UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW

Court

Minute of Meeting held on Wednesday 10 February 2010
on level 5 Sir Alwyn Williams Building

Present:
Ms Susan Ashworth Employee Representative, Mr Ken Brown Co-opted Member, Dr Olwyn Byron Senate Assessor, Professor Muffy Calder Senate Assessor, Mr Peter Daniels Co-opted Member, Ms Susan Dunsmore General Council Assessor, Dr Robin Easton Co-opted Member, Professor Eleanor Gordon Senate Assessor (to item 5), Mr Tommy Gore SRC Assessor, Dr Gordon Hay Senate Assessor, Rt Hon Charles Kennedy MP Rector, Ms Laura Laws SRC President, Mr Alan Maclaren General Council Assessor, Cllr Jim Mackechnie Glasgow City Council Assessor, Mr Murdoch MacLennan Chancellor’s Assessor, Professor William Martin Senate Assessor, Ms Margaret Morton Co-opted Member, Professor Anton Muscatelli Principal, Dr Alan Owen Senate Assessor, Mr Alex Ross Employee Representative, Mr David Ross General Council Assessor, Professor Michael Scott-Morton Co-opted Member, Professor Adrienne Scullion Senate Assessor

In attendance:
Professor Steve Beaumont (Vice-Principal Research & Enterprise), Mr Ian Black (Director of Human Resources), Professor Graham Caie (Clerk of Senate), Professor Frank Coton (Vice-Principal Learning & Teaching), Mr Robert Fraser (Director of Finance), Professor Neal Juster (Vice-Principal Strategy & Resources), Mr Ray McHugh, Corporate Communications, Ms Deborah Maddern (Administrative Officer), Mr David Newall (Secretary of Court), Professor Andrea Nolan (Senior Vice-Principal)

Apologies:
Members: Mr David Anderson General Council Assessor, Mr Kevin Sweeney General Council Assessor

Attenders: Mr Jim McConnell (Director of Estates and Buildings), Ms Susan Stewart (Director of Corporate Communications)

CRT/2009/23. Announcements

Court welcomed Ken Brown, Murdoch MacLennan, Billy Martin and Margaret Morton to their first meeting of Court. Court also welcomed the new Vice-Principal Learning & Teaching, Frank Coton.

CRT/2009/24. Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 16 December 2009

The minutes were approved.
CRT/2009/25. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

CRT/2009/26. Report from the Principal

CRT/2009/26.1 Organisational Structure

At its December meeting, Court had endorsed progress to date and ratified recommendations that the University proceed to implement a new structure on 1 August 2010, based on four Colleges. Since December, University managers and staff representatives had agreed the process which would be used to assimilate staff into the new Colleges and Schools. Meetings had been arranged in February for administrative and support staff, and the University was working with the SRC to brief students on the new College and School structure and address issues identified by them. An open meeting had been held on February 4 to brief staff on progress.

The management of the restructure was being overseen by a Project Board, convened by Professor Nolan and including members of Court, senior executives, the SRC President and trade union representatives. The Project Board had recently discussed procedures for the future appointment of Heads of Schools. The procedures, and those for Heads of Research Institutes, were approved by Court. Court noted a progress report on the appointment of Heads of College.

In response to questions, the Principal responded that the final structure was unlikely to deviate significantly from what Court had already seen. Professor Nolan advised that the final School names would be agreed at SMG in the coming week; the shape of the Research Institutes was still under discussion, but should be finalised by the end of February. Salaries for Heads would depend on a number of factors including experience, and would be overseen by the Remuneration Committee. The length of initial appointments had been a question of balance. They were renewable and would carry an underlying academic appointment. If any current Heads of Department were appointed to Heads of School roles, then the initial term would be for the balance of the existing HoD term. The establishment of wider roles within the Colleges and Schools would not be delayed until the appointment of the Heads of College: working groups were already reporting on the roles, with job descriptions and job matching to follow. There would be a transparent process for the appointment of senior College managers, including deputies and heads of graduate schools. The transitional arrangements for teaching delivery and for postgraduate provision and supervision were being managed through existing departments, with a view to avoiding any disruption to students, as this aspect of business continuity was key. The large amount of senior management time required for restructuring, for example their participation in working groups and on interview panels, was a potential problem which needed to be kept under review.

