THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

Electronic Senate

E-Senate will commence on Wednesday 8 January 2025
and close at noon on Wednesday 22 January 2025

AGENDA

1   **Conferment of the title of Professor Emeritus / Emerita**   **e-S 24/25 3A**
To approve.

2   **Court Resolutions**   **e-S 24/25 3B**
To comment.

3   **Report from the Knowledge Strategy Committee**   **e-S 24/25 3C**
To note.

4   **Report from the Central Academic Promotions Committee**   **e-S 24/25 3D**
For information.

Electronic Senate

8 – 22 January 2025

Conferment of the Title of Emeritus / Emerita Professor

Description of paper

1. The Senate is invited to confer the title of Professor Emeritus / Emerita upon those professors who recently retired or whose retirement is imminent.

Action requested / recommendation

2. To approve. Please note that in the approval of the award of Emeritus/Emerita Professor via e-Senate, a nil response is regarded as assent. Members are invited to submit any comments, observations or reservations using the form available on the Senate Members Portal (Senate member access only). These comments will be added verbatim to the Senate Members Portal e-Senate page where comments can be viewed by other Senate members.

Discussion

3. Senate is invited to confer the title of Professor Emeritus / Emerita upon those professors listed below:

   Professor Brendan Corcoran, Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies
   Professor Jean Manson, Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies

4. The Special Minutes are attached as an appendix.

Resource implications

5. None.

Risk management

6. Not applicable.

Equality & diversity

7. The use of the gendered titles 'emeritus' and 'emerita' may not align with an individual's preferences. The Senate Support Team will respect an individual's preference in title designation.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

10. Those Professors who have been conferred with the title of Professor Emeritus / Emerita will be contacted by Senate Secretariat in due course.

Author Senate Support, 8 January 2025

Freedom of Information Open paper

Special Minute
Brendan M Corcoran MV, DipPharm, PhD, MRCVS
Emeritus Professor of Veterinary Cardiopulmonary Medicine

Since 1996 Professor Brendan Corcoran has held the Personal Chair of Veterinary Cardiopulmonary Medicine at the University of Edinburgh, contributing extensively to the establishment of R(D)SVS as a world class veterinary school. He has contributed to the improvement of understanding of common cardiac and respiratory diseases of companion animals for which he received the Woodrow Award from the British Small Animal Veterinary Association in 2006. Because of his recognised expertise in companion animal respiratory medicine, he has been invited to speak to veterinarians worldwide, helping to improve the clinical skills of colleagues in both developed and developing countries. As a veterinary clinical academic, he has been particularly successful in attracting external funding, for a discipline that has limited access to resources, and including support from industry. Most of his funding has supported his cardiovascular research programmes, examining the cell and molecular biology of mitral valve disease. His work in this area has identified much of what is now known about the aetiopathogenesis of this disease in the dog, and has informed understanding of similar diseases in humans. Recent findings from his laboratory show development of cell senescence and abnormalities in autophagy flux control the development of this disease and plans are in place to further examine this in collaboration with colleagues in the Roslin Institute, the other parts of the Veterinary School and QMRI. Examining this effect in heart valves will have impact on understanding of other degenerative diseases of ageing in both the dog and human. Additionally, Professor Corcoran has on-going studies and collaborations with veterinary clinicians, the results of which will impact disease understanding, treatment and care, and animal welfare.

During his career Professor Corcoran has contributed to the School's and University's national and international engagement, in particular setting the ground work for attracting veterinary students to Edinburgh from the best UG animal science programmes in the USA and Canada. As North America Dean International (shared with Professor Frank Cogliano) he organised and supported the Universities international activities, engaging with our large alumni network, and supporting the previous Principal (Professor Sir Tim O'Shea) attending events in America. He has also been recognised for his contribution to veterinary medicine nationally, serving as a trustee of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons Trust. In this role he advised on funding of veterinary research and support of early career veterinary clinical academics.

Professor Corcoran's aim, if appointed emeritus, will primarily be to support colleagues in projects examining veterinary and comparative cardiology, but will also be interested in supporting the vet school's alumni engagement and other aspects of outreach.

