



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH
The General Council

Billet Summer 2024

**Advances in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and
Data Science and their implications.**

General Council Half Yearly Meeting

The Edinburgh Futures Institute (EFI) building,
1 Lauriston Place, Edinburgh EH3 9EF

Click on the link below and book your place online.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-general-council-summer-event-on-artificial-intelligence-at-the-efi-tickets-856973259087?aff=oddtcreator>

Closing date for applications, **Saturday 15 June 2024.**

Please note that registrations after this date will not be accepted.

Photography/video material from the event will be used
for the General Council website and publications.



WELCOME

Welcome to Billet summer 2024

The General Council provides graduates with a continuing voice in the management of the University's affairs, and every graduate automatically becomes a member. Academic staff and members of the University's governing body, the University Court, are also members of the General Council. It meets twice a year and has the right to comment on matters affecting the University's prosperity and wellbeing. For more information on the work of the General Council, visit www.ed.ac.uk/general-council

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General Council Half Yearly Meeting

Saturday 15 June 2024

The Edinburgh Futures Institute (EFI) building,
1 Lauriston Place,
Edinburgh EH3 9EF

The next statutory half-yearly meeting for members of the General Council will be held in the impressive EFI building at its new home in the Old Royal Infirmary beginning at 10:30 on Saturday 15 June 2024. Tea and coffee will be available from 10:00 for those attending the business meeting at 10:30.

The business meeting, for General Council members only, will be followed by a two-part symposium on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Data Science open to General Council members and their guests. The symposium programme will run from 11.15 until 15:30. The first session will begin with a welcome by the Principal followed by a short presentation about EFI by its interim Director, Professor Kev Dhaliwal.

An outline for the day is as follows:

10:00

Registration for General Council business meeting

10:30

Statutory Business Meeting

11:00

Break

11:15

Symposium: Session 1

12:30

Lunch

14:00

Symposium: Session 2

15:30

Finish



The Edinburgh Futures Institute building, Keith Hunter



The attendance of these colleagues from outside the UK is evidence of the changing shape of the University's alumni body, an inevitable consequence of the fact that international students now make up some **50%** of Edinburgh's students.



Report by Sir Philip Mawer Convener of the Business Committee of the General Council.

As members of the General Council look forward to their summer meeting at the newly opened Edinburgh Futures Institute on 15 June 2024 (of which you will find more details in this edition of Billet, preceding this report), it would be remiss of me not to begin by mentioning the success of the Council's meeting in February. At this, the Principal, Sir Peter Mathieson, presented his annual report on the state of the University and members were able to, and did, question him on a wide range of issues currently facing the University, its staff and students. Feedback from members on these exchanges has been very positive. Sir Peter spoke frankly about areas of challenge, acknowledging problems while reminding those present that many of them are common to the UK university sector, and that alongside the challenges there is also much to celebrate.

It was particularly good to be able to welcome in person to the meeting representatives of the Edinburgh University alumni club of Brussels, as well as those from alumni groups in eight other countries who joined the meeting

online or, because of the time difference, viewed a recording of it subsequently. The attendance of these colleagues from outside the UK is evidence of the changing shape of the University's alumni body, an inevitable consequence of the fact that international students now make up some 50% of Edinburgh's students. This development was also reflected in the announcement at the meeting of the election to the Business Committee of two new members who are based abroad (one of them in France and the other in India: there is already a member of the Committee who lives in the USA).

Again, this development is not unique to Edinburgh but is common to many of the UK's top universities. It is a consequence of several factors, not just the quality of their teaching and research but of a funding model which for many years has pushed them to recruit well-qualified students from outside the UK, in order to make up for the inadequacy of their funding by the UK (and in Edinburgh's case, Scottish) government. A recent report by KPMG issued by Universities UK has highlighted the dangers this funding model poses for many UK universities. Fortunately, as Sir Peter confirmed when he spoke to us in February, Edinburgh is better placed than many to avoid these dangers. However, their implications for all need to be urgently considered.

