

WEB COPY

Court

Minute of Meeting held on Wednesday 10 February 2016 in the Senate Room

Present:

Mr Dave Anderson Employee Representative, Mr Graeme Bissett Co-opted Member, Ms Heather Cousins Co-opted Member, Ms Morag Deans SRC Assessor, Professor Lindsay Farmer Senate Assessor, Dr Carl Goodyear Senate Assessor, Professor Nick Hill Senate Assessor, Professor Karen Lury Senate Assessor, Mr Liam King SRC President, Mr Brian McBride General Council Assessor, Mr Murdoch MacLennan Chancellor's Assessor, Ms Margaret Anne McParland Employee Representative, Mr Ronnie Mercer Co-opted Member, Ms June Milligan Co-opted Member, Mr David Milloy Co-opted Member, Ms Margaret Morton Co-opted Member, Professor Anton Muscatelli Principal, Mr David Ross General Council Assessor (Convener of Court), Dr Duncan Ross Senate Assessor, Ms Lesley Sutherland General Council Assessor, Professor Paul Younger Senate Assessor

In attendance:

Ms Ann Allen (Director of Estates & Buildings), Ms Christine Barr (Director of Human Resources), Professor John Briggs (Clerk of Senate), Professor Muffy Calder (Head of College of Science & Engineering and Vice-Principal), Professor James Conroy (Vice-Principal Internationalisation), Professor Frank Coton (Vice Principal Academic and Educational Innovation), Professor Anna Dominiczak (Head of College of Medical, Veterinary and Life Sciences and Vice-Principal), Mr Robert Fraser (Director of Finance), Professor Neal Juster (Senior Vice-Principal), Ms Deborah Maddern (Administrative Officer), Mr David Newall (Secretary of Court), Professor Miles Padgett (Vice-Principal Research)

Observing:

Elizabeth Passey

Apologies:

Members: Mr Ken Brown Co-opted Member, Dr Morag Macdonald Simpson General Council Assessor, Cllr Pauline McKeever Glasgow City Council Representative

Attendees: Professor Anne Anderson (Head of College of Social Sciences and Vice-Principal), Professor Jon Cooper (Vice-Principal Innovation & Knowledge Exchange), Professor Roibeard O Maolalaigh (Head of College of Arts and Vice-Principal)

CRT/2015/23. Announcements

Elizabeth Passey, Convener of Court from 1 August 2016, was welcomed as an observer. Professor Nick Hill, Senate Assessor, was welcomed to his first meeting.

CRT/2015/24. Minutes of the meetings held on Wednesday 16 December 2015

The minutes were approved subject to Elizabeth Passey's name being added as an observer.

CRT/2015/25. Matters Arising

Information on the spread of ratings applied to senior management in the 2015 pay award would be circulated to Court members, having already been provided to the HR Committee.

CRT/2015/26. Report from the Principal

CRT 2015/26.1 Comprehensive Spending Review/University Funding.

Following the last Court meeting, the headlines for Higher Education funding had been announced by the Scottish Government, as follows:

	2015-16 budget	2016-17 budget	% change
HE resource (via SFC)	£1,062.5m	£1,027.2m	-3.3%
HE Capital	£21.0m	£35.7m	+70%

The major capital increase in large part reflected some earmarked allocations. Overall, there were some pressures on the SFC budget, due to earmarked allocations and expected efficiencies, which made the settlement quite challenging.

The Scottish Government had confirmed that it would continue to fund its commitment to free tuition. It had also renewed its commitment to investing in Higher Education, with a further one billion pounds to be invested in 2016-17, in the context of a new relationship with the sector in the form of a long-term partnership, underpinned by ongoing significant investment to support the delivery of key shared priorities. Discussions were ongoing between the sector and the Government to flesh out the detail of this new 'compact', whose content would include provisions relating to Widening Access.

CRT 2015/26.2 Reviews of REF Units of Assessment

After the REF2014 results had been published in December 2014, it had been agreed by the Research Planning and Strategy Committee and SMG that a review would be conducted of the Unit of Assessment (UoA) submissions, to identify ways to improve the position in the next REF. The reviews would be completed by July 2016. Miles Padgett briefed Court on the progress of the reviews and key themes for refinements in the future. Each review involved an assessment of material associated with our REF2014 and RAE2008 submissions, and holding a panel meeting comprising external assessors, with a written report provided to the relevant Head of College and Director of Institute/Head of School. A longitudinal study of output metrics and league positions was also being undertaken, following the 2014 REF.