Special Minute
Jean Manson BSc, MSc, PhD
Emeritus Professor of Neurodegenerative Disease

Professor Manson graduated with a BSc from the University of St. Andrews, and was subsequently awarded an MSc and PhD in Human Genetics by the University of Edinburgh. Following postdoctoral fellowships at the University of Edinburgh, she was appointed as a Group Leader in the Neuropathogenesis Unit (NPU), part of the Institute for Animal Health (now the Pirbright Institute). Professor Manson was awarded a Personal Chair in Neurodegenerative Diseases by the University of Edinburgh in 2003, and appointed as Head of the TSE Division (IAH) in the same year, later continuing as Head of the Neurobiology Division when NPU joined The Roslin Institute within the University of Edinburgh veterinary school in 2006.

Professor Manson's research focussed on the role of the prion protein gene (*Prnp*) in the pathogenesis of transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs or prion diseases), such as Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease and bovine spongiform encephalopathy. In particular, she led the development of several valuable mouse models for research, pioneering the use of gene-targeting technologies to introduce mutations of interest, or foreign *Prnp* sequences, expressed at physiological levels under control of the mouse promoter. These included one of the first *Prnp* knock-out lines, conditional knock-outs, and transgenic mouse lines expressing PrP from different species. Such mouse models are increasingly recognised as more accurately recapitulating important features of prion pathogenesis than over-expressing transgenic lines generated by embryonic microinjection, and therefore more relevant for identification of potential therapeutic targets. This research contributed to many high-impact publications, and has been funded by grants from e.g. MRC, BBSRC, Department of Health & Social Care (NIHR).

Recognising the common role of protein misfolding in many other human neurodegenerative diseases, in recent years Professor Manson has worked closely with colleagues in academia and industry on initiatives to support research into candidate treatments, notably through the EC-funded European Prevention of Alzheimer's Dementia Biobank (EPAD).

Professor Manson has made many citizenship contributions both internally to the University, and externally at a national and international level. She was Head of the Neurobiology Division and Deputy Director of the Roslin Institute from 2006-2018. She has been an active and long-standing member of several government advisory committees, notably as a prion expert on the Advisory Committees on Dangerous Pathogens (ACDP) and Safety of Blood, Tissues and Organs (SaBTO). She has also provided/provides expert advice to several scientific/research organizations, including Alberta Prion Research Institute (Chair, Scientific Advisory Committee), International NeuroPrion Group (member of Executive Committee), UK Dementia Platform (member of Steering Group) and RS MacDonald Research Trust (member of Grant Committee).

In recognition of her scientific contributions, Professor Manson was awarded the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in 2008, and elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh (FRSE) in 2009.

Since her retirement, Professor Manson has maintained an active role supporting dementia research, continues to offer expert advice to government and scientific bodies, and engages in public communication of science.

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Court Resolutions

Description of paper

1. This paper is presented to Senate for consultation in accordance with the procedures for the creation of Resolutions as set out in the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966.

Action requested / Recommendation

2. Senate is invited to make observations on the following attached draft Resolutions:

   - No. 1/2025: Alteration of the title of Personal Chair of Politics
   - No. 2/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Neuroinflammatory Medicine

   Members are invited to submit any comments, observations or reservations using the form available on the Senate Members Portal (Senate member access only). These comments will be added verbatim to the Senate Members Portal e-Senate page where comments can be viewed by other Senate members.

Background and context

3. Universities (Scotland) Act 1966 enabled the University Court to exercise by Resolution a wide range of powers, including the creation of Chairs. The Act sets out the procedure for making Resolutions and stipulates that Senatus Academicus, the General Council and any other body or person having an interest require to be consulted on draft Resolutions throughout the period of one month, with the months of August and September not taken into account when calculating the consultation period.

Discussion

4. The draft Resolutions are attached to this paper.

Resource implications

5. Resource implications associated with establishing a Chair, or altering the title of a Chair, are considered as part of the University's approval processes. Prior to Senate consultation, it is confirmed that appropriate funding is in place to support the Chair.

