

Minutes Meeting of the Council

Date: 16 July 2026

Present: Martin Temple, Pro-Chancellor (in the Chair)
Claire Brownlie (Pro-Chancellor), Adrian Stone (Pro-Chancellor),
Rob Memmott (Treasurer), Professor Koen Lamberts (President & Vice-
Chancellor), Rebecca Freeman (Items 1-10), Dr John Hogan, Professor Janine
Kirby, Frances Morris-Jones, Dr Siobhán North, Professor Conchúr Ó
Brádaigh, Sam Omondi (Items 11-30), Amanda Peck-Down, Professor Phil
Rodrigo, Professor Mark Strong, Professor Mary Vincent

Secretary: David Swinn

In attendance: Jo Jones, Emily Allan, Dr Edward Smith, Professor Sue Hartley; Natasha
Beaumont, Professor John Derrick and Ashley Roberts (Item 5)

Apologies: Anna James, Varun Kabra, Rob Sykes, Dr Phil Tenney, Ian Wright

1. Welcome and Introductions

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed Members and attendees to the meeting. Apologies as recorded above were noted.
- 1.2 The Chair informed Council that Ghislaine Allilaire had resigned her Council membership due to the scale of her executive commitments in her substantive paid role. Recruitment to the Class (3) vacancy created would be considered over the summer and into next academic year.
- 1.3 The Chair noted that a quorum of the Council was present for a meeting in accordance with Section 3(5) of University's statutes and therefore that the meeting was duly convened.

2. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

2.1 CLOSED MINUTE

2.2 Other Conflicts of Interest

- 2.2.1 Item 22, the Report of the Council Nominations Committee, included recommendations relating to the membership of Council.

(a)-(d) CLOSED MINUTES

As usual for these kinds of conflicts, affected Members would not need to leave the meeting but would not take part in any decisions relating to themselves.

2.2.2 CLOSED MINUTE

2.2.3 There were otherwise no other conflicts of interest declared.

3. Approval of Category B Business

3.1 Council considered Category B business, which is covered in Minutes 13-17, below.

4. Financial Forecasts 2026/27 to 2030/31

4.1 Council considered the University Group consolidated forecast for 2025/26 to 2030/31, which provided a comparison to the forecasts included as part of the Annual Financial Return to the OfS in December 2025. The forecast reflected the April 2026 outturn forecast, the Council approved 2026/27 budget, future year submissions approved by UEB, and an updated capital programme to deliver the first stages of 'Our Future Campus' and the Sustainability Strategy. Members noted that updated forecasts would be presented to the Council Finance Committee and Council in December 2026 for approval prior to submission to the OfS.

4.2 CLOSED MINUTE

4.3 Council approved the interim forecast, for use for the 2025/26 going concern assessment.

5. CLOSED MINUTE

6. Capital Report

6.1 Council received and noted the presented overview of the finances of ongoing Capital Projects and an update from the meetings of the Estates and Capital Sub-Group held on 29 April 2026 and 1 July 2026. The report also included updates on acquisitions and disposals, as well as an update from the Complex Project Oversight Groups (CPOGs).

7. Corporate Risk Register

7.1 Council received the 2025/26 Corporate Risk Register and noted the accompanying minutes of the meetings of the UEB Risk Review Sub-Group held on 14 May 2026 and 16 June 2026. The significant advancement in operational oversight of institutional risk was both highlighted and welcomed and seen as opportune in light of the recent publication of the new CUC HE Code of Governance.

7.2 Council approved the latest version of the 2025/26 Corporate Risk Register.

8. Minutes of the Council Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

8.1 Members of Council received and noted the minutes of the 2 March 2026 and received a verbal update concerning the meeting on 1 June 2026 in lieu of the Minutes, which would be shared via correspondence in due course.

9. Minutes of the Council Finance Committee

- 9.1 Members of Council received and noted the minutes of the 8 June 2026 and 3 July 2026 meetings of the Council Finance Committee.

10. Minutes of the Council Senior Remuneration Committee

- 10.1 Members of Council received and noted the minutes of the 27 April 2026 and 15 June 2026 meetings of the Council Senior Remuneration Committee.

