



UK | DUBAI | MALAYSIA

Court Interim Business Committee

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Constitution and Purpose

- 1.1 In accordance with *Statute 4: The Court* (paragraph 6), the Court has established the Court Interim Business Committee (CIBC).
- 1.2 **Interim Business**
The purpose of the CIBC is to undertake on behalf of the Court any delegable business of the Court in accordance with Article 7.1.2 of the University Charter, as and when it is expedient to do so between scheduled ordinary meetings of the Court.
- (Article 7.4 of the Charter stipulates those powers of the Court which cannot be delegated to any other body, including the CIBC or any other body or individual. These are shown in **Appendix 1** to these Terms of Reference).
- 1.3 **Advisory Role**
The CIBC will also meet regularly to comment and advise on the University's strategic forward planning, ongoing delivery of strategic priorities, and advance consideration of the pipeline of initiatives that the University is considering.

2. Remit

- 2.1 The remit of the CIBC includes the transaction of any business which falls within the powers and the authority of the Court and which is not excluded under the restrictions described in Article 7.4 of the Charter.
- 2.2 In accordance with the Court Standing Orders, it will be at the discretion of the Chair of the Court, as and when business needs might arise, to determine if an item of business should be formally considered by the CIBC between meetings of the Court, or whether the full Court should be invited to consider that item of business. Article 7.4 of the Charter notes that 'The Court may not delegate its powers to make final decisions on issues of corporate strategy.'
- 2.3 Where the matter of business relates to the Chair of the Court it will be at the discretion of the Deputy Chair of the Court to determine whether to convene a meeting with, or conduct a matter of business by correspondence with, the Court or the CIBC.

3. Composition and Membership

- 3.1 Members are appointed to the Committee by the Court. The Committee shall comprise:

- a) The Chair of Court, *ex officio* (as Chair)
Mr Bruce Pritchard
 - b) The Deputy Chair of Court, *ex officio*
Mr Mike Tumilty
 - c) The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, *ex officio*
Mr Mike Tumilty
 - d) The Chair of the Finance Committee, *ex officio*
Mr Steve Heathcote
 - e) The Chair of the Staff Committee, *ex officio*
Ms Dorothy Wright
 - f) The Chair of the Remuneration Committee, *ex officio*
Mr Mike Tumilty
 - g) The Chair of the Global Student Life Committee, *ex officio*
Ms Marta Phillips
 - h) The Chair of the Environment and Infrastructure Committee, *ex officio*
Mr Alan Robertson
 - i) The Chair of the Donations and Investments Committee, *ex officio*
Dr Brian Henderson
 - j) The Principal & Vice-Chancellor, *ex officio*
Professor Richard Williams
 - k) The Vice-Principal and Provost, *ex officio*
Professor Steve McLaughlin
 - l) The Student Union President, *ex officio*
Mr Cameron Fields
 - m) One or more staff members of the Court, *elected or nominated category*
Dr Yvonne McLaren-Hankin
- 3.2 The term of office of Court members who are members of the Committee is concurrent with their term of office on the Court. Membership terms for Court members are set out in Statute 4: *The Court*.

4. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- 4.1 The Committee will exercise its responsibility, as far as possible, to promote diversity of representation within its membership and the membership of any working group or committee established by the Committee. The Committee will also act to promote equality of opportunity for all colleagues who are involved in carrying out the business of the Committee.

5. Quorum

- 5.1 The quorum necessary to transact formal business is five members, one of whom will be the Chair of the Committee and at least three of whom will be independent lay members of the Court.
- 5.2 Members who are participating in a meeting by means of audio-visual conferencing or other means enabling them to communicate with all members present at the meeting simultaneously shall be deemed to be present at the meeting and to count towards the quorum.

6. Chair

- 6.1 The Chair of the Committee will be the Chair of Court.
- 6.2 In the absence of the Chair of the Committee, the Deputy Chair of Court will chair the meeting. In the absence of both the Chair of Court and the Deputy Chair of Court, members will elect from among the independent lay members of the Committee who are present at the meeting a person to act as Chair for the meeting or until such time as the Chair of the Committee arrives.
- 6.3 At times when the Committee is considering the appointment of the successor to the Chair, Chairing of the Committee will pass to the Deputy Chair or, as per arrangements set out in 6.2, above, another independent lay member of the Committee.

7. Frequency of Meetings

- 7.1 The Committee will normally discuss business matters by correspondence. However, it will also meet regularly to comment and advise on the University's strategic developments between scheduled ordinary meetings of the Court. It may also meet as and when necessary, in accordance with direction from the Chair of the Court.
- 7.2 It will be at the discretion of the Chair of the Court to determine whether an item of business for the Court Interim Business Committee can be dealt with by means of correspondence with all members of the committee, rather than through a meeting.