The changing shape of the General Council's membership carries implications for the work of the Business Committee too. It means that we need to be alert to the need to modernise our procedures if all members of the Council, wherever they are located, are to be able to contribute and the Council is to play its proper part as the voice of alumni in the governance of the University. Over recent years, our efforts to adapt to these changing circumstances have been reflected in an increasing emphasis on exploiting improvements in digital communication to ensure we keep members properly informed of the work the Business Committee is doing on their behalf, and to help us conduct our meetings more inclusively as well as efficiently. This continues to be an important area of focus for our Public Affairs Standing Committee in particular, and for the International Standing Committee as it seeks to build better links with alumni clubs abroad.

The pace of activity within the Business Committee and its Standing Committees has shown no signs of slackening since I reported to the last Half Yearly Meeting. February also saw the announcement of a new Rector, Simon Fanshawe (a message from whom you will find later in this edition of Billet), and the Business Committee was pleased to welcome him to its meeting at the end of the month. Also in February, the concerns of Edinburgh's current students on three key issues – the availability and affordability of student accommodation; the impact of the rising cost of living; and the response to gender-based violence on campus – were articulated by the officers of the Edinburgh University Students Association (EUSA) in an open letter to the University Court. All three of these issues either have already been addressed or will shortly be discussed by the relevant Standing Committees of the Business Committee as we seek to help the University continue its efforts to improve the student experience in Edinburgh.

Other issues which the Business Committee and its Standing Committees will be pursuing before the General Council meets in June include:

- The action taken by the University to address the difficulties encountered during the implementation of the People and Money system. We also expect a response after the April Court meeting to our representations about how the lessons learned from People and Money will inform the way major change management programmes are planned and delivered in the future.
- Measures to protect freedom of speech and the safety and security of everyone on campus.
- Its developing global strategy and the contribution alumni can make to help that strategy be realised.
- The burgeoning links the University has with leading higher education institutions in South-East Asia.
- The progress of the Curriculum Transformation Project, which is looking at innovative improvements in course design and teaching across the University, building on existing best practice.
- The University's relationship with the City of Edinburgh.

In addition, we will be:

- Preparing the major event on Artificial Intelligence (AI) which will follow the June Half Yearly Meeting, and getting ready to follow up the issues – for the University and for wider society – which will undoubtedly be raised then; and
- Following up the welcome decision of the University Court to approve proposals for updating the rules governing eligibility for membership of the General Council, which now fall to be considered by the Scottish Government and then by the Privy Council.

As our June Half Yearly Meeting will in fact be my last as Convener of the Business Committee and my term will finish on 31 July, the process of electing my successor and a new vice convener has begun. The outcome will be reported to the June meeting.

I will have more to say then about the role of the Council, its recent progress and the work still to be done. Suffice it to say now that it has been a privilege to fulfil this role on your behalf and to wish you and my hard-working colleagues on the Committee – two of whom make their own farewells later in this edition of Billet – every success in future. Above all, may the University of Edinburgh continue, with your help, to flourish, for the benefit of future generations and of the world.



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Business committee members have their say

We would like to thank our valued members who have come to the end of their term of office for their dedicated support in the work of their Standing Committees. Two of the Standing Committee Conveners who are stepping down have chosen to share some reflections on what that experience has meant for them.



Professor Stephen Hillier **OBE DSc**

Convener, **Academic Standing Committee**

The Academic Standing Committee's remit covers all matters relating to teaching and research and the provision of facilities that impinge on the academic life of the University. Recurring themes throughout my period of office have been Education Technology, Ethnicity and Faith, and Student and Staff Wellbeing, emphasising Mental Health. These themes are core to the University's academic mission, and map closely to the University's Strategy 2030.

The most memorable aspect of ASC's work during my convenueership related to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the experience of current students and staff, and how it was mitigated. During a single week in March 2020, hundreds of face-to-face courses were moved to remote learning and assessment, including provision for examination, boards of examiners, etc. Students and staff

had shared a tangible sense of commitment and community in coping with the crisis. This had been a decisive period facilitated by the University's extensive experience of digital learning. When the crisis broke out, the necessary online technology was already in place. This enabled the University to provide postgraduate teaching throughout successive lockdowns and allowed it to flip existing material from face-to-face to online. This flexibility arguably 'saved us' during the pandemic. Crucially, applications and acceptances for student places held up, and international student applications even increased.

