of Education	1	0.6%	22	12.5%	43	24.4%	42	23.9%	42	23.9%	26	14.8%	176
Social Science	1	1.2%	16	19.3%	21	25.3%	25	30.1%	17	20.5%	3	3.6%	83
Business School	2	0.9%	43	19.5%	75	33.9%	48	21.7%	36	16.3%	17	7.7%	221
Medicine, Medical Sciences & Nutrition	57	6.1%	177	18.9%	232	24.8%	268	28.7%	177	18.9%	24	2.6%	935
School of Biological Sciences	21	12.2%	43	25%	35	20.3%	42	24.4%	24	14%	7	4.1%	172
School of Psychology	6	8.6%	15	21.4%	24	34.3%	17	24.3%	7	10%	1	1.4%	70
Geosciences	5	3.6%	38	27.5%	41	29.7%	23	16.7%	25	18.1%	6	4.3%	138
Natural & Computing Sciences	27	14.7%	55	29.9%	30	16.3%	45	24.5%	23	12.5%	4	2.2%	184
School of Engineering	28	15.2%	35	19%	43	23.4%	42	22.8%	35	19%	1	0.5%	184
Professional Services	163	11%	297	20%	378	25.4%	350	23.5%	252	16.9%	47	3.2%	1487

STAFF DISABILITY BY SCHOOL 2021	No		Refused		Unknown		Yes		Total no.
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Business School	172	87.3%	3	1.5%	19	9.6%	3	1.5%	197
Divinity, History, Philosophy & Art History	84	92.3%	5	5.5%	1	1.1%	1	1.1%	91
Geosciences	117	87.3%	6	4.5%	4	3%	7	5.2%	134
Language, Literature, Music & Visual Culture	166	86%	7	3.6%	13	6.7%	7	3.6%	193
Law	144	90.6%	3	1.9%	10	6.3%	2	1.3%	159
Medicine, Medical Sciences & Nutrition	834	92.9%	19	2.1%	13	1.4%	32	3.6%	898
Natural & Computing Sciences	154	90.1%	3	1.8%	9	5.3%	5	2.9%	171
School of Biological Sciences	180	89.1%	1	0.5%	10	5%	11	5.4%	202
School of Education	134	89.3%	2	1.3%	10	6.7%	4	2.7%	150
School of Engineering	147	88%	5	3%	7	4.2%	8	4.8%	167
School of Psychology	60	92.3%	1	1.5%	2	3.1%	2	3.1%	65
Social Science	66	95.7%			1	1.4%	2	2.9%	69
Professional Services	1426	88.8%	39	2.4%	19	1.2%	121	7.5%	1605

STAFF DISABILITY BY SCHOOL 2022	No		Refused		Unknown		Yes		Total no.
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Business School	199	90%	4	1.8%	12	5.4%	6	2.7%	221
Divinity, History, Philosophy & Art History	79	87.8%	6	6.7%	2	2.2%	3	3.3%	90
Geosciences	122	88.4%	6	4.3%	5	3.6%	5	3.6%	138
Language, Literature, Music & Visual Culture	167	84.8%	5	2.5%	11	5.6%	14	7.1%	197
Law	154	89%	5	2.9%	11	6.4%	3	1.7%	173
Medicine, Medical Sciences & Nutrition	850	90.9%	25	2.7%	17	1.8%	43	4.6%	935
Natural & Computing Sciences	159	86.4%	3	1.6%	14	7.6%	8	4.3%	184
School of Biological Sciences	159	92.4%			6	3.5%	7	4.1%	172
School of Education	152	86.4%	2	1.1%	13	7.4%	9	5.1%	176
School of Engineering	156	84.8%	6	3.3%	13	7.1%	9	4.9%	184
School of Psychology	62	88.6%	2	2.9%	3	4.3%	3	4.3%	70
Social Science	75	90.4%	1	1.2%	3	3.6%	4	4.8%	83
Professional Services	1295	87.1%	39	2.6%	20	1.3%	133	8.9%	1487

STAFF SEXUAL ORIENTATION BY SCHOOL 2021	Bisexual		Gay man		Gay woman		Heterosexual		Information refused		No information		Other		School total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Business School					1	0.5%	149	75.6%	21	10.7%	26	12.7%			197
Divinity, History, Philosophy & Art Hist	2	2.2%	1	1.1%			68	74.7%	14	15.4%	6	6.6%			91
Geosciences	1	0.7%	2	1.5%	2	1.5%	93	69.4%	18	13.4%	17	12.7%	1	0.7%	134
Language, Literature, Music & Visual Culture	5	2.6%	3	1.6%	1	0.5%	111	57.5%	25	13%	48	24.4%			193
Law	1	0.6%	5	3.1%			97	61%	10	6.3%	45	27.7%	1	0.6%	159
Medicine, Medical Sciences & Nutrition	9	1.0%	5	0.6%	7	0.8%	664	73.9%	116	12.9%	97	10.6%			898
Natural & Computing Sciences	1	0.6%	3	1.8%	1	0.6%	114	66.7%	20	11.7%	30	17.5%	2	1.2%	171
School of Biological Sciences	5	2.5%	5	2.5%	3	1.5%	132	65.3%	22	10.9%	33	16.3%	2	1%	202
School of Education	2	1.3%	5	3.3%	3	2%	113	75.3%	11	7.3%	16	10.7%			150
School of Engineering	1	0.6%					129	77.2%	15	9%	22	13.2%			167
School of Psychology	4	6.2%	1	1.5%			46	70.8%	8	12.3%	6	9.2%			65
Social Science	1	1.4%					47	68.1%	9	13%	12	17.4%			69
Professional Services	46	2.9%	14	0.9%	20	1.2%	1205	75.1%	167	10.4%	139	8.3%	14	0.9%	1605

STAFF SEXUAL ORIENTATION BY SCHOOL 2022	Bisexual		Gay man		Gay woman		Heterosexual		Information refused		No information		Other		Total number
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Business School	2	0.9%			2	0.9%	176	79.6%	16	7.2%	24	10.4%	1	0.5%	221
Divinity, History, Philosophy & Art Hist	2	2.2%	1	1.1%			62	68.9%	19	21.1%	6	6.7%			90
Geosciences	2	1.4%	2	1.4%	2	1.4%	95	68.8%	19	13.8%	17	12.3%	1	0.7%	138
Language, Literature, Music & Visual Culture	5	2.5%	5	2.5%			118	59.9%	24	12.2%	44	21.3%	1	0.5%	197
Law	3	1.7%	5	2.9%	1	0.6%	108	62.4%	10	5.8%	45	25.4%	1	0.6%	173
Medicine, Medical Sciences & Nutrition	14	1.5%	7	0.7%	9	1%	696	74.4%	113	12.1%	94	9.9%	2	0.2%	935
Natural & Computing Sciences	3	1.6%	5	2.7%	1	0.5%	120	65.2%	16	8.7%	38	20.1%	1	0.5%	184
School of Biological Sciences	5	2.9%	3	1.7%	1	0.6%	117	68%	15	8.7%	27	15.1%	4	2.3%	172
School of Education	5	2.8%	7	4%	3	1.7%	131	74.4%	12	6.8%	18	10.2%			176
School of Engineering							143	77.7%	16	8.7%	25	13.6%			184
School of Psychology	8	11.4%					49	70%	7	10%	4	5.7%			70
Social Science	5	6%	2	2.9%			54	65.1%	9	10.8%	14	15.7%	1	1.2%	83
Professional Services	54	3.6%	11	0.7%	9	0.6%	1122	75.5%	147	9.9%	124	8.1%	20	1.3%	1487

STAFF ETHNICITY BY SCHOOL 2021	White		Asian		Black		Chinese		Mixed		Other		R/U		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Business School	122	61.9%	33	16.8%	14	7.1%	15	7.6%	2	1%	2	1%	9	4.6%	197
Divinity, History, Philosophy & Art History	77	84.6%			1	1.1%			5	5.5%	1	1.1%	7	7.7%	91
Geosciences	115	85.8%	6	4.5%	1	0.7%			1	0.7%	1	0.7%	10	7.5%	134
Language, Literature, Music & Visual Culture	159	82.4%	4	2.1%			5	2.6%	3	1.6%	5	2.6%	17	8.8%	193
Law	131	82.4%	1	0.6%	13	8.2%	3	1.9%	3	1.9%			8	5%	159
Medicine, Medical Sciences & Nutrition	724	80.5%	67	7.5%	18	2%	13	1.4%	19	2.1%	16	1.8%	41	4.6%	898
Natural & Computing Sciences	124	75.2%	12	7%	6	3.5%	6	3.5%	3	1.8%	6	3.5%	14	8.2%	171
School of Biological	172	85.1%	4	2%	4	2%	4	2%	6	3%	3	1.5%	9	4.5%	202
School of Education	137	91.3%			2	1.3%	1	0.7%	1	0.7%			9	6%	150
School of Engineering	108	64.7%	24	14.4%	6	3.6%	8	4.8%	2	1.2%	5	3%	14	8.4%	167
School of Psychology	53	81.5%	4	6.2%			3	4.6%	2	3.1%			3	4.6%	65
Social Science	63	91.3%	3	4.3%	1	1.4%					1	1.4%	1	1.4%	69
Professional Services	1425	88.8%	47	2.9%	33	2.1%	21	1.3%	27	1.7%	13	0.8%	39	2.4%	1605

STAFF ETHNICITY BY SCHOOL 2022	White		Asian		Black		Chinese		Mixed		Other		R/U		Total no.
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Business School	133	60.2%	33	14.9%	20	9%	19	8.6%	3	1.4%	3	1.4%	10	4.5%	221
Divinity, History, Philosophy & Art History	75	83.3%			1	1.1%	1	1.1%	2	2.2%			11	12.2%	90
Geosciences	117	84.8%	7	5.1%	1	0.7%					2	1.4%	11	8%	138
Language, Literature, Music & Visual Culture	162	82.2%	4	2%			7	3.6%	3	1.5%	7	3.6%	14	7.1%	
Law	146	84.4%	2	1.2%	9	5.2%	3	1.7%	3	1.7%	1	0.6%	9	5.2%	173
Medicine, Medical Sciences & Nutrition	742	79.4%	67	7.2%	21	2.2%	16	1.7%	20	2.1%	17	1.8%	52	5.6%	935
Natural & Computing Sciences	134	72.8%	11	6%	2	1.1%	14	7.6%	3	1.6%	2	1.1%	18	9.2%	184
School of Biological	153	89%	3	1.7%	1	0.6%	2	1.2%	2	1.2%	4	2.3%	7	4.1%	172
School of Education	156	88.6%	3	1.7%	3	1.7%	1	0.6%	3	1.7%			10	5.7%	176
School of Engineering	120	65.2%	18	9.8%	9	4.9%	11	6%	3	1.6%	1	0.5%	22	12%	184
School of Psychology	56	80%	3	4.3%			4	5.7%	2	2.9%	1	1.4%	4	5.7%	70
Social Science	72	86.7%	4	4.8%	1	1.2%					3	3.6%	3	3.6%	83
Professional Services	1323	88.8%	37	2.5%	34	2.3%	22	1.5%	18	1.2%	12	0.8%	41	2.8%	1487

STAFF RELIGION BY SCHOOL 2021	Buddhist		Christian – Church of Scotland		Christian - Other		Christian – Roman Catholic		Hindu		Jewish		Muslim		No information		No Religion		Other		Refused		Spiritual		School total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Business School	4	2%	11	5.6%	28	14.2%	18	9.1%	2	1%			16	8.1%	26	13.2%	70	35.5%			20	10.2%	2	1%	197
Divinity, History, Philosophy & Art History			8	8.8%	25	27.5%	5	5.5%							6	6.6%	33	36.3%	1	1.1%	13	14.3%			91
Geosciences			3	2.2%	20	14.9%	14	10.4%	2	1.4%			2	1.5%	16	11.9%	56	41.8%	1	0.7%	20	14.9%			134
Language, Literature, Music & Visual Culture	2	1%	10	5.2%	16	8.3%	12	6.2%					4	2.1%	45	23.3%	78	40.4%			24	12.4%	2	1%	193
Law	1	0.6%	18	11.3%	23	14.5%	13	8.2%					3	1.9%	44	27.7%	42	26.4%	2	1.3%	13	8.2%			159
Medicine, Medical Sciences & Nutrition	7	0.8%	107	11.9%	124	13.8%	57	6.3%	21	2.3%			22	2.4%	98	10.9%	369	41.1%	3	0.3%	82	9.1%	8	0.9%	898
Natural & Computing Sciences			8	4.7%	18	10.5%	11	6.4%	4	2.3%	2	1.2%	6	3.5%	29	17%	77	45%	1	0.6%	14	8.2%	1	0.6%	171
School of Biological Sciences			12	5.9%	19	9.4%	8	4%	1	0.5%			2	1%	32	15.8%	111	55%	4	2%	12	5.9%	1	0.5%	202
School of Education	1	0.7%	28	18.7%	26	17.3%	8	5.3%			1	0.7%	1	0.7%	15	10%	57	38%	1	0.7%	10	6.7%	2	1.3%	150
School of Engineering	1	0.6%	14	8.4%	18	10.8%	14	8.4%	8	4.8%			12	7.2%	23	13.8%	63	37.7%			14	8.4%			167
School of Psychology			5	7.7%	5	7.7%	2	3.1%			1	1.5%			6	9.2%	40	61.5%			6	9.2%			65
Social Science	1	1.4%	4	5.8%	8	11.6%	2	2.9%					1	1.4%	12	17.4%	32	46.4%			7	10.1%	2	2.9%	69
Professional Services	11	0.7%	203	12.6%	160	10%	108	6.7%	15	0.9%	2	0.1%	26	1.6%	123	7.7%	804	50.1%	13	0.7%	126	7.9%	14	0.9%	

STAFF RELIGION BY SCHOOL 2022	Buddhist		Christian – Church of Scotland		Christian - Other		Christian – Roman Catholic		Hindu		Jewish		Muslim		No information		No Religion		Other		Refused		Spiritual		School total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Business School	5	2.3%	8	3.6%	38	17.2%	20	9%	4	1.8%			14	6.3%	23	10.4%	84	38%	2	0.9%	20	9%	3	1.4%	221
Divinity, History, Philosophy & Art History			9	10%	26	28.9%	4	4.4%							6	6.7%	31	34.4%			14	15.6%			90
Geosciences			3	2.2%	20	14.5%	14	10.1%	2	1.4%			1	0.7%	16	11.6%	60	43.5%	1	0.7%	18	13%	3	2.2%	138
Language, Literature, Music & Visual Culture	2	1%	10	5.1%	19	9.6%	12	6.1%					4	2%	42	21.3%	82	41.6%	4	2%	21	10.7%	1	0.5%	197
Law	1	0.6%	21	12.1%	23	13.3%	15	8.7%					4	2.3%	44	25.4%	52	30.1%	1	0.6%	11	6.4%	1	0.6%	173
Medicine, Medical Sciences & Nutrition	5	0.5%	99	10.6%	133	14.2%	60	6.4%	23	2.5%	2	0.2%	26	2.8%	93	9.9%	395	42.2%	9	1%	79	8.4%	11	1.2%	935
Natural & Computing Sciences	2	1.1%	8	4.3%	18	9.8%	14	7.6%	3	1.6%	2	1.1%	4	2.2%	36	19.6%	80	43.5%	1	0.5%	14	7.6%	2	1.1%	184
School of Biological Sciences			7	4.1%	17	9.9%	4	2.3%	2	1.2%			1	0.6%	25	14.5%	104	60.5%	2	1.2%	9	5.2%	1	0.6%	172
School of Education	1	0.6%	27	15.3%	30	17%	9	5.1%			1	0.6%	2	1.1%	17	9.7%	76	43.2%	1	0.6%	8	4.5%	4	2.3%	176
School of Engineering	2	1.1%	12	6.5%	19	10.3%	16	8.7%	6	3.3%			13	7.1%	26	14.1%	71	38.6%			18	9.8%	1	0.5%	184
School of Psychology			4	5.7%	3	4.3%	2	2.9%			1	1.4%			5	7.1%	49	70%			6	8.6%			70
Social Science	1	1.2%	4	4.8%	7	8.4%	5	6%			1	1.2%	1	1.2%	13	15.7%	42	50.6%			8	9.6%	1	1.2%	83
Professional Services	9	0.6%	175	11.8%	142	9.5%	99	6.7%	15	1%			21	1.4%	110	7.4%	757	50.9%	14	0.9%	125	8.4%	20	1.3%	1487

STAFF WORKING HOURS BY SCHOOL 2021	FT		PT	
	No.	%	No.	%
Law	48	30.8%	111	71.2%
School of Education	47	32.6%	103	71.5%
Language, Literature, Music & Visual Culture	66	35.3%	127	67.9%
Business School	103	55.1%	94	50.3%
School of Biological Sciences	102	58.3%	100	57.1%
Medicine, Medical Sciences & Nutrition	514	58.4%	384	43.6%
Natural & Computing Sciences	106	62.7%	64	37.9%
Divinity, History, Philosophy & Art History	56	63.6%	35	39.8%
Geosciences	92	69.2%	42	31.6%
School of Psychology	45	70.3%	20	31.3%
Social Science	48	70.6%	21	30.9%
School of Engineering	118	71.1%	49	29.5%
Professional Services	804	51.6%	800	51.3%

STAFF WORKING HOURS BY SCHOOL 2022	FT		PT	
	No.	%	No.	%
Law	60	35.1%	113	66.1%
School of Education	51	30.2%	125	74%
Language, Literature, Music & Visual Culture	65	34%	132	69.1%
Business School	109	50.9%	112	52.3%
School of Biological Sciences	104	61.9%	68	40.5%
Medicine, Medical Sciences & Nutrition	517	57%	418	46.1%
Natural & Computing Sciences	110	60.1%	74	40.4%
Divinity, History, Philosophy & Art History	61	68.5%	29	32.6%
Geosciences	93	67.9%	45	32.8%
School of Psychology	46	67.6%	24	35.3%
Social Science	50	64.1%	33	42.3%
School of Engineering	111	62%	72	40.2%
Professional Services	886	60.9%	601	41.3%

LEAVERS 2020/2021		Business School		Divinity, History, Philosophy & Art History		Geosciences		Language, Literature, Music & Visual Culture		Law		Medicine, Medical Sciences & Nutrition		Natural & Computing Sciences		School of Biological Sciences		School of Education		School of Engineering		School of Psychology		Social Science		Professional Services		University Total	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Age	25 and under	4		3		7		8		8		11		26		26		1		17		8		1		83			
	26-35	13		6		14		10		5		50		17		39		1		13		8		7		43			
	36-45	5		3		3		7		5		25		7		10		1		9		6		2		21			
	46-55	5		1		3		7		5		11		6		6		4		5				1		26			
	56-65	2		1		2		2		5		22		6		1		6								46			
	66 and over 66	1		2		1		1				4						3						1		9			
	Total	30		16		30		35		28		123		62		82		16		44		22		12		228		728	
Disability	No	21		12		21		27		24		110		52		71		15		33		18		11		196			
	Refused	2		1		1						1		2				1				2				2			
	Unknown	6		1		6		8		3		8		8		6				10		1				9			
	Yes	1		2		2				1		4				5				1		1		1		21			
	Total	30		16		30		35		28		123		62		82		16		44		22		12		228		728	
Ethnicity	Asian	8		1		3				1		8		3		2				6		2				12			
	Black					1				2		4		4		13				3						10			
	Chinese	4				1		1				2		1		2				2		2				3			
	Mixed			1		1		1		1		3		1		4				1				2		6			
	Other	3		2		1		1				1		3		2				4				2		2			
	R/U	4		2		2		9		2		6		13		4		1		8		1		1		10			
	White	11		10		21		23		22		99		37		55		15		20		17		7		185			
	Total	30		16		30		35		28		123		62		82		16		44		22		12		228		728	
Gender	Female	19		5		17		26		16		79		19		44		11		9		18		5		140			
	Male	11		11		13		9		12		44		43		38		5		35		4		7		88			
	Total	30		16		30		35		28		123		62		82		16		44		22		12		228		728	

LEAVERS 2021/2022		Business School		Divinity, History, Philosophy & Art History		Geosciences		Language, Literature, Music & Visual Culture		Law		Medicine, Medical Sciences & Nutrition		Natural & Computing Sciences		School of Biological Sciences		School of Education		School of Engineering		School of Psychology		Social Science		Professional Services		University Total	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Age	25 and under	5		5		7		3		9		24		29		29				25		9		1		218			
	26-35	11		20		17		12		5		76		27		48		4		21		6		10		82			
	36-45	11		4		14		8		2		34		10		6		6		11		5		3		40			
	46-55	6		5		2		6		3		17		6		6		9		6		1		1		30			
	56-65	7		1				5		4		31		2		3		5		4		1				44			
	66 and over 66	1				2				1		7		1				9		2				2		19			
	Total	41		35		42		34		24		189		75		92		33		69		22		17		433		1106	
Disability	No	32		30		31		25		20		169		55		71		27		48		18		16		377			
	Refused			2		2		2				4		2		1		1		2						7			
	Unknown	7		1		6		2		4		5		13		12		4		14				1		8			
	Yes	2		2		3		5				11		5		8		1		5		4				41			
	Total	41		35		42		34		24		189		75		92		33		69		22		17		433		1106	
Ethnicity	Asian	4		1		1		1				21		4		3		1		5				3		24			
	Black	5		1		3				4		4		6		7				5						17			
	Chinese	3		1								4		5						1		1				10			
	Mixed			4		2		1				7		4		6		2		3		2				17			
	Other	1		1				2				6		3		2				3		1		3		10			
	R/U	5				6		3		3		12		15		7		5		13				1		11			
	White	23		27		30		27		17		135		38		67		25		39		18		10		344			
Total	41		35		42		34		24		189		75		92		33		69		22		17		433		1106		

Gender	Female	21		21		17		24		16		124		25		55		25		13		16		8		284		
	Male	20		14		25		10		8		65		50		37		8		56		6		9		149		
	Total	41		35		42		34		24		189		75		92		33		69		22		17		433		1106

RECRUITMENT		Unknown	Female	Male	Other	Total	% Female
Clinical	Applicants		15	12		27	55.56%
	Interviewees		8	1		9	88.89%
	Offer	2	16	9		27	59.26%
	Offer accepted	2	15	8		25	60%
Grade 1	Applicants	4	116	129		253	45.85%
	Interviewees	1	68	42		111	61.26%
	Offer	3	61	36		100	61%
	Offer accepted	2	49	33		84	58.33%
Grade 2	Applicants	10	632	495	5	1142	55.34%
	Interviewees	2	122	75		199	61.31%
	Offer	2	62	20	1	85	72.94%
	Offer accepted	2	54	17	1	74	72.97%
Grade 2/3	Applicants	1	6	6		13	46.15%
	Interviewees		3	3		6	50%
	Offer		1	1		2	50%
	Offer accepted		1	1		2	50%
Grade 3	Applicants	8	625	460	13	1106	56.51%
	Interviewees	3	168	83	3	257	65.37%
	Offer	1	61	49	1	112	54.46%
	Offer accepted	1	50	42		93	53.76%
Grade 4	Applicants	4	511	367	9	891	57.35%
	Interviewees	1	124	62	2	189	65.61%
	Offer	1	44	29	2	76	57.89%
	Offer accepted	1	37	27	2	67	55.22%
Grade 4/5	Applicants		18	3		21	85.71%
	Interviewees		4			4	100%
	Offer		1	1		2	50%
	Offer accepted			1		1	0%
Grade 5	Applicants	6	438	301	8	753	58.17%
	Interviewees		92	72		164	56.10%
	Offer		35	21		56	62.50%
	Offer accepted		33	21		54	61.11%
Grade 5/6	Applicants		34	24		58	58.62%
	Interviewees		11	7		18	61.11%

	Offer		3	2		5	60%
	Offer accepted		2	2		4	50%
Grade 6	Applicants	11	571	593	6	1181	48.35%
	Interviewees		149	130	2	281	53.02%
	Offer	1	73	49		123	59.35%
	Offer accepted	1	61	43		105	58.10%
Grade 6/7	Applicants		16	17		33	48.48%
	Interviewees		2			2	100%
	Offer		2			2	100%
	Offer accepted		1			1	100%
Grade 7	Applicants	11	694	1272	16	1993	34.82%
	Interviewees		103	130	2	235	43.83%
	Offer	1	46	37		84	54.76%
	Offer accepted	1	44	33		78	56.41%
Grade 7/8	Applicants	4	144	522		670	21.49%
	Interviewees		8	52		60	13.33%
	Offer		12	20		32	37.50%
	Offer accepted		9	13		23	39.13%
Grade 8	Applicants	3	85	217		305	27.87%
	Interviewees	1	16	35		52	30.77%
	Offer		8	10		18	44.44%
	Offer accepted		6	6		12	50%
Grade 8/9	Applicants		1	20		21	4.76%
	Interviewees		1	7		8	12.50%
	Offer			2		2	0%
	Offer accepted			1		1	0%
Grade 9	Applicants	1	53	116	2	172	30.81%
	Interviewees	1	14	14		29	48.28%
	Offer		5	8		13	38.46%
	Offer accepted		5	7		12	41.67%
Total		83	5282	5571	77	11013	47.96%

AGE

LEVEL	RESEARCH POSTGRADUATE		TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE		UNDERGRADUATE	
	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22
20 AND UNDER	0	0	27	29	8591	9088
21-24	356	356	1696	1802	1859	1856
25-29	501	482	1449	1852	1041	902
30+	760	769	3344	3975	1945	1986
TOTAL	1617	1607	6516	7658	13436	13832

GENDER

LEVEL	RESEARCH POSTGRADUATE		TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE		UNDERGRADUATE	
	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22
FEMALE	753	773	3544	3982	8155	8342
MALE	862	832	2965	3666	5241	5444
OTHER	2	2	7	8	40	46
TOTAL	1617	1607	6516	7656	13436	13832

ETHNICITY

LEVEL	RESEARCH POSTGRADUATE		TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE		UNDERGRADUATE	
	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22
ETHNICITY						
Arab	118	128	233	277	188	205
Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi	13	10	37	273	41	48
Asian or Asian British - Indian	48	48	228	570	189	220
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	18	18	72	89	182	214
Black or Black British - African	155	156	504	802	280	287
Black or Black British - Caribbean	4	4	37	45	16	20
Chinese	87	87	916	974	299	351
Gypsy or Traveller	1	1	1	0	2	0
Mixed - Other	38	37	106	113	228	244
Mixed - White/Asian African	4	8	17	17	28	32
Mixed - White/Black African	8	8	22	22	42	47
Mixed - White/Black Caribbean	1	3	14	20	28	30
Not known	0	0	13	9	9	7
Other	37	35	93	96	107	91
Other Asian Background	110	108	240	249	202	209
Other Black Background	10	11	23	34	16	17
Other White Background	447	396	675	546	2057	1330
Prefer not to say	33	44	92	142	144	214
White	48	57	252	633	373	1936
White - British	301	301	1408	1226	3529	2941
White - Gypsy/Traveller	0	0	0	1	3	7
White - Irish	24	27	126	122	133	143
White - Polish	0	0	0	0	17	18
White - Roma	0	0	0	0	1	1
White - Scottish	111	117	1039	1059	2201	2345
NULL	1	3	368	337	3121	2875
TOTAL	1617	1607	6516	7656	13436	13832

RELIGION

LEVEL	RESEARCH POSTGRADUATE		TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE		UNDERGRADUATE	
	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22
RELIGION						
Any other religion or belief	20	22	70	80	136	160
Buddhist	38	33	109	117	84	69
Christian	2	19	162	460	35	153
Christian - Church of Scotland	48	48	281	239	530	551
Christian - Other denomination	407	402	770	887	992	855
Christian - Roman Catholic	120	105	510	537	845	816
Hindu	27	23	132	347	79	104
Jewish	3	3	12	11	26	33
Muslim	216	229	472	799	480	566
No religion	538	505	2725	2720	5640	6086
Not available	1	1	36	55	24	36
Pagan	0	2	0	5	17	28
Prefer not to say	183	205	669	796	1261	1271
Sikh	3	3	9	19	18	18
Spiritual	10	4	88	67	68	43
NULL	1	3	471	517	3201	3043
TOTAL	1617	1607	6516	7656	13436	13832

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

LEVEL	RESEARCH POSTGRADUATE		TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE		UNDERGRADUATE	
	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22
Bisexual	74	94	171	245	783	1006
Gay man	11	9	40	35	87	67
Gay or lesbian	21	24	27	44	192	296
Gay woman/lesbian	5	1	20	25	62	47
Heterosexual	600	392	2950	2530	4107	2487
Heterosexual or straight	609	776	1349	2416	3507	5280
Other	25	17	119	139	90	77
Other sexual orientation	13	15	30	62	85	131
Prefer not to say	258	276	1349	1663	1328	1404
NULL	1	3	461	497	3195	3037
TOTAL	1617	1607	6516	7656	13436	13832

LEVEL	RESEARCH POSTGRADUATE		TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE		UNDERGRADUATE	
	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22
Disability Declared	198	230	445	605	2572	2803
No known disability	1373	1331	5981	6933	10471	10601
Unknown/Refused	46	46	90	118	393	428
TOTAL	1617	1607	6516	7656	13436	13832

Is Gender Now the Same as Birth?

Level	Research Postgraduate						Taught Postgraduate						Undergraduate					
Is gender now same as birth?	2020/21			2021/22			2020/21			2021/22			2020/21			2021/22		
	F	M	O	F	M	O	F	M	O	F	M	O	F	M	O	F	M	O
No	2	2	1	1	1	0	9	9	0	8	16	4	29	26	21	43	29	24
Prefer not to say	14	26	1	13	32	1	385	459	3	504	639	3	75	96	9	97	121	9
Yes	736	834	0	758	798	0	2856	2313	4	3148	2802	1	5960	3999	4	6217	4095	5
No information	1	0	0	1	1	1	294	184	0	322	209	0	2091	1120	6	1985	1199	8
TOTAL	753	862	2	773	832	2	3544	2965	7	3982	3666	8	8155	5241	40	8342	5444	46

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

APPROACH TO SUPPORTING THE VICTIMS OF CONFLICT

1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This paper outlines the support which is available to at-risk scholars (staff and students) who are the victims of conflict from around the world.

2. PREVIOUS CONSIDERATION BY /FURTHER APPROVAL REQUIRED

	Board/Committee	Date
Previously considered or approved by	n/a	
Further consideration/approval required by	n/a	n/a

3. RECOMMENDED ACTION

3.1 The University Court is invited to note the support mechanisms which have been established to support at-risk scholars (staff and students) who are the victims of conflict from around the world.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 At its meeting on 22 March 2022, the University Court received an overview of the package of support which had been implemented to support those affected by the Ukraine conflict.
- 4.2 The support included the establishment of 8 University of Aberdeen Honorary Fellowships including accommodation and a package of support to help them settle into their new life in Aberdeen and to apply for external Fellowships and Grants. Of the 8 Honorary Fellowships, 7 Ukrainian applicants met the criteria and were awarded a Fellowship. The remaining position was offered to an academic from Afghanistan who became known to us via an organisation supporting academics at risk from around the world.
- 4.3 A package of bursaries, scholarships and other support measures for Ukrainian students was introduced, including fee waivers for relevant new and continuing students, free accommodation, access to the Digital Poverty Fund, and a 'good faith' approach to admissions (including acceptance of the UN Qualifications Passport).
- 4.4 The support provided to both Ukrainian academics and students was positively received and served as an immediate and short-term response to an unprecedented situation. In addition, the University responded to accommodation pressures on the Homes for Ukraine Scheme, providing 6 flats for families who had arrived in Aberdeen.
- 4.5 However, the war has since moved into a new phase and it is not yet clear how long the conflict will continue. Furthermore, it is recognised that across the world other conflicts remain ongoing (and future conflicts may arise) which require an institutional response to humanitarian suffering.

5. MOVING TO A SUSTAINABLE APPROACH

- 5.1 Higher education institutions in the UK have a long tradition of providing a 'safe haven' for scholars who find themselves at risk in their home country and are forced to flee from conflict and

persecution. Our institutional commitment to supporting these individuals underpins our commitment to becoming a [University of Sanctuary](#).

- 5.2 To ensure a consistent approach, future institutional support for at-risk scholars and students who are victims of conflict from around the world will be provided via new At-Risk Fellowship schemes for postgraduate students and academics (the first phase of which launched in January 2023). It is intended to deliver coherent, transparent and sustainable institutional support for at-risk scholars from around the world and will draw on our relationship with the [Council for At-Risk Academics \(CARA\)](#). CARA was founded in 1933 to help academics at immediate risk around the world to escape to a place of safety where they can continue their work. It has a unique focus in that it helps individuals who are in immediate danger, rather than those who are already in exile. Most CARA Fellows will aim to return home when it is safe for them to do so, but the programme is designed to provide them with support in the interim period to maintain and develop their skills and to build their academic networks.

