

# **University of Dundee Strategic Advisory Taskforce Report**

**August 2025**

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## Foreword

It has been a privilege to return to the University of Dundee in recent months, albeit in very difficult circumstances. My Principalship covered the period 2000 to 2009, followed by time as the Chief Executive of the Higher Education Funding Council for England, and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Leeds.

My commitment to the students and staff of the University is undiminished, and their resilience over the past year is inspirational. The University Charter of 1967 states that:

“... the objects of the University shall be to advance and diffuse knowledge, wisdom and understanding by teaching and research and by the example and influence of its corporate life.”

Almost sixty years on, this manifests itself in the excellence of the University’s student education and support; world leading and internationally significant research and innovation; and very substantial contributions to the economic, social and cultural life of the City of Dundee, and the wider national and global economies.

However, this must now be seen in the context of the very considerable financial challenges facing the higher education sector as a whole, and a period of financial crisis in Dundee, defined by a structural deficit running to tens of millions of pounds, rapidly diminishing cash balances, and severe liquidity issues.

The University is now addressing the well-documented concerns about the capacity and capability of leadership, governance and effective financial management; and preparing a University Recovery Plan to stabilise the current financial position as a platform for medium and longer term sustainability. It does so with a new interim Principal, Director of Finance, Chief Operating Officer, and University Secretary in place; and with the support of the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), and the Government’s direction under Section 25 of the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 2005.

The University of Dundee Strategic Advisory Taskforce was set up in April 2025 to advise the University, the SFC, the City of Dundee, and Scottish Ministers and does so in this report, whilst respecting the autonomy of the University and the authority of the SFC. The Taskforce has no hesitation in accentuating the positives of the University, whilst recognising the urgent need for far reaching decisions about cost reductions, income generation, and the rationalisation of its assets. It is my hope that the collective wisdom of the University community can make a new pattern of its experience, finding the right balance between continuity and, where needed, change which recognises and addresses current economic realities.

Alan Langlands  
Chair

## Acknowledgements

My sincere thanks go to all members of the Taskforce for their insights and wisdom, and to senior staff at the University, the SFC, and the City Council for their advice, support, and inspirational presentations. I also thank Colin Campbell for his interest and a great visit to the James Hutton Institute.

My particular thanks go to the small team of Scottish Government officials who provided secretariat support for the Taskforce, for their ideas, patience, forbearance and sheer hard work; and to Louise Soutar, Dawn Ingham and Valerie Dorward in the Principal's office for all their help and occasional IT support.

# Chapter 1: University of Dundee Strategic Advisory Taskforce

## Purpose of the Taskforce

“Scottish Ministers, working together with the University of Dundee (the University), the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), and the City of Dundee Council, established the University of Dundee Strategic Advisory Taskforce (the Taskforce) in April 2025.

“The remit of the Taskforce is to draw together relevant expertise to advise the University, SFC, the City of Dundee, and the Scottish Ministers, such that any decisions made about the University’s short, medium and long term financial sustainability take full account of its impact on the City, the region, and the country as a whole; and do everything possible to protect the interests of students and staff, taking account of all potential sources of funding and support.”

1. In establishing the Taskforce, all parties recognised the University as an internationally renowned higher education institution with an excellent reputation for its undergraduate and post graduate provision and world leading research. It was also acknowledged as playing a crucial role in the landscape of Scotland and the UK, with its graduates making a valuable contribution to all sectors including health, education, justice, business and the arts.
2. The University is a fundamental part of the economic and social makeup of the City of Dundee and the Tay Cities Region (TCR). It is a major employer, a key driver of economic growth, and an asset that draws students and researchers to the area from across the UK and many other countries. It is also a key institution in the TCR’s exceptional learning and research offering, which includes the Universities of St Andrews, Abertay, and Highlands and Islands Perth campus, Dundee and Angus College, Scotland’s Rural College, and the James Hutton Institute which offers world leading scientific solutions for sustainable land management, crops and natural resources that support thriving communities.
3. The University is an autonomous institution responsible for its own strategic, operational and financial planning and implementation. It faces immediate challenges to its financial sustainability, linked to wider financial pressures across the sector as a whole, but with its own very specific issues to deal with. The University’s leadership is developing plans to recover from the current critical situation, and to move to a place of medium and long-term sustainability. The senior team is being supported by the SFC, with additional advice and support offered by Scottish Ministers.

4. The University is an independent institution and registered Charity, subject to its own governance and accountability. The Taskforce is external to and independent of the University, and its function is purely advisory, not directive. All final decisions will be made by the appropriate governance structures whether the University, SFC, or the Scottish Government.

## Scope

5. The scope of the Taskforce is to provide advice to inform the development and implementation of a financial recovery plan that takes into consideration the wider context of the City and the TCR. Specifically, the Taskforce is asked to advise on the current impact of the University and of any changes or reforms to:
  - i. the regional and national skills base;
  - ii. research and innovation;
  - iii. the attractiveness of the City, and the ability to continue to grow the local economy and drive local economic development.
6. In addition, the Taskforce has commented on: the context in which the University is operating; the particular issues facing the University; building on existing strengths of the University; the size and shape of the University; potential sources of funding and support; people and culture; and governance. Clear advice is embedded in each of these areas, and the Taskforce suggests that the University should give these matters careful consideration. In particular, the University is advised to address the explicit challenges set out in paragraph 26 and paragraph 48 of this report.

## Work of the Taskforce

7. The Taskforce held five full meetings in the period spanning late-April to mid-July 2025, and has prepared this report for the University, the SFC, the City of Dundee and Scottish Ministers.
8. A series of five workshops was held in the last week of June and the first week of July 2025, each led by a senior member of staff from the University, facilitated by the Scottish Government, and attended by some members of the Taskforce or their representatives. The topics covered were: the Regional and National Skills Base, Income Generation, Shared Services, the Future Vision for Research, and Dundee City, Region and Communities.
9. This work generated helpful insights, discussion points and proposed actions which can be taken forward at the appropriate time by the University as part of its recovery process, incorporated in future operational planning, and developed

further in collaboration with further and higher education partners, and colleagues from the City, Tay Cities Region, economic development agencies, and relevant industries.

## Chapter 2: Summary of Taskforce Advice

10. The University has moved on from its first financial recovery plan developed in March 2025. This plan was not given to the Taskforce due to commercial sensitivity, although the Chair received the plan and was briefed on this matter. A new recovery plan – to be known as the University Recovery Plan – is currently being developed under the leadership of the new interim Principal appointed on 20 June 2025, this for the approval of the University Court, and onward transmission to the SFC. It is against this incomplete background that the Taskforce has considered the overall position, and its advice to the University and other parties is summarised below.

### University Recovery Plan

11. In shaping and finalising the University Recovery Plan, the University should recognise that this is the first important step in what could be a very significant programme of change, and that it should provide a platform to address the complexities of achieving medium and long term financial sustainability, and a new way forward for the University. These issues are explored in more detail in Chapter 4, paragraphs 30-34.