CRT 2015/26.3 Outcome Agreement

In 2012, the Scottish Government had initiated a new partnership approach to the funding of the Higher Education and College Sector, through the use of Outcome Agreements. These agreements were intended to work in 3-year cycles, with the objectives being set by universities in discussion with the SFC. The intention was to maximise universities' ability to be successful in the priority areas identified by the Scottish Funding Council. Over the recent past, Court

members had been updated on the background to and content of the University's Outcome Agreement, which was required to be submitted to the SFC as a condition of funding.

Court noted an update prepared by the Director and deputy Director of the Planning & Business Intelligence Office, and an updated Agreement which reflected current priorities that the SFC expected to be addressed during the final year, including Subject Gender Imbalances, Equality and Diversity, Articulation, and Widening Access - Increasing intake of learners with Care experience. The revision of the Outcome Agreement was the final year of a 3-year cycle and had been light touch.

A new Agreement would be produced in 2016 and would take account of any ongoing or changed priorities of the new Scottish Government; this would include continuation of the Widening Access focus. The draft would be presented to Court for agreement in early 2017. It was agreed that the University's Widening Access portfolio, which was likely to be a key theme in the Agreement, should form the basis of a briefing to Court in the future.

It was suggested that ethnic diversity information and provisions relating to the Gaelic language should also be referred to in the Agreement. In the meantime, in response to a concern from a Court member, Mr Newall agreed to approach the Gaelic Committee regarding the pace of progress in implementing the Gaelic Language Plan.

CRT/2015/26.4 Key Activities

Court noted a summary of some of the main activities in which the Principal had been involved since the last meeting of Court, covering internal and external activities beyond daily operational management and strategy meetings. The activities were under the broad headings of: Academic Development and Strategy; Internationalisation activities; Lobbying/Policy Influencing and Promoting the University; Internal activities and Communications.

CRT/2015/27. Report from the Secretary of Court

CRT/2015/27.1 Higher Education Governance (Scotland) Bill

At the last meeting, Court had heard that the HE Governance Bill had been continuing its passage through the Scottish Parliament, and that Universities Scotland and the Committee of Scottish Chairs had discussed it with the Cabinet Secretary and her advisers, the focus being on areas about which the sector had previously expressed concerns.

The Education & Culture Committee's report on its scrutiny of the Bill, and the Scottish Government's response to the report, had been provided to Court since the last meeting. A number of revisions had been made to the first draft of the Bill, these revisions taking into account some of the concerns that Universities Scotland and the Committee of Scottish Chairs had discussed with the Cabinet Secretary in late 2015. These revisions included: removal of clauses in the Bill which involved new ministerial powers and so had raised concerns regarding possible reclassification of universities as public bodies; removal of the proposal to cap the membership of a University Senate at 120; and removal of proposed legislative amendments that would have deleted references to the Rector's role as 'president' of Court in the ancient universities.

The latest draft of Bill had also included amendments that, among other matters, clarified the

process for selecting a senior lay governor, including the absolute requirement for an election to take place before the person was appointed; and established a requirement that governing bodies should, on request, provide 'reasonable' remuneration to a senior lay governor, and should meet the 'reasonable' expenses incurred by candidates in campaigning for election.

There remained concerns within the sector about the content of the Bill, and Universities Scotland was in ongoing discussion with the Government to explain these. It was understood that the final date for enactment of the legislation was 23 March. Court noted that its Governance Working Group would meet following this date, and brief Court at the April meeting with regard to any internal governance matters that would require to be addressed; this was likely to include a revision of Court's Standing Orders. The mechanics of the electoral processes for the senior lay governor was likely to be left to individual institutions, therefore a process to cover this area would also need to be drafted at local level.

Court's thanks were extended to David Ross for his considerable work as chair of the Committee of Scottish Chairs, in engaging with the Scottish Government on the draft Bill.