Online engagement continues to mushroom, and we presently serve 5 million learners from over 150 countries, including 90 short online courses based on three global platforms. Increased hybrid teaching and learning will likely continue, using quality assurance processes to review the impact on academic outcome and overall student experience.

The challenge remains to develop a curriculum with a strong disciplinary focus, enabling graduates with skills and attributes that align with the University's values – pandemic or no pandemic.



Ms Krystyna Szumelukowa **BA Hons, MPhil, MRTPI**

Convener, **International Standing Committee**

It has been an honour to convene the International Standing Committee (ISC) for its first 5 years. Our starting point was to understand the University's Global Engagement Plan 2017-2020 and Vision for 2025, both linked to Strategy 2030. The university is today a leading global university but rooted in the capital city of Scotland since 1583. This long view is in contrast to the challenges of the last 5 years, with the disruptions of the Covid Pandemic, the UK exiting the European Union, and political and economic instability in the UK and across the globe. The financial, academic, and social consequences of these challenges on students, academic and professional staff, whether local or global, have been stressful. I have an enduring admiration for the immense effort put in by staff to provide student support, as well as promoting new learning, teaching and research opportunities to widen participation. We see the students

crossing the platform in the McEwan Hall at graduations and the result is an ever-increasing number of alumni ambassadors across the globe.

The ISC has received presentations on the full range of issues relating to student recruitment, experience and mobility; the role of international deans and regional directors; the impact of the Covid pandemic locally and globally; engagement with Europe post Brexit, including Una Europa; the review of international partnerships; detailed reviews of regional priorities in North America and Africa; China and the Confucius Institute; the University of Sanctuary and Education Beyond Borders; and the new partnership with Taras Shevchenko in Kyiv, Ukraine.

The university is now reviewing its global strategy and operational plan. As alumni we can play our part in supporting each other and the University to make the world a better and more peaceful place.

Newly elected Business Committee Members for 2024-2028

The following statements were submitted by the successful candidates when nominated.



Dr Nikhil Agarwal

As CEO of IIT of Kanpur Incubator and AI Center, India's largest tech incubator, and a Fellow at the University of Cambridge's CRSD, I possess unique insights into global innovation networks. With my PhD from the University of Edinburgh, I deeply understand the Scottish academic environment and its potential for international collaboration. Leveraging this, I aim to enhance the University of Edinburgh's global engagement, particularly in technology and sustainability.



Prof John Gillies

I believe that my extensive experience in medicine, professional bodies and charring committees could be of great value to the Council. I worked in Malawi and as a general practitioner and educator in Scotland for many years. I was Chair, Royal College of GPs in Scotland from 2010 to 2014 and deputy director of the Scottish School of Primary Care 2015-2019. www.sspc.ac.uk. I speak Scottish Gaelic. In 2018, I was asked by the Scottish Government and Scottish Medical Schools Board to chair a report on increasing GP input into undergraduate medical education in Scotland, involving communications across all Scottish medical schools.



Prof Richard Andrews

My main contribution to the Business Committee would be on international and/or postgraduate matters: I have represented the University in China and worked extensively in Asia and the USA. I chaired the postgraduate report for the curriculum transformation project for the University. I served as Professor and Head of Moray House from October 2019 to October 2022. This position enabled me to work at high levels within the University, attending Senate and (by invitation) Court as well as to engage in the strategic and day-to-day management of a large School within the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences.



Mrs Tamara Raidt

I graduated in 2022 in Creative Writing. As an international student with experience in education and communication, I believe I can contribute to the University's role on the global scene. My priority is to support Edinburgh's international community of students in all the challenges that they may face.



Dr Lucy Blackburn

As a former Head of Higher Education in the Scottish Government, I have a long-time interest in how universities meet the substantial challenges they face. Since leaving the senior civil service, I have researched and published on higher education, especially funding and access, recently completing a PhD at the University on student finance, with an interest also in questions of academic freedom. I have lived in Edinburgh for many years and have a child at a LEAPS programme school. I would welcome the opportunity to use my experience to help the University flourish as a local, national and international institution.