To kick-start the process of change, the University should take account of the following advice:

- i. Understand the key elements contributing to the 2024/25 financial crisis in detail, and agree the sum of public finance required to support the transitional costs of short term recovery. Without the cash resources in place to support the voluntary severance scheme and other transitional costs, cost reductions cannot be delivered and the cash position of the University, already critically low, will deteriorate further.
- ii. Recognise that the implementation of the University Recovery Plan is contingent on this critical sum of finance being secured at the level required and with the phasing required, providing the platform necessary for a more sustainable way forward.
- iii. Address the findings of Professor Pamela Gillies' report (19 June 2025) and meet the conditions integral to the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills' Statement to the Scottish Parliament (24 June 2025).
- iv. Confirm a vision for a more secure and successful future by developing the recovery plan as a platform for medium and long term sustainability. This should include reference to the University's contributions to the regional and national

skills base and future workforce, research and innovation, and its economic and social impact.

- v. Set clear financial goals backed by a robust business model, effective financial management and transparent financial reporting.
- vi. If necessary, adjust short term budgets informed by the 2025 intake of students.
- vii. Ensure that staff, students, campus trade unions, and the staff council are actively and appropriately engaged in understanding and supporting the short-term action required to deliver the recovery plan as the precursor to medium and long term sustainability.
- viii. Maintain existing strong and valued links with the Dundee University Students Association (DUSA), and provide a reasonable level of funding support as it continues to play a crucial role in the life and work of the University at this time of change.
- ix. Provide a timetable for implementation and the phasing of funding required to deliver change, and a methodology for monitoring progress and value for money.
- x. Support the development of the current skillset required of executive and non-executive leaders with a particular focus on transformation, turnaround and high level financial skills and experience which meet the needs of the University. Steps already taken on this matter are welcomed.
- xi. Consider the key risks that could impede or impact adversely on the delivery of the recovery plan, the actions required to improve the financial position, and any necessary mitigations.
- xii. Build and maintain effective working relationships with the University's bank(s), auditors and the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator to ensure transparency, regulatory compliance, and timely communication around all aspects of the financial recovery process.

## The regional and national skills base

12. The University has a strong track record of developing partnerships with other tertiary education institutions, regional employers, government agencies, and industry bodies to align university programmes with emerging skills needs, ensuring that graduates are well equipped to contribute to both the local and national workforce. This has strengthened economic resilience, with the University playing a pivotal role in addressing current and future skill gaps. A synopsis of the University's own description of the educational offer at undergraduate and

postgraduate level is set out in Chapter 5. This provides a baseline for testing the strengths and weaknesses of current provision, and new opportunities to address student markets. Further information in the form of presentations made to the Taskforce by the Schools of Life Sciences, Medicine, Dentistry, Health Sciences and Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design have also been provided to Scottish Ministers, the University, SFC and Dundee City Council alongside this report.

The University should:

- i. Ensure that decisions taken in the voluntary severance scheme (VSS) protect the interests of all students, and ensure continuity and high standards of quality in every aspect of their education during their time at Dundee. Particular care needs to be taken with students studying in accredited programmes, and those which cross disciplinary boundaries. The system of decision making on this issue recently put in place by the leadership team is welcome.
- ii. Ensure a sharp focus on strengthening existing student markets and building new ones as the recovery plan and medium and long-term strategy is developed.
- iii. Respect and properly manage the relationship with NHS Education for Scotland (NES), and with a range of other bodies which set professional standards, specified teaching frameworks, educational requirements and registrable qualifications.
- iv. Initiate further discussions around work experience, apprenticeships, masters programmes and continuous professional development which could lead to new partnerships and sources of income.
- v. Engage students as partners through an active, inclusive and research-based approach to learning; providing education based on sector leading pedagogies, digital resources, new technologies and experiential learning.
- vi. Be wary at a time of change to protect relationships with significant partners e.g. specific degree programmes and articulation agreements with Dundee and Angus College.
- vii. Continue to develop a lifelong community of students, staff, alumni, and partners; embedding environmental sustainability in the curriculum, and giving students the knowledge and skills to make a positive difference in the world.
- viii. Given the pre-eminent position of the University in education for professional careers – recognise the importance of courses which incorporate a code of ethics, the principles of self-regulation, and a sense of vocation, whilst ensuring an ever increasing emphasis on professional accountability shaped by third party

regulation, market forces and a tougher regime of standards, performance monitoring, and mandatory continuing professional development.

- ix. Work together with professional bodies and employers to ensure that the University plays its part in developing professionals in a way that maximises their contribution to the economic, social, cultural and environmental development of the country.
- x. Ensure that development of the recovery plan is informed by an understanding of where there are particular strengths, unique offerings and revenue generation.
- xi. Follow up on discussion and actions from the Regional and National Skills Base workshop.

## Research and Innovation

13. The University submitted to 16 Units of Assessment in the 2021 Research Excellence Framework (REF), ranging from Clinical Medicine to Art and Design, with 84% of its research being assessed as ‘world leading’ or ‘internationally excellent’. For the second successive REF, Dundee was the top University in the UK for Biological Sciences. Strong performances were also recorded in clinically related research in Clinical Medicine and the Allied Health Professions, underlining the University’s capacity to deliver research outputs which measurably transform the lives and life chances of people locally and globally. The College of Art and Design was also confirmed as the highest graded art school in Scotland. The range of research activity in each School is also outlined in Chapter 5 of the report. The Taskforce’s advice is as follows.

The University should:

- i. Protect existing strengths in research and innovation, recognising the importance that the research community and major funders attach to challenge-led research, by promoting interdisciplinary working, and alignment and collaboration with other institutions and businesses, nationally and internationally.
- ii. Improve the robustness of research grant finances – making bids on accurate assessments of costs, and understanding the impact of research funding that does not fully cover the costs of the research. This is part of the wider challenge around university finance but is a specific area where advice and collaboration could be helpful.

- iii. Identify research opportunities that might arise in the UK and Scottish Government's industrial strategies, e.g. in relation to life sciences, digital technologies, and creative industries.
- iv. Minimise academic time for unfunded research by implementing an agreed research performance threshold for academics with Education and Research contracts.
- v. Aim to develop, and in some Schools maintain, vibrant PhD and post-doctoral communities with young researchers encouraged to work across disciplinary boundaries.
- vi. Keep pace with technology which is redefining the way we think about knowledge and opportunity, ensuring staff are supported with appropriate development; technology is transforming the way students learn and the way in which researchers assimilate and analyse data to support the physical, biological, engineering and social sciences.
- vii. Engage further with regional further and higher education institutions, looking critically at where there is overlap between offers to undergraduate and postgraduate students.
- viii. Maintain constructive and purposeful working relationships with research funders, including UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and its specialist groups; Horizon Europe (FP9), soon to be replaced by Framework Programme 10 (FP10), the National Institute for Health and Care Research; the Scottish Funding Council; the Scottish Chief Scientist's Office; the national academies; charitable organisations; and government departments.
- ix. Follow up on discussion and actions from the Future Vision for Research workshop.

## Attractiveness of the City and the ability to grow the local economy and drive local economic development

14. The University makes important contributions to the City of Dundee, the Tay Cities Region, and the wider national and global economy. In 2020-21, the University's Impact Assessment showed that it supported:

- £449m Gross Added Value (GVA) and 6,760 jobs in the City;
- £507m GVA and 7,270 jobs in the Tay Cities Region;
- £975m GVA and 9,410 jobs in Scotland;

- £1.5bn GVA and 15,000 jobs in the UK;
- £1.6bn GVA and 16,070 jobs globally.