A further update would be provided at the April meeting of Court.

CRT/2009/26.2 Pay Negotiations

In January UCEA had reported that all of the Trade Unions and the Employers’ body had agreed that the 2009 pay discussions were concluded. The University
had implemented the 0.5% pay award, with the new rates paid in the January pay run, with backdated effect to 1 August 2009.

**CRT/2009/26.3 Universities Scotland/Scottish Funding Council Business**

There were uncertainties regarding funding for 2010/11, in two areas. One related to the Scottish Funding Council's (SFC) use of its Horizon Fund, where it was possible that certain income streams which had to date been allocated by formula might now be withheld by the SFC and distributed as project funding with specific conditions. Discussion on this had been continuing in recent months at the Tripartite Advisory Group. A second uncertainty related to the forthcoming General Election: the SFC might want to revisit its funding allocation in-year, given the possibility that there might be a new budget shortly after the Election.

Indications from the university funding position in England were not encouraging. The SMG was looking at possible scenarios for Glasgow and Court would be briefed on this in April. Difficult decisions would be needed on whether the University could continue its activities in all areas. Possibilities for more income generation were also being examined, in particular through additional international student recruitment. The University's international student population was lower than that of almost all its Russell Group competitors, and there was scope substantially to increase international student numbers.

In December, Court had been updated on the SFC’s Teaching Prices Review. The Council’s proposals had involved introducing four subject funding groups in place of the current twelve. Given concerns regarding the robustness of the data underpinning the proposals, it was likely that the SFC would not introduce any changes in 2010/11, and would gather further data with a view to possible implementation in 2011/12.

**CRT/2009/26.4. Teacher Education**

As reported to Court in December, the Government intended to reduce funding for teacher education in 2010/11 by some £12M nationally, with serious implications for the Education Faculty at Glasgow and at other Scottish universities. Meanwhile, the SFC had announced its intention to reduce by 10% the Unit of Resource for Teacher Education, probably with effect from 2011/12.

A working group had been monitoring developments and considering the impact of this development. SMG had been briefed by the group at its January meeting, and had agreed that the University must take early steps to manage a reduction in staffing in the Faculty of Education. With respect to longer term teacher training provision at Glasgow, options would be assessed, including the length of programmes for such training.

The reduction in teacher education income would not affect funded places at the Dumfries campus.

**CRT/2009/26.5. Pricing Strategy**

SMG had undertaken its annual review of the fees the University charged for international students, and had also considered its policy on the award of international scholarships. SMG had decided that the University ought to benchmark itself with the Russell Group in setting its fees. SMG had approved a
package of International Excellence Scholarships, Country-specific Scholarships and Scholarships for students accepting a place on new Postgraduate programmes. These were part of a series of measures to increase the attractiveness of Glasgow to international students and to boost recruitment.


The Glasgow School of Social Work had been established in 2004 as a joint venture of the Universities of Glasgow and Strathclyde. 5 years after its establishment, a joint review of the School had been undertaken, co-chaired by Professor Andrea Nolan. Glasgow’s involvement in the School was very limited and the SMG’s conclusion was that the University should withdraw from the Glasgow School of Social Work, such that the last joint intake of students to the School would be in September 2010.

CRT/2009/26.7 Times Higher Education Student Experience Rankings

Glasgow had been ranked 10th in the UK Times Higher Education (THE) Student Experience poll, in terms of general student satisfaction. Extra-curricular activities at Glasgow had been highlighted as a major reason behind the results. The poll had also revealed that student satisfaction with the quality and availability of learning resources at Glasgow was at an all time high.