6. AT-RISK FELLOWSHIPS (POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS)

- 6.1 To ensure that there is a consistent internal process to receive and/or consider such requests for support, an institutional At-Risk Fellowship has been established whereby one Fellow is hosted per year on a rolling basis i.e. if the Fellow is a Masters student, the next Fellow will be identified the following year; if the Fellow is a PhD student, the next Fellow will be identified at the end of the 3-year period of study. Individual Schools may also choose to support additional Fellows from within their own and/or external budgets. The scheme launched in January 2023 and nominations for the Fellowship are currently being sought.

7. COUNCIL FOR AT-RISK ACADEMICS (CARA) STAFF FELLOWSHIP

- 7.1 An institutional Staff Fellowship has also been established. In view of the University's close relationship with the [Council for At-Risk Academics \(CARA\)](#) this Fellowship will be awarded to an at-risk academic supported by CARA.
- 7.2 The Fellow will be employed by the University for a period of up to 2 years and will receive a salary commensurate with (i) the role to which they will be appointed, and (ii) their skills, experience and qualifications. The procedures which will underpin this scheme are currently being finalised ahead of its launch in March 2023.

8. UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

- 8.1 The Development Trust fundraising campaign for those affected by the war in Ukraine and other displaced students in early 2022 has raised c.£60K. This will be directed towards student accommodation and/or hardship funds in Session 2023/24 and disbursed to those who are victims of conflict from around the world and requiring this type of financial support as appropriate.

9. RECOMMENDATION AND NEXT STEPS

- 9.1 The University Court is invited to note the support mechanisms which have been established to support at-risk scholars (staff and students) who are the victims of conflict from around the world.

10. FURTHER INFORMATION

- 10.1 Further information is available from Tracey Slaven, University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer (tracey.slaven@abdn.ac.uk).

6 February 2023

Confidentiality Status: Open

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

COST OF LIVING – SUPPORT TO OUR COMMUNITY

1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This Paper provides Court with a short overview of the work being done to support both students and staff in navigating their way through the challenges linked to cost of living.

2. PREVIOUS CONSIDERATION BY /FURTHER APPROVAL REQUIRED

	Board/Committee	Date
Previously considered/approved by	SMT	16 th February 2023
Further consideration/approval required by	n/a	

3. RECOMMENDED ACTION

3.1 Court is invited to note the update.

4. COST OF LIVING CRISIS

- 4.1 The “Cost-of-Living crisis” (CoL) currently impacting the UK has been significantly felt by many members of our community and particularly within our student population. Many students were financially impacted during the Covid-19 Pandemic, resulting in the use of savings to combat general financial hardship and an overall lack of available part-time work to supplement this. The lingering financial impact from the pandemic is having a noticeable effect on the available funding students have access to, as challenges resulting from the CoL have increased over time.
- 4.2 Significant increases in Government funding made available during the pandemic to support hardship across our different categories of students (open to all regardless of fee funding status students or nationality) has also been heavily restricted, with the eligibility criteria returning to only domestic students in receipt of funding through a recognised UK funding body since August 2022.
- 4.3 Opportunities for part time work are increasing again in Aberdeen, and it is hoped this will enable a return to students gaining both valuable experience of employment, and much needed top-up income, during the CoL, with efforts being made to signpost to such opportunities by the University.
- 4.4 For many students in private accommodation the increasing cost of energy, combined with general increases to the cost of travel, fuel and groceries, continues to have a significant impact. Such impact is strongly seen in the general mental health of our students and ultimately in their ability to remain engaged students.

- 4.5 Additional support has been made available during the academic year, with the Senior Management Team considering proposals in January 2023 for the redistribution of withheld pay from staff taking part in the 2022 strike action. This included supporting the “Grab and Go” pantries, noted below, and in enhancing the hardship fund support available to Student Support for direct distribution to students.
- 4.6 Staff across the University have worked to support our response to the CoL, bringing their expertise and commitment to our students and staff in times of need to the forefront and thanks goes to all those staff making a small contribution to this effort.

5. UNIVERSITY RESPONSES

- 5.1 The University established a group to oversee the impact of the CoL in summer 2022. Initially focused on students, the group has since expanded to include the impact being felt by staff as well as students, and it meets regularly to consider and implement targeted, and evolving, responses to CoL as the academic year continues.
- 5.2 Much of our response to the CoL is designed to be proactive, seeking to provide guidance and advice to students on managing their money and avoiding ultimate hardship from before the academic year started. The proactive payment of £750 made to staff on Grades 1-6 in July 2022 was to support hardship over the winter period before it was truly felt. A range of additional activity has taken place since the group formed, much enhancing existing support services in place, and a summary of these have been outlined below.
- 5.3 The group will continue to meet every month to review the impact of these activities and the progressing CoL issues being felt across the University Community.
- In October 2022, we launched “mindful menus”, giving our community members access to a free breakfast (porridge and tea/coffee) on Tuesdays and Thursdays and a daily lunchtime soup for 50p (vegetarian and gluten free) at the Suttie Centre; Macrobert Café and Students’ Union Building.
 - Grab and Go stations were launched in January 2023, offering students and staff with access to household essential items free of charge in various campus locations. These are maintained by our Student Support team, but is open to all members of our staff and students and lets them grab basic household items (groceries, toiletries, and cleaning products) and will be continued during the full academic year (image below):



- A range of new budget friendly recipe cards (complete with full costings) were prepared and during Welcome Week we ran events to promote healthy, budget-friendly meal planning. This has continued during the term, and we have actively promoted these initiatives including “win the shopping trolley” awareness events about cost of shopping and groceries and tips on budgeting as a student.
- We have launched “Dinner on Us” meal kits promoting some of our recipe cards, with cupboard ingredients to make these, at various locations, (SDLR, SUB, Halls of Residence). We have tried reducing stigma in much of our promotional work linked to the CoL, not targeting hardship directly, but encouraging engagement for all as part of general, better budgeting, campaigns.
- We have dramatically enhanced our budgeting support through our money advice team in Student Support, targeted at encouraging positive behaviours and to avoid hardship. This includes the promotion of various templates for personal budgeting etc. and the provision of bespoke budget planning sessions to review individuals’ budgets. We can also review personal circumstances to ensure students are maximising the use of available funding routes through formal government student funding and other trusts and scholarships.
- To support student access to part-time work, we have reviewed and enhanced the publication of student jobs through our Careers & Employability Service, in line with the maximum expected work hours for students ([15 per week](#)) to ensure this doesn’t impact on academic achievement.
- Ensuring students and staff are aware of the free bus service between our Hillhead, King’s and Foresterhill locations and that younger members of our community are aware of free travel for under 22’s, through the national free bus travel scheme.
- We have enhanced promotional materials, including a new website, collating advice, events and support for the CoL- [Cost of Living | Students | The University of Aberdeen \(abdn.ac.uk\)](#) which is routinely updated as the year progresses.
- A large part of the CoL group’s work looked at enhancing the opening hours of campus locations to ensure students have access to warm spaces during the winter:
 - the Sir Duncan Rice Library was open until midnight during term and 24/7 during assessment periods, with a first-time trial of opening during the Winter Closure period taking place, from the 26-30th December.
 - Our MacRobert/Edward Wright buildings continue to be open 24/7.
 - Our AUSA colleagues helped to extend the opening hours of the Students’ Union Building.
 - The central, Headspace, Building at Hillhead remains open 24/7.
- A festive celebration was held in the week before the winter break, hosted by the Rector, for all students, giving a chance for socialising and Christmas dinner before the closure.
- We worked to ensure that there was strong support available over the Winter Closure period, for those in both Halls and Private accommodation, with emergency wellbeing support available throughout the break via our Student Helpline, and for those in Halls through our team of Resident Assistants. Senior Managers in Student Support offered on call support, and email inboxes were checked every two days during the fully closure period.
- To ensure that students had access to support during the closure, arrangements were made to ensure access to emergency food vouchers and shopping kits if needed, supported by our Security and Student Support teams.
- We have installed pin code lockers in a few campus locations which hold food parcels and food vouchers that students in urgent need can access 24/7, following signposting from Student Support. These are designed to be in secure, but subtle, locations and provide a source of urgent assistance to those in student community most in need.

- AUSA have worked to enhance their swap shop, which allow students to upcycle and exchange items, feeding into our own sustainability goals, both at Hillhead and on King's and Foresterhill.
- In University managed accommodation, the team have installed air dryers, so students don't have to rely solely on electric pay as you go machines. Indoor drying racks have also been installed in laundry rooms to support sustainable laundry provisions.
- Student Support Services continue to manage the main SAAS Discretionary and Childcare Funds for domestic students with significant emergency funding issues. We also work in partnership with AUSA to deliver the modest International Hardship Fund. Demand for this support remains consistent, though not as high as thought at the start of the academic year, hopefully due to the prevalence of proactive support being made available.
- Our Development and Alumni Relations team also continue to offer support through various bursaries and trusts, most recently the 525 Fund, to support hardship in student's ineligible for other funding.

6. FURTHER INFORMATION

- 6.1 Further information is available from Debbie Dyker, Director of People and Nick Edwards, Deputy Director of People & the Head of Student Support Services (n.edwards@abdn.ac.uk).

21 February 2023, version 1, **Confidentiality Status:** Open

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
UNIVERSITY COURT
DELEGATED AUTHORITY SCHEDULE

1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1	This paper presents for Court’s review and approval the final draft of the Delegated Authority Schedule (DAS).
1.2	Also provided is an annotated copy of the Financial Regulations, indicating where changes are required in line with approved changes to both Court and Executive Committee structures and authorities, following the dissolution of the Policy & Resources Committee in June 2022, the transferal of a number of its standing committees to the executive sphere, the establishment of the new Finance & Resourcing Committee from September 2022, and the ongoing review and refinement of executive committee remits and terms of reference.

2. PREVIOUS CONSIDERATION BY /FURTHER APPROVAL REQUIRED

	Board/Committee	Date
Previously considered by	SMT University Court SMT	16 June 2022 28 June 2022 9 February 2023
Further consideration/ approval required by	University Court	1 March 2023

3. RECOMMENDED ACTION

3.1	<p>Court is invited to approve the final draft of the Delegated Authority Schedule (provided at Appendix 1) for implementation. In particular, members are invited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note the content of the DAS and its thematic sections as a summative resource for clarity around delegated authorities, bringing together and building on guidance provided in a series of existing University policy and procedural documents; • note the non-financial elements listed within the DAS narrative and authority tables, and indicate their satisfaction with the authorities and thresholds outlined; • note that the DAS represents a live document for review and amendment on an ongoing basis and in response to internal changes; • approve the proposed amendments to the Financial Regulations which accompany the DAS (provided at Appendix 2 with proposed changes in track).
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4. DISCUSSION

4.1 The Delegated Authority Schedule has been produced in response to Recommendations 1 and 2 of the Externally Facilitated Review of Governance undertaken by Advance HE:

Recommendation 1 of the Governance Review identifies the need for a redefinition of the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of the three key bodies – Court, SMT and Senate.

Recommendation 2 calls for the development and promotion of a Schedule of Delegation and Approval Authorities between Court, its sub-committees, SMT and Senior Officers.

- 4.2 An initial draft of the DAS was presented to University Court in June 2022 and endorsed subject to further refinement and finalisation. The final draft which accompanies this paper was also provided to Senior Management Team (SMT) for their detailed review and endorsement prior to presentation to Court.
- 4.3 The DAS outlines the main approval authorities across a number of key areas of the University's operation, including: Financial Planning; Treasury and Banking; Income Management; Estates; Commercialisation; Student & Academic Activities; and Staff Matters. It draws together and builds on elements of guidance provided by existing documentation including the University's Financial Regulations and key policies, offering a single reference source for appropriate approvals governance mechanisms.
- 4.4 In addition to setting out those matters that are specifically reserved to Court, the Principal, the University Secretary, and the Senate, it also outlines those Committees and individuals to whom authority has been delegated by the University Court to commit the University to a contractual or quasi-contractual arrangement that may result in a liability to the University.
- 4.5 Its coverage is not exhaustive, and every attempt has been made to differentiate appropriately between governance and operational processes.
- 4.6 It is intended that the DAS is a live document for review and amendment on an ongoing basis and in response to internal changes. As a minimum, it is recommended it should undergo review on an annual basis alongside the corporate calendar for Court and Committees.

5. FURTHER INFORMATION

- 5.1 Further information is available from Tracey Slaven, University Secretary & COO, tracey.slaven@abdn.ac.uk and Jan Whitfield, Governance Officer, janine.whitfield@abdn.ac.uk.

3 February 2023

Confidentiality Status: Open

Appendix 1



University of Aberdeen

Delegated Authority Schedule

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Introduction & Scope

Status of Delegations under the Schedule

This Schedule lists those Committees or individuals to whom authority has been delegated by the University Court to commit the University to a contractual or quasi-contractual arrangement that may result in a liability to the University.

The document also supports the proper implementation of the University's [Financial Regulations](#), as approved by University Court, on the recommendation of the Audit & Risk Committee. It summarises the level of delegation authorised by the Financial Regulations.

Section A of the Schedule sets out matters which are reserved to the University Court and which are not normally delegated. The signing/implementing authority for the University Court shall be the University Secretary & COO, unless an alternative is identified in Section A, or by resolution of the Court (as recorded in the minutes for that meeting).

Section B of the Schedule sets out matters which are delegated to the Principal, by virtue of their authority and responsibilities as the Chief Executive and designated Accountable Officer of the University, and to empower them to discharge their duty to ensure the orderly conduct of the business of the University in a timely and efficient manner.

Section C of the Schedule sets out matters which are delegated to the University Secretary & COO, by virtue of their authority and responsibilities as the Principal Officer of Court and to empower them to discharge their duty to ensure that the Court acts within its powers and follows proper procedures.

Section D of the Schedule sets out matters which are delegated to the University Senate, to empower it to discharge its statutory powers to regulate and superintend the education (encompassing teaching, learning and assessment) and discipline of the University, the promotion of research, and the overall planning, co-ordination, development and supervision of the academic work of the institution, subject to the general control and direction of the Court.

Section E of the Schedule sets out, by operational theme, the designated authorised role-holders and Committees within the University who are entrusted by the University Court to exercise its powers in respect of relevant delegated business. Within this section, delegation thresholds are also detailed.

The Schedule applies to all activities set out herein and all University funds, regardless of source (restricted or non-restricted funds). It treats all delegations as non-exclusive.

Principles of Delegation

Any delegate of University Court (including the Principal and University Secretary & COO) shall exercise their delegated powers on behalf of the University at all times in accordance with the following overarching principles:

- The University Court shall retain ultimate oversight of the business of the University.
- The Principal shall exercise general supervision over the University and shall be generally responsible for maintaining and promoting the efficiency and good order of the University.
- All actions will not exceed the level of authority delegated by the University Court.
- Authorities not delegated under this Schedule and authorities for all commitments and transactions above the maximum delegated monetary values within this Schedule remain with the University Court.
- All actions must be contained within the allocated and approved University budget unless otherwise stated.

- All actions shall be in the best interests of the University and consistent with the University's values, charitable purposes, Strategic Plan, and the institutional objectives and priorities contained in the Plan.
- Any decision or action should be consistent with the Nine Principles of Public Life in Scotland ([Appendix 2](#)).
- All decisions or actions must not give rise to a conflict of interest which has not been declared and managed under the University's [Code of Practice on Conflicts of Interest](#).
- All decisions should be consistent with the University's Risk Appetite Statement and comply with legal and funding body obligations.
- Approval must be obtained before the point of committing to any transaction unless otherwise stated. All Procurement should be undertaken in line with the University's Procurement Strategy and associated [Procurement Policy and Procedures](#).
- The total transaction cost over the full period of commitment and options for extensions must be detailed and any transactions of value over £1m should be notified to the Chief Financial Officer.
- Sufficient detail, evidence and relevant level of prior review and confirmation to support any action being requested must be provided to the delegated authority to allow them to make an informed decision and to allow them to demonstrate to Court, auditors or funders that an appropriate course of action is taken.
- Detailed financial sub-delegations are approved by the relevant delegated authority holder and cannot exceed the value of delegation held by the delegated authority holder. This does not delegate the overall responsibility of the delegated authority holder.
- All delegated authority holders named in this document are responsible for ensuring that appropriate business continuity plans are in place should they not be available to undertake their roles. In the absence of the Principal, the Delegated Authority is sub-delegated according to the Principal's deputising arrangements.
- Notwithstanding any delegations under this Schedule, the University Court reserves at all times:
 - The reserved powers set out in Section A;
 - The power to suspend, amend or withdraw a delegation under this Schedule;
 - The general delegation of authority to the Principal and the University Secretary & COO, as set out in Statute
 - The power to exercise any business or function delegated under this Schedule.

Responsibility to Inform

It is the responsibility of the Senior Management Team and relevant delegates to keep the University Court (through reporting to relevant Committees) appropriately informed as to activity arising within the scope of the delegated authority under this Schedule, and to provide appropriate reports as required and/or as requested.

It is the responsibility of the delegate to obtain sufficient detail, evidence and relevant level of prior authorisation to support any action or decision taken in respect of a delegated matter.

The delegate shall be required to be able to demonstrate to University Court, auditors or funders that an appropriate course of action is taken when exercising its powers under this Schedule.

Legal Contracts and Risk

It is acknowledged by the University Court that certain delegates under this Schedule will ostensibly sign contracts which create legal and quasi-legal obligations on behalf of the University which could have significant financial and reputational impact for the University.

It is important for the wellbeing and sustainability of the University that such commitments and the legal risks that they create are understood and managed appropriately.

The University Secretary & COO is responsible for the management of legal risk on behalf of the University. Any delegation which creates legal obligations on behalf of the University (including but not limited to commercial contracts and other types of agreements) are therefore to be taken forward in accordance with the advice from the University Secretary & COO to ensure they are created on a valid legal basis.

Structure and Levels of Delegation

The Delegated Authority Schedule is structured to show:

- The Committee or individual which must approve the transaction, arrangement or project, and;
- The individual who holds the delegated signing authority to execute the transaction once approval has been given. The Court Signatories for transactions reserved to Court, the signing of deeds, or otherwise not delegated are a member of Court, plus the University Secretary & COO or the Head of Governance in the absence of the University Secretary & COO. The nature of the transaction will determine whether this also requires a witness and/or the application of the seal.
- The individuals who need to be informed or consulted by a delegated signing authority or approver for transactions of certain types or above certain values.

Useful definitions of terms are contained within [Appendix 2](#).

Sub-delegation

The University Court regards each Head of School or Director of Professional Services as the designated main budget holder for their respective School or Directorate. The Principal is the designated budget holder for the University Budget and the Capital Budget.

Budget Holders have delegated authority to approve virements between activities within their respective budget and to approve transactions/projects within that budget up to the levels outlined below, in line with the University's legal obligations in relation to procurement. A delegate should normally follow the sub-delegation in this Schedule (where listed). Otherwise, the authority to determine how to delegate rests with the named delegate. Individuals may, from time to time, set out schedules for the sub-delegation of their authorities. For example, a Head of School may regularly delegate authority to an appropriate member or members of the School Executive.

Individuals and bodies in whom authority is vested by this Schedule are authorised to sub-delegate to other individual office holders, provided that:

- The sub-delegation is reasonable and appropriate.
- The delegate gives due consideration to supervision/provision of appropriate challenge.
- The delegate in this Schedule remains ultimately responsible for the acts and omissions of the sub-delegate.
- Any sub-delegation will not prevent the delegate from also discharging those functions.
- The sub-delegation can be revoked at any time without prejudice to any previous decisions made under that authority.

Disputes

If there is a question or dispute regarding whether a decision taken, or proposed to be taken, by a delegated Committee or individual contravenes the provisions of this Schedule, it will be escalated to the University Secretary & COO, who shall decide on behalf of the University Court, in consultation with the Principal and/or Senior Governor as appropriate, if the decision contravenes the provisions and how to proceed.

The University Secretary & COO has delegated authority for decisions and document management relating to the settlement of court actions or other disputes not falling within the remit of other parts of this Schedule.

Novel & Contentious Arrangements

Where a decision or action proposed to be taken under delegated powers is likely to be regarded as controversial or is a material decision that will have or is likely to have:

- a significant effect on financial, reputational or operational risk; and/or
- a significant impact on academic and/or service delivery or performance;

the matter will be referred to the Senior Management Team for consideration. The Senior Management Team may then decide to escalate the matter to the Senior Governor and/or the Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee to consider the appropriate approval mechanism. However, as outlined in the Financial Regulations, it should be noted that any projects exceeding £5m in total cost, or which are novel or contentious regardless of their costs, are subject to final approval by Court.

Examples of novel or contentious arrangements might include:

Strategic UK or International Bids

Large strategic, one-off calls for funding bids including joint bids with other institutions or agreements with institutions or other parties regarding sharing of monies or other University resources provided by external agencies for infrastructure for research or education.

Mergers & Strategic Alignments

Proposals in this area are likely to involve in the UK or overseas:

- legal or reputation commitments (Memorandum of Agreement or Understanding);
- creation of a visible entity or joint venture;
- delivery or shared significant education, research or operational activities out with the University of Aberdeen campus locations; or
- the award of dual/joint degrees for multiple programmes.

Section A: Matters Reserved to Court

The University Court is the University's Governing Body and has ultimate responsibility for the University. The powers of Court are defined in accordance with The Acts, Ordinances and Resolutions of the University of Aberdeen, 1858-1990, the Court's Statement of Primary Responsibilities, and the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966.

The high-level articulation of the University Court's role is to set the mission, strategic direction and values of the University, and to monitor and challenge the execution of the strategy by the Principal and Senior Management Team. The Court must secure appropriate assurance on academic governance and quality from Senate.

To support effective decision-making, Court composition brings independent perspectives as well as those from individuals in academic, professional services, Trade Union and student roles. While on Court, all Court members are required, as charity trustees, to act in the best interest of the University, its beneficiaries and charitable objects.

The following areas of business are reserved to Court to approve:

Strategy & Risk

- The approval of the University's Strategic Plan and areas of reporting via Key Performance Indicators.
- The approval of the University's Risk Appetite Statement and consideration of reports on Risk Management.
- The appointment of the Internal and External Auditors and their annual fees, on the recommendation of the Audit & Risk Committee.
- The approval of the Internal Audit Annual Report for submission to the Scottish Funding Council.

Court Governance

- The appointment and terms of reference of designated Standing Committees of Court.
- The approval, on the recommendation of the Governance and Nominations Committee, of the appointment of independent members of Court, changes to the remits and compositions of Standing Committees and appointment of the membership of Standing Committees.
- The approval of arrangements for the election of the Senior Governor of Court (in accordance with the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016).
- The approval of the removal of a member of Court from office in accordance with Resolution No 288 Procedure for Removal of Members of Court.
- The approval of Ordinances and Resolutions, following consultation with Senate and the General Council.
- Delegation arrangements to Committees, the Principal and other senior officers and the Delegated Authorisation Schedule.
- The approval of any changes to the Standing Orders of the University Court, on the recommendation of the Governance and Nominations Committee.
- The approval of the Schedule of Delegation and decision-making powers, and any ad hoc delegation, provided this is within the terms of the Ordinances and Resolutions.

Academic Governance

- The approval of major academic re-organisations of the curriculum, on the recommendation of the Senate.
- The approval of the annual institution-led Review of Academic Quality.

- The approval of the academic structure of the University in consultation with the Senate, in particular changes to the Schools as the formal academic governance and management structure of the University, and including the creation or amendments of Schools and constituent disciplines.

Staff Appointments and Remuneration

- The approval of the appointment, re-appointment or dismissal of the Principal as the Chief Executive of the University.
- The approval of Severance Terms and substantial changes to pay and/or terms and conditions of the Principal, on the recommendation of the Remuneration Committee.
- The approval of the appointment or dismissal of the Secretary to the Court (University Secretary & COO).
- The approval of the Senior Staff Pay Policy on the recommendation of the Remuneration Committee for implementation by the Committee at an individual level.
- The oversight and approval of strategic People issues.

Finance & Estates

- The approval of the Annual Report and Financial Accounts.
- The approval of the University's Budget and financial forecasts.
- The approval of the University's Financial Strategy.
- The approval of changes to accounting policies, as recommended by the Audit & Risk Committee.
- The approval of the University's borrowing commitments, including re-financing or material variation to existing arrangements, any new borrowing arrangements, and any transaction involving any "sale or lease-back" of material assets.
- The approval of business plans for proposed expenditure out with the agreed revenue and capital budget with a value over £5 million, and the approval of all material asset sales with a value in excess of £1 million, on the recommendation of the Finance & Resourcing Committee.
- The approval of use application, or change in application, of funds raised by Private Placement or bond issue.
- The approval of the University's Capital Plan and Estates Strategy for the management and development of the University's land and buildings.
- The approval of the establishment of new campuses, whether overseas or in the UK.
- The approval of the Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Funding Council.
- The approval of the University's Modern Slavery Statement for annual publication on the University webpages.

NB: The above does not preclude Court from discussing or seeking reports on any matter it deems relevant that are not specified here or which are delegated to Committees.

Section B: Matters Delegated to the Principal

The Court recognises that the Principal is the Vice-Chancellor of the University, the designated Accountable Officer and the Chief Executive Officer, and that as such, the Principal is responsible for the effective working, management and good order of the University. The Principal therefore has authority from the Court for the academic, corporate, financial, estate and human resource management of the University which may, in turn, be discharged through the Senior Management Team and through the academic leadership of the Senior Vice-Principal and Vice-Principals.

Status of Delegations to the Principal

The Court delegates to the Principal the following:

- Authority to lead development of the University's vision, mission, Strategic Plan and values, ensuring the support and engagement of the Court in the relevant processes.
- Authority to lead the University's engagement with legal and other agreements and affiliations with academic and other partners.
- Authority to lead the development of a rolling operational plan for the University, including short and longer term budgets, ensuring the support and engagement of the Court in the development process.
- Authority for the virement of budgets within the financial framework approved by Court.
- Authority to lead development of strategic key performance indicators, against which University performance will be measured at least annually, ensuring the support and engagement of the Court in the relevant development and review processes.
- Authority to provide the academic leadership of the University in such a way as to ensure delivery of excellence in education, scholarship, research, engagement, innovation and impact, and the student experience.
- Authority to lead the Senate as its Convener in fulfilment of the role and responsibilities of the Senate;
- Authority to determine the optimum operational structure of the University and to organise the distribution of all required staff and other resources in the delivery of the strategic objects of the University.
- Authority for the engagement of staff, the determination of their number and their terms and conditions of employment, and the variance of any individual contract of employment.
- Authority to take all necessary steps to ensure that the University has policies and procedures and other controls in place to support delivery of the objects of the University and to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, constitutional rules and legal and contractual agreements with which the University must comply.
- Authority to oversee the processes associated with the maintenance of good order in the University, including those associated with staff and student discipline.
- Authority as the designated Accountable Officer in respect of Scottish Funding Council funds for compliance with the Scottish Funding Council Financial Memorandum. In accordance with the Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance, the Principal shall be formally responsible for alerting the Court if any action or policy is incompatible with the terms of the Financial Memorandum;
- Authority to represent the interests of the University externally, engaging with stakeholders as a strong advocate and ambassador for the University.

- Authority to advise the Senior Governor of Court in respect to any matters where conflict, actual or potential, may occur between the Court and the University Secretary & COO in their role as Secretary to the Court.
- Authority, on behalf of the Court, to carry the prime responsibility for health and safety throughout the University.
- Authority to review the performance of the Principal's direct reports in accordance with agreed objectives and to establish and maintain an equivalent system of staff performance review.
- Authority to undertake such other responsibilities as may be determined by the Court from time to time which are commensurate with the role of Principal, designated Accountable Officer and Chief Executive Officer of the University.

Principles of Delegation

In delegating authority to the Principal to act on its behalf in matters affecting the well-being of the University as outlined above, the Court exercises this delegation subject to the following principles:

- The Principal will act within the terms of the prescribed conditions of his or her appointment.
- The Principal's actions will be:
 - consistent with the University-level Strategic Plan and the institutional objectives and priorities as expressed in this approved Plan;
 - consistent with the University's approved budget;
 - in conformity with relevant legislation and externally prescribed conditions, including the Principal's responsibilities as the designated accounting officer under the Scottish Funding Council's Financial Memorandum and other funding documents including the approved outcome agreement.
- The Principal's actions will be consistent with the Nine Principles of Public Life in Scotland ([Appendix 2](#)).
- The Principal will at all times act in accordance with the best interests of the University, its staff and students, and will be mindful of the importance of preserving the University's reputation.
- The Principal will report to the Court all significant decisions thus taken, and will be accountable to the Court for such decisions.
- In cases of doubt, for example in regard to novel or potentially contentious matters, the Principal will consult with the Senior Governor of the Court, whom failing an external member of the Court nominated for the purpose by the Senior Governor.
- In accordance with the arrangements agreed by the Governance & Nominations Committee, in cases of the absence of the Principal, whether by incapacity, leave or conflict of interest, the Senior Vice-Principal may deputise for the Principal. The Principal also retains the authority to delegate to another appropriate senior officer, acting on behalf of the Principal.

Section C: Matters Delegated to the University Secretary & COO

The University Secretary & COO is responsible for the administration of the University, compliance with all procedures and the provision of governance and administrative services for the Court, Senate and General Council.

In providing governance services for the Court, the University Secretary & COO is the Secretary to the Court and in that role carries out the duties and has the responsibilities of the secretary to the governing body in accordance with the Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance. The University Secretary & COO, in carrying out their role as Secretary to the Court, is solely responsible to the Court and, acting independently, has a direct reporting link to the Senior Governor of the Court for the conduct of Court business.

The University Secretary & COO is also the Establishment License Holder for the University, and the holder of the institutional Immigration License.

Status of Delegations to the University Secretary & COO

The Court has delegated to the Secretary the following:

- Authority to advise the Court and to take steps to ensure compliance of the Court with all applicable internal constitutional documents, codes, policies and procedures, and all applicable external legislation, governance codes, memoranda and grant conditions etc. The latter includes the Scottish Funding Council Financial Memorandum, where the Secretary is responsible for assisting the Principal to fully discharge their responsibilities, as the designated officer in respect of Scottish Funding Council funds, for compliance with the Scottish Funding Council Financial Memorandum, and for alerting the Court if any action or policy is incompatible with the terms of the Financial Memorandum.
- Authority to advise the Court on all matters relating to the Remit and Terms of Reference of Court Committees, ensuring that those Committees conduct business appropriately within the defined limits of their Terms of Reference.
- Authority to ensure that members of the Court are supplied with appropriate information in such a form and of such quality as to enable the Court to discharge its duties.
- Authority to maintain a Register of Interests of all members of the Court and its standing Committees, and senior officers of the University, and to publish these on the University's webpages.
- Authority, in their role as Secretary to the Court, to advise the Senior Governor of Court in respect to any matters where conflict, actual or potential, may occur between the Court and the Principal.
- Authority to be solely responsible for providing legal advice or for obtaining it for the Court and advising the Court on all matters of procedure.
- Authority to advise the Senior Governor of Court and the Governance and Nominations Committee on, and to administer all aspects of the Court's membership and succession planning for the Court and Court Committees. The responsibilities shall extend to cover arrangements for the recruitment of new members and maintenance of the register held on the skills and experience of Court and Court Committee members.
- Authority to advise the Senior Governor of Court and the Governance and Nominations Committee on, and to administer all aspects of the development and delivery programmes of induction and development for all members of the Court.

- Authority to report to the Court on any conflict of interest, actual or potential, on any matter between the University Secretary & COO's managerial responsibilities within the University and their responsibilities as the Secretary to the Court;
- Authority to sign any contract or agreement or other legal instrument on behalf of the University, subject to the University Financial Regulations, or to delegate such authority to an appropriate individual in writing.
- Authority to undertake such other responsibilities, as may be determined by the Court from time to time, to support the proper and effective operation of the Court in accordance with its responsibilities.

Use of the University Seal

In accordance with Ordinance No. 113, deeds, contracts and documents reserved for approval only by University Court are only deemed to be validly executed when sealed with the Common Seal of the University and bearing the signature of one member of the University Court plus the University Secretary & COO (or, in the absence of the University Secretary & COO, their appointed representative).

The signatures should be witnessed, in line with best practice, but it should be noted that the Ordinance states that the application of the Seal and signatures as outlined above is binding, whether attested by witnesses or not.

The use of the Seal should be accompanied by an appropriate, signed register entry to record the details of the date, document, transaction, signatories and witnesses.

Where appropriate, the requirement to use the University Seal is outlined within the *Guidance on the Use of the University Common Seal* in [Appendix 4](#), and relevant supporting tables of the Delegated Authority Schedule in [Appendix 1](#) below.

Section D: Matters Delegated to Senate

Defined by the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 as the body which ‘is responsible for the overall planning, co-ordination, development and supervision of the academic work of the institution’, the Senate is convened by the Principal and is constituted to discharge the functions of the University Court relating to the overall planning, co-ordination, development and supervision of the academic work of the University. As such, it is the supreme academic body of the University and has delegated authority for all academic matters relating to education and research.