Two current members of the Business Committee re-elected for a second 4 -year term:

Almira Delibegovic-Broome KC
Professor Graeme Reid



Introducing the new Rector Simon Fanshawe

“It is a great honour to be elected Rector, this extraordinary, historical and uniquely Scottish role for the University.

Edinburgh (along with Brighton, where I live, and Wiltshire, where I went to school) is one of three compass points of my life. I have deep roots in the city.

I spent a good part of my childhood here and in Stirling. My father was in a Scottish regiment, and I went to primary school in Davidson’s Mains. I appeared at the Edinburgh Fringe for 10 years from 1982 and won the Perrier Award for Comedy there in 1989. I was on the Fringe Society Board for a good number of years. My sister and her family still live in the city.

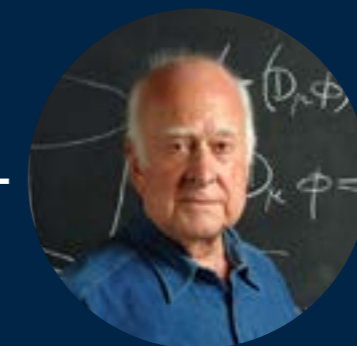
I also have a long association with universities and a significant understanding of their governance. I was Chairman of the Council of the University of Sussex for six years (also, a number of the clients of my consultancy firm Diversity by Design are in the sector). A major reason for accepting the nomination from so many students and staff to stand was that I care deeply about higher education and the role of universities in public life.

I am keen to deepen my understanding of the University, its achievements and the peaks of its research alongside the challenges it faces - many of them common across the UK HE sector, some specific to Scotland and some to Edinburgh.

When I stood for election, I pledged to work on three related themes:

- To work with the University community of all staff and students to embrace and promote the free exchange of ideas as the core purpose of the University.
- To work with students, staff and the University management to bring about improvements in the student experience, in particular any enhancement of student support, and to help build a greater sense of academic community.
- To facilitate bridges across any divides between staff, between students, between staff and students and between the University community and the management – helping to improve communication all round.

I would very much welcome insights and support from the members of the General Council in this work.”



Professor Peter Higgs CH FRS FRSE

1929 - 2024

The University mourns the loss of renowned theoretical physicist Professor Peter Higgs

Professor Peter Higgs achieved world-wide renown in 2012 when the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) announced it had detected the elementary particle that bears his name – the Higgs boson.

He was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics in 2013.

He was a lecturer at the University of Edinburgh when, in 1964, he postulated the existence of this sub-atomic particle which enables other particles to acquire mass, but it took almost 50 years to confirm its existence experimentally.

Peter Higgs was born in 1929 in Newcastle upon Tyne and educated in Bristol.

He graduated in physics in 1950 and a year later was awarded an MSc and then a PhD in 1954 – all from Kings College London.

Higgs joined the University of Edinburgh in 1960 as a lecturer at the Tait Institute of Mathematical Physics and was awarded a Personal Chair of Theoretical Physics in 1980. He retired in 1996.

In 2000, he received from HM Queen Elizabeth, the first Royal Medal of the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

Many years later, in 2012, experiments at the Large Hadron Collider particle accelerator at CERN finally indicated the existence of the Higgs boson.

The following year, Professor Higgs was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics, jointly with Professor François Englert of the Université libre de Bruxelles.

In 2013, he became a Companion of Honour, one of the highest royal honours. Many other awards followed, including the Copley Medal of the Royal Society.

Remaining an intensely modest, private individual, he never gloried in the fame these awards brought.

Professor Higgs died peacefully after a short illness on 8 April 2024.

The University intends to hold an event to celebrate his life and achievements in due course.

