

University of Glasgow

University Court – Wednesday 14 December 2016

Communications to Court from the meeting of Council of Senate held on 08 December 2016

(All matters are for noting)

1. HE Governance Act 2016 Working Group

The Clerk of Senate reported that it had been expected that the full proposal for the establishment of the new Senate would be presented at the December meeting of Council of Senate. However, at its last meeting, on 10 November 2016, the Working Group had noted that there was no indication from the Scottish Government of the commencement date for the new Act or when the expected implementation guidelines would be issued. The Working Group had decided that it would be prudent to wait until this information was available before submitting full proposals to the Council of Senate. The Council of Senate agreed that this was an appropriate course of action under the circumstances. Legal advice would be sought on the proposals; this would include the matters discussed at the October meeting of Council of Senate.

2. Staff Survey – Presentation by Director of Human Resources

Council of Senate received a presentation regarding the results of the 2016 Staff Survey from Ms Christine Barr, Director of Human Resources.

It was reported that the purpose of the Staff Survey was to:

- Measure levels of employee satisfaction
- Measure current culture
- Identify areas of best practice
- Identify areas for improvement
- Inform development of future initiatives

The results of the Staff Survey would inform the how the university would meet the aims of the Strategic Plan. People were at the centre of what was set out to be achieved and there was a lot of work already being conducted in local areas in response to the Staff Survey. There had also been much activity in the last eighteen months under the three themes: Agility, Focus and Empowerment following the results of the survey in 2014.

The 2016 response rate to the survey had been 68%, compared to 60% at the 2014 exercise. The University was ranked 11th of 54 HEIs who taken part in the same survey, which was an increase of nine places since 2014. In terms of all organisations, University of Glasgow was ranked 20th of 356, up thirteen places from the previous survey.

Areas of Good Practice were identified in the survey results as:

- Job Satisfaction / Good place to work

- Culture & Values
- University Leadership / Line Management
- Work-Life Balance
- Equality & Diversity / Dignity @ Work
- Pay & Conditions

It was reported that, in 2014, 90% of respondents had considered the University to be a good place to work. In 2016, this figure was 91%. This was higher than the median for all sectors and indicated that the University of Glasgow was an employer of choice. Eighty-nine percent of respondents agreed that they felt proud to work for the University, an increase of 3% from 2014.

One of the issues identified in the 2014 survey was in response to the question 'The Senior Management Team manage and lead the University well'. Fifty-six percent of respondents had agreed with this statement, this had improved this year, with 68% of respondents agreeing with this statement.

Eighty percent of respondents agreed that they were satisfied with the support they received from their manager; this was the same as the response in 2014. Fifty-eight percent of respondents in the 2016 survey also agreed that change was managed well, which was an increase of 12% from 2014. There was also an increase in respondents considering that communication was effective which had increased 7% from 2014, to 62% with 78% of respondents stated that they found Campus eNews valuable.

Areas for Improvement were identified as:

- Feeling Valued
- Meaningful PDR
- Communication & Engagement
- Workload Demands / Conflicting Priorities
- Managing Change
- Harassment & Bullying

Although there had been an increase in the percentage of staff who felt valued by the University, this figure had only increased by 3% and was still only 52%. It had been identified that there was considerable work to do to address this issue. Some improvement had been seen in terms of the response to whether the Senior Management Team listen to and respond to the views of staff - an increase of 12% to 48% in 2016.

There had been no change in the 4% of staff who indicated in their survey response that they were currently being bullied at work. Agreement with the statement 'different parts of the University communicate effectively with each other' had increased by 6% to 46% in 2016. Forty-seven percent of staff had responded that they struggle to meet the demands of their current workload, although this was a decrease of 2% from the previous survey. Forty-eight percent of respondents found their P&DR was not useful, this figure had increased 4% from the 2014 survey. These were all identified as areas where there was more work to do to address the concerns raised by the survey responses.

Ms Barr reported that there were a number of initiatives ongoing across the University, including work to mainstream activity in Schools and Colleges to develop action plans. It was recognised that in order to effect cultural change, it was necessary to identify where University level change was required. It was reported that meeting had been conducted in the College of Arts to address

issues of concern and these meetings would also be taking place in each of the other Colleges. There would also be opportunities for engagement at University level with each of the Engagement Leads, Professor Neal Juster, Senior Vice-Principal, Dr David Newall, Secretary of Court and Ms Christine Barr, Director of Human Resources.