In fulfilling its duties, Senate, convened by the Principal, brings together academic office holders with the perspectives of individual elected Senators, and through them their constituents, and student representatives. It is required to provide appropriate assurance on academic governance to University Court, and to seek approval from University Court for any material or strategic changes to the following key activity:

- The direction, regulation, approval and promotion of the policies and practices for education, learning and research of the University, including assessment.
- Discussions regarding matters of strategic importance for education and research.
- Approvals of the award of degrees, including honorary degrees.
- The maintenance of the quality and standards of the University’s awards.
- The setting and upholding of the academic regulatory framework of the University, including regulations that govern Students’ programmes of study, their progress and their awards.
- The regulation of the conduct of the students of the University.
- The approval of admission requirements to the University’s various degrees (known as “Going Rates”).
- The strategic oversight of appropriate and effective arrangements for student support (academic and non-academic).
- The setting of high-level academic policy and strategy, under the strategic direction contained within the University’s Strategic Plan, as approved by University Court.
- Reporting to the University Court on any matter referred to the Senate by University Court.
- Any requests to University Court for a Resolution or the amendment of a Resolution.
- The approval of the conferment of emeritus status on retiring professors of the University.
- The policies approved by Senate or its standing sub-committees, including policies relating to student academic appeals, discipline and complaints, and the hearing and determination of outcomes of related issues through sub-committees (the Senate Appeals and Complaints Panel, the Students’ Progress Committees and the Student Disciplinary Committee).

After each meeting, Senate reports to Court on matters approved as part of its delegated authority, as outlined above, referring on items endorsed by Senate requiring further approval from Court.

Senate also delegates some of its work to sub-committees, which draw in specialist expertise and school input, while providing an academic view through the debate of issues at full Senate. Much of the detailed work in regard to the above matters is delegated by the Senate to the University Committees of Research, Education and Quality Assurance.

The University Education Committee is responsible to the Senate for the strategic oversight of education provision and its alignment to the University’s Strategic Plan. Together with its sub-committees for Employability and Entrepreneurship and Student Support and Experience, it also oversees innovation, academic development and enhancement, together with a focus on the wider

student experience, including employability and entrepreneurship, student mobility and student support.

Assurance of the quality of the University's educational provision, particularly in relation to the design, implementation, evaluation and review of mechanisms for quality assurance and quality control, for the enhancement of the quality of education, and for the safeguarding of academic rests with the Quality Assurance Committee and its working sub-group, the Academic Policy and Regulations Group.

The research aspects of the Senate's remit are covered through the Research Committee, and its sub-committee the Postgraduate Research Committee in regard to research students. Non-student research interests are overseen by the Senate through regular reports from the Vice-Principal (Research) who chairs the Research Committee and through consideration of national initiatives as and when appropriate, e.g. in regard to the research assessment exercise.

Section E: Delegated Authority Schedule

Financial Planning

Revenue Budgets & General Expenditure

Court has the overall authority for University finance and it delegates responsibility for monitoring of these finances to the Finance & Resourcing Committee. The Finance & Resourcing Committee also has delegated authority for the approval of all expenditure above the threshold of £1M, and in turn may delegate relevant matters to its standing sub-committee, the Investment Committee.

Additional specific responsibilities are delegated via the Principal directly to the Executive Committees relating to Estates and Digital Strategy. It is a requirement that Project Boards are established to manage strategically important projects and these Boards will report to the relevant executive Committee, with escalation to the Senior Management Team, Finance & Resourcing Committee and Court depending on their financial value, novelty and strategic impacts.

Prior to the commencement of the Financial Year, Court will approve the 3-year revenue budget and the 10-year capital investment plan. This will include the budgets for projects contained either within the revenue or capital plan.

The Chief Financial Officer ensures that detailed budgets are prepared to reflect the outcome of the budget process and that these are communicated to budget holders as soon as possible following their approval by Court. Financial plans should be consistent and enable delivery of the University's Strategic Plan approved by Court.

Heads of School/Directorate and budget holders are not authorised to commit the University to expenditure without first ensuring that there are sufficient funds to meet the purchase cost. In practice, this means that purchase orders cannot be placed beyond the revenue, capital or project budget allocations approved by Court or the Finance & Resourcing Committee.

During the year, the Chief Financial Officer, following discussion with budget holders, is responsible for coordinating the submission of significant budget revisions to the Finance & Resourcing Committee for consideration before submission to Court for approval.

The agreed thresholds for any required approvals of budget variance are as follows:

- Any forecast of a departure (greater than £100K or 10% whichever is lower) from the overall budget target (including project budgets) must be reported immediately to the Head of School or Chief Operating Officer by budget holders and, if necessary, corrective action agreed and taken.
- Any variances over £500K need to be referred to the Senior Management Team and over £1M reported to the Finance & Resourcing Committee.
- Any expenditure out with the agreed revenue and capital budgets with a value between £1M and £5M must be approved by the Finance & Resourcing Committee. Any expenditure out with agreed budgets in excess of £5M must be approved by Court. Projects planned within the overall approved budget, with a total cost between £1m and £5m, must also be approved by Finance & Resourcing Committee. Projects over £5m in total cost or which are novel or contentious are subject to approval by Court.

When the Head of School/Directorate or Chief Financial Officer is on annual or other long-term leave, delegated authority must be agreed with the Chief Financial Officer. For the Chief Financial Officer, authorisation is delegated to a member of the Finance Management Team.

Leases of assets are revenue expenditure, and as such are approved through the revenue budget. Leases for land and buildings are approved by the Estates Committee, for onward recommendation to the Finance & Resourcing Committee.

Resources for planned capital expenditure on land, buildings, equipment, digital infrastructure, furniture and associated costs will be allocated as part of the 10-year capital programme approved by Court.

With appropriate input from the Senior Management Team via the Estates and Digital Strategy Committees, the Finance & Resourcing Committee has delegated authority to endorse the University's Annual and 10-Year Capital Plans for recommendation to Court for approval.

During the year, the Chief Financial Officer along with the Senior Vice-Principal are responsible for submitting capital programme amendments to the Estates and/or Digital Strategy Committee for approval and to the Finance & Resourcing Committee as required. An annual capital plan is produced on a rolling basis detailing the infrastructure projects approved for that financial year.

Treasury and Banking

Treasury Management

The Finance & Resourcing Committee is responsible for approving the [Treasury Management Policy](#) which sets out the strategy and policies for cash management, long term investments and borrowings. The policy must ensure compliance with any funding body approval for any secured or unsecured loans that go beyond the general consent levels set out in the Financial Memorandum.

Borrowing, Investment & Financing

All executive decisions concerning borrowing, investment or financing are delegated to the Chief Financial Officer with the appropriate approval from the Finance & Resourcing Committee and Court. All borrowing shall be undertaken in the name of the University and conform to funding body requirements.

On an annual basis, the University will prepare a Financing Report for approval by the Finance & Resourcing Committee and Court, which will include the following items:

- Compliance with the SFC's financial memorandum, external lenders covenant restrictions and the University's own internal covenant requirements.
- An assessment of progress against the approved repayment strategy.
- Where covenants are breached, or are projected to be breached and/or if there are any shortfall in debt repayment contributions, a recovery plan will be implemented over a maximum period of 3 years.
- An assessment of risks associated with the borrowing strategy.
- Any possible refinancing options which are optimal for the University.

The Investment Committee has delegated authority to implement investment recommendations made by the University's investment advisors within the existing investment strategy.

The Chief Financial Officer has delegated authority to manage investment maximisation of existing investments within existing mechanisms, with the appropriate approval of the Investment Committee.

The Investment Committee recognises the autonomy of the University and The Development Trust. As a consequence, decisions impacting on The Development Trust require the attendance and endorsement of at least one Development Trust appointee.

Banking Arrangements

Court is responsible for the appointment of the University's bankers and other professional financial advisers (such as investment managers) on the recommendation of the Finance & Resourcing Committee. The appointment will initially be for a five-year period and reviewed annually thereafter.

The Chief Financial Officer is responsible, on behalf of the Finance & Resourcing Committee, for liaising with the University's bankers in relation to the operation of bank accounts. Only the Chief Financial Officer may open or close a bank account for dealing with the University's funds. All bank accounts shall be in the name of the University or its subsidiary companies.

The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for ensuring that all bank accounts are subject to regular reconciliation and that large or unusual items are investigated as appropriate.

Income Management

All income streams, including research grants and commercial income should be assessed under the appropriate due diligence ethics and procedures.

Student Fees

The amendment of tuition fees and rents, if in the normal range of increases, is delegated to the Senior Management Team. In the case of strategic or material changes to fees, delegated authority passes to the Finance & Resourcing Committee, for onward endorsement by Court.

Research Grants, Consultancy & Service Contracts

Delegated authority for the submission and acceptance of research grants is held by the Director of Research & Innovation. All sources of income will be subject to the University's processes for ethical review. Revenue and capital expenditure for individual transactions are subject to standard financial authority limits. Approval for submission to the funder is subject to the following threshold approvals:

- For the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition, applications under the value of £350k may be approved by the Head of School.
- For all Schools and Institutes, applications over the value of £350k but under £1m must be approved by the Head of Institute/Head of School and the Director of Research & Innovation.
- Higher value applications over £1m must be referred to the Chief Financial Officer and Senior Vice-Principal for approval.

The Director of Research & Innovation holds delegated authority for the approval and negotiation of terms for all consultancy arrangements. Consultancy must be undertaken in line with the [University's guidelines for the approval and undertaking of consultancies and other paid work](#), as approved by Court.

The University's costing and pricing procedures will apply to the provision of University services relating to the use of labs and research equipment. The Chief Financial Officer and Director of Research & Innovation must review and approve all costing, pricing and financial arrangements for such services before any commitments are made.

Donations & Endowments

The Investment Committee is responsible for proposing and agreeing investment objectives with the University Court and Development Trust and has delegated authority to recommend through the Finance & Resourcing Committee a long-term investment strategy appropriate to meet these objectives, including benchmarks and targets for the investment managers and/or advisors.

The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for maintaining a record of the terms for each endowment fund and for ensuring that funds are appropriately accounted for and disbursed. The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for the monitoring the performance of Fund Managers and advising the Finance & Resourcing Committee on the control and investment of the endowment fund portfolio, via the Investment Committee.

The Finance & Resourcing Committee, via its delegated authority to the Investment Committee, is responsible for ensuring that all the University's endowment funds are operated within any relevant legislation and the specific requirements for each endowment.

Due diligence in respect of large donations is delegated to the Governance and Nominations Committee. When shares are offered by a donor, the Chief Financial Officer is responsible for the same procedures they would normally undertake for monetary donations. This includes, if necessary, approval by the Governance and Nominations Committee.

Debt Collection

The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for the co-ordination of credit control and debt collection and will ensure that effective procedures are in place. Credit arrangements will be approved by the Finance & Resourcing Committee. The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for implementing agreed credit arrangements.

Requests to write-off debts in excess of £50,000 must be referred in writing to the Chief Financial Officer for submission to the Finance & Resourcing Committee for consideration. Debts below this level may be written off with the permission of the Chief Financial Officer, and authorised by the Assistant Director, Financial Accounting. In exceptional cases not related to debt, the University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer should be consulted and has decision-making authority.

Estates

Land, Buildings and Projects

The purchase, sale of land or buildings, or other items of equipment should be undertaken in line with the following authority and with reference to Funding Council requirements where exchequer funded assets or exchequer funds are involved:

Value	Authorisation
Up to £500k (within existing approved budgets)	Estates Committee
Up to £1m	Senior Management Team
£1m - £5m	Finance & Resourcing Committee
Over £5m	Court

The Finance & Resourcing Committee can endorse individual land and property transactions and/or projects consistent with the direction of the Capital or Revenue Plan with a value between £1m and £5m.

Additionally, the Senior Management Team delegates approval authority to the Estates Committee for projects up to £500k in value, within existing budget plans.

Land Owned by Wholly Owned Subsidiary Companies

Decisions relating to the sale of land owned by a wholly owned subsidiary company of the University must be approved by the Finance & Resourcing Committee and Court, depending on value, in addition to gaining approval from the Board of Trustees of the wholly owned subsidiary. Any funds generated by disposals of land owned by a wholly owned subsidiary company with charitable status must be used in accordance with the purposes of that organisation's charitable objects.

Details of the University's subsidiaries and arms-length/associated bodies are provided in [Appendix 5](#).

Building and Commercial Property Contracts

Building and commercial property contracts are an executive responsibility and are administered by the Director of Estates and Facilities subject to the approval limits detailed in the [Budget Management section](#) of this Schedule.

Consultants may be appointed if the project, as determined by the Estates Committee, is too large or too specialised. Appointments shall be subject to tendering and other procedures where appropriate.

Major building contract payments shall be made only on receipt of an authorised certificate approved by the Director of Estates and Facilities (or other duly authorised officer).

Land and Property Disputes and Disposals

The University Secretary & COO should be consulted for all disputes on contracts involving land and property law, or where there are matters of concern.

The Chief Financial Officer has delegated authority to approve decisions regarding disputes with suppliers on framework agreements or approved contracts, in consultation with the University Secretary & COO.

Approval from the Scottish Funding Council must be sought for the disposal of property purchased with public funds.

Commercialisation

The Commercialisation Committee has the delegated authority from Court to consider and make recommendations to Court on the University's overall commercialisation strategy, and to have oversight of the monitoring of performance of the University consultancy, spin-out and joint venture companies, and the creation, dissolution or sale of University subsidiary companies (supported by relevant Executive Committees).

Any new aspect of business, proposed establishment of a company, joint venture or new overseas activity, which will require an investment in buildings, resources or staff time should be presented to the Finance & Resourcing Committee for approval and onward recommendation to Court.

Any projects that are unusual in nature, carry considerable financial and/or reputational risk, must be referred to Court for consideration (see section on [Novel & Contentious Arrangements](#)).

Intellectual Property Rights & Patents

Certain activities undertaken within the University including research and consultancy may give rise to ideas, designs and inventions which may be patentable. These are collectively known as intellectual property.

The Commercialisation Committee is responsible for approving the policy governing intellectual property accruing to the University from inventions and discoveries made by staff in the course of their work.

Companies, Joint Ventures & Consortium Arrangements

In certain circumstances it may be beneficial for the University to form a Company or joint venture to undertake services or commercialisation of intellectual property on behalf of the University. Court has approved an [Intellectual Property and Spin-Out policy](#) for the creation and governance of companies, including guidance on intellectual property exploitation and revenue sharing in respect of:

- the registration and all subsequent dealings with patents, design rights, trademarks and other intellectual property rights including licensing and outright transfer of such rights;
- Dealings with copyright, know-how and all other unregistered intellectual property rights (including in relation to software and teaching materials), licensing and outright transfer of such rights; and
- Technology transfer related agreements, including Confidentiality Agreements, Material Transfer Agreements and Heads of Terms.

It is the responsibility of the Commercialisation Committee to approve the constitution and shareholding arrangements and, if required, appoint University representative directors of companies, wholly or partially owned by the University. The Research & Innovation directorate have delegated authority to negotiate and accept the contractual relationship surrounding company spin-outs.

The formal link between a company and the University will be undertaken by a nominated Director appointed to the company board by the Start Up and Spin Out Group. The nominated Director will be responsible for attending company Board meetings and reporting to the University on the performance and activities of the company and will represent the University's shareholder interest. Where no Director is appointed, the University will receive periodic reports via a reporting requirement in the shareholders agreement.

The directors of companies where the University is the majority shareholder are required to submit a report to the University. Performance of University investments will be reported to both Commercialisation Committee, to inform strategy development, and Finance & Resourcing Committee.

Where the University is involved in a joint venture arrangement, a formal Joint Venture Agreement and Operating Agreement will be put in place with Finance & Resourcing Committee approval. This will include the reporting requirements to the Finance & Resourcing Committee on an annual basis.

Legal Agreements

The University's standard terms and conditions, as set out in the [Financial Regulations](#) and [Procurement Policy and Procedures](#) will apply to all legal agreements.

Legal agreements with no financial impact include all agreements not covered elsewhere in this schedule, with the exception of any bespoke contracts for services outside of the standard terms and conditions of the University. Any such agreements should be reviewed by the University Secretary & COO, who has the right to sign off such contracts following review.

Student & Academic Activities

Admissions

The principles underpinning the acceptance of prospective students to the University are set out within the [Admissions Policy](#) and accompanying [Guidance Notes for Admission](#).

Authority for the scrutiny and endorsement of amendments to the University's Admissions Policy and arrangements is delegated to the Student Recruitment Committee, according to its remit for oversight of the development and implementation of long-term strategy, policy, planning and process relating to all undergraduate and postgraduate student recruitment and admissions. Any such amendments recommended by the Student Recruitment Committee should be approved by the Senior Management Team, and in the case of strategic changes to Admissions and Recruitment Policies, must be approved by University Court.

The Head of School has the delegated authority (including signing authority for the relevant contracts; which may be sub-delegated) for individual student admission decisions for:

- Undergraduate
- Visiting undergraduate
- Taught postgraduate
- Research postgraduate
- Visiting postgraduate

As part of the planning and budgeting round the Head of School, Vice-Principal Global Engagement and Vice-Principal Education undertake a collaborative process to agree the volume of admissions appropriate to the School, based on an assessment of available resources, and the entry requirements for the School, according to a detailed understanding of its programmes and the academic market for each discipline.

Fees and Refunds

The Senior Management Team has delegated authority for the approval of increases to the University fee spine of up to 5%, or in line with the Retail Price Index (RPI), if higher. Any additional increases out with these reference values should be approved by the Finance & Resourcing Committee.

In the case of a novel change to fee structures, for example the introduction of a new fee model or structure for students from the Rest of UK (RUK), the authority for approval rests with University Court.

The assessment and consideration of applications for the refund of tuition fees should be carried out by the relevant Head of School, subject to the University's eligibility criteria. Recommendations for the approval of fee refunds should be presented to the University Secretary & COO for final approval.

The authority arrangements for the write-off of fee debt are outlined within the [Income Management section](#) of this Schedule, under Debt Collection.

Staff Matters

Appointments and Promotions

Authority for the appointment and promotion of staff is delegated in accordance with the schedule outlined within the [Delegated Authority Table: Staff Matters](#) below.

In cases where the arrangement concerned relates to the Principal, the Principal shall withdraw from the Remuneration Committee and take no part in the discussions or any decisions.

Employment Disputes

Authority for the implementation of legally binding orders of courts, tribunals or other judicial bodies in relation to employment matters as well as extra-judicial settlement of employment disputes is delegated as outlined within the [Delegated Authority Table: Staff Matters](#) below.

The Director of People and Chief Financial Officer must be notified of all Awards prior to authorisation.

Authority in relation to other staff and salary decisions is delegated as detailed within the Delegated Authority Table: Staff Matters.

Staff and Court Member Expenses

Staff and Court Member expenses should be signed off in line with the University's [Expenses & Benefits Policy](#).

Staff expenses of Vice-Principals shall be authorised by the Principal, those of Heads of School shall be authorised by the Senior Vice-Principal, and those of Directors will be authorised by the University Secretary & COO. The expenses of the Principal shall be authorised by the Senior Governor of Court, and the expenses of the Senior Vice-Principal and University Secretary & COO shall be authorised by the Principal.

Claims for members of Court will be authorised by the University Secretary & COO or Head of Governance in their absence. Claims for meeting attendance will be based on out-of-pocket expenses but only reasonable expenses can be reimbursed.

Salaries and Pensions

All University staff will be appointed to the salary scales approved by Court and in accordance with appropriate conditions of service.

Court, supported by the Pensions Advisory Group, is responsible for undertaking the role of employer in relation to appropriate pension arrangements for employees.

Severance and other Non-recurring Payments

The approval of Severance Terms and substantial changes to pay and/or terms and conditions of the Principal & Vice-Chancellor are reserved to Court, on the recommendation of the Remuneration Committee, under their delegated authority to oversee severance arrangements for senior staff and ensure that account is taken of the *SFC Guidance on Severance Arrangements in respect of Senior Staff*.

All other severance payments shall only be made in accordance with relevant legislation and funding body guidance and under the approved [Severance Policy](#) as approved by Court. All such payments shall be authorised and calculations checked by the Director of People or the Chief Financial Officer. Any individual amounts which do not fall within the parameters above or are in excess of £100,000 require approval by the Remuneration Committee.

Appendix 1: Delegated Authority Tables

Delegated Authority Table: Governance

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Appointment of designated Standing Committees of University Court		Governance & Nominations Committee AND University Court		University Secretary & COO	University Court Standing Orders	N
Approval of changes to remits and compositions of Standing Committees of University Court		Governance & Nominations Committee AND University Court		University Secretary & COO		N
Appointment or removal of individual members of Court		Governance & Nominations Committee AND University Court	University Secretary & COO	Senior Governor	University Court Standing Orders	N
Approval of arrangements for the election of the Senior Governor of Court		University Court	University Secretary & COO		Guidance and Rules for the Election and Appointment of the Senior Governor of Court	N
Approval of Ordinances		University Court AND Privy Council	Senior Governor AND University Secretary & COO	Senate AND General Council (to provide endorsement and comment)	University Court Standing Orders	Y
Approval of Resolutions		University Court	Senior Governor AND University Secretary & COO	Senate AND General Council (to provide endorsement and comment)	University Court Standing Orders	Y
Approval of the Schedule of Delegation and any amendments to delegation arrangements to Committees, the Principal and senior officers		University Court		University Secretary & COO		N
Approval of amendments to the Standing Orders of University Court		Governance & Nominations Committee AND University Court		University Secretary & COO		N

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Approval of any project, regardless of cost, which is considered novel or contentious		University Court	University Secretary & COO		Financial Regulations 2.4.2	See Guidance on the Use of the University Common Seal

Delegated Authority Table: Financial Planning

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Strategy & Risk						
Approval of the University's Strategic Plan and areas of reporting via KPIs		University Court		Senior Management Team		N
Approval of the University's Risk Appetite Statement		University Court		Director of Planning		N
Appointment of Internal and External Auditors and agreement of annual fees		Audit & Risk Committee AND University Court	University Secretary & COO	Chief Financial Officer AND University Secretary & COO	Financial Regulations 1.7.1; 1.7.5	N
Approval of changes to accounting policies		Audit & Risk Committee AND University Court		Chief Financial Officer		N
Revenue Budgets & General Expenditure						
Approval of the University financial strategy, to include the 3-year revenue budget and 10-year capital investment plan		Finance & Resourcing Committee AND University Court		Principal Senior Vice-Principal Chief Financial Officer Director of Estates Director of Digital & Information Systems	Financial Regulations 2.2.1; 2.3.1; 2.5.2	N
Approval of annual Capital Plan		Senior Management Team via Estates and Digital Strategy Committees AND Finance & Resourcing Committee AND University Court	Senior Vice Principal AND Chief Financial Officer	Director of Estates Director of Digital & Information Systems	Financial Regulations 2.2.2; 2.3.2; 2.5.3	N
In-year amendments to capital programmes		Estates Committee AND/OR Digital Strategy Committee AND Finance & Resourcing Committee	Chief Financial Officer AND Senior Vice-Principal		Financial Regulations 2.3.1	N
Virement of budgets within the financial framework approved by University Court		Principal	Chief Financial Officer	Assistant Director Financial Accounting Assistant Director Financial Planning & Budgeting		N

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Budget variance approvals (requests for additional revenue budget), approval of business plans for proposed expenditure out with the agreed revenue and capital budget	Up to £100k or 10% (whichever is lower)	Head of School/Director AND Senior Vice-Principal OR University Secretary & COO	Chief Financial Officer		Financial Regulations 2.2.4; 2.5.5; 2.5.6; 2.5.7	N
	£500k +	Senior Management Team	Chief Financial Officer			
	£1m +	Finance & Resourcing Committee	Chief Financial Officer			
	£5m +	University Court	Chief Financial Officer			
Approval of material asset sales	Up to £1m	SMT	University Secretary & COO	Director of Estates Chief Financial Officer	Financial Regulations 5.1.1	N
	£1m - £5m	Finance & Resourcing Committee				
	Over £5m	University Court				
Leases of assets		Estates Committee AND Finance & Resourcing Committee	University Secretary & COO	Director of Estates Chief Financial Officer		Y
Purchasing authority for all revenue, capital and project expenditure within approved revenue budget, and formal acceptance of approved contracts and requisition of goods, services and works through an approved framework agreement	Less than £1k	Business Services Administrators	Business Services Administrators	Head of School/Director	Financial Regulations 4.2.1; 4.2.2; 4.2.6	N
	£1k to £25k	Budget Holder	Budget Holder	Head of School/Director		
	£25k to £100k	Head of School/Director (or Chief Financial Officer if absent)	Head of School/Director			
	£100k to £250k	Senior Vice-Principal OR University Secretary & COO AND Chief Financial Officer (or delegate if absent)	Senior Vice-Principal OR Chief Financial Officer OR University Secretary & COO			
	Above £250k	Principal OR Senior Vice-Principal OR University Secretary & COO AND Chief Financial Officer	Principal OR Senior Vice-Principal OR University Secretary & COO	Chief Financial Officer		

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Formal acceptance of approved contracts and requisition of goods, services and works out with regulated procurement		Finance & Resourcing Committee OR University Court	Chief Financial Officer	University Secretary & COO	Financial Regulations 4.3.6	N
Financial Statements & Records						
Approval of the annual consolidated accounts for the University		Audit & Risk Committee AND Finance & Resourcing Committee AND University Court	Senior Governor AND Accountable Officer (Principal) AND Chief Financial Officer	Chief Financial Officer Assistant Director Financial Accounting	Financial Regulations 1.7.4; 2.5.1; 2.6.1; 2.6.2	Y (SFC copies)
Approval of the Internal Audit Annual Report for submission to the SFC		Audit & Risk Committee AND University Court	University Secretary & COO	Chief Financial Officer		N
Approval of the Outcome Agreement with the Scottish Funding Council		Finance & Resourcing Committee AND University Court	Chief Financial Officer	University Secretary & COO		N
Modern Slavery Statement for annual publication on the University webpages		University Court	Chief Financial Officer	University Secretary & COO		N

Delegated Authority Table: Treasury & Banking

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Bank Accounts						
Appointment of the University's banking providers and other professional financial advisers		Finance & Resourcing Committee AND University Court	Chief Financial Officer	University Secretary & COO	Financial Regulations 2.8.10	N
Operation of University bank accounts, including the opening and closing of accounts		Finance & Resourcing Committee	Chief Financial Officer		Financial Regulations 2.8.11; 2.8.12	N
Amendment of bank mandate(s)		Chief Financial Officer	Chief Financial Officer		Financial Regulations 2.8.11	N
Set-up of direct debits or standing orders		Chief Financial Officer	Chief Financial Officer		Financial Regulations 2.8.11	N
Borrowing, Investment & Financing						
Agreement of University Investment Strategy and investment objectives		Investment Committee AND Development Trust AND Finance & Resourcing Committee	Chief Financial Officer	University's Investment Fund Managers		N
Approval of the University's borrowing commitments, including re-financing or material variation to existing arrangements, any new borrowing arrangements, and any transaction involving any "sale or lease-back" of material assets		Chief Financial Officer AND Finance & Resourcing Committee	Chief Financial Officer	University Secretary & COO	Financial Regulations 2.8.2	Y
Approval of endowment fund transactions and authorisation to deal shares on behalf of the University through its nominated broker		Investment Committee AND Finance & Resourcing Committee	Chief Financial Officer	University's Investment Fund Managers	Financial Regulations 3.4.6; 5.1.3	N
Maximisation of existing investments within existing mechanisms		Chief Financial Officer AND Investment Committee	Chief Financial Officer	University Secretary & COO AND University's Investment Fund Managers	Financial Regulations 3.4.6; 5.1.3	N
Investments into and withdrawals from the University's endowment funds		Investment Committee	Chief Financial Officer	University Secretary & COO AND University's Investment Fund Managers	Financial Regulations 3.4.6; 5.1.3	N

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Approval of annual Financing Report		Finance & Resourcing Committee AND University Court	Chief Financial Officer	University Secretary & COO	Financial Regulations 2.8.8	N
Approval of use application, or change in application, of funds raised by Private Placement or bond issue		Investment Committee AND University Court	Chief Financial Officer	Senior Vice-Principal University Secretary & COO		Y
Treasury Management						
Approval of Treasury Management Policy		Finance & Resourcing Committee	Chief Financial Officer		Financial Regulations 2.8.1	N

Delegated Authority Table: Income Management

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Debt Management						
Write-off of unpaid income due to the University	Up to £50k	Chief Financial Officer	Assistant Director, Financial Accounting		Financial Regulations 3.6.3	N
	Over £50k	Finance & Resourcing Committee	Chief Financial Officer			N
Approval of credit arrangements		Finance & Resourcing Committee	Chief Financial Officer		Financial Regulations 3.6.2	N
Gifts & Donations						
Acceptance of gifts and donations	Over £100	Head of School/Directorate	Chief Financial Officer	University Secretary & COO	Financial Regulations 1.6.14; 1.6.16	N
	Donation of large sums or shares	Governance & Nominations Committee (due diligence)	Chief Financial Officer	University Secretary & COO	Financial Regulations 3.4.8	N
	Novel and contentious	Finance & Resourcing Committee AND University Court	Chief Financial Officer	University Secretary & COO		N
Research						
Acceptance of research grants and negotiation and acceptance of contracts including Material Transfer Agreements, Industrial Studentships, Confidentiality Agreements, Collaboration & consortium agreements, Research Services & University Consultancy		Director of Research & Innovation	Director of Research & Innovation		Financial Regulations 3.3.8; 3.5.4	N
Approval for submission of research grants to the relevant funding body	Under £350k	Head of Institute/School	Head of Institute/School	Director of Research & Innovation	Research Governance Handbook	N
	£350k to £1m	Head of Institute/School AND Director of Research & Innovation	Director of Research & Innovation			N
	Over £1m	Chief Financial Officer AND Senior Vice-Principal	Director of Research & Innovation			N
Provision of University services relating to use of labs and research equipment		Chief Financial Officer AND Director of Research & Innovation	Director of Research & Innovation		Research Governance Handbook	N
Other University Income						
Approval of events contracts		Director of Estates	Director of Estates	University Secretary & COO		N

Delegated Authority Table: Estates and Capital Projects

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Strategic Approvals						
Approval of the University's Capital Plan and Estates Strategy for the management and development of the University's land and buildings		Finance & Resourcing Committee AND University Court	University Secretary & COO	Senior Vice-Principal Director of Estates Director of Digital & Information Services Chief Financial Officer	Financial Regulations 2.3.1	N
Approval of the establishment of new campuses, whether overseas or in the UK		University Court	University Secretary & COO	Senior Vice-Principal Director of Estates Director of Digital & Information Services Chief Financial Officer		N
Land, Buildings and Projects						
The purchase or sale of land or buildings, or other items of equipment, or projects consistent with the direction of the Capital Plan	Approval of projects up to £500k (where resources available and previously agreed within the capital budget)	Estates Committee OR Digital Strategy Committee	University Secretary & COO	Senior Vice-Principal Director of Estates Senior Vice-Principal University Secretary & COO	Financial Regulations 5.1.1	N
	Up to £1m	Senior Management Team	University Secretary & COO	Senior Vice-Principal Director of Estates Director of Digital & Information Services Chief Financial Officer		Y
	£1m to £5m	Finance & Resourcing Committee	University Secretary & COO	Senior Vice-Principal Director of Estates Director of Digital & Information Services Chief Financial Officer		Y
	£5m +	University Court	University Secretary & COO	Senior Vice-Principal Director of Estates Director of Digital & Information Services Chief Financial Officer		Y
Decisions relating to the sale of land owned by a wholly owned subsidiary company of the University	Up to £1m	Senior Management Team AND Trustee Board of wholly owned subsidiary	University Secretary & COO	Estates Committee OR Director of Estates (if a single property)		Y

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
	Up to £5m	Finance & Resourcing Committee AND Trustee Board of wholly owned subsidiary	University Secretary & COO	Senior Vice-Principal Director of Estates Chief Financial Officer		Y
	£5m +	University Court AND Trustee Board of wholly owned subsidiary	University Secretary & COO	Senior Vice-Principal Director of Estates Chief Financial Officer		Y
Entering into or exiting from leases for land & buildings		Estates Committee AND Finance & Resourcing Committee	University Secretary & COO	Director of Estates Chief Financial Officer		Y
Renting or leasing University space for commercial purposes	Up to £100k	Director of Estates	University Secretary & COO			Y
	Up to £1m	Estates and/or Digital Strategy Committee AND Senior Management Team	University Secretary & COO	Director of Estates Chief Financial Officer		Y
	£1m to £5m	Finance & Resourcing Committee	University Secretary & COO	Director of Estates Chief Financial Officer		Y
	£5m +	University Court	University Secretary & COO	Director of Estates Chief Financial Officer		Y
Disputes on contracts involving land and property law, or where there are matters of concern		University Secretary & COO	University Secretary & COO	Principal AND/OR Senior Governor		N
Decisions regarding disputes with suppliers on framework agreements or approved contracts		Chief Financial Officer AND University Secretary & COO	Chief Financial Officer AND University Secretary & COO			N

