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UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW

Court

Minute of Meeting held on Wednesday 11 February 2009
in The Senate Room

Present:
Mr David Anderson General Council Assessor, Ms Susan Ashworth Employee Representative, Dr Olwyn Byron Senate Assessor, Professor Muffy Calder Senate Assessor, Professor Andrew Christie Co-opted Member, Mr Peter Daniels Co-opted Member, Ms Barbara Duffner Co-opted Member, Ms Susan Dunsmore General Council Assessor, Dr Robin Easton Co-opted Member, Professor Eleanor Gordon Senate Assessor, Rt Hon Charles Kennedy MP Rector (Chair), Mr Gavin Lee SRC President, Dr Martin Macauley Senate Assessor, Mr Alan Macfarlane General Council Assessor, Mr Jim Mackechnie Glasgow City Council, Dr Laura Martin Senate Assessor, Professor Keith Millar Senate Assessor, Mr Alex Ross Employee Representative, Mr David Ross General Council Assessor, Sir Muir Russell Principal, Professor Mona Siddiqui Senate Assessor, Mr Kevin Sweeney General Council Assessor, Mrs Joy Travers Chancellor's Assessor (Vice-Chair), Mr Filippo Trevisan SRC Assessor

In attendance:
Professor Steve Beaumont (Vice-Principal Research & Enterprise), Mr Ian Black (Director of Human Resources), Professor Graham Caie (Clerk of Senate), Mr Robert Fraser (Director of Finance), Professor Neal Juster (Vice-Principal Strategy & Resources), Mr Jim McConnell (Director of Estates and Buildings), Ms Deborah Maddern (Administrative Officer), Mr David Newall (Secretary of Court), Ms Susan Stewart (Director of Corporate Communications)

Apologies:

Members: Professor Michael Scott-Morton Co-opted Member

Attenders: Professor John Coggins (Vice-Principal Life Sciences & Medicine), Professor Andrea Nolan (Vice-Principal Learning, Teaching and Internationalisation)

CRT/2008/23. Presentations

Professor Steve Beaumont, Vice Principal Research & Enterprise, gave a presentation on the outcome of the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE). The process had assessed research in subject-specific units, not necessarily aligned with Departmental or Faculty boundaries, against international and national standards for the relevant discipline. Assessment had been by peer review of outputs, with the outcome to drive distribution of core grants for research from Funding Councils. There had been substantial differences between the 2008 and 2001 RAES, notably the profiling of grade outcomes within each Unit of Assessment in 2008.

There were a number of positive aspects. In particular, the University was in the UK top ten in 18 units (based on the Times Higher Education Supplement league table), and there were 32 Units with more 50% of their profile in the top two categories.
There had been recognition for the University’s interdisciplinarity, translational research and engagement with users. There was good progress in a number of areas, including those that had benefited from targeted investment and pooling. The University’s proportion of top-ranked research in Scotland had increased as compared to 2001.

However, the University’s overall position within the UK had slipped. There were a number of units where the performance peak was considered too low, and not enough research rated in the highest category. A low PGR:FTE ratio existed in some units and there was low income:FTE in some units, both of which required addressing given their importance as Key Performance Indicators and the contribution both would likely make in the forthcoming Research Excellence Framework exercise.

The impact on funding was not yet known, and would become clear when the Funding Council’s annual grant letter was published in mid-March. The current expectation was that the University’s future research quality grant (QR) would be stationary at best.

Action was being taken under the guidance of the Research Planning and Strategy Committee in the first instance, to review all areas, especially those of weak performance, to re-stress the importance of PGR recruitment and research income generation, to improve systems for performance monitoring, research oversight and development, and to identify priorities for strategic investment. Early preparation for the Research Excellence Framework was under way and included benchmarking of citations. Monitoring of external grants for, and internal investment in, research would occur to ensure that the return from the research justified the investment. These factors would inform the budget round for the forthcoming year as well as the further development of the University’s strategic plan.

Court thanked Professor Beaumont for the presentation and expressed a number of concerns including whether the proposed actions were sufficient. It was agreed that the progress being made as a result of taking these actions would require careful monitoring and attention.

**CRT/2008/24. Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 12 December 2008**

The minutes were approved.

**CRT/2008/25. Matters Arising**

There were no Matters Arising.

**CRT/2008/26. Report from the Principal**

**CRT/2008/26.1 Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering**

At its December meeting, Court had heard that the Senior Management Group had approved a proposal, supported by the Dean of Engineering, that the University should begin discussions with the University of Strathclyde about withdrawal from involvement with the Department of Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering (NAME), which would no longer be badged as a joint department.