In discussion, Council members noted that it would be beneficial to have further breakdown of the results because the scale used in the survey was a five-point scale, however the figures reported amalgamated the 'agree strongly' and 'agree' responses and therefore some of the detail was lost. Ms Barr welcomed this suggestion.

The view was expressed that it was concerning that only 52% of respondents felt valued by the University. It was highlighted that Council of Senate had a role in decision making that affected the academic community and that greater involvement of the Council in consideration of proposals to address the issues identified by the survey results would be welcome. The Principal noted that there was valuable discussion to be had at local level, and that such issues could be brought to Council of Senate for further discussion. It was also noted that a number of changes had been introduced in response to the 2014 survey; for example, Schools had indicated they wanted a stronger role in course approval and this was now happening. There had also been valuable discussion at the Council on the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) and Research Excellence Framework (REF). Ms Barr reported that there was commitment to engagement with each unit in order to create action plans that reflected the granularity of each area. It was reported that there was still work to be done by the three working groups, each addressing a theme that had been established in response to the 2014 survey.

Council of Senate noted that the response rate of 68% meant that there was a significant proportion of staff who had not engaged with the survey and that there may be some selection bias. It was reported that the last three surveys had been operated by an independent company and that this had been thought to have contributed to the increases in response rates, but there would also always be some people who did not want to respond. It was noted that it would be valuable to allow for data capture that would enable an understanding of the reasons behind the non-participation. There was recognition that it was not possible currently to comment on misgivings about the survey without completing it and that some staff were put off by the length of the survey. It was also noted that there would be value in including statistical expertise from the University on the project board.

Council of Senate also noted that 4% of respondents had indicated that they felt bullied, a figure that had remained unchanged since the last survey. There was discussion about whether this would include responses from those that felt bullied by the institution, rather than by individuals and it was recognised that there would be value in making the question more explicit to capture this.

Ms Barr reported that communication and engagement in response to the survey, was ongoing including sharing and discussion of results, through Theme Leads, local events and action planning.

3. Estates Strategy

The Principal provided a verbal update regarding the Estates Strategy. Further detail would be provided by the Director of Estates and Buildings at the next meeting of Council of Senate in February 2017, following key decisions to be taken by the University Court on 14 December 2016. Care was being taken to ensure that these decisions were well communicated to the University community. Plans were being developed on a phased basis and to allow for either acceleration or slowing projects in light of financial circumstances such as Scottish Government

budgets, the effects of Brexit and changes in immigration policy. The focus would be on those projects that had greatest common benefit, for example postgraduate space.

It was noted that the full business case for the Learning and Teaching Hub had been developed and would be considered by Court at the December meeting. If approved, development could begin quickly, subject to planning approval. Project boards had been established for other projects and consultation would be taking place in development of the full business cases for each of these, where there would be opportunity for staff, student and community involvement.

It was also reported that there would be £15M invested in ensuring current buildings were maintained and developed, including the Joseph Black Building, which was a listed building. Previous figures had under-estimated the investment required.

4. Education Policy and Strategy Committee (EdPSC) Report of meeting held on 3 November 2016

Council of Senate received a report from the Education Policy and Strategy Committee from Professor Coton, Vice Principal for Academic & Educational Innovation and were asked to endorse the following:

A multiple award arrangement: MSc Tourism Development and Culture (previously Tourism Environment and Sustainability) and the Remit and Membership of EdPSC for 2016-17.

Professor Coton also provided an update regarding the College actions plans in response to the NSS results. He commended the work that had gone into development of the action plans and the depth of thought and work involved in efforts to address the concerns highlighted in the survey results.

5. Update from Vice Principal (Research)

Professor Miles Padgett, Vice-Principal for Research presented to Council of Senate an update on a number of research matters.

5.1 Lord Stern's independent review of the REF

Professor Padgett reported that the review had been commissioned by Government to identify more efficient and effective ways of allocating quality-related research funding to Universities. The report had been published on 28 July 2016 and contained 12 recommendations. Key recommendations were:

- Full return of "research active" staff; 2N outputs/UoA, with minimum of 0 or 1 and maximum of 6 outputs per individual
- Emphasis on cross-disciplinary (cross-UoA) impact cases, reported at institutional level
- Institutional environment statement.

5.2 Technical consultation on the REF

Professor Padgett reported that the release of the technical consultation on the REF had been made earlier that day. HEFCE had been asked to consult on the practical implementation of the Stern recommendations, not on whether to implement the recommendations.