Delegated Authority Table: Commercialisation

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Strategic Approvals						
Strategic UK or International Bids: large strategic, one-off calls for funding bids including joint bids with other institutions or agreements with institutions or other parties regarding sharing of monies or other University resources provided by external agencies for infrastructure for research or education.		SMT AND Commercialisation Committee WITH escalation as required to Senior Governor AND/OR Chair of Audit & Risk Committee For final approval by University Court	Principal OR Senior Vice-Principal OR University Secretary & COO	Senior Management Team	Financial Regulations 2.4.1; 6.4.1-6.4.8	Y
Mergers & Strategic Alignments: proposals involving in the UK or overseas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • legal or reputation commitments (Memorandum of Agreement or Understanding); • creation of a visible entity or joint venture; • delivery or shared significant education, research or operational activities out with the University of Aberdeen campus locations; or • the award of dual/joint degrees for multiple programmes. 		SMT AND University Court	Principal OR Senior Vice-Principal OR University Secretary & COO	Senior Management Team		Y
Dissolution or sale of University subsidiary companies		Commercialisation Committee AND University Court	Principal OR Senior Vice-Principal OR University Secretary & COO	Senior Management Team	Financial Regulations 5.1.4; 6.4.1-6.4.8	Y
Intellectual Property						
Registration and all subsequent dealings with patents, design rights, trademarks and other intellectual property rights including licensing and outright transfer of such rights		Director of Research & Innovation	Director of Research & Innovation	University Secretary & COO	Financial Regulations 5.2.4	Y

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Dealings with copyright, know-how and all other unregistered intellectual property rights (including in relation to software and teaching materials), licensing and outright transfer of such rights		Director of Research & Innovation	Director of Research & Innovation	University Secretary & COO	Financial Regulations 5.2.4	N
Technology transfer related agreements including Confidentiality Agreements, Material Transfer Agreements and Heads of Terms		Director of Research & Innovation	Director of Research & Innovation	University Secretary & COO	Financial Regulations 5.2.4	N
Approval of Intellectual Property Policy		Commercialisation Committee	University Secretary & COO		Financial Regulations 5.2.2	N
Corporate Governance						
Agreements related to University spin-out companies including company formation documents, shareholder agreements and other documents establishing investment and equity distributions in such companies		Commercialisation Committee	University Secretary & COO		Financial Regulations 5.1.4; 6.4.1-6.4.8	Y
Appointment of University representative directors of companies wholly or partially owned by the University		Commercialisation Committee	University Secretary & COO		Financial Regulations 6.4.1-6.4.8	N
Negotiation and acceptance of contractual relationships surrounding company spin-outs		Research & Innovation Directorate	Director of Research & Innovation		Financial Regulations 6.4.4	N
Legal Agreements						
Approval of bespoke contracts for services outside of the standard terms and conditions of the University		University Secretary & COO	University Secretary & COO			N

Delegated Authority Table: Student and Academic Activities

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Academic Governance						
Approval of major academic re-organisations of the curriculum on the recommendation of Senate		Senate AND University Court	Senior Vice-Principal AND Vice-Principal Education	Vice-Principal Research		N
Approval of the annual institution-led Review of Academic Quality		University Court	Senior Vice-Principal AND Vice-Principal Education	Vice-Principal Research		N
Approval of the academic structure of the University in consultation with Senate, in particular changes to Schools, and including the creation or amendments of Schools and constituent disciplines		University Court	Senior Vice-Principal AND Vice-Principal Education	Vice-Principal Research AND Senate (as advisory body)		N
Direction, regulation, approval and promotion of the policies and practices for education, learning and research of the University, including assessment		Senate	Senior Vice-Principal AND Vice-Principal Education	Vice-Principal Research		N
Setting and approval of the academic regulatory framework of the University, including regulations governing Students' programmes of study, progress and awards		Senate	Senior Vice-Principal AND Vice-Principal Education	Vice-Principal Research		N
Approval of partnership proposals and renewals of partnership agreements		Student Recruitment Committee AND/OR International Partnerships Committee	Senior Vice-Principal AND/OR Vice-Principal Global Engagement	University Secretary & COO		Y
	Novel and contentious	University Court	Senior Vice-Principal AND/OR Vice-Principal Global Engagement	University Secretary & COO Senior Management Team		Y
Admissions						
Routine approval of admissions strategy, associated policy and amendments		Student Recruitment Committee AND Senior Management Team	Vice-Principal Global Engagement			N

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Strategic changes to admissions policies and/or entry criteria		Student Recruitment Committee AND Senior Management Team AND University Court	Vice-Principal Global Engagement	Heads of School		N
Authority for individual student admissions out with standard conditions		Heads of School	Heads of School	Vice-Principal Education		N
Agreement of individual School entry requirements		Head of School	Vice-Principal Education	Senior Vice-Principal Vice-Principal Global Engagement		N
Agreements involving agencies and equivalents for the recruitment of international students		Student Recruitment Committee	Vice-Principal Global Engagement	University Secretary & COO		Y
Fees and refunds						
Approval of refunds of student tuition fees		Head of School AND University Secretary & COO	University Secretary & COO			N
Approval of tuition fees (degree courses) and accommodation fees for onward endorsement by University Court	Normal range of increases (up to 5% or in line with RPI)	Senior Management Team	University Secretary & COO		Financial Regulations 3.1.8	N
	Strategic or material changes (over 5%)	Finance & Resourcing Committee AND University Court	University Secretary & COO			N
	Novel change to fee structures	University Court	University Secretary & COO			N
Agreement of tuition fees for short/summer courses		Heads of School	Heads of School		Financial Regulations 3.5.5 – 3.5.9	N
Approval of write-off of tuition fee debt	Up to £50k	Chief Financial Officer	Chief Financial Officer	University Secretary for exceptional cases not related to debt		N
Awards and Conferment						
Approvals of the award of degrees, including honorary degrees		Senate	Academic Registrar			N
Approval of the conferment of emeritus status on retiring professors of the University		Honorary Awards Committee AND Senate	Principal			N

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Student Appeals and Complaints						
Approval of policies relating to student academic appeals, discipline and complaints, and the hearing and determination of outcomes of related issues through sub-committees (Senate Appeals and Complaints Panel, Students' Progress Committees and Student Disciplinary Committee)		Senate	Academic Registrar			N
Approval of policies relating to research complaints and appeals		University Research Committee AND Senate	Vice-Principal Research			N
Oversight of complaints of unacceptable research conduct	Staff complainant	Nominated person: School/Directorate Director of Research	School/Directorate Director of Research	Vice-Principal Research	Research Governance Handbook (4.2.2 for nominated complaints handlers) AND/OR Code of Practice on Student Discipline AND/OR Whistleblowing Policy	N
	Student complainant	Nominated person: Dean for Postgraduate Research	Dean for Postgraduate Research	Vice-Principal Research		N
	In case of conflict of interest	Nominated person: Dean of Research of relevant University area	Dean of Research of relevant University area	Vice-Principal Research		N
	External complainant	Nominated person: Dean of Research of relevant University area	Dean of Research of relevant University area	Vice-Principal Research		N

Delegated Authority Table: Staff Matters

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Strategic Approvals						
Oversight and approval of strategic People issues		Staff Experience Committee AND University Court	University Secretary & COO	Principal Senior Vice-Principal University Secretary & COO Director of People		N
Appointments and Severance						
Approval of the appointment, re-appointment or dismissal of the Principal		University Court	Senior Governor	University Secretary & COO		N
Approval of severance terms and substantial changes to pay and/or terms and conditions of the Principal		Remuneration Committee AND University Court	Senior Governor	University Secretary & COO Director of People		N
Approval of the appointment or dismissal of the Secretary to the Court		University Court	Senior Governor	Principal Director of People		N
Staff appointments	Grades 1-9	Financial Planning Committee	University Secretary & COO (PS) Senior Vice-Principal (Academic)	Salary authorised through HR for new appointments. Pay Policy approved by SMT. Approval rests with Head of HR.		N
Approval of severance arrangements and terms	Under £100k	Senior Vice-Principal OR University Secretary & COO	Senior Vice-Principal OR University Secretary & COO	Principal Director of People	Financial Regulations 4.15.12 Severance Policy	N
	Over £100k OR SMT Member OR Novel and contentious	Remuneration Committee	Principal (as Accountable Officer)	Principal (or nominee) WITH Senior Governor Director of People		N
	Professorial/Professional G9	Remuneration Committee	Principal (as Accountable Officer)	Senior Vice-Principal (or nominee) OR University Secretary & COO (or nominee) WITH Principal Director of People		

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Pay						
Approval of the Senior Staff Pay Policy		Remuneration Committee AND University Court		Principal Director of People Chief Financial Officer		N
Salary approvals	G1-9	Head of HR				N
	SMT appointments	Remuneration Committee agree thresholds for advertisement and are notified of appointment level	Head of HR			N
Promotions, re-gradings or offers to increase salary or make other payments to staff over and above contracted entitlement		Promotion Committee OR Regrading Panels	Head of HR			N
Implementation of nationally negotiated pay awards		SMT		Included within the budget presented to FRC and Court		N
Approval of expenses						
Court Members		University Secretary & COO OR Head of Governance	University Secretary & COO OR Head of Governance	N/A		N
Principal		Senior Governor of Court	Senior Governor of Court	University Secretary & COO OR Head of Governance		N
Senior Vice-Principal		Principal	Principal			N
University Secretary & COO		Principal	Principal	Head of Governance		N
Vice-Principals		Principal	Principal			N
Heads of School		Senior Vice-Principal	Senior Vice-Principal			N
Directors		University Secretary & COO	University Secretary & COO		Financial Regulations 4.12.3	N
Individual staff members		Main budget holder	Main budget holder			N
Disputes						
Approval of payment of awards from employment disputes and other legally binding decisions		Director of People AND Chief Financial Officer	Director of People			Y
Pensions						
Agreement of pension arrangements for employees		University Court	Principal AND Chief Financial Officer	Director of People AND Pensions Advisory Group		Y

Area of Decision	Threshold Value	Approver	Role holder with Signing Authority	Individuals for consultation	Reference	Seal Required?
Consultancy						
Approval of private consultancies or other paid work out with an individual's contract of employment		Head of School/Directorate AND Senior Vice-Principal	Head of School/Directorate		Financial Regulations 3.5.2; 3.5.3; 3.5.4	N

Appendix 2 Glossary of Terms

The following general terms have been used in this document:

Term	Description
Academic Governance	The framework of policies, structures, relationships, systems and processes that collectively provide leadership to and oversight of a higher education provider's academic activities (teaching, learning and scholarship, and research) at an institutional level.
Accountable Officer	The accountable officer is a person, normally the head of the institution (the Principal), who reports to the regulatory and funding bodies on behalf of the institution.
Acts, Ordinances and Resolutions	The set of Acts of Parliament and other legislative documents that set confer powers and responsibilities to University Court.
Annual Report and Accounts	A corporate document that details the company's financial condition and operations over the previous year.
Approver	The Committee or individual which must approve the transaction, arrangement or project.
Audit & Risk Committee	A committee of Court that provides advice on the effectiveness of the University's procedures for audit, financial control, governance and risk management, and provides assurances in these key areas through its annual report to the Scottish Funding Council, which is approved by Court.
Budget Holder	The member of staff who has been assigned their own budget other than a Head of School or Directorate and is accountable to their Head of School or Directorate for it.
Capital Plan	The plan which identifies and prioritises capital projects which will help achieve the University's strategic objectives. Resources for planned capital expenditure on land, buildings, equipment, digital infrastructure, furniture and associated costs will be allocated as part of the 10-year capital programme approved by Court.
Charity Trustees	The people who share ultimate responsibility for governing a charity and directing how it is managed and run.
Chief Financial Officer	The chief financial officer of the University.
Chief Executive Officer	The highest-ranking executive of a company or institution. At the University of Aberdeen, the Principal is the Chief Executive Officer.
Commercialisation	The process of bringing new products or services to market, or of turning something into a product or service.
Conflict of Interest	A situation in which a person is in a position to derive personal benefit from actions or decisions made in their official capacity.
Convener	The member of a committee with responsibility to call and chair meetings.

Term	Description
Covenants	Financial covenants, are restrictions that lenders can include within a loan deal. They tie the borrower into an agreement in order to approve the loan. With regard to pensions, the covenant sets out the employer's legal obligation and financial ability to support their defined benefit scheme now and in the future.
Delegated Authority	The ability to delegate responsibility to subordinates in a manner that supports their success and holds them accountable for results.
Digital Strategy Committee	The Committee with responsibility for the strategic direction of all digital activities guided by the Aberdeen 2040 strategic goals and associated implementation plans, commitments and key performance indicators.
Dual/joint degree	A degree that involves studying at two universities, one of which may be located in a different country.
Endowment Funds	An investment portfolio with the initial capital deriving from donations. Endowment funds are established to fund charitable and non-profit institutions such universities.
Estates Committee	The Committee responsible for the oversight of the University's estate in order that it can support world-class academic, teaching and research activity in accordance with the University's foundational purpose and strategic plan.
External Auditors	External auditors inspect the University's accounting records and express an opinion as to whether financial statements are presented fairly in accordance with applicable accounting standards.
Finance & Resourcing Committee	A committee of University Court with authority to oversee the University's financial affairs with a focus on ensuring that University's approach to revenue, resource and capital planning mature in support of Aberdeen 2040.
Financial Memorandum	Sets out the formal accountability relationship between the SFC and institutions, and the requirements with which institutions are expected to comply in return of payment of grant by SFC.
Financial Regulations	A set of requirements, restrictions and guidelines to maintain the stability and integrity of the University's financial systems.
Framework Agreement	An agreement or arrangement between one or more procurers and one or more suppliers that establishes the requirement and contract conditions that will apply to future orders or tasks during an agreed period.
General Council	A Council established by the Universities (Scotland) Act 1858 consisting of all graduates and most of the University's academic staff. All graduated of the University of Aberdeen automatically become members of the General Council.
Going Rates	The admission requirements to the University's various degree programmes.

Term	Description
Governance	A system that provides a framework for managing organisations. It identifies who can make decisions, who has the authority to act on behalf of the organisation and who is accountable for how an organisation and its people behave and perform.
Governance & Nominations Committee	A committee of University Court with a standing role to advise Court on matters of governance and to conduct on its behalf, reviews of the University's governance. The Committee also has responsibility for considering nominations for vacancies in Court membership and vacancies in the membership of Court sub-committees.
Head of School/Directorate	Head of School/Directorate of the University who is responsible for the budget of their whole School/Directorate.
Heads of Terms	A document which sets out the terms of a commercial transaction agreed in principle between parties in the course of negotiations.
Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016	The Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act sets down the requirements for universities in Scotland in terms of how their Courts and Senates should be constituted.
Independent Members of Court	A member of the University's board of directors who does not have a material relationship with the University and is neither part of its executive team nor involved in its day-to-day operations.
Individuals for Consultation	The individuals who need to be informed or consulted by a delegated signing authority or approver for transactions of certain types or above certain values.
Institution-led Review of Academic Quality	The review method for higher education institutions in Scotland as set out by the Scottish Quality Assurance Agency (SQAA).
Internal Auditors	Auditors appointed by the University to monitor and evaluate how well risks are being managed, how well the University is running and if internal processes are working. This function also includes a consulting service, advising management on how to improve systems and processes.
Investment Committee	A committee that provides advice and makes recommendations to University management on the investment of University funds.
Material/Technology Transfer Agreement	Legally binding contracts where the owner of intellectual property (IP) in a valuable material or technology (the licensor), gives someone else (the licensee) permission to use that IP in ways (terms) that are spelled out in the agreement.
Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding	A document that describes the broad outlines of an agreement that two or more parties have reached.
Nine Principles of Public Life in Scotland	Nine principles of conduct identified by the Scottish Executive to underpin public life "for the benefit of those who serve the public in any way", recommended for inclusion in the Codes of Conduct of public bodies.

Term	Description
Novel and Contentious Arrangement	A decision or action proposed to be taken which will have or is likely to have a significant effect on financial, reputational or operational risk; and/or a significant impact on academic and/or service delivery or performance.
Principal	The chief executive of the University responsible to Court for maintaining and promoting the efficiency and good order of the University.
Private Placement or Bond Issue	A private placement is a sale of stock shares or bonds to pre-selected investors and institutions rather than on the open market. A bond functions as a loan between an investor and a corporation. The investor agrees to give the corporation a certain amount of money for a specific period of time. In exchange, the investor receives periodic interest payments.
Procurement	The act of obtaining goods or services for business purposes.
Project Boards	Oversight boards established to manage strategically important projects.
Register of Interests	An annually updated register to give board members the mechanism to publicly declare any private interests which may conflict, or may be perceived to conflict, with their public duties.
Remit and Terms of Reference	A document which sets out the purpose, scope and authority of a committee.
Remuneration Committee	A committee of University Court responsible for overseeing the pay, benefits and conditions of employment of the Vice-Chancellor and other senior staff.
Research Grant	A grant obtained for conducting scientific research generally through a competitive process.
Rest of UK (RUK)	Students from England, Wales and Northern Ireland are called "Rest of UK" / "RUK" students. For undergraduate degrees, they have to pay higher fees than Home students, but they usually pay the same for postgraduate degrees.
Retail Price Index (RPI)	A measurement of inflation used to calculate cost of living and wage escalation.
Risk Appetite Statement	A framework agreed by University Court which enables the University to make informed management decisions by defining the optimal and tolerable levels of risk associated with the pursuit of its strategic objectives.
Roleholder with Signing Authority	The individual who holds the delegated signing authority to execute the transaction once approval has been given.
Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance	A specific code of governance applying to the Scottish Higher Education sector.
Scottish Funding Council (SFC)	The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) is the national, strategic body that is responsible for funding teaching and learning provision, research and other activities in Scotland's colleges and universities.
Senate	The body responsible for academic matters whose role is to direct and regulate the education and research work of the University.

Term	Description
Senior Governor	The senior independent member of University Court responsible for the leadership and effectiveness of the Court as the University's governing body, with a key role in building a successful relationship between Court and the senior management of the University.
Senior Management Team	The Senior Management Team ensures the effective leadership, co-ordination and management of the University's activities. It acts as the formal executive decision-making body of the University and ensures that all University initiatives are considered, approved, implemented and monitored in line with the University's strategic, regulatory and policy framework and recognised best practice guidelines.
Senior Vice-Principal	Responsible for providing direct line management to all Heads of School and ensuring the delivery of School plans and budgets. Has strategic oversight of the People and Estates Strategies and also the institutional strategic planning processes. Deputises when the Principal is unavailable.
Severance	Pay and benefits that an employee may be entitled to receive when they leave employment at a company early or unwillingly.
Standing Committee	A permanent committee that meets regularly, usually with responsibility for a particular area.
Standing Orders of Court	A document which sets out the basic rules and procedures for the operation of the University Court.
Start-Up and Spin-Out Panel	An operational panel to oversee the University's support for student and staff spin-out and subsidiary companies.
Student Recruitment Committee	A committee with primary responsibility for the development and monitoring of implementation of the University's strategy and policy for student recruitment across the University, in support of the University's student recruitment and admissions objectives.
Treasury Management	The practice and oversight of strategies, policies and compliance requirements for cash management, investments and borrowings.
Universities (Scotland) Act 1966	An Act to amend the law relating to the Universities of St. Andrews, Glasgow, Aberdeen and Edinburgh to make provisions for the foundation of the University of Dundee.
University Court	The governing body of the University. It is charged to oversee the management of the revenue, property and other resources of the University. It approves the mission and strategic vision of the University and has a number of corporate and legal responsibilities.

Term	Description
University Court Statement of Primary Responsibilities	A document to set out the primary functions of University Court to approve the mission and strategic vision of the University, including institutional and longer-term academic and business plans, and key performance indicators, and to ensure that they meet the interests of stakeholders, including students, staff, alumni, local and national communities and funding bodies.
University Ordinances	Ordinances provide the constitutional framework that allows the University to govern its affairs. Ordinances are detailed regulations and procedures covering all aspects of University business. Ordinances are ultimately approved by the Higher Education Privy Council.
University Education Committee	The Committee responsible to the Senate for the strategic oversight of education provision and its alignment to the University's Strategic Plan.
University Quality Assurance Committee	The Committee responsible for the assurance of the quality of the University's educational provision.
University Research Committee	A standing Committee of Senate established to oversee the research aspects of Senate's remit.
University Seal	A device for embossing the University's name and shield in paper when formally executing deeds, contracts and documents reserved for approval only by University Court.
University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer	The chief administrative officer of the University and principal officer of Court.
Virement of Budgets	An agreed practice in which funds may be transferred from one part of the budget to another during a financial year to allow additional expenditure in a particular budget area to take place.
World Trade Organisation Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA)	A binding international treaty for procurement based on the principles of non-discrimination, transparency and procedural fairness.

Appendix 3 Nine Principals of Public Life in Scotland

The Scottish Government's Model Code of Conduct for Members of Devolved Public Bodies indicates that the following nine general principles of conduct should be observed in public life:

Duty

You have a duty to uphold the law and act in accordance with the law and the public trust placed in you. You have a duty to act in the interests of the public body of which you are a member and in accordance with the core functions and duties of that body.

Selflessness

You have a duty to take decisions solely in terms of public interest. You must not act in order to gain financial or other material benefit for yourself, family or friends.

Integrity

You must not place yourself under any financial, or other, obligation to any individual or organisation that might reasonably be thought to influence you in the performance of your duties.

Objectivity

You must make decisions solely on merit and in a way that is consistent with the functions of the public body when carrying out public business including making appointments, awarding contracts or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits.

Accountability and Stewardship

You are accountable for your decisions and actions to the public. You have a duty to consider issues on their merits, taking account of the views of others and must ensure that the public body uses its resources prudently and in accordance with the law.

Openness

You have a duty to be as open as possible about your decisions and actions, giving reasons for your decisions and restricting information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty

You have a duty to act honestly. You must declare any private interests relating to your public duties and take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership

You have a duty to promote and support these principles by leadership and example, and to maintain and strengthen the public's trust and confidence in the integrity of the public body and its members in conducting public business.

Respect

You must respect fellow members of your public body and employees of the body and the role they play, treating them with courtesy at all times. Similarly, you must respect members of the public when performing duties as a member of your public body.

Appendix 4 Guidance on the Use of the University Common Seal

Introduction

The University holds a Common Seal (“the University Seal”) under its founding Ordinances and Resolutions.

The University Seal is a device for embossing the University’s name and shield in paper when formally executing deeds, contracts and documents reserved for approval only by University Court.

This guidance outlines how and when the University Seal should be used.

Legal Basis

Historically, under common law, any contract entered into by a company had to be under seal. Since the Companies Act 1989 was introduced there is no legal requirement to use a seal. Although a company can still have a seal it is not bound to do so. However, in practice many organisations still use a common seal for deeds, share certificates and other important documents.

The use of the Common Seal of the University of Aberdeen is set out in Ordinance 113 (Execution of Deeds) of the *Acts, Ordinances and Resolutions Affecting the University of Aberdeen 1858-1990*, which states:

“A deed, instrument or document shall be validly executed on behalf of the University Court if it is Sealed within the Common Seal of the University Court and signed by one member of the University Court and the Secretary to the University, or *some other person in place of the Secretary duly appointed by the University Court for the purpose, and such subscription on behalf of the Court shall be binding whether attested by witnesses or not.

The University Court shall provide for the safe custody of the Common Seal.”

Ordinance 113 provides that documents for which approval is reserved to University Court and which require formal execution require application of the Seal and signature by a member of Court and the University Secretary or one of their deputies. Documents which require formal execution are not set out.

The formal execution of a deed is a complex area of law currently covered by a range of legislation including the Companies Act 2006 and the Requirements of Writing (Scotland) Act 1995. In most circumstances the University Seal should be used primarily on legal documents relating to property or financial transactions, however there is no legal requirement for documents to be signed as set out above for formal execution. A document only needs be signed in accordance with the Requirements of Writing Scotland Act, which stipulates that subscription by (or on behalf of) the granter is the only requirement for the valid execution of a document. For the document to be probative, it should also be witnessed.

The source document will therefore impact on the requirement for use of the Seal, however a list of exemplars of those deeds and documents for which the University suggests a Seal should be applied is provided in the section below and outlined within the University’s Delegated Authority Schedule. In addition, the Seal may be applied in situations where the contracting party specifically requests its use.

All other legal or contractual documents should be signed as follows:

- A document which is in relation to a matter reserved to Court (one of its reserved areas of business) or where authority in respect of that matter has not been otherwise delegated (i.e. is not provided for within the Delegated Authority Schedule) should be signed by a Member of Court, or the University Secretary or one of their deputies, and witnessed.

- A document in respect of which authority has been delegated by Court should be signed by a Member of Court, or the University Secretary or one of their deputies, or a person authorised by the Court to do so (i.e. under the Delegated Authority Schedule) and witnessed.

Guidance on the Custody and Use of the Common Seal

The University Secretary is responsible for the secure custody of the University Seal, and for regulating its use. The University Seal is held by the Governance team.

The following list of exemplars is suggested by the University as requiring execution under the Seal:

- Deeds (especially those relating to land or buildings)
- Legal documents relating to property such as leases or licences
- Legal documents relating to the establishment of a new company, spin out, joint venture or overseas activity
- Documents/certificates relating to shares/dividends/stocks
- Legal agreements involving agencies and equivalents for the recruitment of international students
- Legal documents relating to pension schemes
- Legal documents relating to the registration, licensing or outright transfer of patents, design rights, trademarks and other intellectual property rights
- Special resolutions relating to the Ordinances and Resolutions
- Other documents as required by Court or approved by the University Secretary (or deputy), particularly those relating to long-term contracts, those concerning borrowing, investments or financing.

Other legal documents such as those relating to academic agreements, commercial contracts, student recruitment etc. would not normally require the use of the University Seal.

The wording on documents being Sealed should be “Executed by affixing the common Seal of the University of Aberdeen in the presence of:”.

Officers authorised to authenticate the Seal are specified within the University Court’s Delegated Authority Schedule.

The Head of Governance should maintain a Register of Sealings by recording the details of the date, document Sealed, transaction, signatories and witnesses. A list of those documents Sealed should be reported to University Court upon request.

Appendix 5 University Wholly Owned Subsidiaries and Arms-Length/Associated Bodies

Wholly Owned Subsidiaries	Arms-Length/Associated Bodies
Rowett Research Institute Ltd (Active)	University of Aberdeen Superannuation & Life Assurance Scheme (Pension Trust)
Aberdeen University Research & Industrial Services Ltd (Dormant)	University of Aberdeen Development Trust (Independent Charity)
King's College Centre Ltd (Dormant)	University of Aberdeen Development Trust Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation – SCIO
Aberdeen University Press Ltd (Active)	University of Aberdeen Foundation (USA Charity)
	Aberdeen Sports Village Ltd (Joint Venture with City Council and Charity)
	Rocking Horse Nursery (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation - SCIO)



FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

LAST UPDATED: February 2023
Approved by Court
Next Review Date: February 2025

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of Financial Regulations

- 1.1.1. This document contains the Financial Regulations as approved by the University Court of the University of Aberdeen (hereafter referred to as Court), acting on recommendation of the Audit & Risk Committee. The Financial Regulations apply to all financial business of the University of Aberdeen and any group undertakings, irrespective of the source of funding. The purpose of the Financial Regulations is to ensure the proper and transparent use of finances and resources in a manner which not only satisfies the requirements of internal control expected of the University, but also fulfils any legal or financial obligations as laid down by the Statutes and Ordinances, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC), the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and other authorities.

1.2 Application of Financial Regulations

- 1.2.1 These financial regulations are subordinate to the Acts of Parliament and University Ordinances and Resolutions and to any restrictions contained within the University's Financial Memorandum with the SFC and the latter's code of audit practice embedded within the Financial Memorandum.
- 1.2.2 Compliance with the financial regulations is compulsory for all staff employed by the University. A member of staff who fails to comply with the financial regulations may be subject to disciplinary action under the University's disciplinary procedures. It is the responsibility of Heads of Schools/Directorates to ensure that staff are aware of these financial regulations and their content.

1.3 Financial Responsibilities & Corporate Governance

- 1.3.1 The University is regulated by the SFC under a Financial Memorandum. The University complies with conditions of grant set out in this memorandum. The SFC has developed Outcome Agreements with each university to ensure that institutions are working in support of the Scottish Government's priorities. The University is required to report regularly on our performance against agreed outcomes, to ensure that we continue to meet conditions of grant.
- 1.3.2 Court is responsible for the University's mission, strategic direction, management and administrative arrangements, financial health, well-being of staff and students and, in association with the Senate, for establishing and maintaining high standards of academic conduct and probity.
- 1.3.3 Details of Court can be found at:
<https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/governance/court-information.php>
- 1.3.4 Court members are also charity trustees and as such are subject to obligations imposed by charity law. Their dual role may introduce potential conflicts of interest, and as a result Court members are required to disclose interests in the University's register of interests maintained by the University Secretary. They are also responsible for ensuring that entries in the register relating to them are kept up to date regularly and promptly, as prescribed in the financial procedures.

1.3.5 Court has ultimate responsibility for the University's finances, but delegates much of the detailed work to its committees and sub-committees.

1.3.6 The University's principal committee structure can be found at:

<https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/governance/minutes-and-agendas-135.php>

1.3.7 ~~Policy and Resources~~ **Finance & Resourcing Committee**

[Policy and Resources Committee | StaffNet | The University of Aberdeen \(abdn.ac.uk\)](#)

1.3.8 Audit and Risk Committee

<https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/governance/audit-committee-636.php>

1.3.9 Remuneration Committee

<https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/governance/remuneration-committee-635.php>

1.3.10 Governance and Nominations Committee

<https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/governance/governance-and-nominations-committee-634.php>

1.3.11 Commercialisation Committee

1.4 Roles and Responsibilities

1.4.1 Principal and Vice-Chancellor

The Principal is the chief executive of, and the designated accountable officer for, the University and is accountable to Court for implementation and delivery of agreed policy. The Principal must ensure that Court complies with all terms and conditions of public funding from the SFC as set out per the Financial Memorandum.

1.4.2 University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer

The Secretary is the principal officer of Court and is responsible for ensuring that it acts within its powers and follows proper procedures. The Secretary is head of the University's professional services and works closely with the Principal and other senior members of academic and professional services staff to achieve the efficient and effective management of the University.

1.4.3 Chief Financial Officer

Day to day financial administration is organised by the Chief Financial Officer who is responsible for:

- Preparing three year capital and revenue budgets and financial plans, and longer term strategic financial plans
- Preparing accounts, management information, monitoring and control of expenditure against budgets and financial operations
- Preparing the University's annual accounts and other financial statements including accounts which the institution is required to submit to other authorities

- Ensuring that the University maintains satisfactory financial systems and controls, including income collection, supplier and employee payments, tax compliance and treasury management
- Providing professional advice on all matters relating to financial policies and procedures.
- Day-to-day liaison with internal and external auditors in order to achieve efficient processes

1.4.4 The Finance section structure and main contacts are listed at :

<https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here/finance.php>

1.4.5 **Heads of School/Professional Services Directors**

Heads of School/Professional Services Directors are responsible respectively to the Senior Vice-Principal/ Chief Operating Officer for financial management of their respective areas and activities and are advised by the Chief Financial Officer in the execution of all financial duties. The Chief Financial Officer will advise on and approve any financial system and procedures operating within Schools/Directorates.

1.4.6 Heads of School/Directorates are responsible for establishing and maintaining clear lines of responsibility and segregation of duties within their Schools/Directorates for all financial matters.

1.5 **Risk Management**

1.5.1 Court has overall responsibility for ensuring there is a risk management strategy and a common approach to the management of risk throughout the University, through a formal structured risk management process.

1.5.2 The University has a comprehensive Risk Management Framework, which is applicable across the institution at all levels. The University's risk management arrangements are an integral part of its wider strategic planning function. Risk management is a key mechanism which both underpins and supports delivery of strategic objectives, both institutionally and within Schools. Identified risks will generally reflect the University's strategic objectives and areas of strategic importance.

1.5.3 Risk Management is the responsibility of the Directorate of Planning and is overseen by the Audit and Risk Committee. Further information regarding the University's Risk Management Framework and associated guidance available from:

<https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/governance/risk-management-and-audit-276.php>

1.6 **Code of Conduct**

1.6.1 The University is committed to the highest standards of openness, integrity and accountability. It seeks to conduct its affairs in a responsible manner, having regard to the principles established by the Scottish Government's Model Code of Conduct for Members of Devolved Public Bodies, and forms part of the Code of Conduct for Court which governing body members must sign up to when appointed. Members of staff at all levels are also expected to observe the principles as defined by the Model Code.

