



# THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

## Electronic Senate

13 to 27 November 2024

## Confirmed e-Senate Report

Comments raised via e-Senate can be accessed on the [Senate Members Portal](#).

### 1 Conferment of the title of Professor Emeritus / Emerita (e-S 24/25 2A)

Senate approved the conferment of the title of Professor Emeritus / Emerita on the following professors:

- Professor Frances Fowle, Edinburgh College of Art
- Professor Jeremy Robbins, School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures
- Professor Caroline Watt, School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences
- Dame Professor Moira Whyte, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine

Senate noted the special minutes provided for each professor.

Two members commented on this item.

One member commented that the special minutes represented a valuable opportunity to indicate how emeritus and emerita professors would continue to be a part of the university community; and the member considered that the special minutes could have provided additional information in this regard. The member quoted the [Emeritus Professor Procedure](#), which stated that special minutes should include "a note on how they intend to spend their retirement."

Separately, the member commented that they considered it to be disrespectful to confer emeritus/emera status by assent rather than affirmation at a quorate Senate meeting, and called for this item of business to be move to ordinary Senate meetings.

One member simply communicated their approval.

### 2 Senate Election Dates 2025-26 (e-S 24/25 2B)

Senate noted information on the proposed dates in 2025 for the nomination and election of:

- Staff seeking election to Senate.
- Elected members to Senate standing committees.

Three members commented on this item.

One member welcomed discussion within the paper around increasing nominations to Senate and its standing committees, and commented that they felt that workload was a significant barrier preventing participation by staff in university governance.

The member commented that they would welcome workload being recognised within the upcoming Senate elections paper.

One member recommended that provision be made in the schedule for reopening nominations in any categories of membership in which there were fewer nominees than vacancies; and commented that they had anecdotally heard that colleagues had declined to nominate themselves because they assumed that there would be a sufficient number of nominations.

One member simply communicated their approval.

The comments have been noted by the paper author, and will be used to inform the paper on Senate elections to be drafted for the February 2025 meeting.

### **3 Communications from the University Court (e-S 24/25 2C)**

Senate noted the communications from the University Court as detailed within the paper and which related to Court's special meeting of 3 October 2024, and to the ordinary meeting of 7 October 2024. Four members commented on this item.

One member requested that an update be provided to Senate on progress associated with the externally-facilitated review of Court effectiveness, as detailed under point four.

The member also commented, in relation to point 5, that they welcomed the goal of rigorously assessing the impact of feedback turnaround times on NSS scores. The member commented that they would find it useful to receive information on associated indicators of success.

One member commented that they would find it useful to receive information on the projects and associated resource implications referred to under point seven.

One member commented that they felt that the outcome of the meeting on divestment could be more clearly communicated with Senate and the wider University body.

One member noted that this report appeared to contradict the Principal's claim from the October Senate meeting that he could not report to Court on Senate's business until minutes have been approved.

One member simply communicated that they had noted the paper.

Senate members' comments have been shared with the paper author.

### **4 Current Progress within the Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression Working Group (e-S24/252D)**

Senate noted the update on the current progress of the University Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression Working Group; and the following dates that had been provisionally identified for consultation workshops to be held with Senate members:

- Wednesday, 22 January 2025, 13:15 – 14:45
- Wednesday, 22 January 2025, 15:15 – 16:45
- Thursday, 23 January 2025, 12:15 – 13:45

Two members of Senate commented on this item.

One member commented that they were concerned that the terms of reference for the Working Group had not been approved by Senate. The member further queried how many Working Group members had specific academic research expertise on the topic of academic freedom and freedom of expression; observing that this was a particular area of research excellence at the University.

One member simply communicated that they had noted the paper.

Senate members' comments have been shared with the paper author.