At that time, the economic value created by the University was calculated to be more than five times greater than its income, and the impact in Scotland was ten times greater than its income received from the Scottish Government. The Taskforce's advice is as follows.

The University should:

- i. Undertake an updated Impact Assessment as part of the development of the University's medium and long term strategy ... this will also provide a means of tracking progress or attrition in the quality, competitiveness and economic impact of the University.
- ii. Track the impact generated from a wide range of activities – graduate productivity; the support the University provides to business through innovation and entrepreneurship; the economic and social benefits of research, eg. improved health outcomes; the employment it supports internally and through its supply chain; and the range of students it attracts to live, study and work in the area.
- iii. Finalise and implement its Reputation Recovery Strategy informed by discussion at the Dundee City, Region and Communities Workshop.
- iv. Build on the success of The School of Life Sciences in developing the Innovation Hub for high-growth spin-out BioPharma, BioTech, MedTech and Informatics companies, and continue to build on a record of high-growth company creation, with strong pipelines of invested spinouts and companies in development.
- v. Promote the further advancement of TayMed Connect as a collaborative platform for bringing the NHS, industry and University academics together to innovate and co-create solutions to real world healthcare problems.
- vi. Maintain close working relationships with NHS Tayside. The School of Medicine has good relationships through the Tayside Medical Science Centre (TASC) which supports researchers in the delivery and governance of high quality clinical research, providing patients with access to innovative treatments, interventions and medicines. As one of Europe's leading drug trial sites, it has taken part in more than 170 commercial research studies, generating £7m investment in the research infrastructure in the City.
- vii. Engage further with Dundee City Council and other local partners on the support it provides to the tourism and cultural sectors in the City.

- viii. Work with Skills Development Scotland following the VSS scheme to ensure PACE arrangements are in place for exiting staff to build on support already offered by the University.
- ix. Continue to be defined by:
  - Collaboration – with a small team of experienced professionals working to understand companies’ innovation needs, and link them to the expert support they require. Developing shared objectives with companies which result in high quality, high impact projects.
  - Connectivity – in support of companies’ ambitions, the University alongside colleagues from St Andrews and Abertay should continue to be a focal point for colleagues with a shared interest in innovation. This should include research partners, investors and funders of research and innovation, intellectual property lawyers, and business agencies and networks.
  - Enterprise and Communication – continue to play an important role in nurturing a culture of enterprise, equipping students and staff with the skills they need to collaborate with business, and make connections across the region and beyond.
- x. Follow up on discussion and actions from the Future Vision for Research workshop.

## Income generation and shared services

15. The main sources of income for the University are grant funding from the Scottish Funding Council, tuition fees, research grants and other sources (residences, endowments, services rendered). The University already has in place shared education services such as pathways and articulation agreements. There are opportunities to boost income and reduce costs but this is difficult to achieve quickly. The Taskforce’s advice is as follows.

The University should:

- i. Explore expanding its offering of continuing professional development (CPD), where other universities make a significantly larger percentage of income. Dundee could explore working with local partners to join up offerings to improve ease of access for employers and delegates.
- ii. Look at expanding business development links from individual Schools within the University including the potential for decentralisation of business development resources to provide immediate opportunities for income sources.
- iii. Make full use of real estate and facilities, following appropriate rationalisation.

- iv. Ensure that decisions are informed by an understanding of accurate costings, income generation and value for money, while not allowing controls around spending to throttle opportunities for income.
- v. Consider the findings of the Transformation and Efficiency Taskforce led by Sir Nigel Carrington, and explore opportunities for expanding shared services, with a sensitivity to impact on students and staff, potential additional costs and impact of VAT.
- vi. Follow up on discussion and actions from the Income Generation and Shared Services workshops.

## Chapter 3: Context

16. Student education, research and innovation, and the economic, social and cultural impact of the University are all of a high standard. University employees, students, and the wider community can be justly proud of their achievements in each of these domains. However, there are clear signs that the higher education sector as a whole - in Scotland and across the UK – has been on a difficult path over the past ten years with public investment in the teaching unit of resource and basic research both seriously eroded in real terms. This has created a high risk financial environment, affecting institutions to varying degrees, with many seeking to cross-subsidise high quality teaching and research by working hard to boost income and reduce costs. The recent decline in international student numbers, higher operational costs, and increases in employee costs continue to expose serious financial risks within the system.
17. Looking forward, it is increasingly clear that additional investment or a combination of system changes and new policy approaches will be needed to achieve sustainable funding for teaching and student support; student numbers; international education; and research funding. The Scottish sector as a whole is already leading the way on shared services and the use of shared procurement frameworks, and many universities are already taking very significant steps to improve efficiency, reduce costs, and increase income. Dundee is now following this path and can learn from others along the way.
18. Imminent key challenges:
  - reduction in real-terms funding of the unit of resource for teaching indicative university resource (revenue) budget, including teaching and strategic projects, for FY 2025'26 is £773.6 m, an increase of £12.9 m (1.7%) from FY 2024'25
  - a contribution of c£7,500 per Scottish student is less than the £9,535 fee recently confirmed in England. This higher level now fails to meet the costs of teaching, challenging the financial sustainability of some universities in England. The c£7,500 average contribution in Scotland includes high cost subjects like medicine which are confined to a limited group of Scottish universities.
  - the number of Scottish domiciled students funded by SFC is capped, whilst the caps on the health professions include all students. The latter does not affect all universities.
  - there is a significant drop in international student recruitment linked to in-country economic constraints, immigration restrictions, and changing attitudes to the UK in some countries.
  - indicative university capital budget, including research and innovation funding, for FY 2025'26 is £368.3m, an increase of £11.4m (3.2%) from FY 2024/25.
  - research and innovation income is constrained by reductions in flexible, longer term funding which traditionally has complemented a grant-based approach,

and the fact that research project funders do not sufficiently cover overhead costs. Research intensive universities are having to subsidise the shortfall in meeting the full economic costs of research.

## The particular issues facing the University

19. Despite many successes up to and including the 2020's, the University has lost momentum over the past year, and also the trust of its community as a result of flawed leadership, governance and financial management. This resulted in an investigation requested by SFC into its financial oversight and decision making; an unprecedented intervention by Scottish Ministers, invoking section 25 of the Further & Higher Education (Scotland) Act 2005; and a growing interest in the conclusions of work sponsored by Universities UK on the challenges of 'transformation and efficiency' in the higher education sector:

### Investigation into financial oversight and decision making at the University of Dundee: Report presented to the SFC by Professor Pamela Gillies on 19 June 2025

20. Key findings:

- a lack of financial acumen and poor financial judgement.
- inadequate management and reporting of clear and comprehensive financial data.
- poor monitoring of key performance indicators and a lack of agility by leadership in responding to a significant fall in income.
- weak governance in relation to financial accountability, and failure to hold senior management to account.
- the importance of transparency and striving for a fully engaged workforce, and an inclusive University culture.

### Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills - Statement to Scottish Parliament on 24 June 2025

21. Key points:

- the importance of universities as anchors in their communities.
- Government (financial) support dependent on the University responding (positively) to the urgent and clear conclusions of the Gillies report.
- a new Interim Principal has been appointed, and there will be elections for a new Chair of Court over the summer period.
- additional funding of £22m has already been directed to the SFC to support the University.