1.6.2 The Nine Principles of Public Life in Scotland are:

- **Duty**
You have a duty to uphold the law and act in accordance with the law and the public trust placed in you. You have a duty to act in the interests of the public body of which you are a member and in accordance with the core functions and duties of that body.
- **Selflessness**
You have a duty to take decisions solely in terms of public interest. You must not act in order to gain financial or other material benefit for yourself, family or friends.
- **Integrity**
You must not place yourself under any financial, or other, obligation to any individual or organisation that might reasonably be thought to influence you in the performance of your duties.
- **Objectivity**
You must make decisions solely on merit and in a way that is consistent with the functions of the public body when carrying out public business including making appointments, awarding contracts or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits.
- **Accountability and Stewardship**
You are accountable for your decisions and actions to the public. You have a duty to consider issues on their merits, taking account of the views of others and must ensure that the public body uses its resources prudently and in accordance with the law.
- **Openness**
You have a duty to be as open as possible about your decisions and actions, giving reasons for your decisions and restricting information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.
- **Honesty**
You have a duty to act honestly. You must declare any private interests relating to your public duties and take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
- **Leadership**
You have a duty to promote and support these principles by leadership and example, and to maintain and strengthen the public's trust and confidence in the integrity of the public body and its members in conducting public business.
- **Respect**
You must respect fellow members of your public body and employees of the body and the role they play, treating them with courtesy at all times. Similarly, you must respect members of the public when performing duties as a member of your public body.

1.6.3 **Conflict of Interest**

University employees and others with responsibility for administration and management of University funds must not use their authority or office for personal gain. Members of Court, Committee Members and Senior Management or those involved in procurement are required to disclose interests in the University's register of interests maintained by the University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer. They will also be responsible for ensuring that entries in the register relating to them are kept up to date on a regular and prompt basis. The University's code of practice on conflict of interest can be found at:

<https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/governance/policies-procedures-plans-and-guidelines-399.php>

1.6.4 **Fraud**

The University has a duty to its stakeholders to take all responsible steps to prevent fraud, whether perpetrated by staff, students, contractors and suppliers, other organisations or members of the public.

1.6.5 The University will maintain robust internal control mechanisms to both prevent and detect fraud. All line managers have a responsibility for maintaining documented control systems and must be seen to be setting an example by complying fully with these procedures and controls. The effectiveness of controls will be subject to review by the University's Internal Auditors.

1.6.6 All members of staff have a responsibility to protect the assets and reputation of the institution and are expected to be alert to the potential for fraud. All members of staff, management and the governing body have a duty to notify the Chief Financial Officer immediately when any matter arises which involves, or is thought to involve, irregularity, including fraud or corruption. The Chief Financial Officer shall immediately invoke the fraud response plan.

1.6.7 The procedures for both the reporting of suspected fraud and the fraud response plan are detailed in the University's fraud policy which can be found at:

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1.6.8 If the suspected fraud is thought to involve the Chief Financial Officer and/or the Principal, the member of staff shall notify their concerns directly to the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee.

1.6.9 **Anti-Money Laundering**

The University is committed to the highest standards of ethical conduct and integrity in their business activities in the UK and overseas. It will therefore ensure that it has in place proper, robust financial controls so that it can protect its funds and ensure continuing public trust and confidence in it. Some of those controls are intended to ensure that the University complies, in full, with its obligations not to engage or otherwise be implicated in money laundering or terrorist financing.

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1.6.10 **Receiving Gifts or Hospitality**

The Bribery Act 2010 includes offences for acts of bribery by individuals, or persons associated with relevant organisations. The penalties are severe for any employee convicted under the Act. The University's anti-bribery policy statement is embedded in the Expenses and Benefits policy at:

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- 1.6.11 The guiding principles to be followed by all members of staff are:
- the conduct of individuals should not create suspicion of any conflict between their official duty and their private interest
 - the action of individuals acting in an official capacity should not give the impression that they have (or may have) been influenced by a benefit, to show favour or disfavour to any person or organisation
- 1.6.12 Members of staff (or their family members) should not accept any gifts, rewards or hospitality from any organisation or individual during the course of their work that would cause them to reach a position whereby they may or may be deemed to have been influenced in making a business decision as a consequence of accepting such gift.
- 1.6.13 The frequency and scale of hospitality accepted should not be significantly greater than the University would be likely to provide in return.
- 1.6.14 Gifts of a personal nature can only be accepted to a maximum value of £100.
- 1.6.15 Where it is unclear as to what is and is not acceptable, the offer should be declined or advice sought from the relevant Head of School/Directorate or the Chief Financial Officer. The Chief Financial Officer will maintain an institutional register of gifts and hospitality received where the value is in excess of £50.
- 1.6.16 Members of staff in receipt of such gifts or hospitality are obliged to notify their School/Directorate promptly. The Heads of School will maintain local registers for annual report to the Chief Financial Officer. All gifts received on behalf of the University must be reported to the Chief Financial Officer.
- 1.6.17 **Whistleblowing**
Whistleblowing is the disclosure by an employee about malpractice in the workplace. Any concern about a workplace matter should be raised with the relevant member of staff's immediate line manager or Head of School/Directorate. However, the University recognises that because of the seriousness or sensitivity of some issues, together with the knowledge of whom the member of staff thinks may be involved, this may be difficult or impossible. A member of staff may, therefore, make the disclosure directly to staff members designated for this purpose, for example the University Secretary. If the member of staff does not wish to raise the matter with the designated member of staff, or with the Principal or the Chair of Court, it may be raised with the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee. In all cases, the whistle-blower can remain anonymous. The Public Disclosure Act 1998 gives legal protection to employees against being dismissed or penalised by their employers as a result of disclosing certain serious concerns.

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1.6.18 **Criminal Finance Act 2017**

The Act introduced a 'corporate criminal offence of failure to prevent the facilitation of tax evasion'. The legislation applies to all business (corporates and partnerships) and all taxes.

- 1.6.19 The offence is not about the University avoiding, evading or underpaying tax, but about the University failing to prevent its employees/agents/associates from facilitating the evasion of tax by another party. There are two corporate offences – a domestic tax fraud offence and an overseas fraud offence. A UK incorporated body can be prosecuted for either offence. While the overseas offence is slightly narrower in scope, it still essentially means that universities need to consider potential risks for overseas tax evasion as well as UK tax evasion. The University's statement on the Criminal Finance Act 2017 can be found at:

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1.6.20 **Modern Slavery Act 2015**

The Act sets out a number of offences relating to slavery and human trafficking and prescribes penalties for such offences. Section 54 of the Act includes disclosure obligations that apply to certain commercial organisations, including universities. This obligation is intended as a tool to fight slavery and human trafficking globally.

- 1.6.21 The University's Slavery & Human Trafficking Statement is available from:

https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/documents/Procurement_Modern%20SlaveryStatement2021.pdf

1.6.22 **Value for Money**

The Financial Memorandum requires that Court is responsible for delivering value for money from public funds and should continually review its arrangements for managing all resources under its control, taking into account guidance on good practice issued from time to time by the funding body, Audit Scotland, the Public Accounts Committee or other relevant bodies.

- 1.6.23 Internal audit will consider value for money in its programme of work which will enable the Audit and Risk Committee to refer to value for money in its annual report.

1.6.24 **Agreements with External Bodies**

Any agreements negotiated with external bodies must cover any legal liabilities to which the University may be exposed. The University Secretary and Chief Operating Officer or, in the case of research related agreements, the Directorate of Research and Innovation's advice should be sought to ensure that this is the case.

1.7 **Auditors**

1.7.1 **External Auditor**

The external auditor will be appointed by Court on the recommendation of the Audit and Risk Committee, normally for a period of up to five years subject to satisfactory performance and appointments should consider rotation of the external auditor where practicable. The statutory re-appointment of external auditors will take place annually and is the responsibility of Court, advised by the Audit and Risk Committee.

- 1.7.2 The primary role of external audit is to report on the University's financial statements and to carry out such examination of the statements and underlying records and control systems as is necessary to reach their opinion on the statements and to report on the appropriate use

of funds. Their duties will be in accordance with advice set out in the Funding Council's Financial Memorandum and the Financial Reporting Council's auditing standards.

1.7.3 The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for drawing up a timetable for the production of annual financial statements and will advise staff and the external auditors accordingly.

1.7.4 Following consideration by the Audit and Risk Committee, the annual financial statements will be reviewed by the ~~Policy & Resources~~ **Finance & Resourcing Committee**. On the recommendation of the Audit and Risk Committee and the ~~Policy & Resources~~ **Finance & Resourcing Committee** they will be submitted to Court for approval.

1.7.5 **Internal Auditor**

The internal auditor is appointed by Court on the recommendation of the Audit and Risk Committee, normally for a period of up to five years subject to satisfactory performance.

1.7.6 The University's Financial Memorandum with the Funding Council requires that it has an effective internal audit function. Internal audit is responsible for conducting an independent appraisal of all the University's activities, financial and otherwise with the exception of the academic process. Internal audit is required to provide Court, the Principal and senior management with assurances on the adequacy of the internal control system.

1.7.7 Internal audit is independent of the executive management of the University in its planning and operation and has direct access to Court, Principal and Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee.

1.7.8 External auditors and internal auditors have authority to:

- access University premises at reasonable times
- access all assets, records, documents and correspondence relating to any financial and other transactions of the University
- require and receive from staff such explanations as are necessary concerning any matter under examination
- require any employee of the University to account for cash, stores or any other University property under his/her control
- access records belonging to third parties, such as contractors when required

1.7.9 **Other Auditors**

The University may, from time to time, be subject to audit or investigation by external bodies such as the Funding Council, Audit Scotland, European Court of Auditors, and HMRC (HM Revenue & Customs). They have the same rights of access as external and Internal Auditors.

2. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT & CONTROL

2.1 Accounting Period

2.1.1 The University financial year runs from 1 August until 31 July of the following year.

2.2 Budgetary Process

2.2.1 The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for coordinating the annual preparation of a three year revenue budget. Court must approve the first year budget, with the outlying years prepared on an indicative basis only on the recommendation of the ~~Policy & Resources~~ **Finance & Resourcing Committee**. The figures are used to prepare the Strategic Planning Forecast as required by the SFC.

2.2.2 Resources are allocated annually by Court on the recommendation of the ~~Policy & Resources~~ **Finance & Resourcing Committee**. Budget holders are responsible for the economic, effective and efficient use of resources allocated to them and ensuring budgets are used for eligible purposes.

2.2.3 The Chief Financial Officer ensures that detailed budgets are prepared to reflect the outcome of the budget process and that these are communicated to budget holders as soon as possible following their approval by Court. Financial plans should be consistent and enable delivery of the University's Strategic Plan approved by Court.

2.2.4 During the year, the Chief Financial Officer, following discussion with budget holders, is responsible for coordinating the submission of significant budget revisions to the Policy & Resources Committee for consideration before submission to Court for approval.

2.3 Capital Programme

2.3.1 The Chief Financial Officer, in conjunction with the Senior Management Team, the Director of Estates and Facilities and the Director of Digital and Information Systems, is responsible for the preparation of the 10 year capital plan which identifies and prioritises capital projects which will help achieve the University's strategic objectives. Resources for planned capital expenditure on land, buildings, equipment, digital infrastructure, furniture and associated costs will be allocated as part of the 10 year capital programme approved by Court. During the year the Chief Financial Officer along with the Senior-Vice Principal are responsible for submitting capital programme amendments to Estates/Digital Strategy Committee for approval and to the ~~Policy & Resources~~ **Finance & Resourcing Committee and/or University Court as required and as appropriate to the value of the amendment.**

2.3.2 An annual capital plan is produced on a rolling basis detailing the infrastructure projects approved for that financial year.

2.3.3 The University's accounting policies require that expenditure on assets or groups of related assets costing in excess of £20,000 are capitalised rather than expensed in the year of acquisition where the benefit derived from the expenditure extends beyond a single year.

2.3.4 A project board will be established for each major capital project and is responsible for managing the overall project budget and reporting to the Estates/Digital Strategy

Committee. All projects should follow the agreed University methodology for project management.

2.3.5 Proposed major capital projects should be supported by:

- a statement which demonstrates the project is consistent with the strategic plan and should include an option appraisal and risk analysis
- an initial budget for the project for submission to the ~~Policy & Resources~~ **Finance & Resourcing Committee** and/or **University Court** as appropriate to the value of the project, the budget should include a breakdown of costs including professional fees, VAT, contingency and funding sources
- a financial evaluation of the plans detailing their impact on revenue compared with those of alternative plans
- a demonstration of compliance with approved tendering procedures and Funding Council regulations
- a cash flow forecast
- a return on investment calculation

2.3.6 Capital projects should assume VAT will not be recoverable on the project costs, unless specifically authorised to do otherwise.

2.3.7 Following completion of major capital projects, a final report is submitted to the Estates/Digital Strategy Committee recording actual expenditure against budget and reconciling funding arrangements. In addition, a post implementation review is carried out to ensure the objectives have been achieved and highlight any areas for improvement. This is now a condition of grant from the Funding Council in relation to capital grants awarded.

2.4 Other Major Developments including Overseas Activities

2.4.1 Any new aspect of business, proposed establishment of a company, joint venture or overseas activity, which will require an investment in buildings, resources or staff time should be presented to the ~~Policy & Resources~~ **Finance & Resourcing Committee**. All projects should follow the University's agreed Project Management methodology and proposals should be supported by a medium to long-term business plan which sets out:

- a demonstration of the proposal's consistency with the strategic plans approved by Court and with the University's powers under current legislation
- details of the market need and the assumptions (based on reference data) of the level of business available
- details of the business and what product or service will be delivered
- an outline plan for promoting the business to the identified marketplace and achieving planned levels of business
- details of the staff required to deliver, promote and manage the business, together with any re-skilling or recruitment issues
- details of any premises or other resources required including due diligence work on any third party suppliers or partners
- a financial evaluation, including a return on investment assessment, of the proposal together with its impact on revenue and surplus, plus advice on the impact of possible alternative plans and sensitivity analyses in respect of key assumptions
- contingency plans for managing adverse sensitivities
- consideration of taxation, legislative or regulatory issues including those in the country in which the activity will be undertaken

- a financial forecast for the proposal including a monthly cash flow forecast and details of the impact on the University cash flow forecast for the financial years in question

2.4.2 Any projects that are unusual in nature, carry considerable financial and/or reputational risk must be referred to Court for consideration.

2.5 Budget Management

2.5.1 Court has the overall authority for University finance and it delegates responsibility for monitoring of these finances to the ~~Policy & Resources~~ **Finance & Resourcing Committee**, who in turn delegates specific responsibilities to the Estates, Digital Strategy and Investment Committees. It is a requirement that Project Boards are established to manage strategically important projects and these Boards will report to the ~~Policy & Resources sub-committees~~ **Estates and Digital Strategy Committees** and to the University's Senior Management Team.

2.5.2 Prior to the commencement of the Financial Year, Court will approve the 3 year revenue budget and the 10 year capital investment plan. This will include the budgets for projects contained either within the revenue or capital plan.

2.5.3 The Senior Management Team has executive responsibility for the overall management of the University's budget and adherence to the Financial Regulations. Each line of expenditure or income has a designated budget holder who must follow the guidelines below.

2.5.4 Budget holders are responsible for the management of income and expenditure within an agreed budget and must ensure that day to day monitoring is undertaken effectively and are accountable to their line manager. Budget holders are assisted in day to day financial control by the provision of regular management information by the Chief Financial Officer via the University finance system.

2.5.5 Any forecast of a departure (greater than £100K or 10% whichever is lower) from the overall budget target (including project budgets) must be reported immediately to the Head of School or Chief Operating Officer by budget holders and, if necessary, corrective action agreed and taken.

2.5.6 Any variances over £500K need to be referred to the Senior Management Team (SMT) and over £1M reported to the ~~Policy & Resources~~ **Finance & Resourcing Committee**.

2.5.7 Any expenditure out with the agreed revenue and capital budgets with a value between £1M and £5M must be approved by the ~~Policy & Resources~~ **Finance & Resourcing Committee**. Any expenditure out with agreed budgets in excess of £5M must be approved by Court. Projects planned within the overall approved budget, with a total cost between £1m and £5m, must also be approved by ~~Policy & Resources~~ **Finance & Resourcing Committee**. Projects over £5m in total cost or which are novel or contentious are subject to approval by Court. **Projects up to £1m in budget should be approved by the Senior Management Team. Additionally, the Senior Management Team delegates approval authority to the Estates and Digital Strategy Committees for projects up to £500k in value, within existing budget plans.**

2.5.8 The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for the provision of reports on all aspect of the University's finances to the ~~Policy & Resources~~ **Finance & Resourcing Committee** throughout the year.

2.5.9 Budget holders' authority and responsibilities are set out within the Budgetary Autonomy and Responsibilities of Heads of School procedure.

2.6 Financial Statements & Records

2.6.1 The University prepares a set of consolidated financial statements on an annual basis that include the University and any subsidiary companies. The financial statements must be prepared in accordance with current Financial Reporting Standards and the relevant Statement of Recommended Practice. The financial statements must also conform to the Accounts Direction and any other guidance published by the SFC.

2.6.2 The consolidated financial statements are subject to audit by the University's external auditors. The draft statements are reviewed by Audit and Risk Committee and ~~Policy & Resources~~ **Finance & Resourcing Committee** before approval by Court.

2.6.3 Financial Records

The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for the retention of the main financial records. These will be kept in a form acceptable to the relevant authorities. The University is required by law to retain prime documents for six years in addition to the current financial year.

2.6.4 The records to be kept are:

- purchase orders
- supplier invoices
- sales invoices
- bank statements
- copies of receipts (original receipts are required for certain funding bodies)
- BACS files
- payroll records
- the complete transactions archive for each year from the finance system

2.6.5 In addition, other financial documents should be retained for three years or as determined by the funder, for example EU funded projects may require records to be kept for 10 years.

2.7 Taxation

2.7.1 The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for the provision of advice to Schools/Directorates. The advice will take account of all relevant legislation in relation to compliance with statutory requirements for all aspects of taxation, including VAT, PAYE, National Insurance, corporation tax and import duty. The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for making all tax payments and submitting tax returns as appropriate.

2.7.2 For any proposed overseas activity, such as staff secondments or overseas research grants, the Chief Financial Officer must be notified in advance to ensure appropriate advice is taken regarding any overseas taxation implications.

2.7.3 Where the University is partnering with Universities outwith the UK for teaching or research activities, advice must be sought to determine the potential tax, VAT and social security liabilities that may arise from operating overseas. The University will ensure that any activity is registered in line with local requirements, any taxes due are paid and that the University has undertaken sufficient due diligence to ensure any in-country partner is complying with

the relevant tax laws. The taxation position must be agreed prior to signing any contract or agreeing a staff secondment.

2.8 Treasury Management

2.8.1 Treasury Management Policy

The ~~Policy & Resources~~ **Finance & Resourcing Committee** is responsible for approving the treasury management policy which sets out the strategy and policies for cash management, long term investments and borrowings. The policy must ensure compliance with any funding body approval for any secured or unsecured loans that go beyond the general consent levels set out in the Financial Memorandum.

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2.8.2 Borrowing

All executive decisions concerning borrowing, investment or financing are delegated to the Chief Financial Officer with the appropriate approval from the ~~Policy & Resources~~ **Finance & Resourcing Committee** and Court. All borrowing shall be undertaken in the name of the University and conform to funding body requirements.

2.8.3 Any new long term borrowing will only be used to invest in assets which can demonstrate a positive return on investment and allow the build-up of a fund to repay this borrowing or to refinance existing borrowing.

2.8.4 The University will build up funds to repay all outstanding debt or have the ability to repay all outstanding debt. This repayment schedule will take into consideration that new borrowing will take time to produce new income streams and therefore the profile of the build-up of cash to repay debt, may be weighted towards the later years of debt maturity.

2.8.5 The University will maintain a Gearing Test which calculates the overall borrowing as a percentage of the net assets of the organisation. A gearing ratio, looks at the overall level of indebtedness against the net assets of the organisation. The higher the ratio, the larger the risk of being unable to service this debt. The University will not borrow funds which exceed 40% of the net assets of the University. The net assets will be per the University's consolidated balance sheet and will be net of provisions for pension liabilities. This test will be prepared on a 5 year absolute basis which will include the previous financial year, current financial year and projections for a further 3 years.

2.8.6 The University will maintain a Debt Service Cover test to ensure there is sufficient operational cashflow to meet interest repayments and to build up a fund for repayment of debt. The lower the ratio, the higher the risk that with a downturn in an organisation, it may not be able to service its debt. The University will maintain a debt service cover no less than 2.5 times the cash generation from operating activities. The cost of debt will include interest payable, the capital element of any finance lease and the amount to be set aside to repay non amortising debt. The operating cashflow will be taken from the University's consolidated cashflow statement and will include inflows or outflows from exceptional items. This test will be prepared on a 5-year rolling basis which will include the previous financial year, current financial year and projections for a further 3 years.

2.8.7 Any new long term borrowing will only be used to invest in assets which can demonstrate a positive return on investment and allow the build-up of a fund to repay this borrowing or to refinance existing borrowing

- 2.8.8 On an annual basis, the University will prepare a Financing Report which will include the following items:
- Compliance with the SFC's financial memorandum, external lenders covenant restrictions and the University's own internal covenant requirements
 - An assessment of progress against the approved repayment strategy
 - Where covenants are breached, or are projected to be breached and/or if there are any shortfall in debt repayment contributions, a recovery plan will be implemented over a maximum period of 3 years
 - An assessment of risks associated with the borrowing strategy
 - Any possible refinancing options which are optimal for the University
- 2.8.9 **Minimum Cash Holding**
The University, will seek, over an appropriate period, to attain a minimum cash balance of two month's total payroll and operating costs, with progress to be reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee. Whilst this fund is being built up, and in certain circumstances, due to the timing of capital expenditure and receipts, this may be breached, on the basis that a medium term plan is in place to move back to this minimum level.
- 2.8.10 **Appointment of Bankers and Other Professional Advisers**
Court is responsible for the appointment of the University's bankers and other professional financial advisers (such as investment managers) on the recommendation of the ~~Policy & Resources~~ **Finance & Resourcing Committee**. The appointment will initially be for a five year period and reviewed annually thereafter.
- 2.8.11 **Banking Arrangements**
The Chief Financial Officer is responsible, on behalf of the ~~Policy & Resources~~ **Finance & Resourcing Committee**, for liaising with the University's bankers in relation to the operation of bank accounts.
- 2.8.12 Only the Chief Financial Officer may open or close a bank account for dealing with the University's funds. All bank accounts shall be in the name of the University or its subsidiary companies.
- 2.8.13 All automated transfers made on behalf of the University must be authorised and submitted by nominated individuals within the Finance section. The process is managed on-line by use of a digital identity card and a pin number, unique to each authorised individual. Payments up to an agreed amount, currently £50,000, can be authorised/submitted by one individual. Payments in excess of this must be authorised by two individuals before being processed.
- 2.8.14 All cheques drawn on behalf of the University must be signed in the form approved by the ~~Policy & Resources~~ **Finance & Resourcing Committee**. Cheques over the agreed amount must be signed by two authorised persons. The use of cheques is kept to a minimum.
- 2.8.15 The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for ensuring that all bank accounts are subject to regular reconciliation and that large or unusual items are investigated as appropriate.
- 2.8.16 **Corporate Credit Cards**
Corporate credit cards are issued to authorised members of staff. The application for a card must be authorised by the applicant's line manager, and subsequently by the Finance section. A credit limit for monthly spend is set depending on the purpose for which the card is to be used.

3. INCOME

3.1 General

3.1.1 All income received by the University must be banked in the appropriate University bank account and recorded within the University finance system, either via direct input or through an appropriate interface from another approved system. All income must be accounted for in full and should not be offset to meet miscellaneous expenditure or used as a petty cash float. Income must be accounted for in the relevant cost centre.

3.1.2 The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for:

- ensuring that procedures and systems are in place to ensure that the University receives all income that it is entitled to including:
 - prompt issue of invoices
 - prompt collection and recording of income
 - ensuring security of and banking of all income
- co-ordination of credit control and debt collection
- implementation of agreed credit arrangements
- ensuring that all grants awarded are received and recorded appropriately
- ensuring that all claims for funding are made by the due date
- maintenance of financial records in respect of gifts and donations for the recovery of tax where appropriate
- ensuring that the University is compliant with all Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards (PCI DSS)

3.1.3 It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that revenue to the University is maximised by the efficient application of agreed procedures for the identification, collection and banking of income.

3.1.4 All relevant documents, including sales invoices must be in the University's standard format and have the prior approval of the Chief Financial Officer.

3.1.5 All income received by Schools/Directorates must be recorded on a daily basis and remitted to the Finance section or through an approved direct banking arrangement. The custody and transit of all monies received must comply with the requirements of the University's insurers.

3.1.6 The University will accept payments according to the detailed financial procedures which are available at:

<https://www.abdn.ac.uk/infohub/finance/paying.php>

3.1.7 The set-up of new customers, credit checks and payment terms must adhere to the University's credit policy

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3.1.8 ~~Tuition fees and rents, including student accommodation, are approved by the Policy & Resources Committee. The Senior Management Team has delegated authority for the approval of increases to the University fee spine of up to 5%, or in line with the Retail Price~~

Index (RPI), if higher. Any additional increases out with these reference values should be approved by the Finance & Resourcing Committee.

- 3.1.9 In the case of a novel change to fee structures, for example the introduction of a new fee model or structure for students from the Rest of UK (RUK), the authority for approval rests with University Court.

3.2 Student Fees

- 3.2.1 The procedures for collecting tuition and residence fees must be approved by the Chief Financial Officer.

- 3.2.2 Any student who has academic fees outstanding will be prevented from registering at the University and from using any of the University facilities unless appropriate arrangements have been made. On completion of their studies, any student who has outstanding academic fees will not be awarded a degree, or any diploma, certificate and qualification until the outstanding debt has been cleared.

- 3.2.3 The links below provide details of current procedures regarding academic and non-academic student fees, tuition fee refunds, collection of debt procedures and implications for non-payment:

Tuition Fees etc.

<https://www.abdn.ac.uk/students/finance/tuition-fees.php>

Student Debt Policy

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3.3 Research Grants & Contracts

3.3.1 Definition

Research can be defined as original investigation, undertaken to gain new knowledge and understanding, which may be directed towards a specific aim or objective. There are many different funders of research projects including Research Councils UK, UK health authorities, charities and industry.

- 3.3.2 The term 'research grant' is restricted to research projects funded by UK Research Councils and charities. All other externally financed research projects are classified as 'research contracts.'

3.3.3 Applications

All applications for research projects must be forwarded by the applicant to the Research & Innovation Directorate for approval for submission to the funder. All applications will be on behalf of and in the name of the University. Full guidance on the application process for research projects and contracts is available at:

[Research and Knowledge Exchange | StaffNet | The University of Aberdeen \(abdn.ac.uk\)](#)

3.3.4 Costing and Pricing

Research Financial Services (RFS), within the Research & Innovation Directorate, is responsible for providing appropriate costing and pricing advice. In order to price a research

project appropriately, the full cost of the research and other financial implications needs to be identified by the applicants and discussed and appraised by Research & Innovation.

3.3.5 Where required by external research funders, research projects will be costed in accordance with Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) principles and the University policy on Full Economic Costing (fEC). In addition, the application must be in line with the University's policy with regard to indirect costs and other expenses.

3.3.6 Full guidance on all research activities and policies including details of the sign off requirements including approval by Head of School, is available at:

[Search Policy Zone | StaffNet | The University of Aberdeen \(abdn.ac.uk\)](#)

3.3.7 **Grants and Contract Conditions**

Funding bodies normally stipulate the terms and conditions under which funding is awarded, and these will be reviewed by Research and Innovation. Terms and conditions often include procedures regarding the submission of interim or final reports or the provision of other relevant information. It is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator and/or other Co-Applicants, to obtain a full set of terms and conditions from each funding body to enable appropriate monitoring of compliance, and to ensure that conditions of funding are met.

3.3.8 **Acceptance of a Research Project**

It is the responsibility of the Research & Innovation Directorate to accept awards and to negotiate and accept contracts on behalf of the University.

3.3.9 **Financial Management**

Each research project will have a named Principal Investigator and will be allocated a specific project code with a defined budget in accordance with the award. Research Financial Services will maintain all financial records relating to research projects, will provide regular expenditure reports to the Principal Investigator and shall initiate all claims for reimbursement from funding bodies on the due dates.

3.3.10 Management of staff and operating expenditure is the responsibility of the Head of School. The Head of School may delegate day-to-day control of a budget to a grant budget holder but any overspend or under-recovery of overheads, will be charged against school funds.

3.3.11 Research Financial Services will report on a monthly basis, as part of Monthly Management Reporting for the University Management Group, monitor income against budget and ensure that any significant variances from plans are reviewed in a timely manner. The total value of research applications and awards is monitored and reviewed by the University's Research Policy Committee.

3.4 **Donations and Endowments**

3.4.1 The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for maintaining financial records and for ensuring that incoming funds are properly classified and designated as appropriate. Claims for recovery of tax must be completed where appropriate.

3.4.2 Donations and endowments with donor imposed restrictions are recognised as income when the University is entitled to the funds. Income is retained within the restricted reserve until such time that it is utilised in line with such restrictions at which point the income is released to general reserves through a reserve transfer.

3.4.3 Donations with no restrictions are recognised as income when the University is entitled to the funds. Investment income and appreciation of endowments are recorded in income for the year for which they arise and are either restricted or unrestricted income according to the terms applied to the individual endowment fund.

3.4.4 There are five main types of donations and endowments identified within reserves:

- Restricted donations - the donor has specified that the donation must be used for a particular objective.
- Unrestricted donations – the donor does not specify the use of the donation.
- Unrestricted permanent endowments - the donor has specified that the fund is to be permanently invested to generate an income stream for the general benefit of the University.
- Restricted expendable endowments - the donor has specified a particular objective other than the purchase or construction of tangible fixed assets, and the University has the power to use the capital.
- Restricted permanent endowments - the donor has specified that the fund is to be permanently invested to generate an income stream to be applied to a particular objective.

3.4.5 The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for maintaining a record of the terms for each endowment fund and for ensuring that funds are appropriately accounted for and disbursed.

3.4.6 The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for the monitoring the performance of Fund Managers and advising the ~~Policy & Resources Committee~~ **Finance & Resourcing Committee** on the control and investment of the endowment fund portfolio, via the Investment Committee.

3.4.7 The ~~Policy & Resources Committee~~ **Finance & Resourcing Committee** is, **via the Investment Committee**, responsible for ensuring that all the University's endowment funds are operated within any relevant legislation and the specific requirements for each endowment.

3.4.8 **Donation of Investments**

When shares are offered by a donor, the Chief Financial Officer is responsible for the same procedures they would normally undertake for monetary donations . This includes, if necessary, approval by the Governance and Nominations Committee. In addition, the Chief Financial Officer will ensure:

- the donor is the rightful owner of the donated investments
- the company holding the shares complies with the University's ethical policies

3.4.9 At the time of the donation, the Chief Financial Officer should obtain in writing the purpose of the donation.

3.5 **Other Income Generating Activities**

3.5.1 **Consultancies and other Paid Work**

Court has approved guidelines for the approval and undertaking of consultancies and other paid work, staff must comply with these guidelines which can be found at:

<https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/research/impact-knowledge/consultancy-10641.php>

- 3.5.2 Unless otherwise stated in an individual's contract of employment, private consultancies or other paid work may not be accepted without the consent of the Head of School/Directorate, for Heads of School, the Senior Vice-Principal must be consulted.
- 3.5.3 Applications for permission to undertake consultancy or other work as a purely private activity must be submitted to the Head of School, and include the following information:
- the name of the member(s) of staff concerned
 - title of the project and a brief description of the work involved
 - the proposed start date and duration of the work
 - full details of any University resources required (for the calculation and re-charge of the full economic cost) and the price to be charged to the client
 - an undertaking that the work will not interfere with the teaching and normal duties of the member(s) of staff concerned
- 3.5.4 Research & Innovation has the delegated authority to approve and negotiate terms for all consultancy arrangements.
- 3.5.5 **Non-credit Bearing Courses and Other Services**
A 'non-credit bearing course' is any course which does not form part of the award bearing teaching load of a School. Staff wishing to run a non-credit bearing course must have the prior approval of their Head of School. The course organiser will be responsible to the Head of School for day to day management of the course.
- 3.5.6 Some non-credit bearing courses will meet the SFC's definition of Continuing Professional Development (CPD), i.e. established on a self-financing basis to develop work-related skills or knowledge. Research & Innovation advise on the co-ordination of all CPD provision and provide advice to staff wishing to run CPD courses. The CPD Business Development Officer in Research & Innovation should be informed of all potential and on-going CPD provision.
- 3.5.7 All courses or conferences organised by members of staff with the approval of the Head of School must be costed and the financial arrangements agreed with Finance and Research & Innovation as appropriate before any commitments are made. Provision must be made for recovering both direct and indirect costs in accordance with the University's policy. All courses must be self-financing or surplus generating unless it is intended that a new course is to be launched as a loss leader. If that is the case, the reason for it must be specified and agreed by the Head of School and informed by staff in Finance and Research & Innovation.
- 3.5.8 The term 'other services' includes testing and analysis of materials, components, processes and other laboratory services carried out for external third parties or the use of University facilities in order to provide information or support services. The costing, pricing and financial arrangements for such services must be in accordance with the University's costing and pricing procedures and agreed with the Chief Financial Officer/Director of Research & Innovation before any commitments are made. All Other Services should break-even as a minimum and be reviewed on an annual basis.
- 3.5.9 Any deficits on non-credit bearing courses or other services accounts must be met from available school core budgets.

