



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

Electronic Senate

E-Senate will commence on Wednesday 5 November
and close at noon on Wednesday 19 November 2025

AGENDA

- | | |
|---|---------------------|
| 1 Conferment of the title of Professor Emeritus / Emerita
To approve. | e-S 25/26 2A |
| 2 Court Resolutions
To comment. | e-S 25/26 2B |

Electronic Senate

5 – 19 November 2025

Conferment of the Title of Emeritus Professor

Description of paper

1. Senate is invited to confer the title of Professor Emeritus upon Professor Richard Morris 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 upon Professor Richard Morris, School of Neurological and Cardiovascular Sciences.
4. The Special Minute is 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

8. 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, November 2025
Freedom of Information Open paper

Special Minute
Richard Graham Michael Morris CBE, BA, BSc,
DPhil, FRS, FRSE, FMedSci.
Emeritus Professor of Neuroscience

Since 1994, Professor Richard Morris has held the Chair of Neuroscience at the University of Edinburgh with distinction.

He first established his reputation as a scientist at the University of St Andrews, where he began his career as a University Lecturer in 1985. Whilst in St Andrews, he developed a particular interest in discovering how animals and people find their way about. To explore this, he developed a novel method to investigate the issue. Instead of using the then standard techniques of “operant chambers” and walled mazes to study how animals moved around (notably rodents), he developed an “open field” approach in which rats could choose freely in which direction to move. Morris’s trick was to use water as the medium through which the rats would navigate, their aim being to identify a hidden safe platform under the water surface as the target, typically placed up to 2 metres away. Rats took to this task very readily and Morris was able to identify rapid learning of the correct direction and long-lasting memory of the target location. The task was widely taken up by others, and is now widely referred to internationally as the “Morris watermaze”.

Due to his close connection with John O’Keefe and Lynn Nadel, then at University College London, he used his new technique to investigate the neural basis of navigation and its potential mediation by the hippocampus. An initial finding, in 1992, was that lesions of the hippocampus caused a severe disruption of successful navigation. Upon the discovery that *N*-methyl-D-aspartate (NMDA) receptors were expressed prominently in pyramidal cells of the hippocampus, he explored whether their activation was essential for the expression of long-term potentiation (LTP) in the hippocampus. This was successful. A drug which blocked their activation also blocked LTP and - the important new finding - it also impaired spatial learning. This novel finding was duly published in *Nature* in 1997. He followed this up with several lines of research and developed further new techniques.

A striking feature of his work has been his support for young scientists and particularly his colleagues in Edinburgh. With Charles Warlow, then Professor of Medical Neurology in the University, he created an organisation which they called “Edinburgh Neuroscience” whose aim was to support and provide visibility for the diverse work underway – ranging from basic science through to studies involving clinical relevance. This was successful and the framework is now repeated in other Universities in the UK. He views the neuroscience community in Edinburgh as being very special, with its broad range of interests, and both fundamental and applied research. He feels particularly honoured to have been member of the neuroscience community in Edinburgh.

He was an author of seminal publications in the scientific literature about spatial navigation and episodic memory, and about the role of NMDA receptors in memory formation and, with others, he has created a now widely used book, called the Hippocampus book, summarizing the field in which they work.

Since his arrival in Edinburgh, he has extended this work and built a team which has collectively acquired an international reputation. Among an impressive array of funding awards, he was Principal Investigator of 4 MRC Programme Grants. He has given lectures internationally, ranging from the Zotterman Medal of the Swedish Physiological Association in Stockholm in 1999, the Alumnus Lectures in St Andrews in 2003, and many others.

For his research, he was in 2016 – with Tim Bliss and Graham Collingridge - awarded the BRAIN Prize in Denmark, one of the most prestigious awards in neuroscience research. He was elected to Fellowship to both The Royal Society and The Royal Society of Edinburgh, the Academy of Medical Sciences, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the US National Academy of Sciences. In 2010, he was invited to deliver a Plenary address to the annual meeting of the Society for Neuroscience, a rare accolade for a non-American.

Professor Morris has chaired a number of outside bodies with distinction, most notably one of the Committees of The Royal Society responsible for electing new members (resulting in the award of a CBE); and of the Committee which chooses the annual BRAIN Prize in Denmark and has been particularly successful in nurturing alumni.

Electronic Senate

5 – 19 November 2025

Chair 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.88/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Thoracic Oncology and Imaging
No.89/2025: Foundation of a Personal Chair of Philosophy of Education

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 attached Resolutions have arisen from the central academic promotions process in 2024/25 and have therefore been backdated to 1 August 2025.

Resource implications

5. Resource implications associated with establishing 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 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. Final Resolutions will be submitted to the Court meeting on 1 December 2025.

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)

Governance & Court Services

October 2025

Freedom of information

Open paper

Presenter(s) (if required)

N/A

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

Draft Resolution of the University Court No. 88/2025

Foundation of a Personal Chair of Thoracic Oncology and Imaging

At Edinburgh, the First day of December, Two thousand and twenty five.

WHEREAS the University Court deems it expedient to found a Personal Chair of Thoracic Oncology and Imaging:

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 Thoracic Oncology and Imaging 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 Thoracic Oncology and Imaging 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 August Two thousand and twenty five.

For and on behalf of the University Court

LEIGH CHALMERS

University Secretary

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

Draft Resolution of the University Court No. 89/2025

Foundation of a Personal Chair of Philosophy of Education

At Edinburgh, the First day of December, Two thousand and twenty five.

WHEREAS the University Court deems it expedient to found a Personal Chair of Philosophy of Education:

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 Philosophy of Education 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 Philosophy of Education 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 August Two thousand and twenty five.

For and on behalf of the University Court

LEIGH CHALMERS

University Secretary