CRT/2015/27.2 Estate Strategy

At the last meeting, Court had received a report from its Estate Strategy Working Group, including an update on the Learning & Teaching Building, and a timeline of approvals to be sought from Court in 2016.

The Court Working Group would meet later in February to consider further progress on the Learning & Teaching Building. This would include a review of the financial projections for that building and for the Estate Strategy as a whole. A full business case for the Learning & Teaching building would be presented to the June meeting of Court. Court noted that the previously scheduled timing for this presentation (April 2016) had been put back to ensure all elements were included, so that Court had a fully comprehensive briefing ahead of its approval for the construction project being requested.

With regard to a question from Professor Nick Hill about the 'decant' of the School of Mathematics and Statistics during the construction, Professor Coton referred to this being part of a wider temporary reconfiguration of accommodation, that would necessarily involve some staff being nearer than others to building works on the old Western Infirmary site. The arrangements had not yet been finalised.

CRT/2015/27.3 Court Procedural Review Group - Estates & Buildings

The Group had recently considered and approved a proposal to restructure areas of activity in Estates & Buildings, to strengthen skillsets in the areas of Estates Development, Financial Management and Estates Strategy. As in all organisational changes, the University would seek to mitigate the impact of redundancy on those staff affected, either through redeployment or through other measures. Court approved the use of voluntary severance as a possible measure of mitigation where it was not possible to redeploy staff.

CRT/2015/27.4 Annual Court Self-Assessment and Convener appraisal

The Court Governance Working Group would report to April Court on the outcome of an effectiveness review and also, with reference to the HE Code of Good Governance, to report

on how that the University was addressing all its responsibilities in terms of good governance. The convener's annual appraisal would also be undertaken ahead of the April meeting.

CRT/2015/27.5 University Collaboration with Singapore Institute of Technology

It had been previously agreed that Professor Paul Younger would undertake a visit and report on the University's collaboration with Singapore Institute of Technology, as part of the overview of Internationalisation activity. Court noted the report and Professor Younger's very positive summary of his visit, and thanked him for undertaking it.

CRT/2015/27.6 Nominations Committee Business

Since the last meeting, appointments had been made to two external vacancies on the board of GU Holdings Ltd., with Court approval having been given to the appointment of Mary Jane Brouwers and Fraser McLatchie, for 4 years from 1 February 2016.

Court approved a recommendation from the Nominations Committee that June Milligan be appointed as a lay member of the Human Resources Committee with immediate effect.

Court agreed that the Finance Committee's membership and skills profile should be augmented by the appointment of an additional co-opted member. A recommendation for appointment would follow via the Nominations Committee.

CRT/2015/27.7 Joint Committee of Consultation and Negotiation

The Joint Committee of Consultation and Negotiation (JCCN), a locally based group comprising management and union representatives, was chaired by former lay member of Court and the HR Committee, Alan Macfarlane. The UCU representative on the Committee had repeated a request that a Court member be appointed to participate as one of the management representatives on the Committee. While noting comments from Margaret Anne McParland endorsing this approach, Court agreed that it was not Court's role to become involved in the operational matters covered by the Committee, since that would prevent Court from challenging management on such issues, but that the chair of the Committee should be asked to make an Annual Report to Court and the Committee should be invited to forward its minutes to Court, highlighting its activities and keeping Court appraised of any significant issues.

In light of an observation that staff representatives on Court were not on any Court committees, Court was reminded that it reviewed its Committee remits and memberships annually in October and that this would occur as scheduled later in 2016.

CRT/2015/27.8 Senate Assessor on Court

Professor Nick Hill, School of Mathematics & Statistics, had been appointed as a Senate Assessor from 1 January 2016 until 31 July 2019, replacing Professor George Baillie.

CRT/2015/28. Report from the SRC

Liam King, SRC President, briefed Court on the SRC's Strategic Plan 2015-2020 and on the 2014/15 SRC annual report. Particular highlights of the past year had been: the work of the Advice Centre,

which was continuing its independent advocacy and advice work in academic, accommodation and financial areas, had increased its number of cases as a proportion of overall work, and had also seen an increase in the number of international students using the service; Student Media successes, where Subcity (Radio) and GUST (Television) had, respectively, celebrated 20 and 50 years of activity, and where Subcity was embedded within the local community and GUST was a key pathway into a very competitive sector; and the growth of Clubs and Societies, where 14,000 students were members of a club or society. There had also been record-breaking statistics relating to student teaching awards, with a fifth consecutive increase in nominations, at over 1,050. The awards were an important tool to engage students with their learning and teaching, but also in directly shaping the learning environment by recognising the excellence and best practice in teachers.