3.6 Debt Collection

3.6.1 The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for the co-ordination of credit control and debt collection and will ensure that effective procedures are in place so that:

- sales invoices are raised promptly using official University invoices
- invoices are accurate and correctly recorded and coded within the University finance system
- where appropriate, VAT is correctly charged and accounted for
- monthly statements are issued for all outstanding debt
- prompt and effective action is taken to collect overdue debts, in accordance with the University's financial procedures
- outstanding debts are monitored and reports are prepared for management

3.6.2 Credit arrangements will be approved by the ~~Policy & Resources Committee~~ **Finance & Resourcing Committee**. The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for implementing agreed credit arrangements.

3.6.3 Requests to write-off debts in excess of £50,000 must be referred in writing to the Chief Financial Officer for submission to the ~~Policy & Resources Committee~~ **Finance & Resourcing Committee** for consideration. Debts below this level may be written off with the permission of the Chief Financial Officer, and authorised by the Assistant Director, Financial Accounting.

3.7 Refunds

3.7.1 The University seeks to minimise the opportunities for money laundering in accordance with the relevant money laundering regulations in force. Refunds will be made to the individual/organisation that provided payment and will follow the method by which the money was received, for example to the original bank account or credit card from which payment was made.

4. EXPENDITURE

4.1 General

4.1.1 The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for making payment to suppliers for goods and services provided to the University

4.2 Delegation of Financial Authority

4.2.1 Purchasing authority is designated to the Principal and senior officers by the ~~Policy & Resources Committee~~ **Finance & Resourcing Committee**. This applies to all revenue, capital and project expenditure. Expenditure on a single item in excess of £250,000 requires the approval of the Principal, Senior Vice-Principal, or ~~University Secretary~~ **Chief Operating Officer** on advice from the Chief Financial Officer. All purchases over £100,000 must be endorsed by the Chief Financial Officer. The Head of School/Directorate is responsible for purchases within their area of responsibility. Purchasing authority may be delegated to named individuals (or budget holders) within the School/Directorate, in line with the following levels:

- Principal/SVP/~~Secretary to the University~~ **Chief Operating Officer** above £250,000
- VP Delegate/Chief Financial Officer/~~Secretary to the University (for Professional Services only)~~ **Chief Operating Officer (for Directorates only)** £100,000 - £250,000
- Head of School/Director £25,000 - £100,000
- Budget Holder £1,000 - £25,000
- Business Services Administrator/Coordinators less than £1,000

Additionally, the Senior Management Team delegates approval authority to the Digital Strategy Committee for expenditure towards digital projects up to £500k in value, within existing budget plans.

4.2.2 In addition to the above authorisation, projects must have the required budgetary approval as detailed in section 2.5.

4.2.3 The set-up of any requisitioner or authoriser, and financial limits detailed above will be managed by the Finance section.

4.2.4 Heads of School/Directorate and budget holders are not authorised to commit the University to expenditure without first ensuring that there are sufficient funds to meet the purchase cost. In practice this means that purchase orders cannot be placed beyond the revenue, capital or project budget allocations approved by Court or the ~~Policy & Resources Committee~~ **Finance & Resourcing Committee**.

4.2.5 The authorised member of staff (or budget holder) approving the purchase order for payment within the Finance System, must be different to the member of staff responsible for receiving the goods.

4.2.6 When the Head of School/Directorate or Chief Financial Officer is on annual or other long term leave, delegated authority must be agreed with the Chief Financial Officer. For the Chief Financial Officer, authorisation is delegated to a member of the Finance Management Team.

4.3 Procurement

4.3.1 Procurement Procedures

The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for ensuring that procedures are in place so that the University complies with all procurement legislation. The mandatory World Trade Organisation Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA), UK and/or Scottish legislation are to be used for all procurement of goods and services or hire (whether or not hire purchase) with a total value exceeding a threshold value (which is revised every two years). A breach of the legislation is actionable by a supplier or a potential supplier.

4.3.2 It is the responsibility of the Head of School/Directorate to ensure that their members of staff comply with the World Trade Organisation Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA), UK and/or Scottish legislation by notifying the Head of Procurement of any purchases likely to exceed the thresholds noted above. This will need to be done well in advance in order to permit advertisements in Public Contracts Scotland (PCS) national contracts advertising portal or Find a Tender portal which replaced the Official Journal of European Union (OJEU) with the conclusion of Brexit.

4.3.3 The University requires all budget holders, irrespective of the source of funds, to obtain value for money in all transactions including supplies, equipment and services and works at the lowest possible cost consistent with quality, delivery requirements and sustainability and equality legislation. All purchases must be in accordance with sound business practice, considering framework agreements as appropriate and must always consider the University's wider responsibilities in terms of legal, moral, social, economic and environmental impact. Factors to be considered in determining best value for money are noted in the procurement procedures.

[Search Policy Zone | StaffNet | The University of Aberdeen \(abdn.ac.uk\)](#)

4.3.4 The procurement function is the responsibility of the Chief Financial Officer and will:

- ensure that the University's procurement policy is known and observed by all involved in procurement for the University
- provide advice on matters of University procurement policy and practice
- provide advice to and assist Schools/Directorates, where required on specific purchases of £50,000 and over excluding VAT
- develop appropriate standing supply arrangements on behalf of the University to assist budget holders in meeting their value for money obligations
- vet all orders of £50,000 and over excluding VAT before they leave the University
- draft and negotiate all large-scale contracts with a total value of £50,000 and over excluding VAT undertaken by the University, in collaboration with the responsible School/Directorate
- ensure that the University complies with the World Trade Organisation Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA), UK and/or Scottish Public Procurement legislation

4.3.5 Tenders & Quotations

Heads of School/Directorates and delegated budget holders must comply with the University's tendering procedures contained in the University procurement policy. University

employees involved in purchasing, at whatever level, should act ethically at all times. The Code of Ethics is available at:

www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/documents/Procurement_Code%20of%20Ethics%20120221.pdf

- 4.3.6 Only partnership arrangements for the supply of goods or services specifically approved by the ~~Policy & Resources Committee~~ **Finance & Resourcing Committee** or Court will fall outside these arrangements for tenders and quotations.

4.4 Suppliers

- 4.4.1 The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for the set-up and maintenance of all suppliers within the finance system.

- 4.4.2 Details of the procedure and information required to request the set-up or amendment of a supplier can be found at:

[Supplier Set Up | StaffNet | The University of Aberdeen \(abdn.ac.uk\)](#)

- 4.4.3 Requests to amend supplier bank details will only be carried out by the Procurement Team once a series of checks to ensure that the change is a genuine request have been undertaken.

4.5 Purchase Orders

- 4.5.1 The ordering of goods and services must be in accordance with the University's detailed procurement procedures. A purchase order must be placed prior to the purchase of all goods or services, except those made using petty cash or credit card. In exceptional circumstances, urgent orders may be given orally but must be confirmed by an official purchase order endorsed 'confirmation order only' not later than the following working day.

- 4.5.2 Suppliers should be instructed by the purchase order to submit invoices to Accounts Payable, quoting the University purchase order number. Invoices received without a purchase order number will be returned to the supplier.

- 4.5.3 Heads of Schools/Professional Services Directors are responsible for ensuring that expenditure within their area does not exceed the approved budget allocation.

- 4.5.4 When transferring goods or services between Schools/Directorates, internal orders must be used apart from specific items where alternative procedures have been developed, for example photocopying charges.

4.6 Building and Commercial Property Contracts

- 4.6.1 Building and commercial property contracts ~~are the responsibility of the Policy & Resources Committee~~ **are an executive responsibility** and are administered by the Director of Estates and Facilities subject to the approval limits detailed in the Budget Management section of these Financial Regulations (2.5).

- 4.6.2 Consultants may be appointed if the project, as determined by the Estates Committee, is too large or too specialised. Appointments shall be subject to tendering and other procedures where appropriate.

4.6.3 Major building contract payments shall be made only on receipt of an authorised certificate approved by the Director of Estates and Facilities (or other duly authorised officer).

4.7 Other Contracts

4.7.1 Conditions of contract for the purchase of goods and services will be as described in the University's detailed procurement policy.

4.7.2 Schools/Directorates or members of staff who wish to enter into contracts with third parties on behalf of the University must comply with the University policy and practice, further details are available from:

<https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here/purchasing-procurement-1110.php>

4.8 Corporate Credit Cards

4.8.1 The operation and control of the University's credit cards is the responsibility of the Chief Financial Officer. There will be appropriate oversight of the distribution of such cards and the associated card limits.

4.8.2 Corporate cards may be issued to individuals, who have a genuine business requirement to hold one, for example, those who travel extensively on University business. In addition, a card may be issued to an individual for use as a central School/Directorate card.

4.8.3 Corporate cards must only be used for the purposes for which they have been issued and within the authorised purchase limits, cards can be used for valid business expenses only, and the misuse of such cards shall be grounds for disciplinary action.

4.8.4 Cards must not be loaned to another individual or used for personal or private purchases. Cardholders should obtain approval to purchase from the relevant budget holder and should ensure that there is sufficient budget available to meet the costs.

4.8.5 Cardholders must review and reconcile expenditure, and the appropriate individual will approve expenditure in line with the University Credit Card and Expenses and Benefits policies.

4.8.6 Where cards are misused or expense claims are not completed in line with detailed procedures, cards may be suspended or withdrawn.

Credit Card Policy

[Search Policy Zone | StaffNet | The University of Aberdeen \(abdn.ac.uk\)](#)

Expenses and Benefits Policy

[Search Policy Zone | StaffNet | The University of Aberdeen \(abdn.ac.uk\)](#)

4.9 Receipt of Goods

4.9.1 Goods must be received at designated receipt and distribution points and should be checked for quantity and/or weight and inspected for quality and specification. A delivery note shall be obtained from the supplier at the time of delivery and signed by the person receiving the goods.

4.9.2 Goods received must be entered onto the finance system on the day of receipt. If the goods are deemed to be unsatisfactory the record shall be marked accordingly and the supplier immediately notified so that they can be collected for return as soon as possible. Where goods are short on delivery the record should be marked accordingly and the supplier immediately notified.

4.9.3 All persons receiving goods on behalf of the University must be independent of those who negotiated prices and terms and approved the purchase order.

4.10 Payment of Invoices

4.10.1 The procedures for making all payments will be in a form specified by the Chief Financial Officer.

4.10.2 Suppliers are instructed by the purchase order to submit invoices for goods or services to Accounts Payable, quoting the University purchase order number. Invoices received without a purchase order number will be returned to the supplier.

4.10.3 Invoice payments will only be made by Accounts Payable against orders which have been authorised for payment by the appropriate budget holder and where orders have been goods received and match the invoice in the finance system. An invoice will be paid if:

- the goods have been received, examined and approved with regard to quality and quantity, or that services rendered or work done is satisfactory
- it is matched to the order within acceptable tolerance levels
- invoice details (quantity, price, discount) are correct
- the invoice is arithmetically correct
- the invoice has not previously been passed for payment
- where appropriate, an entry has been made on a stores record or School inventory

4.11 Petty Cash

4.11.1 Where a single item costs less than £40 it can be paid from School petty cash under the detailed Petty Cash policy. Such expenditure must be supported by receipts or vouchers where available.

4.11.2 The policy is available at:

[Search Policy Zone | StaffNet | The University of Aberdeen \(abdn.ac.uk\)](#)

4.12 Staff Expenses

4.12.1 Travel, Subsistence and Other Allowances

All claims for the payment of subsistence allowances, travelling and incidental expenses must be completed on the Finance System. Claims by members of staff must be authorised by the Budget Holder or their line manager. Authorisation shall be taken to mean that:

- the journey was authorised;
- the expenses were properly and necessarily incurred in line with the University's Expenses & Benefits policy
- the allowances are properly payable by the University
- all relevant receipts have been produced and are legible

- consideration has been given to the value for money in choosing the mode of travel
- 4.12.2 The University will reimburse reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred wholly, exclusively and necessarily in the performance of duties relating to employment. All claims for payment of subsistence allowances, travelling and incidental expenses must be completed on the finance system and supported by receipts where necessary.
- 4.12.3 Claims for members of Court will be authorised by the University Secretary. Claims for meeting attendance will be based on out-of-pocket expenses but only reasonable expenses can be reimbursed.
- 4.12.4 In certain circumstances, a University credit card will be supplied to key individuals for business purposes. The credit card must not be used to purchase goods and an expense claim must be submitted, duly authorised, to clear the statement in a timely manner.
- 4.12.5 **Hospitality**
The University will reimburse reasonable expenditure on hospitality and entertaining only where it is within approved budgets or where specific prior approval has been granted. Staff entertaining guests from outside bodies should normally use the University's catering facilities. Where this is not the case reasons must be stated when submitting a claim for reimbursement.
- 4.12.6 The detailed expenses and benefits policy is available at:

[Search Policy Zone | StaffNet | The University of Aberdeen \(abdn.ac.uk\)](#)

4.13 Other Payments

4.13.1 Student Maintenance

Payments for maintenance and other payments to students shall be made on the authority of the Chief Financial Officer, supported by detailed claims approved by the Head of School/Directorate.

- 4.13.2 Individual payments under 'outward collaborative provision' contracts shall be authorised by the Chief Financial Officer. This authority shall be on the basis that the payment represents a bona fide element of the contract which has been approved e.g. collaborative EU research project.

4.13.3 Project Advances

The Chief Financial Officer and the relevant Head of School may jointly approve cash advances in accordance with the University's detailed Advances Policy.

The policy is available at:

[Search Policy Zone | StaffNet | The University of Aberdeen \(abdn.ac.uk\)](#)

4.13.4 Payment to Volunteers

It is the responsibility of the Head of School/Professional Services Directors to ensure that payments made to volunteers (individuals who volunteer for clinical trials etc.) are correctly administered. The University allows two types of payment from an approved budget:

- reimbursement of actual costs when fully supported by receipts;

- a small gift or thank you payment as long as it is clearly a token of appreciation, not compensation, and there is no sense that these goods, vouchers or cash are expected in advance

4.13.5 Detailed guidance can be found in the Payments to Individuals guide

[Search Policy Zone | StaffNet | The University of Aberdeen \(abdn.ac.uk\)](#)

4.14 Late Payment Rules

4.14.1 The Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998 (and subsequent amendments by Scottish Statutory Instruments) was introduced to give small businesses the right to charge interest on late payments from large organisations and public authorities. Key points are:

- small business can charge interest on overdue invoices
- interest is chargeable on sales made after 1 November 1998
- the Act also applies to overseas organisations
- the institution can be sued for non-payment

4.14.2 In view of the penalties in this Act, the governing body requires that invoices must be passed for payment as soon as they are received.

4.15 Salaries & Pensions

4.15.1 Salaries

The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for all payments of salaries to all staff including payments for overtime. All time sheets and other pay documents, including those relating to fees payable to external examiners, visiting lecturers or researchers, will be in a form prescribed or approved by the Chief Financial Officer.

4.15.2 All payments to University staff will normally be paid into a UK Bank or Building Society account only. Payments to employees whose normal place of work is an overseas campus etc. will be paid in the relevant country.

4.15.3 All University staff will be appointed to the salary scales approved by Court and in accordance with appropriate conditions of service. All letters of appointment must be issued by the Director of People. The Director of People will be responsible for keeping the Chief Financial Officer informed of all matters relating to staff for payroll purposes.

4.15.4 The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for payments to casual and temporary part-time employees and for informing the appropriate authorities of such payments. All casual and temporary part-time employees will be included on the payroll.

4.15.5 The Chief Financial Officer shall be responsible for keeping all records relating to payroll including those of a statutory nature.

4.15.6 The Chief Financial Officer shall be responsible for ensuring that an up to date financial planning model of staffing costs, as approved from time to time for each category of staff, is maintained.

- 4.15.7 All payments must be made in accordance with University's detailed payroll financial procedures and comply with Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs (HMRC) regulations. Comprehensive procedures are retained in the Payroll Office.
- 4.15.8 Where working overseas, any taxation, VAT and social security liabilities will be calculated and paid in line with the regulations in place in the relevant country.
- 4.15.9 **Pensions**
Court, supported by the Pensions Advisory Group, is responsible for undertaking the role of employer in relation to appropriate pension arrangements for employees
- 4.15.10 The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for day to day pension matters including:
- paying contributions to various authorised pension schemes
 - preparing the annual return to various pension schemes
 - financial administration of the University of Aberdeen Superannuation and Life Assurance Scheme (UASLAS)
- 4.15.11 **Severance and other Non-recurring Payments**
Severance payments shall only be made in accordance with relevant legislation and funding body guidance and under the approved Severance Policy as approved by Court. Professional advice should be obtained where necessary.
- 4.15.12 All such payments shall be authorised as per the approved Severance Policy and calculations checked by the Director of People or the Chief Financial Officer. Any individual amounts which do not fall within the parameters above or are in excess of £100,000 require approval by the Remuneration Committee.

5. ASSETS & LIABILITIES

5.1 Assets

5.1.1 Land, Buildings, Plant and Equipment

The purchase, sale of land or buildings, or other items of equipment should be undertaken in line with the following authority and with reference to Funding Council requirements where exchequer funded assets or exchequer funds are involved.

Value	Authorisation
Up to £500k (within existing approved budgets)	Estates Committee
Up to - £1m	Senior Management Team
£1m - £5m	Policy & Resources Committee Finance & Resourcing Committee
Over £5m	Court

The Finance & Resourcing Committee can endorse individual land and property transactions and/or projects consistent with the direction of the Capital or Revenue Plan with a value between £1m and £5m.

Additionally, the Senior Management Team delegates approval authority to the Estates Committee for projects up to £500k in value, within existing budget plans.

5.1.2 The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for maintaining the University’s fixed asset register of land, buildings, equipment, fixtures and fittings that cost in excess of £20,000.

5.1.3 Investments

University investments for endowments and certain pension funds are overseen by the Investment Committee. The Committee monitors the external management of funds, advises on performance benchmarks and targets and reports to the ~~Policy & Resources Committee~~ Finance & Resourcing Committee via the Chief Financial Officer.

<https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/governance/investment-committee-5805.php>

5.1.4 The decision surrounding the creation, investment in and disposal of spin-out companies are overseen by the Start Up and Spin Out ~~Group~~ Panel on behalf of the ~~Policy & Resources Commercialisation~~ Committee. In addition, the Group considers proposals to invest in and dispose of shares received from the disposal of spin-out companies.

5.1.5 Inventories

Heads of Schools/Professional Services Directors are responsible for maintaining inventories for all plant, equipment and furniture and stores in their Schools/Directorates with a value in line with the detailed policy. The inventory must include items donated or held in trust.

5.1.6 Inventories must be checked at least annually and retained in the form prescribed by the Chief Financial Officer as described in the University's detailed financial procedures.

[Search Policy Zone | StaffNet | The University of Aberdeen \(abdn.ac.uk\)](#)

5.1.7 **Stocks and Stores**

Heads of Schools/Professional Services Directors are responsible for establishing adequate arrangements for the custody and control of stocks and stores within their Schools/Directorates. The systems used for stores accounting in Schools/Directorates must have the approval of the Chief Financial Officer, and not replicate data held in the University finance system.

5.1.8 Heads of Schools/Professional Services Directors of areas that require that stocks to be valued must ensure that the stock-taking procedures in place have the approval of the Chief Financial Officer, and that instructions to appropriate staff within their schools/directorates are issued in accordance with advice contained in the University's detailed financial procedures.

5.1.9 **Safeguarding Assets**

Heads of School/ Professional Services Directors are responsible for the care, custody and security of the assets and intellectual property under their control. Assets owned by the University shall, so far as is practical, be effectively marked to identify them as University property.

5.1.10 **Asset Disposal**

Disposal of surplus equipment must be in accordance with procedures agreed by the ~~Policy & Resources Committee~~ **Finance & Resourcing Committee** and contained in the University's detailed financial procedures. Sales proceeds must be recorded via the University finance system and paid into a University bank account.

[Search Policy Zone | StaffNet | The University of Aberdeen \(abdn.ac.uk\)](#)

5.2 **Intellectual Property Rights and Patents**

5.2.1 **General**

Certain activities undertaken within the University including research and consultancy may give rise to ideas, designs and inventions which may be patentable. These are collectively known as intellectual property.

5.2.2 **Intellectual Property Rights**

The ~~Policy & Resources Committee~~ **Commercialisation Committee** is responsible for approving the policy governing intellectual property accruing to the University from inventions and discoveries made by staff in the course of their work.

5.2.3 In the event of the University becoming involved in the commercial exploitation of inventions and research, this must be in accordance with the University's policy on intellectual property and spin-outs. That detailed policy can be found at:

<https://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/research/impact-knowledge/spinouts-ip-policy-10630.php#panel10633>

5.2.4 Research and Innovation has the delegated authority to negotiate and accept contracts on matters relating to intellectual property, including commercialisation, material transfer, licensing, confidentiality and assignment agreements.

5.3 Insurance

- 5.3.1 The Chief Financial Officer is responsible, with support from IAG, for implementing the insurance strategy and for arranging insurance cover in line with the strategy . The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for obtaining quotations, negotiating claims and maintaining the necessary records. The Chief Financial Officer will also deal with the University's insurers and brokers about specific insurance problems.
- 5.3.2 Heads of Schools/Directorates must ensure that any agreements negotiated within their School/Directorate, with external bodies cover any legal liabilities to which the University may be exposed. The Chief Financial Officer's advice should be sought to ensure that this is the case. Heads of Schools/Directorates must give prompt notification to the Chief Financial Officer of any potential new risks, additional property and equipment which may require insurance and any alterations affecting existing risks.
- 5.3.3 Heads of Schools/Directorates must advise the Chief Financial Officer, immediately, of any event which may give rise to an insurance claim. The Chief Financial Officer will notify the University's insurers and, if appropriate, prepare a claim in conjunction with the Head of School/Directorate for transmission to the insurers.
- 5.3.4 The Chief Financial Officer will keep a register of all insurances affected by the University and the property and risks covered.
- 5.3.5 The Heads of Schools/Directorates are responsible for keeping suitable records of plant and equipment which is subject to inspection by an insurance company and for ensuring that inspection is carried out in the periods prescribed.
- 5.3.6 All staff using their own vehicles on behalf of the University shall maintain their own, appropriate insurance cover for business use.
- 5.3.7 The University is not responsible for the insurance of personal libraries or personal effects held within staff rooms and staff will therefore be required to secure personal insurance where appropriate. Similarly, the University is not responsible for damage to personal vehicles whilst they are parked in University grounds unless the damage is as a result of a negligent act by the University.

6. OTHER ITEMS

6.1 Student Welfare & Discretionary Funds

6.1.1 The Chief Financial Officer will prescribe the format for recording the use of student welfare funds. Records of discretionary funds will be maintained according to funding body requirements.

6.2 Voluntary Funds

6.2.1 The Chief Financial Officer shall be informed of any fund, not being an official fund of the University, which is controlled wholly or in part by a member of staff in relation to their function in the University.

6.2.2 The accounts of any such fund shall be audited by an independent external person and shall be submitted with a certificate of audit to the appropriate body. The Chief Financial Officer shall be entitled to verify that this has been done.

6.3 Security

6.3.1 The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for the safekeeping of official financial documents relating to the University. All such documents shall be held in an appropriately secure, fireproof location and copies held at a separate location.

6.3.2 Heads of Schools/Directorates are responsible for maintaining proper security at all times for all buildings, stock, stores, furniture, cash, etc. under their control. They shall consult the Director of Estates and Facilities in any case where physical security is thought to be defective or where it is considered that special security arrangements may be needed.

6.3.3 Keys to safes or other similar containers must be secured by the person responsible.

6.3.4 The Director of Digital and Information Services is responsible for advising on arrangements for maintaining proper security and privacy of information held on the University network and for ensuring that, where data is to be shared with other bodies, a Data Sharing Agreement (DSA) is put in place. Appropriate levels of security will be provided, such as passwords for networked PCs, together with restricted physical access to network shares. Information relating to personal data held will be subject to the provisions of all relevant legislation. A University Data Protection Officer (DPO) has been nominated to ensure compliance with the Act. The DPO maintains a register of DSAs.

6.4 Companies, Joint Ventures & Consortium Arrangements

6.4.1 In certain circumstances it may be beneficial for the University to form a Company or joint venture to undertake services or commercialisation of intellectual property on behalf of the University.

6.4.2 Court has approved an [Intellectual Property and Spin-Out Policy](#) for the creation and governance of companies, **including guidance on intellectual property exploitation and revenue sharing in respect of:**

- The registration and all subsequent dealings with patents, design rights, trademarks and other intellectual property rights including licensing and outright transfer of such rights;
 - Dealings with copyright, know-how and all other unregistered intellectual property rights (including in relation to software and teaching materials), licensing and outright transfer of such rights; and
 - Technology transfer related agreements, including Confidentiality Agreements, Material Transfer Agreements and Heads of Terms.
- 6.4.3 The ~~Start Up and Spin Out Group~~ **Commercialisation Committee** has the delegated authority from Court to ~~approve the formation of new companies, and the subsequent arrangements for monitoring and reporting on its activities including any decision by Court to dispose of its investment or wind up a company.~~ **Oversee the creation, dissolution or sale of University subsidiary companies (supported by the relevant Executive Committee).**
- 6.4.4 It is the responsibility of the ~~Start Up and Spin Out Group~~ **Commercialisation Committee** to approve the constitution and shareholding arrangements and, if required, appoint University representative directors of companies, wholly or partially owned by the University. **The Research & Innovation Directorate** have the delegated authority to negotiate and accept the contractual relationship surrounding company spin-outs.
- 6.4.5 The formal link between a company and the University will be undertaken by a nominated Director appointed to the company board by the Start Up and Spin Out ~~Group~~ **Panel**. The nominated Director will be responsible for attending company Board meetings and reporting to the University on the performance and activities of the company and will represent the University's shareholder interest. Where no Director is appointed, the University will receive periodic reports via a reporting requirement in the shareholders agreement.
- 6.4.6 The directors of companies where the University is the majority shareholder are required to submit, via the Start Up and Spin Out ~~Group~~ **Panel**, **a report to the Senior Management Team, which will also be provided to the Finance & Resourcing Committee for information.** The Start Up and Spin Out ~~Group~~ **Panel** formally reports to the ~~Policy & Resources~~ **Commercialisation** Committee on all companies, where the University has a shareholding, on a six monthly basis.
- 6.4.7 All shareholders and directors (where they are employed by the university) are required to submit a conflict of interest declaration form as required by the Code of Practice on Conflicts:
- [Search Policy Zone | StaffNet | The University of Aberdeen \(abdn.ac.uk\)](#)
- 6.4.8 Where the University is involved in a joint venture arrangement, a formal Joint Venture Agreement and Operating Agreement will be put in place with Policy & Resources Committee approval. This will include the reporting requirements to the Policy & Resources Committee on an annual basis.

Glossary

The following general terms have been used in this document:

AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE	A committee of Court that provides advice on the effectiveness of the University's procedures for audit, financial control, governance and risk management, and provides assurances in these key areas through its annual report to the Scottish Funding Council, which is approved by Court.
BUDGET HOLDER	The member of staff who has been assigned their own budget other than a Head of School or Directorate and is accountable to their Head of School or Directorate for it.
COURT	The governing body of the University. It is charged with the administration and management of its resource and property.
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER	The chief financial officer of the University.
FINANCIAL MEMORANDUM	Sets out the formal accountability relationship between the SFC and institutions, and the requirements with which institutions are expected to comply in return of payment of grant by SFC.
FINANCE & RESOURCING COMMITTEE	A Committee of Court to oversee the University's financial affairs with a focus on ensuring that the University's approach to revenue, resource and capital planning mature in support of Aberdeen 2040.
INVESTMENT COMMITTEE	A committee that provides advice and makes recommendations to University management on the investment of University funds.
PRINCIPAL	The chief executive of the University responsible to Court for maintaining and promoting the efficiency and good order of the University.
FINANCIAL REPORTING COUNCIL	The Financial Reporting Council (FRC) sets the UK Corporate Governance and Stewardship Codes and UK standards for accounting and actuarial work. As the Competent Authority for audit in the UK the FRC sets auditing and ethical standards and monitors and enforces audit quality.

FINANCIAL REPORTING STANDARDS (FRS)	The financial reporting standards FRS 100, 101, 102 and 103 (known as new UK GAAP) are effective from 1 January 2015. These FRSs replace existing financial reporting standards issued by the FRC for reporting periods starting on or after 1 January 2015.
FULL ECONOMIC COST (fEC)	The forecast of and accounting for the full economic cost of individual research projects on a reliable, comprehensive and consistent basis.
HEADS OF SCHOOL/DIRECTORATE	Head of School/Directorate of the University who is responsible for the budget of their whole School/Directorate.
POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE	A committee of Court to integrate academic, financial, estate and human resources planning and policy making, advising Court and Senate on long term strategic objectives; and to oversee the operational performance of the University
SCOTTISH FUNDING COUNCIL (SFC)	The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) is the national, strategic body that is responsible for funding teaching and learning provision, research and other activities in Scotland's colleges and universities
SEGREGATION OF DUTIES	The concept of having more than one person required to complete a task. In business the separation is an internal control intended to prevent fraud and error.
SENATE	The body responsible for academic matters whose role is to direct and regulate the teaching and research work of the University.
STATEMENT OF RECOMMENDED PRACTICE (SORP)	A statement of recommended practice (SORP) is set of recommendations usually as regards accounting practices and the reporting of financial information drawn up by a regulatory body.
START UP AND SPIN OUT GROUP PANEL	A committee with the devolved authority to make decisions surrounding the creation of spin-out committees and the monitoring of University investment in spin-out and subsidiary companies. A panel established to undertake the technical assessment, on a confidential basis, of proposals for investment, divestment and income distribution in respect of innovation and entrepreneurship start-up and spin-out activity.

TRANSPARENT APPROACH TO COSTING (TRAC)	The standard method used for costing in the higher education sector in the UK.
UNIVERSITY ORDINANCES	Ordinances provide the constitutional framework that allows the University to govern its affairs. Ordinances are detailed regulations and procedures covering all aspects of University business.
UNIVERSITY SECRETARY AND CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER	The chief administrative officer of the University and principal officer of Court.

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

UPDATE ON CHANGES TO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This paper provides an update on changes to the Executive Committee structure. The changes respond to the amendments to the Court Committee structure following the externally facilitated Governance Review.

2. PREVIOUS CONSIDERATION BY /FURTHER APPROVAL REQUIRED

	Board/Committee	Date
Previously considered or approved by	n/a	
Further consideration/approval required by	n/a	

3. RECOMMENDED ACTION

3.1 The University Court is invited to note and discuss the changes to the Committee structure which are intended to provide assurance of effective management oversight.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Executive Committee structure is illustrated in Appendix 1.
- The Committees include those which were previously sub-committees of Policy & Resources Committee (PARC).
 - Three new (marked in Blue) Committees are to be established: Risk Management (encompassing the existing biannual risk workshops), Staff Experience, and Enterprise and Innovation.
 - One, Regional Engagement, is transitioned from Group to Committee (marked in Purple).
 - The final “Committee” in the hierarchy is the “Military Education Committee” (marked in Green) which is a joint structure with RGU. This does not meet the normal criteria for a committee being more accurately a co-ordination group but is required by legislation.
 - Information Governance Committee and Health & Safety Committee (marked in Peach), which formally provide assurance reports respectively to Audit & Risk Committee and Court, will provide regular reports to Senior Management Team (SMT) and escalate any management issues as required. The Campus Planning Group meets the requirements of Ministers that we maintain a consultative committee as a standing precaution in relation to Covid impacts.
- 4.2 In re-aligning the PARC sub-committees as Executive Committees, the opportunity has been taken to highlight areas in which terms of reference and membership would be appropriate. These changes will be taken forward by the Chair of each Committee. The need for a broadly based review of the operation of Committees supporting Student Recruitment and International Partnerships has been identified.
- 4.3 A specific distinction has been drawn between Committees, their Sub-Committees, Groups and Panels:
- Committees/Sub-Committees have a set of formal delegations of authority from the parent body in relation to its remit.

- Groups may be long-standing co-ordination/advisory groups or short-life working or Task and Finish Groups (TFG). None hold delegated authority from the parent Committee. The distinction between long-standing and short-life groups will be emphasised in the remit, with TFGs, in particular, having clear expected outputs and end-dates. Groups may also exist out with the formal committee infrastructure, providing support to a specific SMT role or function; for example, the Advisory Group to the Establishment Licence Holder (ELH) supports the ELH (currently Tracey Slaven).
- Panels (for example Redundancy or Appeal panels) have decision-making authority as a part of an approved policy process. While they may provide statistic level information to a Committee, they are not under the direction of the Committee and do not hold delegated authority from the Committee.