Papers for the General Council Half-Yearly Meeting

Saturday 15 June 2024, 10.30am

Agenda for the General Council Statutory Business Meeting

1. Minutes of the Meeting of the General Council held in the McEwan Hall on 17 February 2024 (Paper A)
2. Matters arising
3. Report of the Business Committee
4. Dates of future meetings of the General Council and Notice of forthcoming elections
5. Any other competent business
6. Adjournment

Minutes of the Meeting of the General Council held in Edinburgh on 17 February 2024

Present:

Ms Debora Kayembe	University Rector, in the Chair
Dr William Duncan	Secretary of the General Council
Sir Philip Mawer	Convener of the Business Committee
Professor Sir Peter Mathieson	Principal and Vice-Chancellor
Ms Lucy Evans	Deputy Secretary, Students
Rev Dr Harriet Harris	Chaplain to the University

71 Members present (plus those joining online)

1. Results of the Elections for seven Members of the General Council Business Committee

The Secretary announced that the seven members of the Business Committee elected to serve for a period of four years from 1 August 2024 to 31 July 2028 were: Dr Nikhil Agarwal, Professor Richard Andrews, Dr Lucy Blackburn, Almira Delibegovic-Broome KC, Professor John Gillies, Mrs Tamara Raidt and Professor Graeme Reid.

2. Minutes of the Meeting of the General Council held in The Nucleus, The King's Buildings, Saturday 10 June 2023 (Paper A)

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 June 2023 were approved.

3. Matters arising

The Chair reported that there were no matters arising from the Minutes.

4. Report of the Business Committee

Sir Philip began his report by acknowledging that this was the final meeting of Debora Kayembe, University Rector, and expressing warm thanks on behalf of the General Council for her many services to the Council and the University while wishing her every continued success in future. The Convener also took the opportunity to congratulate Debora's successor, Simon Fanshawe, and looked forward to welcoming him to the next meeting of the Business Committee.

Over the past few months, the various Standing Committees of the Business Committee had been discussing both the University's achievements and the challenges it faced with a wide range of university staff and students. Low reported levels of student satisfaction have been a persistent challenge at Edinburgh over many years. The Academic Standing Committee had met Lucy Evans – the relatively newly appointed Deputy Secretary-Students – who is leading the University's collective effort to tackle this challenge. Lucy is bringing new energy and determination to this daunting task and the Committee heard that the new arrangements for providing all-round support to students which have recently been introduced here are becoming a model other HE institutions are interested in following.

The Academic Standing Committee had also met with Sharan Atwal and Lauren Byrne, respectively the President and Vice-President (Welfare) of the Student Association, EUSA. Several issues raised in that discussion were being followed up by the Business Committee in other contexts. For example, the Finance and Services Standing Committee (chaired by Almira Delibegovic-Broome KC) had met with Gary Jebb, the University's Director of Place, to discuss how the shortage of accommodation for students in Edinburgh is being addressed. It was encouraging to learn that all four universities in Edinburgh are working together to develop a strategic response to this problem in discussion with the City Council.

The Finance and Services Committee had met with the University's Finance Director, to discuss the financial aspects of the University's latest Report and Accounts and the progress of the troubled implementation of People and Money. The University Court had commissioned an independent review by PA Consulting of the implementation of this system, the report of which can be found on the University website.

The Business Committee had also met to discuss the PA Consulting report and had since written to the Senior Lay Member of the Court highlighting several issues. A response to this submission is expected following the Court meeting in April.

The University Court will be giving further consideration to the review of Ordinance 186, which sets out the qualifying criteria for membership of the General Council. The present criteria were defined in 1991: 30 years later, the changes proposed to Ordinance 186 are essentially designed to simplify the current criteria and to bring them up to date. Currently, General Council membership is only offered to those with university degrees and to senior academic staff. This fails to recognise that the University now confers on those graduating other types of award in addition to degrees, and also overlooks the valuable contribution to the University's success made by senior professional staff. The proposed changes to the Ordinance would remedy these deficiencies, remove areas of uncertainty and simplify administration of the arrangements for registering members of the Council.

Responses received so far to the consultation of General Council members about these changes reveal that, while some have reservations, a clear majority of respondents favour the proposed changes. It will then be for the University Court to consider whether to proceed with the proposals, with or without amendment. Only if Court's decision is positive and if the result of the subsequent consideration of the revised Ordinance by the Privy

Council is favourable, will questions relating to the implementation of the proposed changes need finally to be decided.

The Convener concluded his report by re-iterating that the Business Committee and its Standing Committees are focussed on considering issues that help safeguard the wellbeing and prosperity of Edinburgh University and are determined to engage constructively with the University at all levels in order to help ensure that wellbeing and prosperity continue.