Court noted the context and the content of more recent discussions with the University of Strathclyde and approved:
• The transfer of the Department of NAME to the University of Strathclyde with effect from 1 August 2009.
• The transfer of the name of the John Elder Chair to the University of Strathclyde for use within the Department of NAME.
• That the student entry of October 2009 be the last cohort of NAME students to undertake joint degrees of the Universities of Glasgow and Strathclyde. Thereafter students in the Department would read for degrees of the University of Strathclyde.

Court noted that negotiations were continuing over access to the Glasgow tow tank and associated facilities by Strathclyde staff; that negotiations were continuing over transfer of endowed prizes currently awarded to students studying for degrees in NAME; and that a joint communications strategy to inform all stakeholders was being developed by both universities.

It was confirmed that student services at the University of Glasgow would remain available for students who were registered for the joint degree. Staff appointed to the joint department, prior to 1 August 2009, would continue to be able to use University of Glasgow facilities for staff.

**CRT/2008/26.2 Research Assessment Exercise**

Court noted that the Senior Management Group had discussed the outcome of the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise for the University. An early review of the research strategies of all units within each Faculty was taking place, giving particular attention to the weakest areas of research.

**CRT/2008/26.3 Pay Claim 2009**

Court noted that the employers' association, UCEA, had agreed with campus trade unions a national bargaining process with a clearly defined timetable that would culminate in mid-May. The Universities & Colleges Union (UCU) had not accepted this agreement and had meanwhile submitted a pay award for their members, from 1 August 2009, of 8% or (RPI + 3%), whichever was higher. UCU might soon ballot their members on industrial action. Through the offices of ACAS, discussions were currently taking place between UCU and UCEA.

**CRT/2008/26.4 HE Finance and Pay Data Review**

Court noted that in December 2008, a report had been published by a national review group that had been charged with reviewing data on the financial position of the HE sector and on the remuneration of HE employees. David Newall gave a summary of the report. With respect to the financial position of the sector, the group had concluded that on a Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) basis, the whole sector was significantly in deficit, suggesting problems for the medium term and an increased risk profile. The group had also concluded that pay and conditions generally compared favourably to other sectors.

**CRT/2008/26.5 Student Protest**

Court heard that a group of students had presented a petition to the Principal with over 1000 names protesting at the situation in Gaza and seeking various actions by the University. The University had replied that, while it could not accept the majority of the students’ demands, it recognised there were genuine humanitarian concerns and the Principal had offered to meet students to discuss
these. A small number of students had occupied a University building on 9 February, but the University’s view was that it would have been unreasonable to withdraw the offer to meet a delegation because of the occupation of the building, thereby denying students the opportunity to discuss their humanitarian concerns. The University was prepared to offer some assistance on a number of these concerns, for example by allowing students to organise a day of fundraising on campus for the Disasters Emergency Appeal.

The SRC was thanked for its help in taking the matter forward.

**CRT/2008/27. Report from the Rector**

Court heard that the Rector’s regular surgeries continued to be well patronised, with the Court Office and the SRC providing a back-up and follow-through support service on individual cases. The Scottish Rectors’ Group was proving to be a useful forum, both for an overall comparing of notes and as an additional locus for those active within the higher education sector.

**CRT/2008/28. Reports of Court Committees**

**CRT/2008/28.1 Finance Committee**

**CRT/2008/28.1.1 New Account**

Court endorsed the Finance Committee’s approval of the opening of a new bank account.

**CRT/2008/28.1.2 Financial Regulations**

Court approved a number of amendments to the Financial Regulations.

**CRT/2008/28.1.3 Key Performance Indicators**

A set of Financial KPIs had been provided to Court and were noted.

**CRT/2008/28.1.4 Universities’ Superannuation Scheme**

Court noted that the employer’s contribution to the USS would increase from 14% to 16% in October 2009. This would have an impact of £3M on the University’s budget.

**CRT/2008/28.2 Human Resources Committee**

Court received an update on the Committee’s most recent meeting from its chair, Barbara Duffner. A subgroup looking into Key Performance Indicators had met and was developing a set of relevant indicators, aligned with the University’s strategic plan and which would be presented to Court in due course.

Court noted an update on Performance and Development Review. Steps were in train to ensure P&DR was mandatory and to an agreed common timetable. The process would also establish departmental objectives as a mandatory part of any P&DR, with departments required to ensure they had developed an appropriate set related to Faculty/University objectives. The Human Resources Committee
would discuss Performance Management further at its next meeting in April and keep Court informed.

**CRT/2008/28.3 Estates Committee**

Court noted the report of the Estates Committee.