Risk Management

6. There are reputational considerations in establishing and altering the title of Chairs which are considered as part of the University's approval processes.

Responding to the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development Goals

7. N/A.

Equality and Diversity

8. Equality and diversity best practice and agreed procedures are adopted in appointing individuals to chairs.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

9. Via Senate's report to University Court.

Consultation

10. The statutory process for the creation and renaming of Chairs requires consultation with Senate and the General Council prior to approval by the University Court.

Further information

Author(s)	**Presenter(s) (if required)**
Kirstie Graham	
Deputy Head of Court Services	
December 2024	

Freedom of information

Open paper

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

Draft Resolution of the University Court No. 1/2025

Alteration of the title of Personal Chair of Politics

At Edinburgh, the Twenty fourth day of February, Two thousand and twenty five.

WHEREAS the University Court deems it expedient to alter the title of the Chair of Politics founded by Ordinance 129;

AND WHEREAS paragraph 5 of Part II of Schedule 2 to the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966, provides that the University Court may, after consultation with the Senatus Academicus and with the consent of the incumbent and patrons, if any, alter the title of existing professorships;

AND WHEREAS the Chair dealt with in this Resolution is in the patronage of the University Court itself:

THEREFORE the University Court, after consultation with the Senatus Academicus and in exercise of the powers conferred upon it by Section 3 of the Universities (Scotland) Act 1966, with special reference to paragraph 5 of Part II of Schedule 2 to that Act, hereby resolves:

1.   The Chair of Politics shall hereafter be designated the Chair of Politics and International Relations.

2.   This Resolution shall come into with effect from 1 August Two thousand and twenty two.

For and on behalf of the University Court

LEIGH CHALMERS

University Secretary

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

Draft Resolution of the University Court No. 2/2025

Foundation of a Personal Chair of Neuroinflammatory Medicine

At Edinburgh, the Twenty fourth day of February, Two thousand and twenty five.

WHEREAS the University Court deems it expedient to found a Personal Chair of Neuroinflammatory Medicine:

THEREFORE the University Court, after consultation with the Senatus Academicus and in exercise of the powers conferred upon it by Section 3 of the Universities (Scotland) Act, 1966, with special reference to paragraph 5 of Part II of Schedule 2 to that Act, hereby resolves:

1.   There shall be a Personal Chair of Neuroinflammatory Medicine in the University of Edinburgh.

2.   The patronage of the Chair shall be vested in and exercised by the University Court of the University of Edinburgh.

3.   Notwithstanding the personal nature of this Chair, the terms and conditions of appointment and tenure which by Statute, Ordinance and otherwise apply to other Chairs in the University shall be deemed to apply in like manner to the Personal Chair of Neuroinflammatory Medicine together with all other rights, privileges and duties attaching to the office of Professor.

4.   This Resolution shall come into force with effect from 1 February Two thousand and twenty.

For and on behalf of the University Court

LEIGH CHALMERS

University Secretary

Electronic Senate

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Knowledge Strategy Committee Report

Description of paper

1. The paper reports on the Knowledge Strategy Committee meeting held on a hybrid basis on 29 October 2024.

Action requested / recommendation

2. Senate is invited to note the report.

Resource implications

3. Where applicable, as covered in the report.

Risk management

4. Where applicable, as covered in the report.

Equality & diversity

5. Where applicable, as covered in the report.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

6. Regular reports on aspects of the Committee's work of interest to Senate will continue to be submitted.

Author
Jamie Tait
Clerk to Knowledge Strategy Committee
November 2024

Freedom of Information
Open paper

REPORT FROM THE KNOWLEDGE STRATEGY COMMITTEE

29 October 2024

1   Artificial Intelligence Adoption Task Force Update

Michael Rovatsos, Professor of Artificial Intelligence, gave a presentation on the work of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Adoption Task Force. This is an informal grouping overseeing implementation of key recommendations from the previous short-life working group that Knowledge Strategy Committee (KSC) were updated on in January 2024. The Task Force are navigating the challenges and opportunities around AI, and are working on what a long-term strategy for the University may look like. The following was covered in the presentation:

