

Email received from Janet Legrand 12.05.23

Sent on behalf of Janet Legrand, Senior Lay Member of the University Court

Dear Andrew Neish KC,

Thank you for your letter of 2 May regarding the disruption at the screening of Adult Human Female at the University on 26 April.

Upholding freedom of expression and academic freedom, and facilitating an environment where students and staff can discuss and debate challenging topics is at the heart of the University of Edinburgh's purpose. In line with its commitment to fostering an inclusive, supportive and safe environment for our whole community, the University worked with organisers of the event and leads of organisations representing those who wished to participate in peaceful protest at the screening of the film, putting increased measures and extra security in place to mitigate risks, whilst ensuring that all were in a position to express their views, including respecting others with differing perspectives.

Despite significant additional measures being taken, a small handful of disruptive protesters restricted access to the venue, preventing the organisers from holding the event, and leading to increased tensions and safety concerns. It was therefore decided that the screening should not continue.

Following this disruption, the Principal of the University issued a [statement](#), which conveyed his extreme disappointment about the events of 26 April.

In that statement, the Principal made clear that the University will take all steps available to it to fully investigate those who were responsible for the disturbances, and to explore routes of action that can be taken to ensure this behaviour is not repeated in future. The Principal was also clear in his condemnation of this behaviour.

I share the Principal's hope that the University can avoid any situation in future where individuals are prevented from exercising their freedoms of speech and assembly due to the actions of a small number of individuals intent on disrupting an event. On the issue of the Adult Human Female screening, the University is meeting with the organisers of this event shortly to discuss next steps.

Thank you again for your letter. As requested, the letter, and a copy of this response, will be made available to all University Court members.

Janet Legrand KC (Hon)
Senior Lay Member of the University Court