8. Attendance at Meetings

- 8.1 The following officers are expected to be in attendance at meetings:
- a) The University Secretary;
 - b) The Global Chief Financial Officer;
 - c) The Global Director of HR
 - d) The Committee Clerk.
- 8.2 Other officers and members of the University community may be asked to attend when appropriate, with the agreement of the Chair.
- 8.3 The Committee will maintain a record of attendance at each of its meetings.

9. Reserved Business

- 9.1 There may be occasions when the Committee's business is designated reserved and/or commercially sensitive. On such occasions, with the approval of the Chair, any persons in attendance may be asked to withdraw from the meeting during consideration of a particular reserved item of business.

- 9.2 The record of matters which the Chair and the Committee are satisfied should be dealt with on a reserved basis will be identified within the minutes.

10. Conflict of Interest

- 10.1 Where it is identified that a member of the Committee has a conflict of interest with respect to a matter, the Chair may, on the advice of the Secretary, request that the member in question withdraw from participation in relevant business. Depending on the nature of the business, this may allow for participation in discussions without taking part in decision making or may require complete non-participation and/or withdrawal from that part of the meeting.
- 10.2 All instances of identified conflicts of interest shall be recorded in the minutes.

11. Reporting Procedures

- 11.1 The Committee will submit regular reports to the Court based on the Committee's minutes. The Chair will approve the content of reports before release.
- 11.2 The Chair of Court will provide a verbal update to the Court on meetings held to discuss strategic forward planning, priorities and initiatives.
- 11.3 The Committee's records (agenda, papers, minutes) are included in the University's Freedom of Information Publication Scheme. Information will be readily accessible on request to members of the public under the terms of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act (FOI(S)A) with the exception of information which is deemed to be covered by a specific exemption under the Act. Minutes and reports of the Committee will denote those areas of reported business which are deemed to fall within the designation of information which is 'exempt' under the FOI(S)A.

12. Forward Planning

- 12.1 The Committee will review its Terms of Reference and submit recommendations on these to the Court annually for approval.
- 12.2 The Committee will set its meeting dates two years in advance, aligned to the schedule of meetings of the Court.
- 12.3 The Committee will submit an annual assurance report for the year just completed alongside its Terms of Reference. This will include a summary report of the items of business undertaken by the Committee in the last full year.

13. Supporting Information

Groups feeding into the Court Interim Business Committee

- 13.1
- None

Effectiveness and lifespan

- 13.2 Lifespan ongoing. Effectiveness reviewed five-yearly as part of the Court's review of its effectiveness.

The Court and its committees will regularly monitor their own effectiveness and the performance of the institution against its planned strategies and operational targets.

Actions that may be taken by the Committee

- 13.3
- For formal business, the Committee may: Note; Receive; Consider; Endorse; Approve; Recommend; Reject
 - For advisory matters (e.g. comment and feedback on strategic initiatives and development), the Committee may: Note; Receive; Consider; Endorse; Recommend; Advise

Minuting style

- 13.4 Traditional/formal minutes in accordance with internal University guidance. Action notes will be taken for advisory discussions.

Resources

- 13.5
- Secretary** Ruth Moir, University Secretary
- Clerk** Lisa Herlihy, Senior Governance Officer

Version	Amendments	Approved by
V1	Minor amendments to update wording and reflect changes to the membership. No changes made to the remit.	The Court, 3 October 2024
V2	Minor amendments to update wording and reflect changes to the membership. No changes made to the remit.	The Court, 11 December 2025

Appendix 1: Extract from University Charter (June 2019)

- 7.4. The Court may not delegate its powers:
- 7.4.1. to determine the objects of the University;
 - 7.4.2. to make final decisions on issues of corporate strategy;
 - 7.4.3. to appoint and dismiss any one or more of the Chancellor, the Pro-Chancellor(s), the Principal, the Vice-Principal and/or the Secretary and to approve their terms and conditions of appointment;
 - 7.4.4. to approve the annual business plan of the University and each member of the Heriot-Watt Group;
 - 7.4.5. to review and approve the annual budget of the University and annual report of the University;
 - 7.4.6. to amend the Charter under the provisions of Article 17;
 - 7.4.7. to make, amend or revoke Statutes or Ordinances;
 - 7.4.8. to adopt the University's annual accounts;
 - 7.4.9. to appoint or remove the University's External Auditor;
 - 7.4.10. to decide the remuneration of the Chair of the Court and any other external and independent members of the Court under the terms of Article 4.8; or
 - 7.4.11. to decide whether there should be a reduction in the Academic Staff as a whole or of any constituent part of the University or any member of the Heriot-Watt Group by way of compulsory redundancy.