**UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN**

**FLAG FLYING PROTOCOL**

**1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this protocol is to provide guidance on the display of flags on campuses at the University of Aberdeen.

**2. SCOPE**

The University flagpole on Cromwell Tower, King’s College campus is currently the only flagpole suitable for the flying of flags on the University estate.

The University has the following flags in storage:

* University Flag
* Scottish Saltire Flag
* UK Union Flag
* EU Flag
* Progress Rainbow Flag

Due to limitations with the current flagpole and building, it is not possible to fly more than one flag from this flagpole at the same time.

**3. FLYING SCHEDULE**

The University Flag should be flown every day from Cromwell Tower, except to mark the following annual occasions:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date\*** | **Celebration** | **Requirement**  | **Comments** |
| 9 May | Europe Day | EU Flag | Flown on 9 May, removal 10 May |
| May (last weekend) | Grampian Pride | Progress Rainbow Flag | Flown annually from the Friday and over the weekend of Grampian Pride until Monday (usually, but not always, takes place on the last Saturday in May). |
| June | LGBTQ+ Pride Month | Progress Rainbow Flag | Flown in the month of June, except during Graduation Week should this fall into June, when the University Flag would be flown. |
| 9 November | Remembrance Day | UK Union Flag | Flown annually **at half-mast** from the Friday and over the Remembrance weekend until Monday (takes place on the second Sunday in November). |
| 30 November | St Andrew’s Day | Scottish Saltire Flag | Flown on 30 Nov, removal 1 Dec |

**\* Please note:** When an actionable date falls on a weekend and trained staff are not on campus, the Estates & Facilities Department will aim to action a request on the Friday before the required date and remove the flag at the first opportunity on the following Monday, or the end of the agreed period if later.

**4. FLYING OF FLAGS AT HALF-MAST**

* In the following circumstances, at the Principal’s (or Chief Operating Officer in the event of the absence of the Principal) discretion, the University Flag may be flown **at half-mast** from the University flagpole:
	+ Following the death of a current or former University Chancellor, Pro-Chancellor, Senior Governor and Principal.
	+ In the event of local mourning or in response to a major national incident resulting in fatalities.
	+ The UK Union Flag will also be flown at half-mast from the announcement of the death of the Sovereign until the day following the day of the State Funeral.
* In the event of a significant event requiring half-masting of either the University Flag or the UK Union Flag during the annual occasions listed above, the flags will be removed for the period of half-masting only.
* Flags at half-mast should be **flown approximately two-thirds up** between the top and bottom of the flagpole, with at least the height of the flag between the top of the flag and the top of the flagpole.

Changes and additions may be made to these arrangements at the discretion of the Principal, to reflect exceptional circumstances.

**5. PROCESS**

* As the University is an autonomous, independent body, decisions related to flag flying on the University estate are for the University to determine, subject to any local planning conditions. The UK and Scottish governments as well as individual local authorities will have their own flag flying guidelines which are not binding on the University.
* The Scottish Government’s Protocol and Honours Team (protocolandhonours@gov.scot) can provide guidance on national flag flying protocols, should this be required.
* The Estates & Facilities Department is responsible for the raising and lowering of these flags, maintenance and storage of the flags and for arranging the cleaning or replacement of flags, as and when required.
* Requests to fly flags (where not listed in the schedule) should be directed to the Communications Office (communications@abdn.ac.uk) ideally no later than eight weeks in advance if flags are not held by the University.
* A flag must be supplied by, and costs met by, the School or Department making the request. Flags must meet the size and specifications for the University flagpole, as advised by the Estates & Facilities Department. The University is also ordinarily unable to fly flags with commercial logos or for advertising purposes which may need planning or advertising consent.
* Any request should include details of which flag is to be flown, why it is appropriate for the University to fly the guest flag and on which date(s) the guest flag is proposed to be flown. The final decision on whether to fly the flag will rest with the Principal, or the Chief Operating Officer acting on behalf of the Principal and is not subject to appeal.
* In the interests of health and safety, if current or expected poor weather conditions make it unsafe for staff to access the roof to change a flag, this will take precedence. The decision will be made entirely at the discretion of the Estates and Facilities Department.

| Title | Flag Flying Protocol |
| --- | --- |
| Author / Creator | Phil Bale / Public Affairs, Stakeholder Engagement and Events (PASE) |
| Owner | Chief Operating Officer |
| Date published / approved | July 2025 (SMT) |
| Version | 1.0 |
| Date for Next Review | Every three years by the Head of Public Affairs, and where changes are required, SMT. |
| Audience | Staff and students |
| Related  | Special Lighting Guidance |
| Subject / Description | The purpose of this guidance is to outline a process for the display of flags on campus. |
| Equality Impact Assessment |  |
| Section | External Relations |
| Theme | Estates management; Health & Safety; Equality & Diversity |
| Keywords | Flags; half-mast; protocol |