CRT/2009/26.8. Kelvin and Adam Smith Scholarships

SMG had reviewed the scholarship scheme and had resolved that the University should continue to invest in this successful scheme, using funds which had been released from endowment income and as yet not committed.

CRT/2009/26.9. Reviews of Departments

Updates on the reviews of the School of Modern Languages and on the Department of Sociology were requested. These would be brought to Court at a future date.

CRT/2009/27. Annual Report on Research Key Performance Indicators

Professor Steve Beaumont, Vice Principal Research & Enterprise, reported on the University’s performance in 2008/09 against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for Research and Knowledge Transfer. The KPI framework had been approved by Court in April 2007 and contained KPIs in three areas: financial performance and related institutional behaviour; postgraduate research students; and research quality and esteem. These headline indicators were supported by a scorecard of other measures, some of which would be highlighted in the report.

A baseline had been set for five measures in 2005/2006, with targets set to be achieved in 2010/2011. Total research volume (awards for directly incurred costs averaged over a three year period) had grown substantially from a baseline of £65M to £76.2M in 2008/2009; financial contribution had grown from 18% to 26.2%; awards eligible for knowledge transfer grant (KTG) had grown to £23.8M from a baseline of £18.5M and income from KTG eligible activities had grown substantially from £23.8M to £44.3M, giving Glasgow the largest KTG in Scotland. However with the exception of KTG income, the growth rates achieved had not met their targets in real terms and the growth of contribution from research grants appeared to be saturating as most of the portfolio of funding switched over to Full Economic Costs.
The percentage of staff holding research funding had also been selected as a KPI. Refinement of data on this indicator showed that only 48% of staff held an award either as principal or co-investigator, and in the present climate it was very unlikely that the target of 90% grant holding would be met. Nevertheless the University was working to increase grant holding through increased information on, and support and training for, grant applications. It was noted that the number of staff holding funding was not the same as those who were research active, where the figure would be higher. In response to questions, it was confirmed that performance and development review (P&DR) for academic staff covered performance in the research role and the supervision of research students. Much greater use would be made of P&DR and an SMG project had been initiated to make P&DR more robust, and identify a programme of training for the research component of an academic career.

The figures relating to PGR students showed that the University had performed well, with PGR headcount, PGR:Academic FTE ratio and percentage of international students all exceeding targets for 2008/09. There had been significant progress relating to the constitution of the graduate schools, including increased formalisation and broadening of training. Independent surveys of research student satisfaction showed that the University was well rated. One aspect relating to this area, which would be kept under review, was that while the University contributed approximately the same share of its own funding (19%) to PGR studentships as other Russell Group members, it offered significantly fewer studentships per academic staff member.

Details of some of the supporting measures on the ‘scorecard’ were provided. Addressing the ‘customer measures’ heading, the University had participated in a pilot study of bibliometrics. Although there was a reasonable correlation between the outcome of the last RAE and bibliometric measures based on citation rates, their interpretation required caution and in some subjects they were clearly inappropriate: for this reason it was not proposed to base the next research assessment exercise (the Research Excellence Framework) on bibliometric indicators. Nevertheless, aggregate citation rates relative to world average in each field did appear to have some credibility, and were being used with caution to inform judgments on research performance locally.

Under the ‘internal process’ measures heading, there were some concerns over recent application volume and declining success rates, although it was evident that the University was not alone as some Research Councils’ policies had changed and funding ceased for certain areas.

Ongoing actions relating to research support included strengthening P&DR to increase participation; career-long training and support for academic staff; aligning with Research Council priorities and targeting other funders such as the Technology Strategy Board, the EU and US agencies; mentoring and monitoring submissions at Faculty and University level; and strategic investments to stimulate new areas.

Looking at wider environmental factors, there were potential threats from the ringfencing of the science budget nationally, from possible efficiency savings in the Full Economic Costing uplift, the ‘blacklisting’ by some funders of applicants with poor success, and from uncertainties surrounding the future of the Knowledge Transfer Grant and Research Excellence Grant. The restructuring of the University, in particular the formation of the Research Institutes, would enhance the University’s research capabilities through stronger collaboration and targeted investment, and through a more solutions-based approach to working with companies.