Outputs:

- Use HESA data to give no choice around which UoAs we return and which staff we return to each UoA
- Practical ways of achieving non-portability

Impact:

- Define interdisciplinary ICS. HEFCE will run a pilot in 2017.

Other:

- Is there a role for a 5* rating?
- Optimal UoA structure
- Appropriate subprofile weightings, given 65% for outputs and minimum 20% for impact

The timeline post-2014 REF was:

- Consultation on REF guidelines to be launched before Christmas, for 14 weeks
- REF guidelines published mid 2017
- REF census date probably 2020

The consultation included recommendations relating to:

- the submission of staff and outputs
- the approach to the assessment of impact
- the introduction of an institutional level assessment

Professor Padgett reported that it was anticipated that there all staff with research-related contracts. The volume indicator would be dictated by the size of the institution, and therefore, it was anticipated, would lead to some funding fluctuations around the sector. Financial modelling was therefore extremely important. The consultation was seeking suggestions on level of independence and the minimum and maximum returns per person. It was noted that some submissions were double weighted and it was expected that these would be expected to count as two outputs. It was reported that it was not anticipated that there would be significant change to the UoAs, although there were suggestions around links to HESA cost codes. The consultation indicated that there was thinking around impact being assessed at institutional level, but that it was not clear how this would work. It was highlighted that responses to the consultation were crucial and that HEFCE were keen to receive views. The consultation recommendations included non-portability of outputs, which was welcomed.

Council of Senate noted that, in England, REF and TEF were tending to place contradictory pressures on universities, and there was danger of causing fracture between research and teaching within institutions. It was reported that it was in our interest to return as many high quality people as possible in order to generate income. It was recognised that there was always a risk of tension between research and teaching and that TEF might not be moving in the right direction for the health of the sector.

There would need to be a high quality return of 4* in order to perform better than REF2014 in terms of benchmarking with other Russell Group institutions.

5.3 *Interim Research Reviews (IRR)*

Professor Padgett reported that the University's upcoming Interim Research Reviews (IRR), was designed to assess the institution's research readiness ahead of the next REF, with assessment at the level of REF2014 Units of Assessment.

The reviews were scheduled to start in July 2017 and would run for 12 months. The format of the IRR would be similar to that of the UoA Reviews, in that a panel comprising external and internal members would be appointed and review materials ahead of meeting with UoA and College representatives. A final report would be circulated following each review. The IRR would cover outputs and environment at a unit level, with impact to be assessed in a linked process at College level. Units would score outputs, which would then also be scored by the external members of the Panel. This would allow for both an assessment of the Unit's calibration of quality and an estimated percentage of the 4* outputs in the Unit. Discrepancies in internal and external scores would be highlighted to the Unit. The REF selection tool in Enlighten had been activated, and researchers in the Colleges (except for MVLS, which was running a different process to select outputs) had been asked to select up to six of their 3* and 4* outputs, as well as provide a rationale for each. This rationale would be part of the materials reviewed by the Panel.

The Reviews were approved by SMG on 27 September 2016; following this, the Research Team in RSIO was working on the specifics of the IRR and consulting on the process and an updated paper would be received by SMG on 12 December 2016 with further details.

The order of the Units within the three ranches would follow the UoA Review pattern as closely as possible and would allow for decisions to be made regarding changes to Unit configurations.

5.4 Enlighten

Researchers from the Colleges of Arts, Social Science and Science and Engineering were to select, from their Enlighten record, up to six outputs meeting the 3* or 4* REF grading criteria

- Researchers add a rationale for including the output in their shortlist
- R&T and selected R-only staff to engage with tool by end January 2017
- Option for 'zero output' selection
- Monthly reports on engagement to SMG/Colleges

6. Convener's Business

6.1 Brexit/ Immigration / TEF

The Principal reported that there had been two forums on Brexit with staff and students; these had provided a good picture of the issues concerning those on campus. There were significant concerns due to the importance of staff and students from outwith the UK to the health of the University and regarding any general attempt to control immigration. It was reported that there were no immediate initiatives, but that support was available to staff through HR.

There was a work stream of the Funding Council of Scotland regarding student mobility. It was recognised that EU students contributed to diversity on campus and it was important to continue to attract students from the EU. Erasmus Plus had been extremely valuable across the sector.