10.a CLOSED MINUTE

11. Further Welcome and Introductions

- 11.1 Members of Council welcomed SU Members to the meeting.

12. Further Declaration of Conflicts of Interests

- 12.1 Members joining at this part of the meeting declared no conflict of interests.

13. Category C Business

- 13.1 Council considered Category C business, which was covered in Minutes 18-30 below.

14. President & Vice-Chancellor's Report

- 14.1 Council received and noted the President & Vice-Chancellor's report, which provided information on the principal current and forthcoming developments in the policy environment and against each of the themes in the University's Strategic Plan. Attention was drawn to the following updates and developments since the written report was prepared:

a) External Environment:

i). Andy Burnham appointed as Labour leader and Prime Minister:

An Andy Burnham-led Government was anticipated to signal a change from the Starmer administration with a new forward looking vision, but the impact on policy which affected higher education would not be that different, as the parameters he had to work within remained. The University would focus on working with a Burnham Government to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes

ii). Strategic Priorities Grant:

The national Strategic Priorities Grant, which supported high-cost subjects and other priority areas, was to be cut by £50.9 million in 2026-27 to £1,252 million. The indicative allocation for Sheffield was down on a like-for-like basis compared to the previous year.

iii). International Student Fee Levy:

The P&VC had written to the Chancellor of the Exchequer outlining the risks posed by the implementation of the levy, and a response had been received from the Skills Minister explaining that the fee had been introduced to support the Student Maintenance Grant.

b) QS Top 100:

The University had retained its place in the QS Top 100, and had climbed a further 10 places to 82nd in the world. The University had also risen one place to rank 14th in the UK. The University was now focused on future rankings and was conducting a large-scale contact collection exercise to enable high-impact academic and employer submissions. Council commended colleagues for their efforts in achieving such a positive outcome this year, noting that this would remain highly competitive in future.

c) Interim Faculty of Arts and Humanities Leadership Arrangements:

From 1 September, Professor Hugo Dobson, currently Faculty Director of One University Strategy Delivery, would serve as Lead Faculty Director & Interim Head of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities. This short-term arrangement would allow continuity of leadership from within the Faculty as Professor Graham Gee took up the role of Vice-President for Education. Jenny Rollin (Deputy Faculty Director of Operations - Cross-Cutting) from within the Faculty would provide additional support and leadership around the One University pillar.

d) Celebrating Technicians:

The University had hosted an event to celebrate and recognise its technical community, and to announce the award winners from the Our People: Celebrating Technicians campaign.

e) Defence University Alliance:

The University was one of 35 founding members of the Government's Defence University Alliance.

15. **Student Experience**

- 15.1 Council received and noted the report. The report provided an update on the SU's work since the last meeting of Council, with a particular focus on activities undertaken within the 2025/26 academic year.

16. **Review of the Students' Union Constitution**

- 16.1 Council received the revised draft Articles. The Articles presented were unchanged from the interim update and draft that Council considered in April and were based on an updated sector model which had been pre-approved by the Charity Commission. Presented in conjunction with the draft Articles were proposed changes to the Code of Practice relating to the Students' Union that had been suggested as part of the annual review of the University Calendar. The amendments to the Code had been made to align with the updated language and provisions of the Articles.

16.2 Council:

- 16.2.1 Approved the proposed Students' Union Articles of Association.

16.2.2 Approved the proposed updates to the Code of Practice relating to the Students' Union.

17. Committee of University Chairs HE Code of Governance

17.1 Council received and noted a detailed paper which summarised the requirements of the new CUC Code and included recommendations intended to strengthen or facilitate ongoing compliance and the enhancement of Council's overall effectiveness where action was or might be needed to ensure that the University complied and/or was able to evidence such compliance. The Code would come into force in 2026/27, and any non-compliance with "should" statements would need explaining in a published document, i.e. for the first time in the Annual Report, published December 2027. It was noted that a range of immediate and planned follow-up work would commence over the summer in order to implement actions where this was required. It was clarified that, whilst certain areas required further thought to ensure that the University was able to apply the Code in a manner that supported delivery of key institutional activities and strategic priorities, it was evident that the University was already largely compliant overall, and the further actions were regarded as evolution of institutional governance.

18. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

(Meetings held on 30 April 2026 and 17 June 2026)

18.1 Council approved the Minutes of the meetings held on 30 April 2026 and 17 June 2026 as an accurate record.

19. Action Log and Matters Arising on the Minutes

19.1 Council approved the updated Action Log. There were no other matters arising.

20. Minutes of the Senate

20.1 Council received and noted the minutes from the 24 June 2026 meeting of the Senate.

21. Minutes of the Council Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee

21.1 Council received a verbal update concerning the meeting on 5 March 2026 in lieu of the Minutes, which would be shared via correspondence in due course. Members also endorsed the publication of the EDI Student Policy Statement.

22. Report of the Council Nominations Committee

22.1 Council received and approved the reports of the Council Nominations Committee meetings held on 03 and 17 June 2026, including the recommendations and rationale regarding the Chair of Council, Council membership, and Council representation on other committees. An Election for the Class (4) vacancy (a member of Senate) would be held over the Summer, with the resulting recommendation for appointment proceeding to Council Nominations Committee and Council in due course.

23. OfS Update Report and Conditions Compliance Register

- 23.1 Council received and noted the update report and the updated Conditions Compliance Register.

24. Governance Matters

24.1 Confirmation and Amendment of University Regulations

- 24.1.1 Members of Council were informed that changes resulting from a recent external review of Regulation III: Scheme of Delegation (see below) required further amendments to other Regulations for consistency and to reflect approval of related matters during 2025/26 or structural changes.

- 24.1.2 Council approved the proposed amendments to Regulations II, VI and IX.

24.2 Scheme of Delegation

- 24.2.1 Council confirmed and approved the proposed new Regulation III: Scheme of Delegation, which followed an external review facilitated by Shakespeare Martineau LLP, and noted that further work would be undertaken to ensure consistency across related documents, including committee terms of reference and the Financial Regulations. Members of Council also noted that broader suggestions made in the report from Shakespeare Martineau would be considered in liaison with the new University Secretary to inform any further plans and any actions required.

24.3 Council Standing Orders

- 24.3.1 Council confirmed and approved the amended Council Standing Orders.

24.4 Council Code of Conduct

- 24.4.1 Council confirmed and approved the Council Code of Conduct.

24.5 Compliance and Assurance Framework

- 24.5.1 Council considered and approved the updated Framework.

25. Report on Action Taken

- 25.1 Council received and endorsed a report on action taken on its behalf since the previous meeting.

26. Council Business Plan

- 26.1 Council received and noted the latest iteration of the business plan.

27. Public Availability of Council Papers

- 27.1 Members of Council approved the arrangements for the publication of Council papers on the web.

28. Any Other Business

28.1 Annual Council Effectiveness Questionnaire:

Council noted that the Annual Council Effectiveness Questionnaire would be circulated to Members later in the Summer, and that it would include an increase in questions in response to the new CUC Code of HE Governance. All Members were encouraged to complete the questionnaire, which was an important strand of the continuous work to improve the functioning of Council.

28.2 Farewells:

On behalf of Council, the Chair thanked the following, for whom this was the final meeting of Council before stepping down at the end of 2025/26, for their contributions and offered good wishes for the future:

- 28.2.1 It was noted that the meeting was Professor Mary Vincent's final meeting of Council before she stood down as Vice-President of Education. Members of Council thanked for her dedicated and expert support of Council.
- 28.2.2 Professor Conchúr Ó Brádaigh, whose one-year term on Council as one of the Class (2) Senior Academic Officers concluded on 31 July.
- 28.2.3 Professor Janine Kirby, whose second three-year term on Council as one of the Class (4) Members elected by Senate concluded on 31 July.
- 28.2.4 David Swinn in his role as Interim University Secretary, with Riley Power due to start as University Secretary on 17 August.

29. Feedback on the Meeting

- 29.1 The Chair thanked Members for their contributions during the meeting.

30. Dates of Next Meetings

- 30.1 Thursday 24 September 2026
Monday 19 October 2026

These Minutes were confirmed at a meeting held on 19 October 2026.