- the University is required to develop a sustainable long term recovery plan, drawing on public financial support alongside private and commercial investment ... the aim being to draw reliance on (exceptional) public funding to an end.
- Government has issued an unprecedented direction to the SFC under section 25 of the Further & Higher Education (Scotland) Act 2005.
- the University has been informed of ‘in principle’ funding of up to £40m over two academic years (2025-26, and 2026-27) and three financial years, requiring (rigorous) due diligence prior to (committing) to any expenditure.

The funding announced by the Cabinet Secretary on 24 June 2025 will not impact on the funding available to the SFC in support of other institutions in Scotland ... and her concluding remarks (below) provide a clear and legitimate challenge which should shape the University’s future:

“Presiding Officer, a line must now be drawn under mistakes made by a collective few, and we must jointly - across this Chamber – endeavour to support Dundee University to rebuild, to thrive and once again, to flourish. The City of Discovery should expect no less.”

**Universities UK - Transformation and Efficiency Taskforce: Towards a new era of collaboration. Chaired by Sir Nigel Carrington and published on 2 June 2025.**

#### 22. Key points:

- innovative collaborative structures.
- sharing more services and infrastructure.
- using economies of scale and sector buying power.
- supporting digital transformation.
- adopting a common approach to assessing efficiency and benchmarking costs.
- evolving leadership and governance.
- creating the right policy and regulatory environment that helps universities go further, faster.

Highly relevant to the University, the report also underlines the importance of:

- developing the current skillset required of executive and non-executive leaders with a particular focus on transformation, turnaround and (high level) financial skills.

As a member of Universities UK, the University will be aware that the 2 June report is the first of a series of relevant reports expected from the UUK Taskforce and a number of associated bodies. These are intended to move discussions about collaboration in higher education forward, and to explore new approaches to strategy development and managing large scale change.

## Chapter 4: Responding to the University's Current Challenges

### Building on the existing strengths of the University

23. The University has recently developed a vision document which was circulated at a meeting of the Taskforce on 6 June 2025. The extent of institutional 'buy in' to this document is not clear, and links to the development of the University Recovery Plan are also unclear. That said, it is referenced clearly in the documentation prepared for candidates for the next Chair of Court. This falls short of a strategy but it does accentuate some of the main strengths of the University in a compelling way. The vision is expressed as follows:

“Our vision is to become a leading university shaping professional life, a driver of regional and national prosperity, a global hub for impact in health and life sciences, and a partner of choice for government and industry in delivering strategic goals across health, industry, skills and sustainability.”

24. The key elements of the vision document are as follows:

- Empowerment through education ... focused on equipping students with the skills, entrepreneurial mindset, and real world experience to be leaders of tomorrow. Commitments to immersive learning, diversity, and wider access to learning are all reinforced; and prominence is given to the development of high-value professional skills, reinforcing Dundee's track record of graduating more students to the professions than any other Scottish university.
- Innovation in Health and Life Sciences ... focused on drug discovery; translational research in relation to new diagnostics, devices, healthcare practices and policies, and healthcare design (and practice). . The potential of the new Life Sciences Innovation Hub to foster the next generation of successful start-up and spin out companies is also highlighted.
- Creative and cultural impact ... building on the excellence of education, research and practice in Art & Design at Duncan of Jordanstone College, and its unique partnership with the V&A.

25. This is a laudable attempt to underline the University's excellence in key areas of education, research and innovation, and economic and social impact, all verifiable. It also provides a possible foundation for the challenge “to rebuild, to thrive and once again, to flourish.”

26. The three elements listed above have a long history of investment and development, an ability to change with the times, and a willingness to work across

disciplines, institutions and in some cases continents. As it stands, the vision document and related activity can be challenged as follows:

- it omits a number of key disciplines e.g. in humanities, social sciences, mathematics, science and engineering.
- it does not include basic science activity in life sciences, e.g. cell signalling and immunology; targeted protein degradation; genome integrity; and protein phosphorylation and ubiquitylation.
- it omits areas of real significance to a wide range of partners in community-based professions and the judiciary. Examples of current good practice include: the Educational Assistive Technology Group, and the Leverhulme Research Centre for Forensic Science, both with a strong reputation. The first provides a unique education offer to practitioners in schools, charities, and care homes; and the second enables systemic collaboration between academics, industry, innovators and government departments, bringing urgently required research, standards, education, training and innovation to the judiciary, scientific, and law enforcement communities. Leverhulme Trust funding comes to an end this year but both of these issues should be considered in detail by the University, with particular reference to maintain existing and developing new student markets.
- it is also clear that maintaining and building student recruitment in the School of Business is being hampered by a delay in releasing funds to complete the process of accreditation eg with the European Quality Improvement System (EQUIS), the leading international system of quality assessment and improvement, and successful accreditation would boost international recruitment.
- whilst recognising the importance of the Life Sciences Innovation Hub, it does not mention other Tay Cities Region (TCR) projects, all opportunities aimed at boosting the economy and creating jobs. This includes Eden Project Scotland, and collaboration with other projects e.g. the International Barley Hub and Advanced Plant Growth Centre at the James Hutton Institute, and Studio Dundee. At this mid-point in review of TCR funding, the University should revisit these issues, and consider other funding sources to help with RAAC.

27. Further discussions about this new vision document and some elements of the University's 2022-27 Strategy will need to be taken forward alongside new ideas, with the University community actively involved in shaping plans for short, medium and long term financial sustainability, and revisiting its mission and values which were said to be based on "deep and reflective consultation across our extended community".

28. The Taskforce understands that the University intends to work on a wider strategy in the near future. This needs to be taken forward on the platform of the recovery plan and take account of any further plans for medium and long term sustainability. The University community should be actively involved in discussions about vision, mission, values, and the substance of the plan.

29. There can be no doubt that the University has very difficult decisions to make in the coming months, prioritising the effective and efficient use of resources and focusing on stability and financial sustainability.

## The size and shape of the University

30. The University faces an urgent and intensive period of change, and does so from a position of financial weakness and employee concern. The shortcomings in governance, leadership, and poor financial management and oversight need to be addressed quickly, and a credible University Recovery Plan needs to be prepared in a way that signals engagement with the workforce, and the beginnings of a more inclusive University culture.
31. The working assumption of the Taskforce is that the leadership of the University will take urgent steps to reduce costs, introduce new efficiency measures, maximise income, and ensure careful handling of the voluntary severance scheme. It is also assumed that the recovery plan will enhance an agreed text with a clear set of financial goals, underlying assumptions, a timeline, processes for implementation and tracking progress, and a detailed assessment of risks. The recent appointments of a new interim Principal, Director of Finance, Chief Operating Officer, and University Secretary will bring new energy and expertise to the development of the recovery plan, and shaping the medium and long term financial sustainability of the University.
32. Having a holding position on strategy which is flexible enough to enable short term financial savings, reviewing the deployment of professional services, and working on a new business model would also be important steps. It is of course conceivable that short term recovery and the development and implementation of a sustainable plan for the medium term could prove time consuming and could fail. Without distracting attention from dealing with the urgent issues currently facing the University and as a necessary contingency, it would certainly make sense to carve out sufficient time to explore more fundamental options for the future. For example, this could mean detailed exploration of new strategic collaborations based on trusted partnerships which respect institutional autonomy, the breadth of choice for students, and high quality interdisciplinary research.
33. The intensity of internal collaborations across disciplines, between Schools, external partners, research funders, and national and international agencies is striking ... all matters which need to be taken into an account at a time of change. Protecting the interests of academic staff in teaching and research and students at a time of change and extreme financial pressure will clearly be a challenge in areas where academic expertise is at a premium, and continuity of up to 4/5 years

is required for the population of undergraduate students spread widely across the University.