**CRT/2008/28.4 Health, Safety and Environment Committee**

Court noted that at its meeting on 14 January 2009, the Health, Safety and Environment Committee (HSEC) had expressed concerns regarding the new model for health service provision approved by Court on 10 December, including concerns that the HSEC had not been consulted earlier as a group. As a result, the chair of the Committee had met on 26 January with Robin Easton, David Newall and Anne Mitchell (secretary to the Health Service Review Group). This meeting had addressed to the chair's satisfaction each of the points of concern raised by the Committee and he had advised the Committee of this. Court noted the minutes of the HSEC meeting on 14 January, and the note of the meeting held on 26 January, and agreed that the matters raised by the Committee had indeed been addressed satisfactorily.

**CRT/2008/29. Report from the Secretary of Court**

**CRT/2008/29.1 Review of University Health Service**

Court was reminded that in December it had approved the model proposed by the review group for the future provision of health services in the University. Court had requested that staff and students should be consulted on the new model and should receive a message explaining how the future service would compare with the current one. Court noted a summary of the responses received through this consultation. Court reaffirmed its decision to introduce the new model, with effect from 1 August 2009.

Court noted that the model of provision approved by it would have implications for the members of staff currently employed in the University Health Service. The current UHS would close and, while all efforts would be taken to redeploy the staff affected or to take other steps to mitigate the impact of the closure, it might be necessary to terminate contracts of employment. Court approved the creation of a Structural Change Committee and a Redundancy Committee, which would be responsible for ensuring that opportunities to avoid or mitigate the impact of redundancy were investigated thoroughly.

**CRT/2008/29.2 Court Strategy Discussion - Update**

The Court Strategy Discussion held in September 2008 had identified a number of issues which Court considered should be given priority by the University if it was to achieve its stated institutional goals. There had been a strong level of agreement around six themes, and Court expected University managers to engage with these and to demonstrate progress against each of them. Court noted updates against these themes. With respect to the development of proposals for greater support and mentoring of Heads of Department, it was noted that an update would be provided at the next meeting. Court agreed that the role would benefit from clarification and greater guidance, and improved
succession planning. Recent management appointments approved on Court’s behalf would benefit from the new measures being put in place.

CRT/2008/29.3 Climate Commitment

Court noted that the Universities & Colleges Climate Commitment for Scotland had been signed on the University's behalf by the Principal and the Rector on 14 January. This document committed the University to publishing, within a year, a five-year climate action plan with targets and timescales. A draft action plan would be prepared by University officers and brought to Court for discussion at its meeting in October 2009.

CRT/2008/29.4 Grievance Stage 2 Appeals and Disciplinary Tribunal

In October 2008 Court had been advised that Stage 2 Grievance Committees had been set up to consider grievances in the Arts Faculty and the Faculty of Law, Business and Social Sciences. Court noted that the appeals had not been upheld.

In October 2008 a Disciplinary Tribunal had been set up to consider a staff matter in the Medical Faculty. Court noted that the matter had been settled.

CRT/2008/29.5 Glasgow University Rugby Football Club

Court noted that an appeal had been received against the Court’s decision at its last meeting to suspend the Rugby Club from representing the University and from using the facilities of the University with effect from 1 January 2009. A panel was being set up to hear the appeal.

CRT/2008/29.6 Management Appointment

Court noted that the Secretary of Court had approved the following management appointment on Court's behalf:

**Headship of the Department of Management**

Professor Fiona Wilson with effect from 9 December 2008 until 31 July 2013.

CRT/2008/29.7 Appointing Committee for Headship of Department

Court noted that the following appointing committee had been approved for a Headship of Department where the current Head would demit office on 31 July 2009; the outgoing Head was indicated:

*School of Law (Professor Tom Mullen)*

Professor Elizabeth Moignard (convener)

Dr Olwyn Byron (Senate Assessor).

CRT/2008/29.8 Chair in Clinical Physics

Court noted that with the agreement of NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde, the Secretary of Court had approved the temporary suspension of an agreement with the Health Board that the University’s Chair of Clinical Physics must also be the
Director of the NHS Department of Clinical Physics and Bio-engineering. The most recent holder of the posts had retired from the NHS but was being offered a part time appointment at the University, and the NHS was willing to waive the requirement during this appointment.

**CRT/2008/29.9 Draft Resolution**

Court noted that the following draft Resolution had been approved. It had been transmitted to the Senate and General Council for comment. A copy of the Resolution was available from the Court Office.

RESOLUTION NO. 622 – DALRYMPLE CHAIR OF ARCHAEOLOGY.

**CRT/2008/30. Communications from Meeting of Senate 5 February 2009**

The Communications from Senate were noted.

**CRT/2008/31. Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

**CRT/2008/32. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Court will be held on Wednesday 22 April 2009 in the Wolfson Medical Building at 1.30pm

Other dates for the 2008/2009 Session are

- Wednesday 24 June 2009
- Dates for the 2009/2010 Session are
- Wednesday 7 October 2009
- Wednesday 16 December 2009
- Wednesday 10 February 2010
- Wednesday 14 April 2010
- Wednesday 23 June 2010