- Progress to date, such as the development of pilot project ideas, including "AI for Teaching Innovation" led by Professor Sian Bayne, and the potential creation of a ChatBot interface for University policies;
- The launch of a new online hub to help staff explore what AI means for our work at the University;
- Updates to staff and student guidance on Generative AI. It was noted that student guidance had recently been issued and staff guidance was to follow shortly; and
- Challenges faced, including mobilisation of budget, difficulty in coordinating dispersed activities and governance issues including the role of the AI and Data Ethics (AIDE) Advisory Board.

The Committee welcomed the presentation and the following points were raised in discussion:

- Positive feedback on the recently issued student AI guidance was noted, with some suggestions for improvements already made by students from the Edinburgh Futures Institute. It was confirmed that further student engagement would take place so the guidance can be revised ahead of the 2025/26 academic year. It was also noted that although the guidance applied to postgraduate research (PGR) students, it would be helpful to revisit this to include some additional more detailed information directed at PGR students. This work would be taken forward by the Deputy Vice-Principal Students (Enhancement).
- Student training had been oversubscribed and very well received.
- The risk and impact of AI tools/extensions being added to products by existing vendors. Whilst there is an ability to turn these extensions on and off, there may be an assumption that these are University-endorsed products therefore the importance of training to support decision making around incorporating and using these extensions was noted.
- The EUSA Vice-President Education would shortly be making a video to provide information to students about ELM (Edinburgh (access to) Language Models), the University's AI innovation platform.
- The importance of clear governance processes, and understanding and clarifying what the University needs AI for. It was noted this is particularly important when moving from the experimental stage of pilot projects

demonstrating capability, to a more widespread introduction of AI to areas of identified need, and the subsequent issues around capacity.
- The use of AI for personal productivity, and the opportunities this could create in terms of managing workload. Alongside this, the awareness that opinions on AI vary dramatically and the need to acknowledge there will be different views on its use.
- Further resources available were also flagged:
  - AI Adoption Hub SharePoint
  - AI Adoption Teams Channel
  - AI for Teaching Innovation Project
  - AI Impact Assessment Tool
  - AI in HE educational videos

The Convener thanked Professor Rovatsos for his presentation and noted the Committee's support for the work being taken forward by the AI Adoption Task Force.

2   IT & Library NSS 2024 Results and Draft Action Plan

Gosia Such, Director of User Services, gave a presentation on the National Student Survey (NSS) results for the IT and Library questions.

It was noted that scores for both Library satisfaction and Learning resources had decreased since last year, and both sat below the Russell Group and UK averages. Learning Resources did however have the highest score of all themes across the University.

It was highlighted that common themes appeared in both the positive and negative comments, with the lack of study spaces being the main issue. Work was now focussed on the action plan to address the identified issues.

3   Chief Information Officer Update

Key activities and updates since the last meeting were reported, including:

- **Sustainable IT**. It was noted that the Sustainable IT Group, chaired by Professor John Thompson, was looking at issues such as the environmental impact of ChatGPT, and it would be helpful to update KSC on the emerging work around this at a future meeting.
- **Accessibility**. It was noted that the Cabinet Office continues to expand its audit programme checking digital accessibility of platforms against the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). It was also reported that Oracle (which is used for People and Money) would be moving to its Redwood user interface in the next two and half years. The redesign was intended to modernise the user experience across Oracle's various products and services. This would be both a technology and accessibility improvement project.
- **Technology sector**. It was reported there had been an increasing consolidation of the sector.
- **Long-term revenue costs**. The impact and pressure on ISG's revenue budget in relation to increasing external costs.

4   Knowledge Strategy Committee Governance Update

The Convener introduced a paper which set out a proposal for changes to the committee structure for KSC and its three thematic committees: IT Committee, Library Committee and the University Collections Advisory Committee (UCAC). This included disbanding KSC with a merged Library Committee and UCAC succeeding KSC as the joint standing committee of Court and Senate. It was noted that support was sought to recommend the proposal to both Court and Senate, which would happen only once further work had been undertaken.