Court thanked Professor Beaumont for the report.
Laura Laws, SRC President, presented the SRC’s annual report for 2008/2009. Referring to the Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR), Ms Laws explained that with regard to the University’s approach to engaging students, the review outcome would highlight a number of positive features including the very effective partnership between the Students’ Representative Council and the University. There had been an options appraisal of the Student Bodies undertaken by the University in 2009 in which the SRC had been widely praised for its professionalism, attitude and culture.

The SRC’s mission was to provide effective representation, support, opportunities and services for and on behalf of the students of the University of Glasgow. Within this there were three aims: Representation and Engagement, ensuring the interests and views of members were represented; Student Wellbeing, providing independent professional support services which reflected the diversity of the student body; and Volunteering and Employability, whereby the SRC provided opportunities for its members.

With respect to representation and engagement, areas of the annual report were highlighted. There had been an increase in the numbers of Student Representatives, with an extensive and well regarded training programme developed. Work had been undertaken on Postgraduate student experience, with the SRC making a decision to focus more on postgraduate students. A Late Submission Policy had been developed, with the Senate Office, to standardise practices for students across the University. A Student Maternity, Maternity Support & Adoption Policy had been implemented. Further work would take place with the aim of securing ‘Wednesday Afternoons Free From Classes’. The student media had been successful in winning a number of industry awards.

Under the student wellbeing agenda, the Halls to campus minibus service had been further developed and was very well used; Freshers Week had been designed to accommodate the needs of a more diverse student body; and there had been a greater SRC presence at induction events for both first years and international students. The SRC’s support for this latter group was evidenced by the International Student Barometer placing the SRC as the best student body in Scotland.

The ‘volunteering and employability’ aim had been met through a number of initiatives. The Student Volunteer Support Service had supported 550 students in 12 projects and continued to promote good links with local organisations. Clubs and Societies affiliated numbers had increased, allowing a wider range of participatory activities. Media Week had grown, with an increase in both participants and events.

The SRC would continue to build on 08/09’s successes. Projects in progress included working with SPARQS (the development body for student representatives), Research and Enterprise and the Senate Office to create the first, tailor-made PGR representation system in the UK; augmenting the SRC’s online presence and around campus; and working with University Services with respect to student carers and access to benefits.

Court thanked Ms Laws for the report.
CRT/2009/29. Reports of Court Committees

CRT/2009/29.1 Finance Committee

The report of the Finance Committee, including Key Performance Indicators, was noted. The KPIs would be presented in more detail at a future meeting. Court noted that a decision had been made on the supplier for the HR and Payroll project. The budget for the project would be £1.8M including staff costs.

CRT/2009/29.2 Human Resources Committee

The report was noted.

CRT/2009/29.3 Estates Committee

Court endorsed Estates Committee’s approval of the Revised Maintenance and Refurbishment Policy.

Court noted the Estates Committee's agreement that the use of the revenue maintenance budget should afford greater priority in future to building fabric repairs, with a lower priority afforded to refurbishment projects. It was confirmed that in the event that the Funding Council-allocated portion of this budget was not sustained, a decision would be required to revise priorities.

CRT/2009/29.4 Health, Safety & Environment Committee

CRT/2009/29.4.1 Remit & Membership of the Committee

Court noted that the Health, Safety & Environment Committee had begun reviewing its remit and membership, prompted by the creation of the Health, Safety & Wellbeing Service and by the proposals to restructure the University. Agreement had been reached on membership and management of meetings. The matter would be considered further at the meeting to be held in March.

CRT/2009/29.4.2 Management of Stress and Report of HSE Inspection

Court noted that, while the report following the HSE inspection had been generally favourable, steps had been taken to begin the process of addressing some issues raised in the report. At its meeting in January, the Committee had considered a draft policy on stress management. Future consultation with HR and staff would result in the further development of the policy.