34. Chapter 5 of this report sets out some of the achievements of each of the University's eight Schools, and the range and complexity of their current education and research commitments. The abbreviated School profiles are drawn from the University's website following discussions with each of the Deans, and the economic, social, cultural and environmental impact of each School is available online. The Schools as currently defined provide the backcloth to the development of the recovery plan, and the starting point for examining strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for change in striving for medium and long-term financial sustainability.

## Potential sources of funding and support

35. The Taskforce was asked to address this issue, and the Cabinet Secretary's statement referred to "private and commercial investment". This requires more work by the University in the coming weeks and months, particularly given the University's serious failures in financial management. This should be informed by discussion at the Income Generation workshop.

36. Whilst banks recognise the vital role of universities in boosting regional development, they also look to them to ensure a balanced approach to their educational and civic roles; the capability to navigate change; and a commitment to achieve sustainability in its widest sense, contributing more effectively to economic growth. There are also clear signs that some UK universities' borrowing costs are spiralling, with banks seeking more control over the money they lend, and high levels of pre-existing debt gripping some institutions.

37. In stabilising the current position, the University needs to be focused on cost reduction and a strategically focused rebuild of new and existing student markets. It should also consider issues of private investment, philanthropy, and alumni support where expansion may be possible in the medium and long term, recognising that securing additional resources in this way will sometimes require an element of upfront investment on the part of the University.

## People and Culture

38. The Taskforce was asked to advise on protecting the interests of students and staff, cognisant of the impact that the University's financial crisis is having on their lives. The University's Directorate of People has a comprehensive set of policies, procedures and employment conditions but this is only part of the story. Achieving a positive approach to people and culture in the workplace is vital to constructive

relationships between employees and the leadership of the University. This should prioritise employee wellbeing, inclusivity and diversity, and openness and transparency, ensuring that key information and decisions about the life and work of the University are, where appropriate, available to employees, students, trade unions, the staff council, and the wider community.

39. Chapter 5 of the report, setting out the work of the individual Schools, confirms that staff have worked tirelessly to deliver high quality teaching, student support, research and knowledge exchange throughout the recent period of crisis, and the Taskforce has received inspiring presentations from University staff at its meetings. The impact of the University in delivering a pipeline of highly skilled workers for the health, education, and social care sectors; and in developing new vaccines, health screening, and driving research that makes a positive difference to the lives and life chances of the people of Scotland and around the world is immense. The fact that the University continues to be so successful in its core functions despite flaws in its governance, leadership and financial management accentuates the importance of addressing the Gillies recommendations with urgency. This is imperative given the actions required for recovery, and the pressures and complexities the University faces at a time of real-terms spending reductions in the sector as a whole.
40. Ideally, the Taskforce would like to see the staff of the University being able to continue delivering the breadth and depth of its excellent educational and research output and the positive impact it has on the City of Dundee and the country as a whole. Staff and students must be valued and supported and they need to have trust and faith in the leadership of the University. That said, it would be irresponsible to underestimate the considerable financial challenges facing the sector as a whole, the intensity of the financial crisis facing Dundee in particular, and the imperative of working together towards institutional stability and medium and long term financial sustainability.
41. In this regard, it is important that the Local Joint Committee where trade unions represent staff and managers represent employers, continues to engage in collective bargaining, negotiation and consultation in a meaningful, informed and transparent way, taking proper account of the Scottish Government's position on Fair Work Principles and the Real Living Wage.

## Governance

42. The University would not exist without its successive generations of students and the academic, professional services, and support staff who ensure they have the knowledge, skills, and learning environment they need to make a difference in the world. Students and staff need to be at the centre of the recovery process, and the

Governance and leadership structures of the University need to operate effectively by working together in a purposeful and constructive way.

43. The Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Act 2016 put in place measures for the governance of higher education institutions. The University's Royal Charter, Statutes (updated in August 2021), and the associated Ordinances and Standing Orders are published in detail, and take full account of the onerous responsibilities and accountabilities of the governing bodies and the executive leadership team.

## The Court

44. The responsibilities of the Court are set out in the University's Statement of Primary Responsibilities as follows:

Approving and overseeing the institution's activities, the Court agrees its vision and future strategic direction and ensures an environment that allows the University to achieve its objectives and all students to reach their potential. The Court appoints the Principal and Vice-Chancellor; approves the University budget and strategy, as well as the financial, people, estates and other operational plans which underpin their successful delivery; and monitors the University's performance in achieving its goals.

45. The Court is responsible for all regulatory compliance, to the Scottish Funding Council for the proper use of public funds, and for establishing and monitoring effective systems of internal control and accountability. In addition the Court holds ultimate responsibility to the University's stakeholders, including students, funders and customers; and to a number of public bodies, including the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR), Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner (OSIC), Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO), and UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI).
46. The Court has 24 members in total - 14 lay members, and 10 non-lay members. Membership categories are: lay members - Chair, Deputy Chair, Rector (or a nominated Assessor), a nominee of the City of Dundee Council Executive, and 10 co-opted lay members; and non-lay members - Principal and Vice Chancellor, Dundee University Students' Association (DUSA) President, an independent student member, one member of academic staff nominated by a trade union, one member of non-academic staff nominated by a trade union, 3 Senate assessors (elected by Senate), and 2 Staff Council assessors (elected by the Staff Council).

## The Senate

47. The Senate's primary responsibilities are to regulate and superintend the academic work of the University. This includes student admissions, through all its teaching activities to graduation. A statement of its full powers is set out in Statute 10 and, in addition to student matters, these include responsibilities to promote research within the University, and to make recommendations to Court on a wide range of academic staffing issues. The Senate also has the flexibility to discuss and declare an opinion on any matter whatsoever relating to the University.

## Challenge

48. In the wake of the Gillies Report and the serious flaws in leadership, governance and financial management at the University, it is essential that the Court and the University Secretary work together to review the modus operandi of the governing body and its relationship with the executive team, the Senate, and the wider University community. The University has committed to developing an action plan in response to the Gillies Report. The clear imperative should be to operate effectively and transparently in accordance with the governance framework described in paragraphs 42-47 (above); to be guided by the Nolan Principles; to respect the Scottish Government's unprecedented direction to SFC under section 25 of the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 2005 and to meet any conditions imposed by the SFC as a consequence of that direction; and to show leadership by example in addressing the cultural challenges facing the University. A skills matrix defining the capacity and capability of Court members needs to be developed to inform the appointment of new Court members and Trustees to fill existing and future vacancies.

# Chapter 5: University of Dundee Academic Schools

## School of Humanities, Social Sciences & Law

A dynamic, modern, and integrated School that brings together a range of disciplines from across the social sciences, humanities and related professional programmes.

The School comprises 5 divisions:

### Dundee Law School:

- Top 20 for Law in the UK - Good University Guide, The Times and Sunday Times 2025.

**Education** is focused on the subjects needed to proceed towards practising Law in all common jurisdictions globally, including undergraduate LLB, accelerated LLB, and postgraduate LLM programmes.