The report of the Business Committee was approved.

5. Dates of future meetings of the General Council and Notice of forthcoming elections

The next Half-Yearly Meeting will take place on Saturday 15 June 2024 in the Edinburgh Futures Institute. Any Motions for discussion at this meeting should be received in the General Council Office by Wednesday 27 March 2024.

The following Statutory Half-Yearly Meeting will be held on Saturday 15 February 2025 in the McEwan Hall, Edinburgh. Any motions for discussion at this meeting should be received in the General Council Office by Wednesday 20 November 2024.

There will be elections for five Members of the Business Committee in February 2025. Nominations on forms available from the General Council Office and on the website should be received in the General Council Office by Wednesday 20 November 2024.

6. Presentation by Professor Sir Peter Mathieson, Principal and Vice-Chancellor, of the Annual Report to the University

The Principal began his seventh annual report to the General Council by warmly welcoming members present in the McEwan Hall and those joining the meeting via livestream.

The University has continued to grow, with almost 50,000 students and more than ten applications for every place. An update on figures for 2022-23 revealed that the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences accounts for more than half of the University in terms of student numbers. About 60% of the student population are undergraduates: roughly one third from Scotland, a third from the rest of the UK and a third international. The number coming from the EU has fallen as a direct consequence of Brexit. Amongst the postgraduate population, international students predominate and 61% of overseas students came from Asia. The Principal acknowledged the dependence on international students for the financial cross-subsidy they provide towards activities where the funding provided by UK and Scottish Governments does not cover the full economic cost.

Progress continues to be made on efforts to enable students from disadvantaged backgrounds to study at the University and the Principal praised the University's record on scholarship provision.

The Senior Leadership Team welcomed and accepted the recommendations arising from the 'People and Money External Review' conducted by PA Consulting for the University Court and are committed to addressing the major issues covered in the report, recognising that consultation with staff is key when considering future major change projects.

Deputy Secretary Governance and Strategic Planning, Rona Smith, has been leading on more recent work

around the size and shape of the University and concluded that, although there is no need for the University to grow and its overall size should by and large stay the same, a broader balance within the student population would be desirable.

The income of the University continues to grow. Edinburgh is by far the biggest university in Scotland, with a turnover now of £1.385 billion, and is the fourth biggest in the UK. Research income, tuition fees and funding body grants have grown and philanthropic income is at record levels but expenditure has gone up by more than income so there is continuing pressure on finances. Running the University costs around £100 million a month. Capital expenditure is substantial and as this is largely funded from the operating surplus, there is an obvious need to continue to generate a surplus.

The Principal mentioned the high standard of nominations received in the various categories for University awards and described some of the offerings which celebrate the diverse graduate community.

The City Region Deal program has been a massive success for the University and for the region. KPIs set under the City Region Deal have been exceeded in terms of talent, education, research, and entrepreneurship. The Edinburgh Futures Institute, and the decision to host the Exascale supercomputer in Edinburgh, are symbols of what the University has been able to achieve under this deal.

The Principal concluded his presentation by saying that, despite ongoing challenges for the University and at a time of massive uncertainties in wider society, universities have a key role to play in thought leadership, the production and dissemination of new knowledge, and ensuring resilience and stability. The University of Edinburgh is playing its part in all of these, and he asserted that the strategic priorities, the values and vision articulated in its Strategy 2030 remain as relevant in 2024 as they did when that was written in 2018.

There was then an extensive question and answer session covering the following topics:

- Curriculum transformation and the impact of recent developments in AI;
- How to improve communication with General Council members to help counter unjustified negative local media coverage, for example on student accommodation and freedom of expression;
- Communications to improve awareness of the many good news stories within the University, and the possible part the Edinburgh Futures Institute could play in this;
- Widening participation and how students from disadvantaged backgrounds fare in comparison to other students during their period of study and after graduation;
- University participation in the Turing scheme and its limitations, and the prospects for a possible Scottish Government funded alternative, similar to that available in Wales;
- Data to help improve future pandemic preparedness;
- Concern about student satisfaction and staff morale and the various measures being taken to try to improve the situation locally;
- Higher Education funding and whether Scottish families willing and able to afford to pay tuition fees to Scottish Universities should be allowed to do so, rather than pay them to Universities elsewhere;

- The welcome decision by the University to pay visa fees for university staff applying for permanent residency in the UK;
- People and Money implementation difficulties and how lessons learned from this will affect other change management programmes, e.g. through better two-way communication and greater involvement of relevant inhouse academic expertise;
- Measures to improve and tighten the timescales for providing feedback to students on their assessed work, and monitoring staff compliance on this.