CRT/2009/29.4.3 Personal Safety Concerns

Court noted that the SRC had identified two areas of the campus where students reported feeling concern for their personal safety. Mr Gore advised that Estates & Buildings had investigated the issues and introduced improved lighting.

CRT/2009/29.4.4 Response to Adverse Weather Conditions

Court noted that the Committee had recognised the excellent work of Estates & Buildings staff during the recent weather conditions and had noted that feedback received from staff would inform future planning.
CRT/2009/30. Report from the Secretary of Court

CRT/2009/30.1 Establishment of Redundancy Committee: Teacher Education

Court approved the creation of a Structural Change Committee and a Redundancy Committee with respect to Teacher Education provision. This followed an announced reduction in government funding for Initial Teacher Education, which meant that the University’s intake of teacher trainees would be substantially reduced. The Committees would be responsible for ensuring that opportunities to avoid or mitigate the impact of redundancy were investigated thoroughly. The Structural Change Committee would hold in-depth discussions with all the affected staff. Opportunities for redeployment and other measures to avoid redundancy would be fully explored, and these would include considering the possibility of voluntary severance, which, if recommended, would be on terms that would be determined by the Remuneration Committee. If the Structural Change Committee concluded that one or more members of staff should be made redundant, it would report to the Redundancy Committee. The Redundancy Committee (chaired by a Vice-Principal and including two lay members of Court, two senior academic colleagues and two members of support staff) would form its own independent view of the recommended redundancies, considering the report of the Structural Change Committee and reporting to Court. Should the Redundancy Committee recommend to Court that staff be made redundant, and should Court accept this recommendation, then (and only then) would the staff affected be given notice of termination.

CRT/2009/30.2 Employment Ordinance

At its last meeting, Court had been advised that a draft Employment Ordinance had been publicised, and comments sought from members of Senate and from the General Council Business Committee. Court had approved an extension to the consultation period for Senate comments. Further, extensive, consultations had also taken place with officers of UCU Glasgow.

Court approved the submission of the agreed revised draft ordinance to the Privy Council for its consideration. If the Privy Council approved the ordinance, new HR procedures would be developed and brought to Court for discussion in due course.

CRT/2009/30.3 Vice Principal (Learning & Teaching)

Court noted that Professor Frank Coton, formerly Dean of the Faculty of Engineering, had been appointed Vice-Principal, Learning & Teaching with effect from 1 January 2010, replacing Professor Andrea Nolan, who had been appointed Senior Vice-Principal in October 2009.

CRT/2009/30.4 Dean of Faculty of Engineering

Court noted that following Professor Coton’s appointment as Vice-Principal, Dr Chris Pearce had been appointed as Acting Dean of Engineering until 31 July 2010, after which the new College structure would exist.

CRT/2009/30.5 Grievance Stage 2

Court noted that a Stage 2 Grievance Committee had considered a grievance from a member of staff in the Faculty of Arts. The grievance had not been upheld.

CRT/2009/30.6 H1N1 Virus (Swine Flu)
Court noted that latest figures showed that the second wave of the flu pandemic had passed. As of the end of January, the Emergencies Planning Group had decided to terminate the weekly updates to students and staff that it had provided since Spring 2009 via the website. However, it continued to monitor the position.

CRT/2009/31. Communications from Meeting of Senate 4 February 2010

Professor Caie updated Court on acceptances of nominations for Honorary Degrees and advised Court of two new nominations.

Information would be issued to Court members on dates and arrangements for the annual Cathedral Service and Commemoration Day.

CRT/2009/32. Any Other Business

In response to a question about childcare provision, the Secretary of Court agreed to review current levels of applications and the options for alternative or additional accommodation.

CRT/2009/33. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Court will be held on Wednesday 14 April 2010 in the Senate Room

The other date for the 2009/2010 Session is

Wednesday 23 June 2010