5. CLERKING OF COMMITTEES

- 5.1 Clerking of Court and its Committees (including Pensions Advisory Group), Senate, AUSA Forum, SMT and the University Management/Leadership Forum will be undertaken by the Governance Team. It is expected that clerking of the General Council Business Committee will also move to the Governance Team.
- 5.2 Clerking of Senate Committees (for example University Education Committee) and Executive Committees will be undertaken by the relevant directorate area. Support and training on effective clerking will be provided by the Governance Team.
- 5.3 It is expected that all Committees will move to using Decision-Time as the system is rolled out across the University.

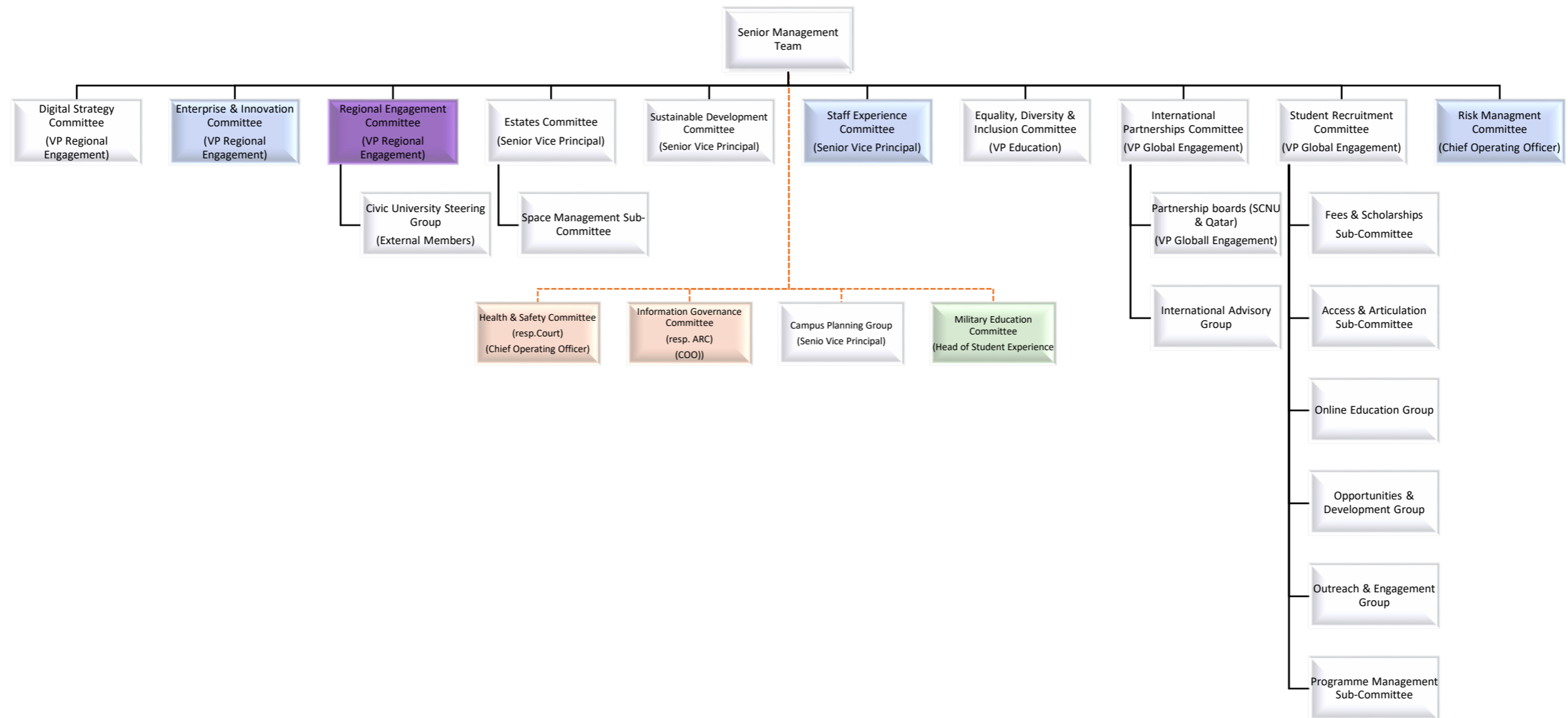
6. FURTHER INFORMATION

- 6.1 Further information is available from Tracey Slaven, University Secretary & Chief Operating Officer (tracey.slaven@abdn.ac.uk).

19 February 2023

Confidentiality Status: Open

Appendix 1: Executive Committee Structure



UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

REPORT FROM SENATUS ACADEMICUS

1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This paper outlines the main items of business considered by the Senate at its meeting on 8 February 2023.

1.2 This paper is provided for information and approval and forms part of the mechanism for Court to assure itself that it has academic oversight of quality within the University.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 Court is asked to **note** the items discussed (3.1 - 3.4), which included the finalised principles and timelines for the work to decolonise the curriculum, the implementation plans for the Researcher Development Concordat, and an institutional Policy on the Responsible Use of Metrics.

2.2 Court is asked to **approve**, for its part, the draft Resolutions, 'Omnibus Resolution Changes in Regulations for Various Degrees' and 'Additional degrees available to Senate for award *honoris causa tantum*', included at 3.5 and 3.6 respectively, and to forward them to the General Council and make them available within the University in terms of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966.

3. DISCUSSION

3.1 ITEMS FROM THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

3.1.1 Draft Aberdeen 2040 graduate attributes and skills: An Academic View

Senate received a [presentation](#) and discussed a [paper](#) detailing work carried out to date on the creation of the Aberdeen 2040 Graduate Attributes and Skills. The feedback and actions arising from the Senate discussions will be taken back to the Graduate Attributes and Skills workstream with a final version then to be brought to Senate for approval.

3.1.2 Decolonising the Curriculum

Following its discussion in November, and a further extensive discussion at the meeting much of which focused on the potential workload implications of the proposals, Senate voted to approve the proposed [principles and timelines](#) for the approach to be taken to the implementation of Decolonising the Curriculum.

3.2 ITEMS FROM THE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH COMMITTEE

3.2.1 Researcher Development Concordat

Senate approved the revised [proposals](#) for the implementation of recommendations put forward with regards to the Researcher Development Concordat. The approved proposal incorporated feedback from the discussions at Senate in November

3.2.2 Institutional Policy on the Responsible Use of Metrics

Following discussion at Senate in November, Senate discussed and approved a revised [policy](#) on the Responsible Use of Metrics.

3.2.3 Presentation: Citations

Senate received a [presentation](#) from the University Librarian highlighting the role citations play in determining league table performance and the assistance available from the University Library to assist with maximizing potential in this context.

3.3 PRESENTATION: COMMERCIALISATION

Senate received a [presentation](#) from the Vice-Principal (Regional Engagement) entitled 'Commercialisation & Entrepreneurship: Context, Benchmarking & Next Steps'

3.4 HONORARY DEGREE VOTING

Senate voted on confidential nominations for honorary degrees.

3.5 OMNIBUS RESOLUTION CHANGES IN REGULATIONS FOR VARIOUS DEGREES

On the recommendation of the Quality Assurance Committee, Senate for its part, approved the proposed amendments to degree regulations to take effect from September 2023. Accordingly, the Court is asked **to approve, on the recommendation of the Senate, the draft Resolution attached as Annex 1** and to forward it to the General Council and make it available within the University in terms of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966.

3.6 ADDITIONAL DEGREES AVAILABLE TO SENATE FOR AWARD *HONORIS CAUSA TANTUM*

On the recommendation of the Honorary Degrees Committee, Senate approved amendments to regulations to create further honorary degrees to allow greater differentiation at the subject level. Accordingly, the Court is asked **to approve, on the recommendation of the Senate, the draft Resolution attached as Annex 2** and to forward it to the General Council and make it available within the University in terms of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966.

3.7 ROUTINE BUSINESS

Senate noted: the [Quality Assurance Committee Report](#); the [University Research Committee Report](#); the [University Education Committee Report](#); [Senate Election Results](#); and the [Senate Assessor Election Result](#).

4 FURTHER INFORMATION

- 4.1 Further information is available from Tracey Slaven (tracey.slaven@abdn.ac.uk) or Rachael Bernard (r.bernard@abdn.ac.uk)

20 February 2023 [version 1] **Confidentiality Status:** Open

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

REGULATORY CHANGES INCLUDED IN THE OMNIBUS RESOLUTION
FOR INTRODUCTION IN 2023/2024**1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER**

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to seek the **approval** of the Court for the attached Resolution, which comprises 'Changes to Regulations for Various Degrees'.

2. PREVIOUS CONSIDERATION BY /FURTHER APPROVAL REQUIRED

	Board/Committee	Date
Previously considered/ approved by:	Academic Policy and Regulations Group (APRG)	18 January 2023
	Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)	<i>by Circulation</i>
	Senate	8 February 2023
Further consideration/ approval required by:	Court	1 March 2023
	Business Committee of the General Council	TBC
	Court	TBC

3. RECOMMENDED ACTION

3.1 The Court is asked to **approve** the attached regulatory changes and to forward the draft resolution to the General Council and make it available within the University in terms of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 The regulatory changes to be introduced with effect from 2023/24 are included in the attached appendix A, titled 'Changes to Regulations for Various Degrees'. This Resolution enacts the changes in Degree Regulations recommended by the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC).

4.2 Key changes included in the regulatory changes are noted as follows:

(i) General Regulations for First Degrees

The proposed change in respect of Regulation 16.1 pertaining to progression requirements, and which should be considered alongside Regulation 9, seeks to clarify progression requirements. The changes address (i) clarity around which component of study, be it programme or course, the regulation refers and (ii) the position with regards to honours and non-honours degree programmes and the progression requirements therein. It is recognised that in previous years, where students were not eligible to enter honours, they

were moved to the relevant Designated Degree programme and allowed to progress with them being moved back to the Honours Degree at the end of programme year 4 if they made up their shortfall of credits. This was confusing to students and also cumbersome administratively. In recent years, students have been advised that they are 'not on track' for Honours but have been retained on the Honours degree in third year but not permitted to progress to programme year 4 if they have not made up their shortfall of credits from levels 1 and 2. Very few students in this situation fail to make up this shortfall. The changes proposed to General Regulation 16.1 seek to clarify this approach. In making these changes to the General Regulations, those students who do not have 240 credits at the end of programme year 2 will be informed that they are 'not on track' and will be clearly informed of the requirements they need to meet to progress to programme year 4.

(ii) Regulations for Degrees Undertaken at the Aberdeen Institute of Data Science and Artificial Intelligence at South China Normal University (SCNU)

The proposed changes in respect of progression requirements for the Aberdeen Institute seek to clarify the requirements for English Language. The proposed changes to the regulations exclude English Language courses from the progression requirements and instead separately require that the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is achieved at the required level as stipulated by the University prior to progression to programme year 3. This is because the English language component is separate to the University degree requirements and the English language courses undertaken by Joint Institute students are to assist with the achievement of IELTS and therefore, not a formal component of the programme.

(iii) Supplementary Regulations for the Degree of Bachelor of Music (BMus)

The degree of Bachelor of Music (Community Music) has been removed from the regulations due to programme withdrawal.

(iv) Supplementary Regulations for the Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE)

The degree of Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (DLITE) has been removed from the regulations due to programme withdrawal.

(v) Regulations for the Degree of Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBChB)

The proposed introduction of a new regulation regarding the Medical Licensing Assessment requirements in the Regulations for the Degree of Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBChB) provides the required thresholds for which students must have achieved the Applied Knowledge Test (AKT). This is in response to the General Medical Council introduction of a Medical Licensing Assessment (MLA) that all students within the UK are required to pass in order to graduate with a license to practise from academic year 2024/25. This will consist of two parts: (i) the Applied Knowledge Test (AKT) and (ii) a Clinical and Professional Skills Assessment (CPSA).

The GMC accepted a proposal from the Medical Schools Council Assessment Alliance to design and administrate the Medical Schools AKT, which all UK Medical Schools have signed up to. The University's Medical School will be responsible for the running of the AKT for medical students. Final written papers will take place in Year 4 at the Medical School, which is the penultimate year of the MBChB programme with the AKT replacing the current year

4 exam. The AKT will go live in January 2024 for the penultimate year Schools. Further, the CPSA will be the final clinical assessment as run by the School, the Year 5 Sequential OSCE.

5. FURTHER INFORMATION

5.1 Further information is available from Liam Dyker, Acting Assistant Registrar (liam.dyker2@abdn.ac.uk) or Gillian Mackintosh, Director of Academic Services and Online Education (g.mackintosh@abdn.ac.uk).

13 January 2023

Confidentiality Status: *Open*

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE/UNIVERSITY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DRAFT RESOLUTION NO x OF 2023 [CHANGES IN REGULATIONS FOR VARIOUS DEGREES]

After consultation with the Senatus Academicus, the University Court, at its meeting on < > passed the following Resolution:

1. On the recommendation of the Senatus Academicus, the following changes to Degree Regulations are hereby approved.
2. This Resolution shall come into force on the fifteenth day of September, two thousand and twenty-three, but the requirements under it shall also be binding on students proceeding for the first time to First Degree study from the Summer School for Access, or from Programme Year 0 of the MA or BSc with Foundation Studies.

1. GENERAL REGULATIONS FOR FIRST DEGREES

Regulation 16.1 b.

In the existing regulation, following '[including those' insert 'courses'.

Regulation 16.1 c

In the existing regulation, following '[including those' insert 'courses'.

Regulation 16.1 d

Delete the existing regulation.

Re-number the following regulations.

Regulation 16.1 e

In the existing regulation, following 'programme year 3' delete 'of a non-honours degree

In the existing regulation, following 'end of level 3,' insert 'including those courses required to enter programme year 4 for the degree programme for which they are currently registered and'

In the existing regulation, following 'any courses' insert 'at levels 1 and 2'.

In the existing regulation, following 'programme year 3' delete '[including those required to enter programme year 4 for the degree programme for which they are currently registered].'

Regulation 16.1 f

Delete the existing regulation.

Re-number the following regulations.

- 16.1. Studies for each degree are arranged to extend over a number of programme years, each of which for a full-time student normally occupies two half-sessions. Except with the permission of the Senatus Academicus or where Regulation 17.1 applies candidates may not progress:
- a. if they have been required to attend the Summer School for Access, from that to a subsequent programme year unless they have completed the Summer School at a standard deemed to be satisfactory by the Senatus Academicus; or
 - b. from programme year 1 to programme year 2 unless they have accumulated, by award or recognition, or been exempted from, at least 90 credit points at level 1 [including those courses required to enter programme year 2 for the degree programme for which they are currently registered]; or
 - c. from programme year 2 to programme year 3 unless they have accumulated, by award or recognition, or been exempted from, at least 210 credit points at levels 1 and 2 [including those courses required to enter programme year 3 for the degree programme for which they are currently registered]; or
 - ~~d. from programme year 2 to programme year 3 of an honours degree unless they have accumulated, by award or recognition, or been exempted from, at least 240 credit points at levels 1 and 2 [including those required to enter programme year 3 for the degree programme for which they are currently registered]; or~~
 - ~~e.d.~~ from programme year 3 ~~of a non honours degree~~ to programme year 4 of an Honours degree programme where the degree programme for which they are registered allows, unless they have achieved at least 330 credit points by the end of level 3, including those courses required to enter programme year 4 for the degree programme for which they are currently registered and any courses at levels 1 and 2 which were outstanding at the time of progression to programme year 3 ~~[including those required to enter programme year 4 for the degree programme for which they are currently registered];~~
 - ~~f. within an Honours programme unless they have accumulated, by award or recognition, or been exempt from, at least 330 credit points by the end of level 3 [including those required to enter programme year 4 for the degree programme for which they are currently registered];~~
 - ~~g.e.~~ in all cases, unless they have satisfied such further requirements governing progression between programme years as may be prescribed in the Supplementary Regulations governing award of the degree programme for which they are registered.

Exceptionally, the Senatus Academicus may allow candidates to progress with less than the number of credit points stated, if it is satisfied (a) that they would have obtained the necessary credit points to progress save for medical or other good cause; (b) that they are capable of satisfying the progression requirements of the next programme year within two further half-sessions of full-time study or the equivalent.

2. REGULATIONS FOR DEGREES UNDERTAKEN AT THE ABERDEEN INSTITUTE OF DATA SCIENCE AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AT SOUTH CHINA NORMAL UNIVERSITY (SCNU)

Regulation 7a

In the existing regulation, following 'appended to these regulations,' insert 'excluding courses in English language'.

Regulation 7b

In the existing regulation, following 'appended to these regulations,' insert 'excluding courses in English language'.

In the existing regulation, for 'level 6 (or approved equivalent)' substitute '(or approved equivalent) to the required level as stipulated by the University of Aberdeen'.

Regulation 7c

In the existing regulation, following 'appended to these regulations,' insert 'excluding courses in English language'.

In the existing regulation, for 'level 6 (or approved equivalent)' substitute '(or approved equivalent) to the required level as stipulated by the University of Aberdeen'.

7. Studies for each degree awarded by the University of Aberdeen, undertaken at the Aberdeen Institute at SCNU, are arranged to extend over four programme years, each of which for a full-time student normally occupies two half- sessions. General Regulation 16, regarding progression, is, however, superseded by the following:

Except with the permission of the Senatus Academicus candidates may not progress:

- (a) from programme year 1 to programme year 2 unless they have accumulated, by award or recognition, or been exempted from, no less than 75% of the credit point total required at level 1 for the completion of the Aberdeen award [including those courses prescribed in the appropriate programme prescription, appended to these regulations, excluding courses in English language]; *or*
- (b) from programme year 2 to programme year 3 of a non-honours degree unless they have accumulated, by award or recognition, or been exempted from, no less than 100% of the credit point total required at level 1 and no less than 75% of the credit point total required at level 2 for the completion of the Aberdeen award [including those courses prescribed in the appropriate programme prescription, appended to these regulations, excluding courses in English language] and successful completion of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) (or approved equivalent) to the required level as stipulated by the University of Aberdeen (level 6 (or approved equivalent)); *or*
- (c) from programme year 2 to programme year 3 of an honours degree unless they have accumulated, by award or recognition, or been exempted from, no less than 100% of the credit point total required at levels 1 and 2 for the completion of the Aberdeen award [including those courses prescribed in the appropriate programme prescription, appended to these regulations, excluding courses in English language] and successful completion of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) (or approved equivalent) to the required level as stipulated by the University of Aberdeen level 6 (or approved equivalent); *or*
- (d) from programme year 3 of an honours degree programme or from programme year 3 of a non- honours degree programme to programme year 4 of an honours degree programme where the degree programme for which they are registered allows, unless they have achieved a no less than 100% of the credit point total required at level 3 for the completion of the Aberdeen award [including those courses prescribed in the appropriate programme prescription, appended to these regulations].

Exceptionally, the Senatus Academicus may allow candidates to progress with less than the number of credit points stated, if it is satisfied (a) that they would have obtained the necessary credit points to progress save for medical or other good cause; (b) that they are capable of satisfying the progression requirements of the next programme year within two further half-sessions of full-time study or the equivalent.

4. SUPPLEMENTARY REGULATIONS FOR THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF MUSIC (BMUS)

Regulation 1

In the existing regulation, following 'BMus (Education)' insert 'or'

In the existing regulation, following 'BMus Honours (Education)' delete 'Designated Degree of BMus (Community Music) or Degree of BMus Honours (Community Music).'

- | | |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. | The Degree of Bachelor of Music (BMus) may be conferred as a Designated Degree of BMus, Degree of BMus Honours, Designated Degree of BMus (Education) <u>or</u> , Degree of BMus Honours (Education).
Designated Degree of BMus (Community Music) or Degree of BMus Honours (Community Music).
Candidates for the Degree with Honours who have completed satisfactorily a programme accredited by the General Teaching Council for Scotland shall be awarded the Degree of BMus Honours (Education). |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Regulation 2

In the existing regulation, following 'BMus Honours (Education), delete 'or BMus Honours (Community Music),'

- | | |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2. | Before being admitted to the Honours programme, programme years 3 and 4, leading to the degree of BMus Honours (Education) <u>or</u> BMus Honours (Community Music), or to the Designated BMus (Education) programme year 3 all candidates must, in addition to satisfying any academic requirements for admission, become a member of Disclosure Scotland's Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme. |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Regulation 5c

In the existing regulation, following 'an Honours programme' delete 'or the Designated BMus (Community Music).'

Regulation 5e

In the existing regulation, following 'Designated BMus (Education)' insert 'or'.

In the existing regulation, following 'BMus Honours (Education)' delete 'or, normally, programme year 3 of the Designated BMus (Community Music) BMus Honours (Community Music).'

In the existing regulation, following 'BMus Honours (Education)' delete 'or BMus Honours (Community Music).'

- | | |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5. | Except with the permission of the Senatus Academicus or where General Regulation 17.1 applies candidates may not progress |
| (a) | from programme year 1 to programme year 2 unless they have accumulated, by award or recognition, at least 90 credit points at level 1 [including, by award, recognition or exemption, those required to enter programme year 2 for the degree programme for which they are currently registered]; <i>or</i> |
| (b) | from programme year 2 to programme year 3 of the Designated BMus or Designated BMus (Education) unless they have accumulated, by award or recognition, at least 210 credit points at levels 1 and 2 [including, by award, recognition or exemption those required to enter programme year 3 for the degree programme for which they are currently registered]; <i>or</i> |

- (c) from programme year 2 to programme year 3 of an Honours programme ~~or the Designated BMus (Community Music)~~ unless they have accumulated, by award or recognition, at least 240 credit points at levels 1 and 2 [including, by award, recognition or exemption those required to enter programme year 3 for the degree programme for which they are currently registered];
or
- (d) from programme year 3 of the BMus Honours, or Designated BMus to programme year 4 of the BMus Honours unless they have accumulated, by award or recognition, at least 330 credit points at Levels 1,2 and 3 [including by award, recognition or exemption those required to enter programme year 4 for the degree programme for which they are currently registered].
- (e) from programme year 3 of the Designated BMus (Education) ~~or~~ BMus Honours (Education) ~~or, normally, programme year 3 of the Designated BMus (Community Music)~~ BMus Honours (Community Music) to programme year 4 of the BMus Honours (Education) ~~or BMus Honours (Community Music)~~ unless they have accumulated, by award or recognition, at least 360 credit points at Levels 1, 2 and 3 [including by award, recognition or exemption those required to enter programme year 4 for the degree programme for which they are currently registered].

Regulation 7

Delete the existing regulation.

~~7. The Senatus Academicus may require candidates on the BMus Honours (Community Music) programme to discontinue attendance on courses in the programme if they fail any period of Community Placement on a second occasion. Candidates who have obtained no fewer than 360 credit points towards the degree, including at least 90 credit points at Level 3 may, on application, be awarded the Designated Degree of BMus or Designated degree of Bmus (Community Music).~~

Re-number the following regulations.

Regulation 10

In the existing regulation, following 'BMus Honours' insert 'or'.

In the existing regulation, following 'BMus Honours (Education)' delete 'or BMus Honours (Community Music)'.

In the existing regulation, following 'BMus Honours' insert 'or'.

In the existing regulation, following 'BMus Honours (Education)' delete 'or BMus Honours (Community Music)'.

In the existing regulation, following 'BMus Honours' insert 'or'.

In the existing regulation, following 'Designated degree of BMus (Education)' delete 'or Designated Degree of BMus (Community Music)'.

~~10.9~~ Candidates for the Degree of BMus Honours ~~or~~ BMus Honours (Education) ~~or BMus Honours (Community Music)~~ who either:

- (a) have failed to complete the requirements for this degree within five calendar years of the date of their first matriculation for this degree, or;
- (b) can no longer do so (e.g., are deemed unfit to practice) or;
- (c) have indicated in writing to the Senatus Academicus that they no longer wish to pursue a curriculum leading to the degree of BMus Honours or; BMus Honours (Education) ~~or BMus Honours (Community Music)~~;

but who, in each case, have obtained no fewer than 360 credit points towards the degree including at least 90 credit points at Level 3 may, on application, be awarded the Designated Degree of BMus or; Designated degree of BMus (Education) ~~or Designated Degree of BMus (Community Music)~~.

4. SUPPLEMENTARY REGULATIONS FOR THE PROFESSIONAL GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN EDUCATION (PGDE)

Regulation 2

In the existing regulation, following 'listed in annex A.' delete 'The degree may also be conferred as the Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (DLITE).'

2. The Professional Graduate Diploma in Education may be conferred in either Primary or Secondary Education. The Secondary route may be completed with designation in a cognate subject or a combination of two cognate subjects as listed in annex A. ~~The degree may also be conferred as the Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (DLITE)~~. Candidates who have completed satisfactorily a programme accredited by the General Teaching Council for Scotland shall be awarded the Diploma in accordance with Regulation 4.

5. REGULATIONS FOR THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF MEDICINE AND BACHELOR OF SURGERY (MBChB)

Regulation 14

Insert new regulation as follows:

'14. Candidates for the Degrees of MBChB are required to undertake the Medical Licensing Assessment (MLA). Consisting of two elements (a) a clinical and professional skills assessment, undertaken as part of the final year OSCE and (b) an Applied Knowledge Test (AKT), the degree of MBChB will not be conferred on a candidate who fails to achieve a pass in both elements of the MLA. In regard to the AKT:

- (i) Notwithstanding Regulation 8, candidates will normally have a maximum of four opportunities, undertaken over the course of two academic years, to achieve a pass in the AKT;
- (ii) In accordance with Regulation 10(iii), candidates shall not be permitted to progress to programme year 5 without successful completion of the AKT.
- (iii) Candidates must normally graduate with the degree of MBChB within two academic years of achieving a pass in the AKT. Failure to do so will result in a candidate being required to retake the AKT prior to graduation and a delay in conferral of the degree.'

Re-number the following regulations

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

**ADDITIONAL DEGREES AVAILABLE TO SENATE
FOR AWARD *honoris causa tantum***

1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This paper seeks approval of the draft Resolution ‘Additional degrees available to Senate for award *honoris causa tantum*’

1.2 This paper is provided for **Approval**.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 Court is invited to approve the draft Resolution ‘Additional degrees available to Senate for award *honoris causa tantum*’ and forward it to the General Council and make it available within the University in terms of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966.

3. PREVIOUS CONSIDERATION BY /FURTHER APPROVAL REQUIRED

	Board/Committee	Date
Previously considered/ approved by:	Honorary Degrees Committee	14 December 2022
	Senate	8 February 2023
Further consideration/ approval required by:	Court	1 March 2023
	Business Committee of the General Council	TBC
	Court	TBC

4. DISCUSSION

3.1 As approved by Senate on 5 February 2020, on the recommendation of the Honorary Degrees Committee, there was a decision to create further honorary degrees to allow greater differentiation at the subject level.

3.2 Accordingly, the attached draft Resolution creates the degrees of Doctor of Education and Doctor of Engineering styled as DEd and DEng respectively to differentiate them from the EdD and EngD which exist already as professional doctorates; it creates the degree of Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) and the degree of Doctor of the University (DUniv) replaces the existing Doctor Honoris Causa (DHC). In addition, the regulations are amended to permit the award of the Doctor of Medicine (MD) *honoris causa tantum* as well as by examination

3.3 The attached draft resolution (**Appendix A**) enacts these recommendations and will see these degrees become available for conferral from the beginning of academic year 2023/24

4. FURTHER INFORMATION

- 4.1 Further information may be obtained from Rachael Bernard, Senior Governance Officer (r.bernard@abdn.ac.uk).

[19 January 2023] [1] **Confidentiality Status:** Open

DRAFT RESOLUTION NO XXX OF 2023

[Additional degrees available to Senate for award *honoris causa tantum*]

After consultation with the Senatus Academicus, the University Court of the University of Aberdeen, at its meeting on < >, passed the following Resolution:

1. The Degree of Doctor of the University (DUniv) may be conferred *honoris causa tantum* by the University of Aberdeen.
2. The Degree of Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) may be conferred *honoris causa tantum* by the University of Aberdeen.
3. The Degree of Doctor of Education (DEd) may be conferred *honoris causa tantum* by the University of Aberdeen.
4. The Degree of Doctor of Engineering (DEng) may be conferred *honoris causa tantum* by the University of Aberdeen.
5. On the recommendation of the Senatus Academicus, amendments to the General Regulations for Postgraduate Study and the General Regulations for Research Degrees as set out below are hereby approved.
6. This Resolution shall come into force on the date on which it is passed by the University Court.

Amendments to Regulations for Postgraduate Study

Section 3 Higher Degrees

After the regulations for the Degree of Doctor of Music (DMus)

Insert:

Degree of Doctor of Education (DEd)

The Degree of Doctor of Education (DEd) is conferred *honoris causa tantum*.

After the regulations for the Degree of Doctor of Science (DSC)

Insert:

Degree of Doctor of Engineering (DEng)

The Degree of Doctor of Engineering (DEng) is conferred *honoris causa tantum*.

Degree of Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS)

The Degree of Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) is conferred *honoris causa tantum*.

Replace:

~~Degree of Doctor Honoris Causa (DHC)~~

~~The Degree of Doctor Honoris Causa (DHC) is conferred *honoris causa tantum*.~~

With

Degree of Doctor of the University (DUniv)

The Degree of Doctor of the University (DUniv) is conferred *honoris causa tantum*.

Amendment to General Regulations for Research Degrees

To the existing Regulation 39

Append:

39. The degree shall not be conferred on candidates unless:

- (i) they have completed the period specified under Regulation 13;
- (ii) they have paid the tuition fees required.

Or

(iii) The Degree of Doctor of Medicine shall not be conferred upon persons who have not satisfied the conditions hereinbefore set forth, except that it shall be in the power of the Senatus Academicus to confer the Degree of Doctor of Medicine *honoris causa tantum*.

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

GOVERNANCE AND NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 **This paper provides a report on the key items of business considered by the Governance and Nominations Committee on 7 February.** It is focused on items of business for approval, as detailed in section 3, however a short summary of other business considered is included (the detail of which is available through the agenda, papers and draft minutes of the meeting that are available within the [Decision Time](#) Resources area).

2. PREVIOUS CONSIDERATION BY /FURTHER APPROVAL REQUIRED

	Board/Committee	Date
Previously considered/approved by	N/A	N/A
Further consideration/ approval required by	University Court	1 March 2023

3. RECOMMENDED ACTION

3.1 The Court is invited to:

- 1) **Approve** the proposed approach to the recruitment of independent members of Court as outlined at section 4;
- 2) **Approve** the proposed change to the rules for the election of staff members of Court and proposed change to periods of office for elected staff and trade union nominated members outlined at section 5.
- 3) **Approve** the revised approach to the Court Race Champion role outlined at section 6.

4. RECRUITMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS OF COURT

4.1 The Committee discussed the recruitment and appointment of independent members given that the current period of appointment of four members would conclude in July or September 2023 with a further member reaching the end of their third period of appointment in July 2024.

4.2 The Committee discussed the potential use of professional search consultants to support the process and whether the benefits of this would provide value for money. It was noted the 2021 independent member recruitment process, while supported by search consultants, had seen good responses from the alumni network and that the recent recruitment of external members of Audit and Risk Committee, undertaken entirely in-house, had been positive. It was agreed that, provided there was a clear emphasis on attracting a field of good candidates able to enhance the Court’s diversity, it would be appropriate to use the potential imminent recruitment process for a vacancy arising in September 2023 to further trial the use of in-house recruitment.

4.3 The Committee agreed to recommend the following composition for the short-listing and interview panel, to be drawn from the Governance and Nominations Committee membership and with authority to make a recommendation to Court for appointment and on periods of appointment or reappointment subject to the further approval of the Committee and Court:

- Senior Governor (Chair)
- Principal
- A staff member of Court
- Chair of the Governance and Nominations Committee

A further independent member of Court
A Students' Association nominated member of Court

4.4 While noting the intention to undertake a wider discussion on a longer-term approach to succession planning for Court members, the Committee agreed to recommend to Court in the meantime the following potential skills for prioritisation:

- People/Human Resources
- Cyber Security and Digital/IT
- Environmental Sustainability
- Estates, Construction and Major Capital Projects

4.5 **Recommendation:** The Committee:

1. Recommends to Court that it approve the proposed approach outlined above to the recruitment process;
2. Invites Court's further consideration of the skills to be prioritised to inform that recruitment;
3. Notes to Court that it will finalise the number of vacancies for recruitment and any further recommendations to Court on reappointment at its meeting on 28 March.

5. ELECTION OF STAFF MEMBERS OF COURT AND NOMINATION OF TRADE UNION MEMBERS OF COURT

5.1 The Committee considered the procedures for the Election of Staff Members and Nomination of Trade Union Members. Both processes will be required to be taken forward in 2023 as the current periods of appointment of the two elected staff members and the UCU nominated member conclude on 31 October 2023 and that of the member jointly nominated by UNISON and UNITE on 31 July 2023.

5.2 The intention is that the nominations phase for the staff elections will open in late April/early May, with the election being held in late May or early June over a period of 7 days (as stated in the rules). This would enable the successful candidates to receive induction, including opportunities to observe both the June and September Court, before formally taking up appointment on 1 November 2023.