**Research** is organised around two themes - Law for a Sustainable World and Law for a Just World, with cross-cutting initiatives comprising the Interdisciplinary Legal Studies Group, the UNESCO Centre for Water Law, Science and Policy, and collaboration with the Centre for Energy, Petroleum, and Mineral Law and Policy.

### Education and Society:

- Top 10 in the UK for Education - The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2025.
- 1st in Scotland for Overall Satisfaction in Education - National Student Survey 2024.

**Education** is focused on social justice and improving the lives of individuals and communities. The division offers courses at undergraduate and postgraduate level in School Teacher Education, Community Education, and Social Work, ranging from qualifying and post-qualifying courses that are professionally recognised, to continuing professional development courses.

**Research** covers the themes of: practice, pedagogy, education and life transitions, and peripheries.

## Energy, Environment and Society:

Education is focused on preparing graduates for high-profile careers, and can include remote internships to develop employability skills and gain valuable work experience.

- Top 10 LLM Programmes for Energy Law - LLM Guide 2024.
- Top 20 in the UK for Geography and Environmental Science - The Sunday Times Good University Guide 2025.

The Division tackles challenging questions about human and physical environments, from global issues such as climate change to local issues such as urban regeneration.

**Education** covers a wide range of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in Geography (also with economics, planning, history, psychology, and modern languages), Environmental Science, and Social research. This includes degree level courses with Dundee and Angus College.

**Research** addresses pressing environmental and social issues, and is organised in two groups: the environmental futures, and social futures groups. The emergent Binks Institute for Sustainability brings a wide range of researchers together to address critical questions to be addressed in achieving environmental sustainability locally and globally.

## Humanities:

- 1st in Scotland for overall satisfaction in English and Creative Writing - National Student Survey 2024.
- 1st in Scotland for overall satisfaction in English and Film Studies - National Student Survey 2024.

The Division focuses on understanding the world's culture and creativity through critical reflection and practice in history, literature, comics, film, creative writing, philosophy, modern languages, and archival education.

**Education** includes courses in Archive and Information Studies, English, History and Archives, Languages, and Philosophy.

**Research** includes a vibrant PhD programme, research centres and partnerships, and the Arts and Humanities Research Institute with five research centres, and membership of a number of clusters shared with other higher education institutions. It is also a member of the Consortium of Institutes of Advanced Studies, and the Scottish Graduate School for Arts and Humanities which offers funding for doctoral research under the auspices of the Arts and Humanities Research Council and SFC.

## Psychology:

- Top 30 in the UK - Guardian University Guide 2025.

The Division conducts education and research in human experimental psychology, language and cognition, neuroscience and development, and social psychology.

**Education** includes BSc and MA honours programmes in Psychology, and a wide range of joint courses (with English, Geography, History, Mathematics and Languages).

**Research** is recognised as being world-leading with particular strengths in Psycholinguistics, Developmental Psychology, Health Psychology, Cognitive Neuroscience, and Social Psychology.

The School's mission is to continue building a high-quality and inspirational environment for education, research and social impact that will be known for its innovative approaches to the human and cultural sciences, and for addressing the major challenges faced by members of society in their local, national, and global settings.

## School of Science and Engineering

Through teaching and research, the School brings together subjects in STEM - science, technology, engineering (and) mathematics - to address global societal challenges and life-changing technologies.

- 1st for Medical Technology and Biomedical Engineering in Scotland - Complete University Guide 2025.
- 1st in Scotland for overall satisfaction in Physics - National Student Survey 2024.
- 2nd in the UK for Forensic Science - Guardian University Guide 2026,
- 5th in the UK for Anatomy and Physiology - The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2025.
- Top 5 in UK for Computing - Guardian University Guide 2025,
- 2nd in Scotland for overall satisfaction in Mathematics - National Student Survey 2024

The School comprises 5 divisions:

## Engineering:

**Education** with a focus on undergraduate and postgraduate accredited courses in biomedical, civil, and mechanical engineering which enable students to develop technical and problem-solving skills to tackle real life challenges.

**Research** is focused on Biomedical Imaging and Technology; Future Infrastructure and Environment; and Material Science and Engineering.

### Anatomy and Human Identification:

The School hosts the largest interdisciplinary forensic science research team in the UK, comprising staff from the Leverhulme Research Centre for Forensic Science (LRCFS) and the Centre for Anatomy and Human Identification (CAHID). This pairing has acknowledged leadership in forensic science, and key partnerships and collaborations with the judiciary, forensic scientists, crime scene examiners and other operational forensic practitioners, and law enforcement and legal practitioners.

**Education** includes undergraduate courses on Anatomical Sciences and Forensic Anthropology, and postgraduate programmes in similar areas with variants which focus on Human Anatomy, Archaeology, and Medical Art.

**Research** draws on partnerships and collaborations, and is based on five principles of Detection, Recognition, Comparison, Recognition, and Comparison.

### Computing:

The Division's focus is on building systems and software, and providing the technical and transferable skills that are in demand by a wide range of industries.

**Education** - undergraduate courses are Computer Science, Computer Science (Data Science and AI) and Computer Science (User Experience and Design), the latter with Industrial Placement. Postgraduate programmes incorporate International Business, AI for Software Development, Data Science and Engineering, Educational Assistive Technology, and Information Technology Management. Computer Science PhD programmes promote collaborative research and innovation, spanning a range of cutting-edge topics.

**Research** - 100% of computer science and informatics submitted to REF 2021 was rated 'world leading' or 'internationally excellent'. Programmes lever fundamental computer science expertise in artificial intelligence, machine learning and user experience to enhance human health and well-being, and to empower society through technology.

### Mathematics:

Mathematics fuels scientific advances and guides decisions in industry, government, and finance, based on analytical skills, problem-solving ability and strong IT skills.

**Education** - undergraduate single honours courses are in Mathematical Biology and Mathematics, and joint honours courses are available, combining Mathematics with English, Astrophysics, Economics, Finance, Physics, and Psychology. With internationally acknowledged research strengths in Applied Mathematics, a range of PhD opportunities are available in Dundee.

**Research** - Mathematical Sciences and Computational Physics work together on fundamental research which gives rise to interdisciplinary applications spanning Science and Engineering, Life Sciences, Medicine, and Dentistry. Key areas include Mathematical Biology and Computational Biophysics; Magnetohydrodynamics and Astrophysics; and Numerical Analysis and Scientific Computing.

## Physics:

Exploring nature in the broadest possible sense, physicists discover how the universe behaves and aim to use that knowledge to the benefit of humanity.

**Education** - undergraduate courses include Physics, Physics with Astrophysics, and Physics with renewable energy science. It is possible to combine Bachelor and Masters' level modules into an integrated degree.

**Research** - Physics research areas include: Astronomy and Astrophysics; Biomedical Imaging and Technology; Computational Biophysics; Materials Physics; Nanotechnology; Photonics; and Renewable Energy. A wide range of PhD opportunities are available.

## School of Business

The School strives to deliver an outstanding experience that connects people and organisations to deliver economic and social impact.

**Education** – Undergraduate programmes: Accounting and Finance, Economics and Business Management, and Marketing. Postgraduate programmes: Accounting and Finance Economics Business, International Business, and Management and Marketing.

