

Annex 3: Convener of Court

The Convener of Court occupies the position of senior lay member as defined in the Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 and is appointed accordingly, initially for a period of two years, and may be reappointed, normally for a further three years, provided that no person shall hold office for more than eight consecutive years.

Role and responsibilities:

- The leadership and effectiveness of the Court,
- To chair the governing body of the University and to ensure that such meetings proceed efficiently and effectively
- To conduct Court business, efficiently and effectively, in accordance with the Charter and Statutes of the University
- To ensure that the governing body understands its strategic role and is aware of its responsibilities as set out in the University Charter and Statutes, its Statement of Primary Responsibilities and the Financial Memorandum with the Funding Council
- To ensure that the members of Court work together effectively and have confidence in the procedures laid down for the conduct of business
- To ensure that the Court observes the principles of public life and does not become involved in the day-to-day executive management of the University.
- To ensure that there is an appropriate balance of authority between the Court and the Principal of the University.

The Convener of Court can attend, in an *ex officio* capacity, any Committee of the University that is responsible for the management and administration of revenue, property, staff and students of the University and of all joint committees of Court and Senate (except the Audit and Risk Committee and the Executive Team, unless otherwise specified in the Statutes or Ordinances). In particular, the Convener of Court (or their nominee) chairs the following committees:

- the Joint Committee of Court and Senate responsible for the appointment of the Principal and Vice-Chancellor
- the Senior Academic Review and Development Panel
- the Court Governance Committee.

The Convener of Court represents the University at the Committee of Chairs of University Courts and the Scottish Committee of Chairs of University Courts. Additionally, the Convener of Court is invited to attend certain ceremonial functions within the University, such as Student Inaugurations, Graduation ceremonies and similar events.

Court has delegated authority to the Convener of Court to take day to day decisions on behalf of Court on the understanding that (a) appropriate advice is taken from both lay and other Court members and (b) all such action is reported to the next meeting for homologation. The Convener of Court is also authorised to call extraordinary meetings of Court if it should prove necessary.

The role of Convener of Court is a demanding one and requires individuals who are prepared

- to commit to the University;
- to work with the Senior Officers of the University to ensure that the University achieves its strategic aims, providing appropriate and rigorous challenge when necessary;
- to provide leadership to the Court; and
- to represent the University at events as appropriate.

The time commitment for this post varies throughout the year, as some periods are more demanding than others. This is particularly evident in the lead-up to Court meetings. The Convener also attends other committee meetings. Additionally, there are certain duties which are required of the Convener and others where the Convener may exercise some choice whether to undertake or not.

The overall time commitment for essential duties is estimated to be the equivalent of around 30-40 days per year, but these are not necessarily full days.

The Convener also represents the University at a number of external events, which may be in addition to this.

Approved by the Court on 1 October 2025