5.3 *Election Rules:* **Appendix 1** sets out the current election rules which were last updated in 2020 for the last election process. Following those elections, a 'wash up' review was undertaken and recommended that the system of voting should be changed to adopt the Alternative Vote system rather than 'First Past the Post.' This was approved by Court in March 2021 and the enclosed rules have been updated at section 10 to reflect that change and propose adopting the same alternative vote rules as used for the Rectorial election. No other amendments are proposed.

5.4 Under higher education governance legislation, the rules for the nomination of Trade Union members of Court are set by the governing body. A copy of the Court's rules is enclosed at **Appendix 2**. Under these it is agreed that the UCU will nominate the academic member (while noting that some non-academic staff are members of UCU) and that UNISON and UNITE will jointly nominate the support staff member. The rules, however, require all three Unions to jointly agree on the two nominations before being made to Court.

5.4 *Periods of Appointment:* The Committee noted that the current periods of appointment for three of the positions (elected and UCU nominated) currently run to 31 October 2023 rather than 31 July as had been past practice due to the previous incumbents having been extended for a period of three months due to the pandemic. In order to provide a greater lead-in time for induction of any new members that may emerge from the process. The Committee **agreed** to recommend a "re-set" to regularise the period of appointment so that the positions conclude in July and any future appointments may take up post before the start of an academic year. This required the period of office of three of the positions to be shortened from three years to 2 years and nine months i.e.:

- Academic and Non-Academic Staff Elected Members: appoint from 1 November 2023 to 31 July 2026;
- UCU Nominated Member: appoint from 1 November 2023 to 31 July 2026;
- UNISON/UNITE Nominated Member – no change: appoint from 1 August 2023 to 31 July 2026

6. COURT RACE CHAMPION

6.1 The Committee received and considered a paper on a revised approach to the role of Court Race Champion which it had been agreed should be revisited to one that was more proportionate to the time and resources available to Court members. The paper outlined a revised approach to the role, remit and responsibility of the role that:

- a) reinforced the Court and University's commitment to the Antiracism Strategy approved by Court in March 2022; and
- b) supported the Court's collective responsibility as the primary body responsible for the University, including its commitments under equality, safeguarding, wellbeing and other legislation.

6.2 The approach is intended to support the entirety of Court and the Court Race Champion in the University's commitment to the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion; and the promotion of the Antiracism Strategy. The revised remit would be introduced alongside a Court Assurance Prompt to support and embed an approach to Court deliberations, discussions and decisions that take into account dimensions of race. The exact format of the Court Assurance Prompt will be discussed further and developed by relevant members of staff and Committee members. The revised approach is articulated as follows:

The Court Race Champion role is to support Court in its collective commitment to creating an antiracist University. The primary means of providing that support is by:

- *Working with a relevant member of the University staff (to be identified), in a similar manner to the Court buddy system, to gain specific insight into the work of the University on issues of race and the Antiracism Strategy;*
- *Encouraging fellow Court members to consider Court papers and proposals through a 'race lens' to ensure proposed actions do not adversely impact racialised groups. This will be supported by the use of a Court Assurance Prompt: Race, to be developed;*
- *Being willing to talk about the University's antiracism work, at a strategic level, to internal and external stakeholders. This activity will be supported by the Vice Principal of Education, Head of Organisational Development and the Governance and Executive Support Team, where relevant;*
- *Liaising with the Governance and Executive Support Team to identify additional support or development opportunities for Court and/or individual Governors to help fulfil their commitments in regard to the University's Antiracism Strategy.*

The Court Race Champion role will be limited to a period of 12/18 months with a view to the role being rotated around Court members. The time limit is intended to:

- *re-assure Governors that the role will not last indefinitely;*
- *encourage different volunteers from the Court composition to come forward;*
- *promote the importance of gaining experience of different aspects of the University to inform Court discussions on a range of issues; and*
- *support collective responsibility by reinforcing the rotational aspect.*

7. FURTHER BUSINESS CONSIDERED BY THE COMMITTEE

7.1 The Committee also considered the following items of business:

- Leadership and Governance Risk Register
- Assurance Report on Business Continuity for Key Roles
- Progress of Governor Annual Performance Review Process
- Status of Governance Review Implementation Plan
- Deep Dive Discussion Topic for In-Person Meeting of the Committee: Agreed as "Approach to Board Effectiveness, Maturity and Committee Skills"

8. FURTHER INFORMATION

8.1 Further information is available from Bruce Purdon, Clerk to the Committee (email b.purdon@abdn.ac.uk).

10 February 2023 v1

Confidentiality Status: Open

Rules for the Nomination and Election of Academic and Non-Academic Staff Members of Court

The composition of Court, in accordance with the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016, provides for two members elected by the staff of the University. The Court has further agreed, that one such member shall be a member of academic staff and that one such member shall be a member of non-academic staff. As required by S 11 (2) of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016, the Court has agreed that the following process should be observed in the election of both these positions on Court.

Election Process

Returning Officer

1) The Secretary to the Court, or her/his nominee, shall be the Returning Officer for the election. If for any reason the Secretary is unavailable, the Principal will appoint a Returning Officer. The Returning Officer will be responsible for managing the electoral process, including the arranging of the announcement of candidates and their election statements, arrangements for voting and the electoral roll, the application of the election rules herein, including with regard to the content of election statements, considering complaints raised in relation to the conduct of campaigning and the election itself, imposing sanctions as appropriate. In addition, the Returning Officer will be authorised to take all other decisions necessary for the effective conduct of the nominations and elections process.

Constituency for Academic Staff Member

2) The constituency for the election of an academic staff member of Court shall be all academic staff members of the University at the electoral census date, defined as 'academic, teaching and research staff'. The member elected as the 'academic staff member' must be a member of the same constituency of 'academic, teaching and research staff'.

Constituency for Non-Academic Staff Member

3) The constituency for the election of a non-academic staff member of Court shall be all non-academic staff members of the University at the electoral census date, defined as 'professional and support staff'. The member elected as the 'non-academic staff member' must be a member of the same constituency of 'professional and support staff'.

Nominations for Election

4) The Secretary shall arrange for notification of a vacancy in either position to be issued to each member of the relevant constituency, together with the conditions for the nomination of candidates, the requirements and responsibilities of the role of a member of Court, and the date for return of nominations. The duration of the nominations period shall be a minimum of 21 days. Nominations shall be made on the form of nomination as issued by the Returning Officer. Nominations shall require to be supported by a proposer and a seconder who shall both be members of the relevant electing constituency. To be eligible to stand in the election, a nominee must confirm that they are not disqualified from serving as a charitable trustee under the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and that they are aware of no other reason, legal or otherwise, that would render them unfit to be a charity trustee or that could bring the Court into disrepute.

5) During the period of 7 days after the close of the nomination period, it shall be in order for a candidate to withdraw their nomination. The Returning Officer, on expiry of the nomination period, shall intimate to each candidate and to each candidate's proposer and seconder the names and

designations of all the candidates nominated, together with the names and designations of their proposers and seconders.

6) Where two or more nominations are received for a vacancy, an election ballot will be issued. Where only one nomination is received for a vacancy, the Returning Officer shall declare such candidate to be duly elected.

Conduct of an Election

7) When a ballot is required, it will be conducted through electronic voting via a secure online voting system administered by the University or election management professionals appointed by the University. Each member of the relevant constituency shall be issued by e-mail with a notice of the ballot and instructions on how to cast their vote. Where a member of staff is unable to vote electronically, the University will, if requested, be required to make arrangements for such staff to have access to facilities to cast their vote, in a manner and timeframe approved by the Returning Officer.

8) The Returning Officer will set and publish the voting period dates for an election and agree the census date at which those eligible to vote in each constituency shall be determined. The voting period will be for a minimum of 7 days. Where a change of circumstances occurs which in the opinion of the Returning Officer renders the voting period insufficient to enable a representative vote to be obtained under the special conditions ruling at the time, the Returning Officer may extend the said voting periods as she or he considers necessary. Such extension shall be intimated to any nominated candidates and to their proposers and seconders.

9) Each candidate shall be entitled to provide a photograph and election communication of not more than 500 words which will be made available to the electorate by the University. Statements will be approved by the Returning Officer prior to publication to ensure that they do not include defamatory or other content likely to be inimical to the good conduct of the election. Any other campaigning activity will be regulated through the enclosed supplementary regulations (Annex A).

~~10) The candidate who secures a simple majority of the total number of votes cast shall be declared the winner. Where there is a tie, the winner shall be determined by lot under the supervision of the Returning officer. The election will be conducted using the alternative vote system. Each voter will be allowed an alternative transferable vote and may indicate the order of preference in which they wish to place the candidates. At the end of the first counting of votes, if a candidate has received 50 per cent plus one of the total votes cast they shall be declared elected. If no candidate has an overall majority then the candidate with the least votes shall be eliminated and each of their votes will be transferred to whichever candidate has been listed second in order of preference. These transferred votes shall each count as one full vote. This process shall be repeated until either one candidate has obtained 50 per cent plus one of the total votes cast or there are only two candidates left who have not been eliminated, in which case the candidate of those two with the most votes shall be declared as elected. In the event of an equality of votes for two or more candidates at any stage of the count then the candidate to be excluded shall be decided by the relative placing of the candidates at the most recent stage of the count at which their votes were unequal (or if equal at all stages by the drawing of lots).~~

11) At any time before voting closes a candidate may withdraw their candidacy. If in consequence of such withdrawal or in the event of the death of a candidate during the said period results in one candidate for the vacancy remaining, the counting of the votes lodged will not take place and the remaining candidate will be declared to be duly elected.

12) The validity of any election shall not be affected by any defect in the procedure in carrying out such an election or infringement of these Election Rules unless on the application of a candidate (or an individual designated as a candidate's representative) made to the Returning Officer, or at the instigation of the Returning Officer where she/he becomes aware of such a potential defect in the procedure or any potential infringement of these Election Rules, and after due enquiry, considers that a defect or infringement has had or may have an adverse impact on a fair and free election.

In those circumstances the Returning Officer will make such arrangements and/or apply such sanctions as the Returning Officer considers reasonable and proportionate to remedy and/or to provide redress for the harm caused by the procedural defect or infringement of these Election Rules. Such arrangements and sanctions may include but are not limited to, permitting all or some candidates to provide additional materials to the electorate, pausing or suspending the election, extending the election period, rescheduling the election, disqualifying candidates and/or declaring the election to be invalid.

Period of Office and Conditions of Appointment

13) The period of office shall be three years and will normally commence on 1 August of the year of election. If the member elected ceases to be a member of staff of the relevant constituency of the University, she or he shall cease to be a member of the Court. Members will be eligible for nomination for re-election, subject to a limit of three periods of three years whether served continuously or not, and with a restriction preventing returning to serve on Court in another position after that maximum of period of office for a period of three years.

14) In the event of an election to a casual vacancy being required, the member elected shall commence a new period of office. Where this falls at a time other than 1 August, in order to regulate the period of office, it shall be considered to have begun on 1 August preceding the date of the actual election where this is before 1 February and on the 1 August following the date of election where this falls on or after 1 February.

15) 'Alternate members' are not permitted at Court.

16) Members of Court elected by staff shall be subject to the Court's terms and conditions of appointment, and regulate their conduct in accordance with the highest standards of governance, as set out in the University Court's Code of Conduct, adherence to which is part of the terms of the appointment of all members of Court. In addition, members are subject to the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 which provides for circumstances under which an individual is disqualified from serving as a charity trustee and any elected member will be required to confirm that they are not so disqualified as part of their terms and conditions of appointment. In accordance with the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 and the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance, a Policy and Procedure for the Removal of Members Court is in place to address circumstances where a member has materially breached their conditions of appointment.

Ends

As agreed by the University Court on 2 April 2020 (by circulation) [and updated March 2023](#)



Guidance and Rules on the Conduct of Candidates in Elections of Academic and Non-Academic Staff Members of Court

- 1) Campaigning may only be undertaken during the period specified by the Returning Officer. No campaigning should be undertaken by candidates until they have been notified of that period permitted by the Returning Officer.
- 2) Each candidate shall be entitled to provide a photograph and election communication of not more than 500 words which will be made available to the electorate by the University.
- 3) Candidates shall be responsible for their conduct in any campaign activity they undertake and that of anyone associated with their campaign. Candidates should not seek to influence their colleagues by behaviour that may be perceived to be bullying, harassment or intimidation. Endorsements of candidates from non-voters are not allowed, nor are direct criticisms of other candidates or their supporters.
- 4) Candidates or their supporters are not permitted to provide assistance or seek to influence staff in the process of voting.
- 5) Canvassing in the form of poster campaigns is not permitted.
- 6) Candidates may have only one website presence for the purpose of any campaign. Candidates may not use pre-existing websites for the promotion of their campaign. Candidates may utilise personal Social Media platforms for the promotion of their campaign but University social media channels may not be used.
- 7) Use of pre-existing e-mail, phone or mailing group/ lists by candidates for the purpose of promoting their campaign is not permitted. Harvesting of data from any such lists for campaign purposes is also not permitted.
- 8) Candidates may canvass individuals known to them. Unsolicited canvassing of other voters by e-mail, mail or phone using University directories or resources is not permitted. As noted at section (2), the University will ensure that the candidate's statement is made available to voters.
- 9) A breach of these rules may result in the disqualification of a candidate by the Returning Officer. All complaints should be directed to the Returning Officer.

Ends

University of Aberdeen

Rules for the Nomination of Trade Union Members of Court

The composition of Court, in accordance with the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 provides for a member nominated by a trade union from among the academic staff of the University who are members of a branch of a trade union that has a connection with the institution; and one member nominated by a trade union from among the support staff of the University who are members of a branch of a trade union that has a connection with the institution.

As required by S 12 (2) of the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016, the Court has agreed that the following process should be observed by those trade unions entitled to nominate to these positions on Court.

- 1) The nomination of an academic member of staff who is a member of a trade union shall be the responsibility of the local branch of the University & College Union, which shall make a nomination from within its own academic staff membership at the University.
- 2) The nomination of a member of support staff who is a member of a trade union shall be the responsibility of the local branches of the Unison and Unite trade unions, which shall make a single nomination from within its joint professional and support staff membership at the University.
- 3) It will be the responsibility of each trade union entitled to nominate to ensure it has appropriate processes and procedures in place to promote and invite nominations for membership of the Court and to determine its preferred candidate.
- 4) Following determination of its preferred candidate, all three trade unions shall agree upon the final nominations for each of the two positions on Court. In so doing, the trade unions shall have due regard to the principles of equality and diversity and, in particular, shall seek to achieve gender balance in the two nominations agreed.
- 5) The period of office of members of Court nominated by trade unions shall be three years commencing 1 August. A member nominated by a trade union who ceases either to be a member of the trade union or to be a member of staff of the University shall cease to be a member of the Court. Members will be eligible for re-nomination, subject to a limit of three periods of three years whether served continuously or not, and with a restriction preventing returning to serve on Court in another position after that maximum of period of office for a period of three years.
- 6) In the event of a casual vacancy arising in either nominated position, the trade unions responsible shall agree upon a new nomination as soon as practicable in accordance with the process set out above. The agreed nomination shall commence a new period of office. Where this falls at a time other than 1 August, in order to regulate the period of office, it shall be considered to have begun on 1 August preceding the date of the actual appointment where this is before 1 February and on the following 1 August where this falls on or after 1 February.
- 7) 'Alternate members' are not permitted at Court.
- 8) Members of Court nominated by trade unions shall be subject to the Court's terms and conditions of appointment, and regulate their conduct in accordance with the highest standards of governance, as set out in the University Court's Code of Conduct, adherence to which is part of the terms of the appointment of all members of Court. In addition, members are subject to the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 which provides for circumstances under which an individual is disqualified from serving as a charity trustee and trade union nominated members will be required to confirm that they are not so disqualified as part of their terms and conditions of appointment. In accordance with the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 and the Scottish Code of Good HE Governance, a Policy and Procedure for the Removal of Members Court is in place to address circumstances where a member has materially breached their conditions of appointment.

Continues/

9) These rules may be amended by the Court subject to the consultation required under S12 (4) of the Higher Education Governance Act 2016 being undertaken.

Ends

Approved by Court on 27 June 2017

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

FINANCE AND RESOURCING COMMITTEE REPORT**1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER**

1.1. This paper is provided to University Court for information as an overview of the business conducted by the Finance and Resourcing Committee at its meeting on 7 February 2023, to provide an overview of the assurances obtained, and for onward noting, consideration and approval of specific items of business, as outlined in section 3 below. The agenda, papers and draft minutes of the meeting are available within the [Decision Time](#) Resources area for members of Court.

2. PREVIOUS CONSIDERATION BY /FURTHER APPROVAL REQUIRED

	Board/Committee	Date
Previously considered/approved by	N/A	
Further consideration/ approval required by	N/A	

3. RECOMMENDED ACTION

3.1 The Finance and Resourcing Committee met on 7 February 2023 in an online meeting via Microsoft Teams. University Court is invited to **note** the Committee's:

- consideration and discussion of an update from the Principal on the Higher Education sector and University developments, including further industrial action by the University and College Union (UCU) and the current public funding landscape (items 4.1 – 4.6 refer).
- formal noting of the approval via circulation of the Annual Procurement Report, institutional TRAC Return 2021-22 and Annual Audited Accounts 2021-22 since its last meeting in November 2022 (items 5.1 – 5.6 refer).
- detailed consideration of reporting on the current status of student recruitment and associated budgetary implications for 2022-23 and 2023-24, and progress against the implementation of measures agreed by the Committee in November 2022 to return to the original budget deficit target of £1.9m (items 6.1 – 6.8 refer). An associated update and extended discussion is scheduled under item 7 of the current agenda.
- receipt and endorsement of the Management Accounts for December 2022 (item 6.9 refers).
- consideration of reporting on the conduct and key findings of the externally commissioned Post-Implementation Review (PIR) on outcomes from the delivery of the Qatar partnership, and recent communication between the University and Chairperson of the Al Faleh Group (AFG) regarding the arrangements for fee share in the partnership (items 6.10 and 6.11 refer). An additional update is scheduled under item 12.1 of the current agenda.
- endorsement of arrangements to circulate the SFC Financial Forecast Update to the Committee for information following its detailed review and approval by the Senior Management Team and prior to the submission deadline of 31 March 2023 (item 6.12 refers).
- receipt of an update on key issues relating to current and planned capital projects and developments within the University's estate (items 6.13 and 6.14 refer).
- receipt of an update in respect of the Hillhead Heating Infrastructure Project and its endorsement of arrangements for its approval via circulation of the capital proposal in February 2023 for onward recommendation to University Court for approval for implementation (items 6.15 – 6.18 refer). An additional update on the conclusion of the

Committee's consideration of the proposals by circulation and any recommendation to Court will be provided as part of item 8.2 of the current agenda.

- receipt of an update from the Investment Committee in relation to the University's endowment, Development Trust and Northern College portfolios (items 7.1 – 7.3 refer).

4. INTRODUCTIONS

Principal's Introduction

- 4.1. An update was provided by the Principal to outline developments within the University and the external operating environment, with a particular focus on public funding and the further industrial action planned by the University and College Union (UCU).
- 4.2. The Committee noted that, against the backdrop of flat fee levels within the undergraduate market and a shrinking margin on Rest of UK (rUK) student fees, lobbying was taking place across the sector in an attempt to open debate and inform forward policy on how to fund universities sustainably in the longer term.

- 4.4. It was also reported that the University and Colleges Union (UCU) had achieved a mandate for 18 days of strike action throughout February and March 2023.

- 4.5. The key issues on which members had voted for industrial action were in relation to pay and pensions, however it was not felt appropriate that the sector comment on changing pension benefits or contributions until the value of the USS Pension fund was known later in 2023. With regard to pay, sector employers had made a full and final pay offer of a minimum 5% uplift, extending to 8% for lowest paid employees, in addition to the annual pay increments due in August 2023 worth approximately 3%. This was at the limit of affordability for the sector, with a number of institutions holding vacancies, and others needing to defer the pay award or make redundancies due to issues with affordability.

- 4.6. The Principal confirmed that the University would need to explore options to both reduce staff workloads and improve efficiency and productivity whilst its staffing numbers were constrained due to budgetary factors. SMT would return to the committee in due course with further proposals as to how to accommodate the challenging situation.

5. MATTERS ARISING

Annual Procurement Report (APR)

- 5.1. The Committee formally noted its approval via circulation of the APR on 19 December 2022, and its submission to Scottish Ministers by the deadline of 31 January 2023.

Institutional TRAC Return 2021-22

- 5.2. The Committee formally noted that, at its last meeting on 10 November 2022, it had approved the delegation of authority to the TRAC Steering Group to review the draft TRAC Return 2021-22 and prepare a report to SMT to recommend its approval. On the recommendation of the TRAC Steering Group, SMT approved the 2021-22 Return for submission to the SFC by the deadline of 31 January 2023 at its meeting on 12 January 2023.

Annual Audited Accounts 2021-22

- 5.3. The Committee formally noted that, at its last meeting on 10 November 2022, it endorsed the University Annual Report and Accounts 2021-22 for recommendation to University Court for approval, subject to confirmation by the external auditor of outstanding items for final review by the Audit & Risk Committee.

Student numbers and associated financial implications for 2023-24

- 6.7. An update was also provided by the Vice-Principal Global Engagement on the current early indications for student numbers for 2023-24 entry, with each student market discussed in detail.
- 6.8. The Committee noted that the University was reviewing every stage in each applicant journey to maximise the opportunity to meet budget targets for 2023/24, including partnering with a third party to increase application processing capacity and speed of decision making on applications. Decision making and focus would be informed by continued review of the source recruitment markets, recognising that different markets would convert at different rates.

Chief Financial Officer's Report

Management accounts (MMR) for December 2022

- 6.9. The Committee received and endorsed the management accounts for December 2022.



Update on the Financial Forecast Update (FFU) to the SFC for 2022-23

- 6.12. The Committee noted that the SFC had now confirmed the submission date for the 2022-23 FFU as 31 March 2023. It was agreed that the FFU Report would be circulated to the Committee for information following its detailed review and approval for submission by the Senior Management Team.

Estates Developments and Capital Projects

- 6.13. The Committee welcomed incoming Director of Estates & Facilities, Morag Beers to the meeting and to the University.
- 6.14. An update was received on key issues relating to current and planned capital projects and developments within the University's estate, with particular reference to:
- A new Assurance Review Process forming part of a wider institutional Project Assurance Framework.
 - The current status of the King's Transformation Projects (Johnston and King's Quarter). Budgets were currently undergoing testing at tender stage and would be fully reviewed once costings were received.
 - The conduct of a benefits management review and 'lessons learned' exercise relating to the Science Teaching Hub.
 - Progress on other construction projects to enhance the University's estate and forthcoming projects to commence shortly.
 - Updates on the budgets for Campus Services Projects, Estates Recurrent Projects and backlog maintenance.
 - The intention to take forward the development of an Estates Masterplan under the leadership of the new Director of Estates & Facilities – a key action under the Aberdeen 2040 Implementation Plan. The Strategy and corresponding Capital Plan would be developed in liaison with the University community under the oversight of the Estates and Digital Strategy Committees and with external facilitation if required. It was noted that the financial elements would return to the Finance & Resourcing Committee in due course, and reporting on the strategic elements would progress to Court at its June 2023 meeting.

Hillhead Heating Infrastructure Project

- 6.15. The Committee received an update on the current status of the project and proposed arrangements for its endorsement of the capital proposal for onward recommendation to University Court.
- 6.16. It was confirmed that the existing Hillhead site heating infrastructure had outlived its lifespan and now required replacement. Whilst reactive maintenance had allowed the site to remain functioning to date, the state of the infrastructure was now such that a major incident was increasingly more likely, which could result in a need to re-house over 1,500 students.
- 6.17. In November 2022, the Committee had approved the re-submission of a loan application to SFC/Salix for £4m towards a revised project proposal for the Hillhead infrastructure, reprioritising the original loan in the context of evolving net zero thinking. The application had subsequently been approved and confirmation provided to the University of the decision in late January 2023.
- 6.18. Work was now being finalised to produce a full capital proposal, comprising business plan, Return on Investment and payback calculations. Endorsement of the proposal would be sought from the Sustainable Heating Programme Board, Estates Committee and Senior Management Team prior to approval for implementation by the Finance & Resourcing Committee and Court, as appropriate to the project value and as set out in the University's Delegated Authority Schedule. It was anticipated that the documentation would be provided to the Committee later in February 2023 for decision via circulation and onward recommendation to Court for final approval.

7. INVESTMENTS

Investment Portfolio

- 7.1. The Committee noted an update from the Investment Committee in relation to the University's endowment, Development Trust and Northern College portfolios.



- 7.3. It was noted that Court Member, Caryn Miller had been recently appointed as Chair of the University's Investment Committee, and that a successful recruitment exercise had been conducted to appoint a new external member to the Committee.

8. FURTHER INFORMATION

- 8.1. Further information is available from Jan Whitfield, Clerk to the Finance and Resourcing Committee, janine.whitfield@abdn.ac.uk

Confidentiality Status: Items 4.3, 6.1 - 6.6, 6.10 – 6.11 and 7.2 contain commercially sensitive information and should remain closed.

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

COMMERCIALISATION COMMITTEE REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This paper is provided to University Court for information as an overview of the business conducted by the Commercialisation Committee at its last meeting on 6 February 2023. The agenda, papers and draft minutes of the meeting are available within the [Decision Time](#) Resources area for members of Court.

2. PREVIOUS CONSIDERATION BY /FURTHER APPROVAL REQUIRED

	Board/Committee	Date
Previously considered/approved by	N/A	
Further consideration/ approval required by	N/A	

3. RECOMMENDED ACTION

3.1 University Court is invited to note the Committee's considerations and discussions.

4. MATTERS REMITTED BY COURT

4.1. As part of its regular review of its log of actions arising from previous meetings, the Committee noted the matters remitted to it by Court with regard to future briefings around the following themes:

- the risks and opportunities of spin out working
- the fostering of links with industry
- the commercial application of research, with particular regard to the work of the Rowett Institute

4.2. It was agreed that discussion around how to best progress reporting to Court on these matters would be held between the Chair and Senior Governor, the outcomes of which will be communicated under the current agenda via a verbal update.

5. COMMERCIALISATION

Presentation: Enterprise & Entrepreneurship – Benchmarking and Next Steps

5.1. The Vice-Principal Regional Engagement delivered a presentation to the Committee to outline the current levels of engagement and entrepreneurship at the University across contract research, consultancy, IT licensing and new company formation. An update was also provided on current next steps within the context of the policy and regional landscape.

Vice-Principal's Update

5.2. The Committee received an update on current commercialisation activity relating to intellectual property and company development, following the most recent meeting of the Start Up and Spin Out Panel in December 2022.

5.3. It was noted that the University's Entrepreneurs in Residence (EIR) Scheme had been extended, with three Royal Society-Supported EIRs now appointed as Fellows to support translational research and entrepreneurship across the University.

- 5.4. The Committee requested the development of a series of KPIs to underpin future reporting on start up and spin out companies and an action was agreed to progress the selection of appropriate and meaningful reporting criteria and KPIs for the Committee to use, plus informal ways of providing briefings to the Committee and Court as appropriate on spin out activity and associated case studies.

Executive Committees

- 5.5. In the context of the ongoing restructuring of the University's Executive Committee Framework (a further update on which is provided under item 13.2 of the current agenda), and the recent changes to Court Committees including the establishment of the Commercialisation Committee, the following developments relevant to commercialisation were noted:

- The establishment of a new Enterprise & Innovation Committee within the wider framework of Executive Committees reporting to the Senior Management Team. The Committee will move to develop the operationalisation of enterprise approaches, and to address initiatives and policy areas, including the entrepreneurial campus agenda.
- The recognition of the existing Start Up and Spin Out Group as a "Panel", reporting to the Enterprise & Innovation Committee, and with escalation via the Financial Regulations to the Senior Management Team and Finance & Resourcing Committee if required.
- The repositioning of the former Regional Engagement Group as a Committee with responsibility for the development of operational strategy in that area and subsequent oversight of the Civic University Steering Group.

- 5.6. The Committee sought confirmation of the measures that would be used to assess the effectiveness and methodologies of the new Committees and arrangements after an initial period of operation. It was confirmed that work was ongoing to review all current policies and procedures to ensure they were fit for purpose across the University's innovation and entrepreneurship environments. This work would include the development of KPIs delivery timescales across the academic community and the Enterprise & Innovation Committee, under the strategic oversight of the Commercialisation Committee.

Enterprise & Innovation Roles

- 5.7. The Committee received an update on recent developments in respect of new Enterprise & Innovation roles within the University. In support of industry engagement and the entrepreneurial campus agenda, new roles of Dean for Enterprise & Innovation and twelve Enterprise & Innovation Champions had been created.
- 5.8. All twelve Enterprise & Innovation Champions had now been recruited across Schools and had attended a successful briefing and induction event in December 2022. A recruitment exercise for a new Dean for Enterprise & Innovation had been launched in January 2023.
- 5.9. In addition to an ambassadorial context, an initial priority for the new role-holders would be to grow the University's activity around Knowledge Transfer Partnerships. It was planned to brief the incoming role-holders on the appropriate mechanisms and processes in order for them to drive this initiative across Schools, to work with the Research & Innovation Team to identify opportunities, and to engage more academics with the Scheme. Activity would also be targeted at the identification and exploration of student entrepreneurship and start up activity across the University.

Committee Governance

- 5.10. The Committee held a facilitated workshop session to identify potential barriers to the success of commercialisation activity, with a view to incorporating the resulting key themes into its forward Schedule of Business for further exploration and reporting.
- 5.11. The discussions covered both the commercialisation of Intellectual Property via licensing and business and spin outs and start ups. Findings were also categorised across the operational areas of resources, people and culture, structural process and incentives.

5.12. Further work will now be undertaken to produce a mapping of priority focus areas for the Committee and to develop of a schedule of business for future meetings which will be shared with the Committee at an additional informal session to be held during April 2023.

6. FURTHER INFORMATION

6.1 Further information is available from Jan Whitfield, Clerk to the Commercialisation Committee, janine.whitfield@abdn.ac.uk

Confidentiality Status: Open

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

UNIVERSITY COURT

PARTNERSHIP NEGOTIATING AND CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (PNCC)

1. PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

1.1 This paper reports on the meeting of the PNCC held on 31 January 2023.

2. PREVIOUS CONSIDERATION BY /FURTHER APPROVAL REQUIRED

	Board/Committee	Date
Previously considered/approved by	N/A	
Further consideration/ approval required by	N/A	

3. RECOMMENDED ACTION

3.1 Court is invited to note the report from the PNCC.

FOR INFORMATION

4. HOMEWORKING REQUESTS

4.1 The Committee received an update on the number of homeworking requests received and approved. The final meeting of the Homeworking Review Group was due to take place on 13 February 23 and it was noted that an interim report on the review of the Homeworking Policy would be made available for the next PNCC meeting.

5. PAY AND UNIVERSITIES SUPERANNUATION SCHEME (USS) PENSION UPDATE

5.1 The Committee received an update on the pay negotiations and noted the staff communication issued on 30 January 2023 which provided details on the 2023-2024 pay negotiations and the final offer for the pay round. It was noted that the negotiations on non-pay items for 2023-24 would commence in March 2023.

5.2 It was also noted that there would be no changes to USS until after the next Formal Scheme Valuation which is due to complete in April 2024.

6. REGRADING REVIEW

6.1 The Committee received an update on the review of the Regrading Policy and Procedure for Professional Services staff which was being undertaken by the Regrading Review Group (RRG), a subgroup of the Reward Consultation and Negotiation Group (RCNG). The Committee noted the RRG had engaged in detailed discussion regarding the regrading procedure and identifying priorities to be taken forward.

7. DISCIPLINARY AND CAPABILITY CASEWORK

7.1 The Committee received and noted a paper providing an update on the number of disciplinary, capability and grievance cases in the year to date including the timing for the management of each case.

8. STAFF SURVEY RESULTS

- 8.1 The Committee received and noted the slides from the Staff Survey Open Session which took place on 30 January 23. It was noted that a detailed breakdown on staff categories would be made available. It was further noted that the outcome of the staff survey would be considered through other groups including the Workload Review Group.

9. POLICY APPROVAL

9.1 Pay Policy

The Committee received and noted the new Pay Policy. The proposed Pay Policy details arrangements pertaining to pay which support the University's commitment to the principle of equal pay for work of equal value whilst ensuring the University remains competitive in recruiting and retaining staff. The Policy covers the following scenarios – commencing employment with the University, changing role within the University, receipt of a contribution award, promotion or regrading. The Committee emphasised the requirement for careful documentation of the rationale for pay decisions and who had made them. It was agreed that the language in the Pay Policy would be clarified and recirculated to PNCC for approval.

10 FURTHER INFORMATION

- 10.1 Further information is available from Catherine Cook, Clerk to the Partnership Negotiating and Consultative Committee (c.cook@abdn.ac.uk) or Debbie Dyker, Director of People, (d.j.dyker@abdn.ac.uk)

13 February 2023

Confidentiality Status: Open