The new Plan had built on the previous plans, about which overall feedback had been that the direction of travel was good, with positivity on both the SRC and University side about the partnership and relationship between the two organisations. The new plan would continue to focus on the student facing activities of the SRC, including representation and engagement, and support and wellbeing; the enabling aims of the organisation would now include Communications, Marketing and IT as well as People and Finance/Funding; and Success Indicators had been introduced.

During discussion, Court noted the vital role SRC played as the students' representative body, and complimented the Council on the excellent work it was doing to support students' experience on campus. Court noted that SRC was seeking to work collaboratively with the QMU to optimise co-ordination of back-of-office functions and also to look at the affiliations process for clubs and societies, where at present there were individual processes for each institution. Court agreed that the SRC would have an important role in working with the University as the vision for the reconfigured campus was shaped. This would include encouraging student unions to develop optimal services for students, which in the case of the unions covered the social aspects of student life rather than the representational and other student-facing work that the SRC undertook.

Court thanked Mr King for the briefing and for the quality of the SRC's annual report and strategic plan.

CRT/2015/29. Reports of Court Committees

CRT/2015/29.1 Finance Committee

CRT/2015/29.1.1 Anti-Bribery Policy

In recent months, the University had commissioned a bespoke online training package on Anti-Bribery and Corruption. The material had been designed by an external supplier in partnership with staff in the Procurement Office. Training would be undertaken by all university staff whose duties might place them in positions where they could be exposed to bribery and corruption. Associated with the launch of the Anti-Bribery Training, a new policy statement had been issued, clarifying the standards that the University expected of its staff and the requirement to undertake training. The Finance Committee had reviewed the policy, which Court now approved.

CRT/2015/29.1.2 Finance Key Performance Indicators

Court noted a report on Finance Key Performance Indicators.

CRT/2015/29.1.3 Endowment Investment Report

Court noted an endowment investment report as at 30 November 2015.

CRT/2015/29.1.4 Financial reports

Court noted an overview of performance as at 30 November 2015.

The report was noted.

CRT/2015/29.2 Estates Committee

Court noted the progress made in respect of the Estate Strategy, and the report from the Committee, which it also noted would be subject to minor factual corrections to the minutes.

With respect to a question about community engagement relating to the development of major estates policies in the coming months, Court noted that this would occur for the Masterplan and the Learning & Teaching Hub, as it had done with the Campus Development Framework.

CRT/2015/29.3 Human Resources Committee

The Committee had received an update on the HR People Strategy, Strategic Plan implementation, Leadership development, the National Pay negotiations, last year's Performance & Development Review process and a proposed restructure of the Recruitment Team.

The Committee had received a briefing on Internal Communications and the work being done to support staff engagement and the empowering people agenda; and an overview on the People and Organisational Development Goals for 2016-2020.

The report was noted.

CRT/2015/29.4 Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee

The Committee had reviewed standard reports on Occupational Health activities and on accidents that had occurred in recent months. The Committee had also received an update on safety for overseas workers, on which matter the University was working with the insurers to add risk assessments to current insurance procedures, preferably using an electronic method. The Committee had approved the Lone Study Policy, which would now be published on the HSW website.

The report was noted.

CRT/2015/30. Communications from Meeting of Council of Senate held on 4 February 2016

Council of Senate had received updates on: progress against the University Strategy Workstreams; the University's response to the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills Green Paper *Fulfilling our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social mobility and Student Choice*; the Nurse Review of Research Councils; the funding environment; and the HE Governance (Scotland) Bill.

The Communications from the Council of Senate were noted.

CRT/2015/31. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

CRT/2015/32. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Court will be held on Wednesday 13 April 2016 at 2pm in the Wolfson Wohl Building, Garscube Estate.