The Deputy Secretary Governance and Strategic Planning then provided further context to the proposal. It was noted there were multiple drivers for the recommended changes, including the continued rapid development of digital learning, research and administration over the past decade; the findings and recommendations of both the externally-facilitated effectiveness review of Court and its committees and an Internal Audit review of the Estates Committee; and discussions within KSC itself about overlap and duplication with other committees. It was finally noted that, given the multiple drivers for change, maintaining status quo was not an option. The core proposal put to KSC, with effect from the next academic year on 1 August 2025, was for:

- KSC to be disbanded;
- Library Committee and University Collections Advisory Committee to be merged and replace KSC as the joint committee of Court and Senate; and
- IT Committee to return to its historic norm as a management/operational committee, reporting into the University Executive, but with digital estate projects with a value above £2m progressing from IT Committee to Estates Committee.

There was wide-ranging discussion of the recommendations, from which the following points emerged:

- Recent KSC activity had focussed on operational IT work, which in turn had led to questions around the purpose and value added, particularly as this related to IT Committee. It was queried whether there could be an opportunity to rebalance the focus of KSC activity towards knowledge strategy and interaction with Teaching & Learning and Research Strategies.
- Relatedly, it was felt the paper did not make clear how knowledge management activities would be addressed without KSC.
- Duplication of papers and discussions across the existing committee structure was evident, often with no time for changes to be made between committees.
- There was some inefficiency in governance processes for some digital items, which required a long governance path.
- Membership and leadership of the potential new committee structure would be key, including strong academic and student representation.
- There should not simply be a merger of existing terms of reference, instead a long-term strategic approach should be taken to ensure integration across the wider portfolio, and a key governance role that could be more usefully exercised.

- It would be important to engage fully with the chairs and membership of the three KSC thematic committees. Stating a strategic rationale for merging Library Committee and UCAC would help with onward communications and next steps.
- There was support for IT Committee reporting into the University Executive, also noting that as AIDE has no formal reporting line and the IT Committee has a large number of sub-committees, there was an opportunity to look at this lower-level committee structure.

Taking the above comments into account, it was concluded that:

- The majority of KSC members supported the three recommendations as outlined in the paper and the related timeline, recognising those recommendations as a key first step, and these were therefore agreed for onward transmission;
- It was recommended that further consultation be undertaken on next steps, addressing some of the points raised in this meeting, with relevant groups under both Court and Senate;
- A fuller proposal would then be taken forward to Court and Senate in early 2025.

5   Other items

The Committee noted papers on Digital Estate Capital Envelope 2023-2029 and Digital Estates Status Update; Information Security; Learning Analytics Policy Review 2024/2025; Digital Accessibility, Legislation and External Audits: UK Government Accessibility Audit Overview; ELM Roadmap and Next Steps; and Library Materials Budget. Regular reports were received from the IT Committee, Library Committee, University Collections Advisory Committee and Estates Committee.

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Report from Central Academic Promotions Committee

Description of paper

1. Report of the recommendations of the Central Academic Promotions Committee provided in Appendix 1.

Action requested / Recommendation

2. For information.

Resource implications

3. Increased salaries will impact on individual College's staff budget.

Risk Management

4. N/A

Responding to the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development Goals

5. N/A

Equality and Diversity

6. Equality and Diversity is central to the considerations of the Central Academic Promotions Committee.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

7. N/A

Further information
Author(s)   **Presenter(s) (if required)**
Louise Kidd
HR Partner Reward
University HR
12 December 2024

Freedom of information: Open

REPORT FROM THE CENTRAL ACADEMIC PROMOTIONS COMMITTEE

The Committee reviewed electronically in August 2024, one nomination for award of the academic title of Personal Chair. This award was confirmed.

The following award of Personal Chair has been made since the last report to Senate:

Title	Initial	Surname	College	School / Deanery	Personal Chair Title	Date of Effect
Dr	N	Pantic	CAHSS	Moray House School of Education	Personal Chair in Educational Change and Diversity	1 August 2024