The Principal reported that this had been fed into the UK consultation and the Scottish Affairs Committee. There was currently no response from Whitehall. At this time, it was not clear what other steps could be taken. It was noted that immigration had helped the Scottish economy when it was in decline.

At the Conservative Party Conference in October 2016, the Home Secretary, Amber Rudd, had announced possible major new restrictions on overseas students, including two-tier visa rules affecting poorer quality universities and courses. The intention was to reduce the flow of overseas students from outside Europe by linking student immigration ceilings to the quality of colleges and courses. It was not clear how the quality of institutions and courses would be differentiated, but using TEF was a possibility, despite its shortcomings. It was unlikely that University of Glasgow would take part in the TEF currently due to concern about its failure to actually assess teaching excellence and the handling of data for Scottish HEIs when compared to English institutions. If the UoG was to participate we would want it to be a true indicator of teaching excellence. However, the situation would require to be reevaluated rapidly if TEF were to be linked to Tier 4 visas.

Professor Coton, Vice-Principal (Academic and Educational Innovation) provided an update on the TEF. Institutional or 'provider' level TEF was intended to run for two years from 2017. Subject level TEF would be piloted in 2018 and then be introduced fully in 2019. Postgraduate level TEF might also be introduced in 2019.

With respect to provider level TEF, it was anticipated that a number of Russell Group Universities and some London-based institutions would not opt in at this stage. It was likely that few Scottish universities would participate. The National Union of Students was also planning a boycott of the NSS because of its link to increases in fees for English HEIs. There was little clarity currently around the subject level TEF, but there would likely be 20 subjects. These might be based on either REF UoAs or HESA JACS codes. There were widespread concerns regarding the practicability of subject-level TEF.

There were many concerns in the sector concerning the metrics to be used. A particular issue was the use of the POLAR multiple deprivation measure, which had been designed to fit England and did not reflect the distribution of deprivation in Scotland – particularly in Glasgow - well. The use of benchmarks rather than absolute performance had particularly damaging effects on Russell Group university performance, as they made it difficult for HEIs which are already high-achieving to be able to show very positive results. It was notably difficult for universities with high entry tariffs to score well on learning gain measures. Russell Group institutions also had relatively high percentages of international students, who were not captured within key metrics. It was hoped that the Department for Education would address these concerns at least in part. There was extensive lobbying of the DfE and Ministers.

6.2 Autumn Budget Statement

The Principal reported that the estimates for the UK fiscal position were not as positive as pre-Brexit. It had been announced that there would be more capital spend for Scotland through adjustment of the Barnett Formula, but that what Scotland might receive in real terms would be reduced by 4.1% in 2019-20 compared to 2015-16. The NHS and policing budget were ring-fenced, which would have an impact on the HE sector. The Principal reported that the details of the Scottish Government Spending Review would be made public on 15 December 2016. It anticipated that the best case would be flat cash for teaching resource and capital spend.

6.3 Scottish Government Review – Scottish Funding Council (SFC), Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Skills Development Scotland

The Principal reported that a Scottish Government review was recommending that (SFC, Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Skills Development Scotland should operate under a single board. There was concern because the four bodies being reviewed were very different. There was also a proposal that the Board might be chaired by a Minister. This

was also concerning because, although there had been reassurances to the contrary, it could potentially threaten the autonomy of universities.

7. Clerk of Senate's Business

7.1 Graduation Ceremonies Committee

The Clerk of Senate presented a proposal for the establishment of a Graduation Ceremonies Committee. Although it was Senate that awards the degrees of the University of Glasgow and the Clerk of Senate who had overall responsibility on behalf of Senate, the preparation and organisation of the graduation ceremonies had become an increasingly complex process and now typically involved approximately 150 people from the Colleges and University Services. The proposal was to formalise the process so that areas of responsibility for the various aspects of the graduation ceremonies on the Gilmorehill, Dumfries and overseas campuses were clearly laid out and the relevant people took ownership to ensure that the process operated effectively.

Council of Senate approved the establishment of a Graduation Ceremonies Committee.

7.2 Assistance for Senate Assessors on Court

The Clerk of Senate reported that Professor Paul Younger, one of the Senate Assessors on Court, had been unwell for some time and it was possible he may not be able return to the University for a further period. The Council joined the Clerk of Senate in expressing best wishes for Professor Younger's full and speedy recovery and hoped to see him resuming his role as soon as possible.

