

Hugh Mitchell – Candidate statement

Why am I putting myself forward for this role? Well, that is easy. I am proud of the University of Edinburgh at so many levels and have committed the last 5+ years trying to be a constructive and impactful Court member. Basically I care and also believe my experience is particularly relevant to the challenges the University faces. The best I can do is give the reader some sense of my approach to leadership.

The Court is the top leadership body within the University. In my experience, leadership, both individual and collective, is most effective when three conditions are positively met:

Do you know what you are talking about? If yes, it generates **respect**

Do you know where you are going? ... if compelling it generates **engagement and energy**

Do you share what you believe in? If it resonates, it generates **commitment**

The Court brings together a rich mix of skills, talents, perspectives and experience. The SLM role is to provide leadership that ensures that collective capability is fully brought to bear in the service of the University. I would seek to better utilise the competence Court members bring to enhance the respect of all University stakeholders.

We operate in a volatile, dynamic, and challenging world today. Court has to be active in navigating today's issues but not at the expense of creating a compelling picture of the future. I would seek to provide greater clarity on future direction and strategy.

Reflecting our global reputation, scale and capacity, our strategy should be ambitious. That requires the University to be standing on solid foundations. Those foundations are: future facing teaching and impactful research; financial resilience; committed staff and high student appeal; and positive reputation. I would seek greater assurance that these foundations are robust and intervene where they are not.

Our strategies should be underpinned by clear beliefs about who we are as a University and what we are trying to achieve. I would seek to have more transparency and engagement on this within Court

It is too easy for issues of the day to dictate how the Court spends its time. I would seek to better balance Court time between these sometimes conflicting demands on its priorities through planning and being more outcome focused.

Court are not custodians of an ancient institution (too passive) but in a relay race where we run our leg as well as we can, trying to take the University into a leading position to

meet the demands of tomorrow. There is no finishing line, just humbly passing the baton onto those who follow.

I believe all three candidates for the SLM role have the skills and experience to do the SLM role well. Supported by my Summary Biography, I hope you have a sense of what I would bring to the role. Also, as I am an existing Court Member, those who have any interaction with Court will be able to confirm whether my description resonates with their own experience of me.