

Guidelines for Consultations between the General Council & the University

Purpose: These guidelines are intended to provide general guidance to both parties. They cover both formal and informal consultations and feedback between the General Council and the University. They are not intended to be comprehensive or overly prescriptive, and they recognise that the informal exchange of comments and suggestions are often most productive.

1. Formal Consultations

The University Court is obliged to consult the General Council on all Resolutions and Ordinances and consider any representations.

2. Consultations between Court and the General Council

- a. Court may from time to time wish to consult the General Council on any relevant topic, as set out in the relevant Ordinances and Resolutions. It should be kept aware of the possibility of utilising the Business Committee as a trusted and knowledgeable reference group for this purpose.
- b. The General Council has the statutory right to make formal representations to Court on any matter affecting the wellbeing and prosperity of the University. It will usually be the responsibility of the Business Committee of the General Council to determine when or whether such representations are appropriate.
- c. Court and its sub-Committees may from time to time consider briefing the Business Committee on topics of relevance, as determined by Court. Such information will often be useful to the General Council when it has the opportunity to assist with the reliable communication of the University's position to the wider community, especially the local community.

3. Other consultations between the University and the General Council

The University's senior management may from time to time see benefit in seeking the views of the General Council through the Business Committee on a range of issues. It is expected that these matters will include:

a. University Strategic Plan

The University will consult the General Council as part of the process for developing new or revised Strategic Plans. Draft versions will be made available for comment and suggestions by the University in good time. Communication will be through the General Council Secretary.

b. Alumni Engagement Strategy

The University will consult the General Council in the development or revision of its Alumni Engagement Strategy. Draft versions will be made available for comment and suggestions by the University in good time. Communication will be through the General Council Secretary. The Public Affairs Standing Committee will be involved in this process.

4. Information and feedback to/from University staff.

There are other valuable occasions on which the General Council and its Business Committee receive information from and can give feedback to University officers:

- a. Principal's Report at Half-Yearly meetings. The format of these meetings allows all General Council members to participate, including distant members through email questions etc.
- b. The General Council meets with members of University staff from time to time, usually receiving presentations from them. These are normally to standing committees of the Business Committee (principally the Academic and the Finance and Services committees) and occasionally to the Business Committee as a whole. Presenters will be alerted to the fact prior to their appearance that they should feel able to seek opinion from committee members as a trusted and knowledgeable reference group. This clarification will be the responsibility of the Secretary as part of the information provided to all presenters prior to a meeting. It will be the responsibility of the Convener of the relevant meeting to guide discussion accordingly. Occasionally the Convener and the Secretary may send written comments to the University following such presentations.

5. Authors

This document was written by the Secretary of the General Council and the University Secretary

6. Approvals

Approved by the Business Committee at its meeting of Thursday 13th December 2012

Approved by the University Court at its meeting of Monday 18th February 2013