The Principal was warmly thanked for his comprehensive report and for his highly informative and candid responses to the questions.

7. Any other competent business

a. University of Edinburgh Graduates Association – Mr Peter Freshwater drew attention to the Association’s centenary celebrations and added that copies of the latest edition of its Journal were available in the reception area for a modest voluntary donation.

b. Valedictory remarks by the Rector. As the Rector would shortly be completing her 3-year term, she was invited to address the General Council. She thanked those who had supported and encouraged her, especially through some difficult times, and also thanked General Council members for all they do to support the University. She then made a heartfelt plea for far greater peace and justice in the world through greater compassion and mutual respect for our shared humanity and interdependence. She would be returning to DRC in May to undertake humanitarian work. Sir Philip warmly thanked the Rector and wished her every success in her future work which resonates strongly with the values and aims of the University.

8. Adjournment

The Motion by the Convener of the Business Committee that, for the purpose of considering matters which may be transmitted to the General Council by the University Court or any other business of a competent nature, the Business Committee be empowered to act on behalf of the Council, and that this meeting be adjourned to a date to be fixed by the Business Committee, was approved.

The Rev Dr Harriet Harris closed the meeting with a benediction.

The Principal’s full presentation and question and answer session, and the Business Committee’s report to the meeting on 17 February 2024 are available on the website at: www.ed.ac.uk/general-council/half-yearly-meetings/past-meetings

Officers for 2023- 2024

Chairman: HRH The Princess Royal
Secretary: William Duncan, BSc, PhD, MCIPD 2026
Registrar: Leigh Chalmers, University Secretary ex-officio

General Council Assessors on the University Court:

Jock Millican, BSc, FCILT 2027
The Hon Lady Wolffe (Sarah Wolffe KC) 2027
The Rt Hon Douglas Alexander, MA, LLB 2025

Chancellor's Assessor:

Sheriff Principal Alastair Dunlop QC ex officio

Business Committee:

Convener: Sir Philip Mawer, DLitt, LLD (Hon), MA, DPA, Hon FIA 2024
Vice-Convener: Gordon D Cairns, LLB 2024
Convener of Academic Standing Committee: Stephen Hillier, OBE, DSc 2024
Convener of Constitutional Standing Committee: Gordon Cairns, LLB 2024
Convener of Finance and Services Standing Committee: Almira Delibegovic-Broome, KC 2024
Convener of International Standing Committee: Krystyna Szumelukowa, BA Hons, MPhil, MRTPI 2024
Convener of Public Affairs Standing Committee: Candice Donnelly, LLB (Hons), Dip LP, NP, WS 2026

Members:

Lady Joyce Caplan, BEd 2024
Francis McManus, MLitt, LLB (Hons), FRSPH, MREHIS, FHEA 2024
Graeme Reid, BSc, PhD, FRSB 2024
Frances D Dow, CBE, MA, DPhil 2024
Brian Smith, MA, MLitt 2025
Elisabeth Feldstein, MChem 2025
Kirsty MacGregor, MA, MBA, DipEd 2025
Arron Ashton, BSc 2025
Devin Scobie, MA (Hons), MPRCA 2025
Bruce Nelson, BSc, MBA, PhD, FCMl 2026
Alice Brown, CBE, FRSE, AcSS, FRCP EDIN, CIPFA (HON) 2026
Kate Hawley, BSc (Hons), MICFor 2026
John Clifford, MSc 2026
Manya Buchan, BA (Hons), MBA 2027
Ann Cormack, MBE, MA, PGDip 2027
Mary Gunn, PhD, MBA, MA, LLM 2027

Assistant Secretary: Alison MacLeary, MA (Hons)

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