

SUMMARY REPORT OF COURT MEETING 18th September 2025

The University Court met on campus today, 18th September 2025, the first Court meeting of the 25/26 academic year. The Chair welcomed Anita Volkert, the new Senate elected governor, and Osman Rafiq, the new Professional and Support staff elected governor, to their first formal meeting of Court. Professor John Connolly and Professor Sharron Dolan, Interim PVCs Research, were also welcomed in their interim executive roles.

On the previous day Court held its annual Stakeholder meeting online on the topic of *Technology, Talent, and Tomorrow's Workforce* led by the Chair, the Principal and Professor Louise Dixon, PVC Education, with an outstanding panel of speakers including our Chancellor, Dr Anne-Marie Imafidon MBE. In the evening David Halliday, former staff Governor, hosted a conversation with a guest whose personal experience demonstrated the extraordinary power of education to change lives.

What follows is a high-level summary of the main issues addressed by Court today. Minutes of the meeting will be published on the University website in due course.

Yvette Hopkins
Chair of Court

1. Principal & Vice Chancellor & Executive Board Report

The report provided a summary of items arising since the previous Court meeting, with the Principal highlighting key issues. The Court noted the report, which included the University being named the UK's University of the Year for Graduate Jobs 2026 by the Daily Mail University Guide, along with updates on Scottish Government and Home Office/UKVI issues, and the NSS results.

2. Chief Operating Officer and DVC Report

The COO and DVC gave an overview of key developments in Finance; Estates; IT; Future Students, Marketing & Communications; Foundation, Alumni & Events; and Registry & School Professional Services.

3. UKVI Report

The Court welcomed a report which set out progress and described the extensive actions taken and in train to fulfil both the UKVI's current requirements and those further requirements presaged in the UK Government's Immigration White Paper.

4. Draft Budget 2025/2026

The Court approved the updated 2025/26 Budget.

5. Interim VC arrangements and handover

The Court noted options for addressing any gap between the departure of the current VC and the arrival of his successor. Firm proposals for decision by Court will be presented to Court once the

new VC has been identified and the appointee's start date is known along with the duration of any gap.

6. Student Recruitment Trimester A 2025-26

The Court noted the report detailing an early view of the ongoing registration of new students for Trimester A 2025-26.

7. Student President's Report

The Student President reported on issues affecting students and on the activities of the Students' Association.

8. University Secretary's Report

The Court received a report from the University Secretary and approved the Statement of Primary Responsibilities for 2025/26. The Court also approved the Modern Slavery Statement for inclusion in the financial report and annual accounts for the year ended 31st July 2025, and the appointment of a new lay governor.

9. Research Update Q4 2024/25

The Court noted a report summarising research policy context and REF2029 preparations, the 2024/25 Q4 and full year applications and awards where income showed an excellent upward movement reflecting higher value awards.

10. Standing Committee Business

The Court received reports from the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 14th July and 15th September 2025.

11. Media Coverage Analysis – May, June and July 2025

The Court noted the report which highlights the media coverage received by the University in May, June and July 2025.

12. Date of next Court meeting

The next meeting of Court will take place on Thursday 13th November 2025.