Business degrees with Artificial Intelligence (AI): Business Analytics and AI, International Business and AI, International Marketing and AI for Business, Islamic Finance and AI, Management and AI for Business.

**Research** – Cross-disciplinary research themes: Health, wellbeing, and education; entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity, and markets and governance. The School's Research, Knowledge Exchange, and Impact (RKEI) ambitions are grounded in interdisciplinary collaborations across the School and the University.

They are closely aligned with the University's commitment to transforming lives, locally and globally as reflected in Dundee's ranking in the world top 20 for delivering on the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (THE Impact Rankings 2019) and the University's interdisciplinary themes.

## Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design

The creative heart of the University, shaping some of the top artists and designers across the globe.

- 2nd in Scotland for Art and Design - Complete University Guide 2026
- Top 15 in the UK for Art and Design - Complete University Guide 2026

**Education** - undergraduate Art and Design courses .... spanning Animation; Architecture; Art and Philosophy; Environmental Sustainability and Geography; Fine Art; Graphic Design; and Interior and Environmental Design. Postgraduate Art and Design courses .... spanning Animation and Visual Effects (VFX); Communication Design; Curatorial Practice; Design for Business; Fine Art; Interior Design; Medical Art; and Product Design.

**Research** - The School's research contributes to a knowledge base that extends beyond its traditional strengths in art and design disciplines. Individual creative practice continues to play a major role in its research culture alongside collaborative and interdisciplinary research. DoJ researchers play a major role in projects in the arts, humanities, social sciences, physical and life sciences, technology, and engineering.

Researchers are grouped thematically around four areas of investigation:

- Interdisciplinary Design and Innovation
- People, Landscape, and Environment
- Secure Digital Futures
- Visual Practice, Curation and Critique.

These themes are permeable, transcend departmental structures, and draw on many areas of expertise. Funders and collaborators include the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme, the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council, the Arts and Humanities Research Council, Creative Scotland, The British Council, The National Galleries of Scotland, and Arts Council England.

Professor Anita Taylor, the Dean of the Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design presented at the fifth Taskforce meeting.

## School of Medicine

Pioneers in medical education where students are doctors from day one and world leading research flourishes, transforming lives locally and globally.

- 1st in Scotland and 2nd in the UK for Medicine - The Times & Sunday Times Good University Guide 2025
- Joint 1st in the UK for Graduate Prospects in Medicine - Complete University Guide 2025.
- 1st in the UK for Medicine and Medical Technology - Complete University Guide 2021.

**Education** - Dundee's five year MBChB undergraduate curriculum with a limit of 220 students prepares doctors for the greatly increased pace of change in medical knowledge, practice and professionalism. In addition, the School provides a one-year Gateway to Medicine for widening access students, and a four-year Scotgem course designed for Scottish graduates who are interested in a career in general practice within NHS Scotland.

It is also possible to take a year out of the MBChB course to study for a BMSc - known as an intercalated year - with in depth study in one of the following areas: Anatomy; Applied Orthopaedic Technology; Cancer and Personalised Medicine; Global Health; Healthcare Improvement; Human Reproduction, Assisted Conception and Embryonic Stem Cells; Medical Education; and Neuropharmacology and Behaviour. There are also a number of Postgraduate Courses covering similar territory at a higher level, and with a number of internationally recognised researchers, clinicians, and educators committed to innovation and excellence. A number of Medical Education and Research qualifications and degrees at MSc and PhD levels are also available.

**Research** within the School is organised into the following divisions:

- Population Health and Genomics
- Cardiovascular
- Cancer
- Diabetes, Endocrinology, and Reproductive Biology
- Neuroscience
- Respiratory and Gastroenterology

Current Research Themes are:

- Precision Medicine
- Health and Bioinformatics
- Translational Neuroscience
- Cancer
- Infection and Anti-microbial Resistance
- Cellular stress and metabolism

- Medical Education.

Research is strongly informed by a close working relationship with NHS Tayside through the Tayside Medical Science Centre (TASC) which supports researchers in the delivery and governance of high quality clinical research and provides patients with access to innovative treatments, interventions and medicines.

The School has a growing track record of commercialisation and impact in areas including Data-driven healthcare, Modelling disease, and Healthcare by design. TASC is one of Europe's leading drug trial sites, offering its many industry partners a high quality clinical research environment that offers end-to-end support across the trial lifecycle. TASC has taken part in more than 170 commercial research studies, generating £7m further investment into the research infrastructure in Dundee.

## School of Dentistry

The School prepares students of dentistry and oral health sciences for graduate study and professional life. In research, it aims to improve human health and well-being, while contributing to the design and effective implementation of future health technologies, health services, health informatics and knowledge systems.

- 1st in the UK for Dentistry - Complete University Guide 2026.
- In the top 50 in the world for Dentistry - QS World University Rankings by Subject 2025.

**Education** - undergraduate courses are in Dentistry (BDS), and Oral Health Sciences (BSc). Postgraduate courses cover a range of issues, including: Dental Public Health; Dental Public Health with Clinical Dentistry; Forensic and Legal Odontology; Forensic Dentistry; and Inclusive Oral Health. The School also has a PhD programme for postgraduate research in dentistry.

**Research** - The School is a WHO Collaborating Centre for public health issues on Congenital Anomalies and Technology Transfer. It is embedded in an oral health research rich environment through the: Dental Health Services Research Unit; Cochrane Oral Health Group; Centre for Evidence Based Dentistry; and the Scottish Dental Clinical Effectiveness Programmes. Current research includes the: Scottish Oral Health Improvement Prison Programme; NIHR Dental Recalls Trial; A study focused on the health and well-being of people with intellectual disabilities; Scottish Oral Health Improvement Homelessness Programmes; and Oral Improvement for People with Experience of Drugs.

## School of Health Sciences

The School's courses are delivered by expert staff, committed to providing high quality education to students. Research is focused on improving health and health services, supporting innovation, and patient safety.

- 1st in Scotland for overall satisfaction in Child Nursing - National Student Survey 2024.

**Education** - with campuses in Dundee and Kirkcaldy, the School offers excellent clinical facilities and placements throughout Scotland. Undergraduate courses include Adult Nursing, Child Nursing, and Mental Health Nursing; pre-registration MSc courses. Postgraduate courses include Advanced Practice; Health Studies; Infection Prevention and Control; Leadership in Healthcare; and Quality Improvement and Patient Safety.

**Research** - primary research themes include Understanding health; Innovation in health; and Improving health service delivery. Research groupings build on existing strengths and reflect the interests and experience of staff as follows: Healthy active ageing research; Improvement and implementation; Living well with long term conditions; Mother, infant and child; and Substance use.

*Professors Rory McCrimmon, Linda Martindale, Peter Massey, Dr Andrew Mason and Mr Simon Dunn, Executive Nurse Director for NHS Tayside, gave presentations at the fourth taskforce meeting*

## School of Life Sciences

The School has an international reputation for excellence in the three 'triple intensity' areas of research, education, and external engagement.

- 1st in the UK for Biological Sciences - Research Excellence Framework 2021;
- 1st in the UK for Research Quality in Biological and Biomedical Sciences - Complete University Guide 2026;
- The School is 7th in the UK, 8th in Europe, and 18th in the world for Biomedical and Health Sciences Impact - Centre for Science and Technology Studies (CWTS) Leiden Ranking 2024.