It was noted that the demands on Senate Assessors in carrying out their role were significant. In addition to participation in Court meetings themselves, key tasks performed by the Assessors included acting as members for Periodic Subject Reviews Panels and on Appointment and Reward & Recognition Committees. To provide some support pro tem for the Assessors while Professor Younger was absent, in conjunction with Dr Duncan Ross, the Senior Senate Assessor, Dr Kathryn Lowe in the School of Critical Studies had kindly agreed to act as panel member on a forthcoming PSR.

Dr Lowe had carried out very extensive work in the past on Senate's behalf, including two terms as Senior Senate Assessor for Student Conduct, and she was also currently one of the Senior Senate Assessor for Complaints. The Clerk of Senate was very grateful to Dr Lowe for taking on this further task. It was explained that Dr Lowe would not be acting in the capacity of a Senate Assessor or acting Senate Assessor. There was precedence for asking senior staff to take on particular Assessor tasks pro-tem in similar circumstances, and this was recognised as something that Council of Senate may wish to return to when, as anticipated, there would be a much smaller Senate from which to appoint members to carry out Senate-related duties.

The Clerk of Senate would continue to liaise with Dr Ross and the other Senate Assessors and would keep the situation under review and keep Council of Senate informed.

7.3 Honorary Degrees 2017

The Clerk of Senate reported that following acceptances had been received from nominees to receive Honorary Degrees in 2017:

DOCTOR OF LETTERS (DLitt)
Vincent DEIGHAN (Frank Quiteley)
Artist

Graham DONALDSON

President of the Standing International Conference of Inspectorates

Dame Nemat SHAIK
Deputy Governor, Bank of England

John TIFFANY
Theatre Director

DOCTOR OF LETTERS (DLitt) - GSA

Adele PATRICK
Lifelong Learning and Creative Development Manager,
Glasgow Women's Library

DOCTOR OF MUSIC (DMus)
Roy McEWAN
Chief Executive and Director of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra

DOCTOR OF SCIENCE (DSc)
Sir Paul NURSE
Scientist

Mene PANGALOS
Executive Vice President of AstraZeneca's Innovative Medicines and Early Development
Biotech Unit

Dr Patrick VALLANCE
President of Pharmaceuticals, GlaxoSmithKline plc

DOCTOR OF THE UNIVERSITY (DUniv)
Robert CALDERWOOD
Chief Executive of Greater Glasgow & Clyde NHS Board

Amanda McMILLAN
CEO of AGS Airports Limited and Managing Director of Glasgow Airport

The names noted above of those who had accepted the offer of an Honorary Degree were now in the public domain.

8. University Court: Communications from the meeting held on 12 October 2016

The Communications from University Court meeting held on 12 October were received.

The Secretary of Court reported that The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) had advised that, in its opinion, the University's use of academic sanctions to enforce a non-tuition fee debt was unlawful and had requested that the University amend its debt policy. Court had noted that when a student was having difficulty in clearing debt, the University's approach was supportive, including an offer of assistance in the form of flexible payment plans and advice on financial management. However, in common with the majority of universities in Scotland, the University insisted that debt was ultimately cleared before the student graduated, or proceeded to the next

year of study. That sanction was expressed in the University Calendar. The Secretary of Court and Director of Finance, together with the University's lawyer, had met with the CMA in August, and there was ongoing discussion of the matter. This included the CMA having been challenged about its contention that the debt policy was illegal. Court had noted that the CMA had very recently advised that it continued to view the policy as illegal. Court noted that other institutions varied in their approach to the matter, but with a number operating the same system as the one currently in operation at the University. Court agreed that the Secretary of Court and Director of Finance should enter into further discussion with the CMA, and the resulting recommendations had been approved by Court by email so as to avoid unnecessary delay in reaching agreement with the CMA. Court had agreed that the University would continue to reserve the right ultimately to apply an academic penalty, such as to refuse to allow a student to register, to progress to the next level of study and/or to receive an academic award of the University. However, the University would not seek to impose an academic penalty where:

- (i) an arrangement has been agreed with the University in respect of payment of the sum, unless that agreement has been materially or persistently breached; or
- (ii) the outstanding sum is subject to a formal dispute which is being pursued in good faith by the student; or
- (iii) the outstanding sum relates to accommodation debt.

The Council of Senate was reminded that, where students experience difficulty in making payments they could seek practical support and advice from the Student Financial Aid Team and independently from the Student Representative Council's Advice Centre. Students should also contact the Student Collections Team to make them aware of any delay in payment.