**Research** divisions, centres, and units, enable research groups studying similar topics to be grouped together to encourage collaboration and interdisciplinary working - these are:

- Biological Chemistry and Drug Discovery
- Cell Signalling and Immunology
- Centre for targeted Protein Degradation
- Computational Biology

- Drug Discovery Unit
- Genome Integrity
- Medical Research Council Protein Phosphorylation and Ubiquitylation (PPU)
- Molecular, Cell, and Developmental Biology
- Molecular Microbiology
- Plant Sciences
- Wellcome Centre for Anti-Infective's Research (WCAIR).

Research activity is underpinned by state-of-the-art facilities and in-house support, located in four interlinked buildings, with a Division of Plant Sciences located at the James Hutton Institute. The Dundee based campus includes:

- Open-plan research laboratories
- The National Phenotypic Screening Centre
- Cryo-Electron Microscopy
- MRC PPU Reagents and Services
- MRC PPU DNA Sequencing and Services
- Safety, technical services, and workshop expertise
- Data Analysis Group
- Dundee Imaging Facility
- Human Pluripotent Stem Cell Facility
- FingerPrints Proteomics Facility - a Proteomics and Mass Spectrometry capability, available to researchers and external academic and industrial clients across the globe.

Top in the UK for overall student satisfaction in Biosciences - National Student Survey 2024.

**Education** - training and developing the next generation of scientists is fundamental to the work of the School, and is led by a dedicated team of academics, technicians, and administrative staff. Undergraduate degrees (excluding the joint degree with the National University of Singapore) are fully accredited by the Royal Society of Biology, and include:

- Biochemistry (with or without a year in industry)
- Biological and Biomedical Sciences
- Biological Chemistry and Drug Discovery
- Biological Sciences (with or without a year in industry)
- Biomedical Studies with the Indonesia Institute for Life Sciences
- Life Sciences (with Dundee and Angus College)
- Microbiology (with or without a year in industry)
- Molecular Biosciences (joint degree with HAN University of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands)
- Neuroscience (with or without a year in industry)
- Pharmacology (with or without a year in industry).

Taught postgraduate courses include:

- Biological Data Science
- Biomedical and Molecular Sciences (can be with Business, Entrepreneurship, Management, Marketing)
- Service and Health Communication.

It is also possible to undertake a 'Life Sciences Masters by Research MSc (Res)' by conducting an in-depth research project working in a lab on real projects with world leading scientists.

The School also offers a range of different programmes leading to a PhD in Life Sciences, some involving rotation projects, and others focused on a single area of research. It also places great emphasis on supporting a vibrant PhD and post-doctoral community.

Commercialisation and impact in Life Sciences ensures that the School's research has a real and significant impact on the quality of people's lives - their health, the economy and the environment.

The School was 4th in the UK for the volume of equity secured by its spin-outs (£251m) - Parkwalk-Beauhurst 2022; and 5th in the UK for its record of turning research into world-changing companies - Octopus Ventures 2021.

With long-standing partnerships with industry and a verifiable track record of generating sustainable spin-out companies, a number of new collaborations and enterprises are at the forefront of life sciences innovation. The new hub created through the Tay Cities Deal will further strengthen the expertise and support provided to industry, accelerating company formation and growth.

Professor Sir Michael Ferguson presented at the third Taskforce meeting.

# Membership of the Taskforce

The Taskforce included representatives from:

- University of Dundee
- Directorate for Lifelong Learning and Skills, The Scottish Government
- Directorate for Economic Development, The Scottish Government
- Scottish Funding Council
- Dundee City Council
- Universities Scotland
- Abertay University
- University of St Andrews
- Dundee and Angus College
- Dundee University Student Association
- Dundee and Angus Chamber of Commerce
- Scottish Enterprise
- Skills Development Scotland
- UNISON
- Unite
- University and College Union
- Scottish Trades Union Congress
- Developing the Young Workforce
- NHS Education Scotland
- V&A Dundee
- Chief Business Advisor to the First Minister

## List of Acronyms

<b>AI</b>	Artificial Intelligence
<b>BDS</b>	Bachelor of Dental Surgery
<b>BMSc</b>	Bachelor of Medical Sciences
<b>BSc</b>	Bachelor of Science
<b>CAHID</b>	Centre for Anatomy and Human Identification
<b>CPD</b>	Continuing Professional Development
<b>CWTS</b>	CWTS Leiden Ranking (Centre for Science and Technological Studies)
<b>DNA</b>	Deoxyribonucleic acid
<b>DoJ</b>	Duncan of Jordanstone
<b>DUSA</b>	Dundee University Students Association
<b>EQUIS</b>	European Quality Improvement System
<b>FP9</b>	Ninth Framework Programme for Research and Innovation
<b>FP10</b>	Tenth Framework Programme for Research and Innovation
<b>FY</b>	Financial Year
<b>GVA</b>	Gross Value Added
<b>HAN</b>	HAN University of Applied Sciences
<b>IT</b>	Information Technology
<b>LLB</b>	Bachelor of Laws
<b>LLM</b>	Master of Laws
<b>LRCFS</b>	Leverhulme Research Centre for Forensic Science
<b>MA</b>	Master of Arts
<b>MBChB</b>	Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery
<b>MRC</b>	Medical Research Council
<b>MSc</b>	Master of Science
<b>NES</b>	NHS Education for Scotland
<b>NHS</b>	National Health Service
<b>NIHR</b>	The National Institute for Health and Care Research
<b>OSCR</b>	Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator
<b>OSIC</b>	Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner
<b>PACE</b>	Partnership Action for Continuing Employment
<b>PhD</b>	Doctor of Philosophy
<b>PPU</b>	Protein Phosphorylation and Ubiquitylation Unit
<b>QAA</b>	Quality Assurance Agency
<b>QS</b>	Quacquarelli Symonds Limited
<b>RAAC</b>	Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete
<b>REF</b>	Research Excellence Framework
<b>RKEI</b>	Research, Knowledge Exchange, and Impact
<b>SFC</b>	Scottish Funding Council
<b>SPSO</b>	Scottish Public Services Ombudsman
<b>STEM</b>	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
<b>STUC</b>	Scottish Trades Union Congress
<b>TASC</b>	Tayside Medical Science Centre

<b>TCR</b>	Tay City Region
<b>THE</b>	Times Higher Education (World University Rankings)
<b>UCU</b>	University and College Union
<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom
<b>UKRI</b>	United Kingdom Research & Innovation
<b>UKVI</b>	United Kingdom Visas & Immigration
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
<b>UNISON</b>	UNISON Trade Union
<b>Unite</b>	Unite the Union
<b>UUK</b>	Universities UK
<b>V&amp;A</b>	Victoria and Albert
<b>VAT</b>	Value Added Tax
<b>VFX</b>	Visual Effects
<b>VSS</b>	Voluntary Severance Scheme
<b>WCAIR</b>	Wellcome Centre for Anti-Infectives Research
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organisation



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This publication is available at [www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)

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The Scottish Government  
St Andrew's House  
Edinburgh  
EH1 3DG

ISBN: 978-1-80643-003-1 (web only)

Published by The Scottish Government, August 2025

Produced for The Scottish Government by APS Group Scotland, 21 Tennant Street, Edinburgh EH6 5NA  
PPDAS1639126 (08/25)

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